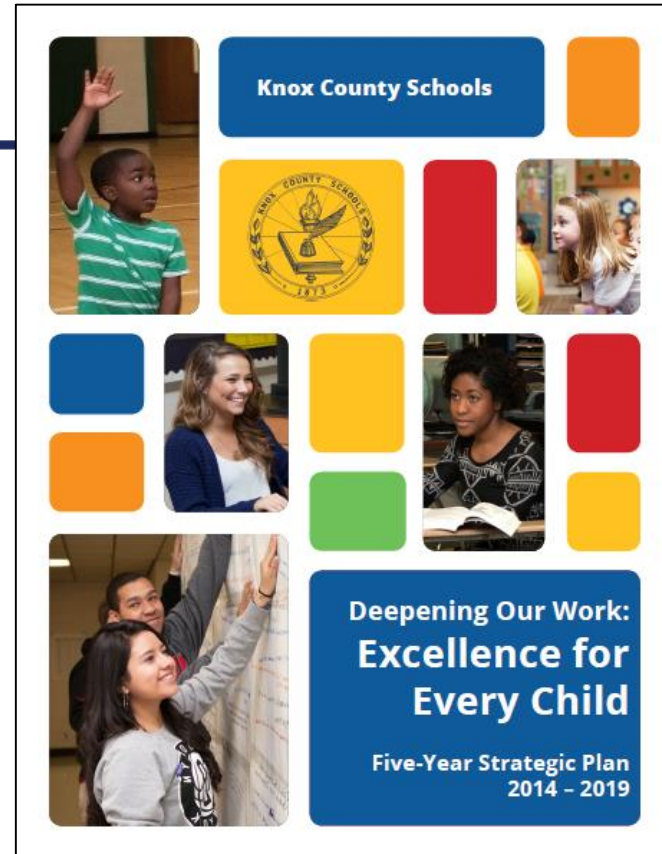


Student Assessment Inventory Update

Board of Education
Mid-Month Workshop
October 19, 2015

Project Background

- KCS strategic plan goal to “re-examine the assessment landscape to ensure purpose and coherence”
- Received a \$40,000 grant from Achieve, Inc. to conduct this work in Feb '15
- Highlighted as one of the 7 community conversations in State of Schools address
- Stated objective of Student Assessment Inventory work:
Ensure that every assessment a student takes is either required and/or useful in informing instruction



b. Re-examine the assessment landscape to ensure purpose and coherence. Our students should only take assessments that are either required by state and federal policy or are valuable in providing the right type of data to inform and support teaching and learning. Our assessments should be primarily driven by teachers' need for information and must be streamlined so that they are not redundant. Additionally, they must be designed and implemented to minimally disrupt valuable instructional time.

Student Assessment Committee Action Plan

Stakeholder Feedback & Data Collection (April 1 – June 5)

Principal Input

- 85 School Inventory Meetings
- 9 Deeper Insight Interviews

Teacher Input

- Teacher Advisory Committee
- 8 Teacher Focus Groups
- 9 Deeper Insight Interviews
- Teacher Survey

Student Input

- 6 Student Focus Groups (Middle + High School)
- 24 Elementary School Conversations
- Student Survey (Primarily High School)

Parent Input

- Community Meeting (June 2)
- 11 Deeper Insight Interviews
- Parent Survey

Committee Analysis & Recommendations (June 8 – Aug 30)

COMMITTEE SUMMIT

(June 8-9)

- Review and analyze all of the stakeholder feedback and data

Over 150 hours of stakeholder input & 1000s of responses on surveys!

More detailed presentations will be posted on the website following the Board meeting.



