

Recommendations to the Texas Commission on Next-Generation Assessments and Accountability

On Behalf of the Texas High Performance Schools Consortium

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The Texas High Performance Schools Consortium Purpose

To inform the governor, legislature, and commissioner of education on “methods for transforming Texas public schools in the state by improving student learning through the development of innovative, next-generation learning standards and assessment and accountability systems.”
(SB1557, 82nd Legislature)

The Texas High Performance Schools Consortium

- Overlap between the Consortium and the Commission in several key areas:
 - Defining state accountability
 - The role of student assessment
 - Creating a system that meets state goals and is community-based
 - Promotes parent and community involvement and reflects unique community needs

Consortium Focus: Digital Integration

Providing students the opportunity to work within learning environments that reflect the needs of future-ready students

Exemplars:

- Alamo Heights ISD [Spotlight on Engagement: Technology Integration](#)
- Clear Creek ISD [Latitude 2 Learn: Personalized Learning in CCISD](#)
- Willis ISD [Digital Transformation](#)

Consortium Focus: High-Priority Learning Standards

Determining high-priority learning standards that emphasize depth over breadth and align with a new vision of accountability

Exemplars:

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Consortium Focus: Multiple Assessments

Writing samples, project-bas



Consortium Focus: Community-Based Accountability

Engaging the community in the education of its youth by establishing rigorous standards that meet the unique needs of that community, building upon the community-focused component of House Bill 5

Exemplars:

- Clear Creek ISD
[2014-15 Community Based Accountability Report](#)
- College Station ISD





An Opportunity for Meaningful Change

The recent passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), coupled with the establishment of this Commission and the state's focus on next-generation assessment and accountability, creates a unique opportunity for transforming Texas public schools

- New state discretion in assessment and accountability through ESSA
- The Consortium (THPSC) provides a resource for research and development

Short- and Long-Term Recommendations from the Consortium



Assessment and Accountability: A Subsystem

Assessment and accountability is a **subsystem** of a much larger and complex system of learning and teaching.

As such, a subsystem should be congruent with the other key components or subsystems that make up the larger system and not distort the work of the overall educational system.

Assessment and Accountability Subsystem impacts the Instructional Improvement Subsystem

Recommendation 2

Establish true learning standards-based state assessments.

The testing design of present state tests does not allocate a sufficient number of test items to a given standard nor does it support meaningful comparison over time on a given learning standard.



Recommendation 3

Limit state testing and its inclusion in the accountability system to the requirements of federal law.

Over the last 20 years the state has expanded the subjects tested and incorporated much of that testing into a high-stakes accountability system, adding to the climate and culture of teaching the test.



Recommendation 4

Begin modeling stratified random sampling from past tests and future tests.

No state has more data to mine than Texas. It is time to start building the case for the use of stratified random sampling and the redirection of testing dollars to educational research for instructional strategies to meet the needs of the increasingly diverse student population of Texas.



Recommendation 5

Expand the opportunities for innovation into alternative, district-based assessment and accountability subsystems.

The state has articulated a commitment to assessment and accountability that is community-based, promotes parent and community involvement, and reflects the unique needs of each community.

The seedbed most fertile for that work, where such a model is to be developed, must be in the communities and school districts that serve the children in those communities.

Creating a New Reality Through New, Balanced Partnerships

The Commission should urge the state to seek relief from the mandatory whole population testing requirements for grades 3-8 and 10.

The state is the proper authority to determine if stratified random sampling should be supplemented by selected whole grade testing at key gateway transition points.

The District's Role in a Next-Generation System

- Districts are accountable for learning at the student, classroom, school, and district level
- Districts are accountable to the communities they serve
- Districts have the lead responsibility for certain core accountability functions related to measures and assessments of student learning

The State's Role in a Next-Generation System

- The state is accountable for the establishment of a rigorous accreditation process to ensure educational quality
- The state is accountable to taxpayers and citizens
- The state has the lead responsibility for certain core functions:
 - Establish expectations
 - Determine high-priority learning standards
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