

# Editor's Note

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Editorial Director

NASBE folk have been singing their own rendition of “A Change Is Gonna Come” as regards education reform for a while now, as well as a K-12 version of “Are You Ready?” Given the policy reset reflected in the newly minted Every Student Succeeds Act, NASBE is pleased to deliver a timely issue that focuses on one thing the change means for state boards of education: greater responsibility for assessments and determining their role in state accountability systems. The authors argue for states to take a fresh, vigorous look at how all the pieces fit together.

For your consideration as you navigate these waters, Rajendra Chattergoon and Scott Marion describe the qualities of a coherent system of assessments and how you will know if you have one. The Alliance for Excellent Education's Robert Rothman writes on how the potential muddle of multiple measures can be sorted with data dashboards. And New Hampshire's deputy commissioner of education, Paul Leather, describes the goals and process by which his state is redesigning its accountability system. Performance assessments play a leading role.

This edition deals not only with student and school performance. Ben Fenton at New Leaders makes the case for robust implementation of principal evaluations to help school leaders develop their skills, and Anne Marie Fenton and Pamela Wetherington sketch Georgia's path toward statewide adoption of a performance assessment for new teacher candidates.

Another NASBE refrain that may sound familiar is our call for state boards to ensure that statewide tests align with statewide standards. While there are aligned tests to choose from for Common

Core adopters to assess English language arts and math skills, states that recently adopted Next Generation Science Standards have only just begun to think how assessments might connect to them. Jim Pellegrino details what states should look for in aligned science assessments.

Although states have embraced the challenge of preparing their students for college and careers, it's fair to say that many would be hard pressed to say whether their students are displaying career readiness. MetaMetrics' Malbert Smith III and Gary L. Williamson show that such assessment is possible, and, as a case in point, they show how North Carolina has married learning progressions in K-12 reading against distinct measures of text complexity that reflect what careers and colleges will require of new entrants.

We round out the issue with an interview with Linda Darling-Hammond on the benefits of student performance assessments and how state boards might think about incorporating them into their assessment systems.

You are keenly aware of how your communities react to assessments, particularly if they appear to them unconnected from what they expect of their schools and students. These authors make the case that a well-knitted system can assure stakeholders that what is measured matters—and that educators and policymakers alike remain focused on what matters most in helping all students achieve. ■

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