Usefulness of State-Mandated Tests

1-not useful 2-somewhat useful 3-useful 4-very useful

Name of Assessment	Parent	Student	Teacher	Principal
Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) Achievement Test	2.4	Low Base	1.8	3.1
TCAP End of Course (EOC) Tests	2.4	2.2		
TCAP Writing Assessment	2.3	1.9	1.5	2.2
TCAP Social Studies Field Test				2.0
Universal Screener & Progress Monitoring			2.5	3.6*
ACT Suite – EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT	2.9	2.5	2.0	3.4
ACCESS/WIDA for English Learners	2.7	2.1	2.1	2.9
Progressive Aerobic Cardiovascular Endurance Run (PACER)				
NAEP				

* - Principal rating includes STAR Renaissance only



Usefulness of Local Tests

1-not useful 2-somewhat useful 3-useful 4-very useful

Name of Assessment	Parent	Student	Teacher	Principal
<u>District-Mandated</u>				
District End of Course Tests			2.1	3.4
Middle School Honors Mid-Term		Low Base [3.2]		2.9
<u>School/Teacher/Student Choice</u>				
AP Exams/IB Exams	2.9	2.7	2.5	3.7
CTE Certification	2.6	2.3	2.4	
District Created Module Assessments	2.7*	2.5*	2.2	3.2
Common Assessments by PLCs			2.7	3.7
Classroom Formative		3.1	3.3	
Quizzes		2.8		
Homework	2.9	2.7		

* - Unit test or Benchmarking test

Key Conclusions:

- Biggest opportunity for improvement in terms of usefulness is in the state-mandated TCAP Achievement, EOC, and Writing tests
- Very few district-mandated tests, and these are viewed to be somewhat useful or useful

Teacher Estimates of Time Spent on Testing

Key Conclusions:

- 3rd-12th graders spent between 10-20 hours (average of 13.4 hours) taking required state and district tests in the 14-15 school year.
 - This is less than 2% of the school year.
- The total time impact of high stakes testing (including planning/preparation during class and lost instructional time due to modified schedules during the test window) is much greater.
 - Teachers' estimates are 38 hours/3.5% of school year* (median) or 79 hours/7.3% of school year* hours (mean).
- The total time teachers estimated spending on all types of testing (including high stakes and non-high stakes testing) is less than what they felt was an appropriate amount of time to assess student learning: 15% (median) to 20.7% (mean) of the school year.

* Assumes 6 hours/day for 180 days. Note that the school day is 7 hours, but we conservatively chose 6 hours to account for lunch, class change, etc.



Other Themes Related to Assessment

- Student test prep
- Test logistics
- TCAP hoopla
- Use of post TCAP/EOC time
- Teacher anxiety
- Student stress
- Accountability balance
- Communication



Components of test culture



... so what is being done
about this?

Action at the State Level

Tennessee Dept. of Education Assessment Task Force

- Tennessee Dept. of Ed conducted an assessment task force in parallel to the KCS assessment inventory
- A Knox County Schools parent served on both committees and was able to share what we learned directly with the state's task force
- State task force issued 16 recommendations



Knox County parent in task force meeting with Commissioner McQueen

State's Recommendations Address Themes Heard in the KCS Inventory Work:

- ✓ Communicate that the best test preparation is focusing on great teaching and engaged student learning every day.
- ✓ Annually release test blueprints and as many test items as possible
- ✓ Eliminate mandatory 8th grade EXPLORE test and 10th grade PLAN test
- ✓ Form a parent advisory group to give feedback on concerns related to over-testing and test preparation practices as well as feedback on information desired for annual student reports
- ✓ Work with districts to increase awareness of the realities of test anxiety while providing specific guidance in how to help educators avoid passing on stress or test anxiety to students.



Action at the State Level

TNReady

- New and improved tests in English language arts and math in 15-16

Step in the Right Direction Relative to KCS Inventory Feedback:

- ✓ Test is specifically designed to assess TN standards
- ✓ Different types of questions that require problem solving and critical thinking instead of relying simply on memorization
- ✓ Longer test window and more flexibility in schedule => Allows for “test day” to feel more like a normal school day
- ✓ Practice questions available for teachers to use in every day instruction (MICA)
- ✓ Improved reporting on student performance to parents



Action at the District Level

**See TNReady as an opportunity
for a fresh start in the test culture
at Knox County Schools**



Action at the District Level

TNReady Communication Plan

- Principal Meeting
- Teacher In-Service
- Resources to support classroom instruction
- TNReady website page with Q&A and other resources
- Schools are conducting parent meetings
- TNReady brochures and the 15-16 assessment landscape will be sent home with report cards
- TNReady Board presentation tonight
- Video featuring KCS students to explain the “why”

