

# Requirements for the Development of Instructionally Supportive Assessments

Prepared By

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Assessment

## Requirement 1

**A state's content standards must be prioritized to support effective instruction and assessment.**

*Because –*

- *educators in many state cannot adequately address within the amount of time available for instruction the large number of content standards that are supposedly measured by state tests;*
- *state tests often do not adequately assess all of the content standards, and frequently center on standards that are easiest to assess; and*
- *state tests rarely provide educators with the kind of information they need to improve instruction.*

## Requirement 2

**A state's high-priority content standards must be clearly and thoroughly described so that the knowledge and skills students need to demonstrate competence are evident.**

*Because –*

- *a state's high-priority content standards will be measured by state tests;*
- *educators must understand what each of these content standards calls for from students; and*
- *many content standards are not worded with sufficient clarity for rigorous instructional planning and assessment design.*

## Requirement 3

**The results of a state's assessment of high-priority content standards should be reported standard-by-standard for each student, school, and district.**

*Because –*

- *students, parents, educators, and policymakers need information about which content standards students are and are not attaining; and*
- *educators can do little to improve students' achievement without information about their performance on each high-priority content standard.*

## Requirement 4

**A state must provide educators with optional classroom assessment procedures that can measure students' progress in attaining content standards not assessed by state tests.**

*Because –*

- *content standards that are not assessed by state tests are important and should be given instructional attention;*
- *educators need good assessment tools to monitor students' achievement and rarely have the time and resources to develop such tools; and*
- *assessments that are routinely administered by educators can and should be used to provide a complete picture of what students know and are able to do.*

## Requirement 5

**A state must monitor the breadth of the curriculum to ensure that instructional attention is given to all content standards and subject areas, including those that are not assessed by state tests.**

*Because –*

- *students benefit from a rich and deep curriculum; and*
- *state tests that measure high-priority content standards could narrow curricular coverage unless steps are taken to forestall such narrowing.*

## Requirement 6

**A state must ensure that all students have the opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of state standards; consequently, it must provide well-designed assessments appropriate for a broad range of students, with accommodations and alternate methods of assessment available for students who need them.**

*Because –*

- *all students must be given appropriate opportunities to demonstrate the degree to which they have mastered state content standards; and*
- *federal statutes required that such opportunities be offered in particular ways.*

## Requirement 7

**A state must generally allow test developers a minimum of three years to produce statewide tests that satisfy the *Standards of Educational and Psychological Testing* and similar test-quality guidelines.**

*Because –*

- *tests developed too hurriedly neither support instruction nor supply accurate evaluative information for accountability programs; and*
- *there is a widespread misunderstanding that high-quality achievement tests can be developed in two years or less.*

## Requirement 8

**A state must ensure that educators receive professional development focused on how to optimize children's learning based on the results of instructionally supportive assessments.**

*Because –*

- *most educators are unfamiliar with the instructionally supportive assessment system the Commission advocates; and*
- *it is imperative that educators become adept at using such a assessment system for instructional purposes.*

## Requirement 9

**A state should secure evidence that supports that supports the ongoing improvement of its state assessments to ensure those assessments are (a) appropriate for the accountability purposes for which they are used, (b) appropriate for determining whether students have attained state standards, (c) appropriate for enhancing instruction, and (d) not the cause of negative consequences.**

*Because –*

- *any assessment system, not matter how well designed, can be improved; and*
- *a state's assessment system must perform both an accountability function and an instructional improvement function.*