

A COLLECTIVE CALL FOR POLICY CHANGE

to remodel our system of assessments in New Mexico

We believe in performance assessments where students demonstrate what they know & can do!

It is time to begin moving away from standardized tests as we know them.

Why now?

- The **new governor** plans to end use of the controversial PARCC exam and stop “punitive testing-first evaluation.”
 - A **School Support & Accountability Work Group** convened by New Mexico’s Legislative Education Study Committee is recommending “an assessment system that supports assessment for student learning.”
 - A team of district leaders and Future Focused Education had a breakthrough on a recent trip to **New Hampshire, where performance assessments are used in valid and reliable ways**
- in the state’s accountability system. This answers much of the skepticism about moving away from standardized testing as we know it.
- The one-size-fits-all, single-state-test accountability system has not served New Mexico’s diverse population well over the last 20 years, and the federal **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** opens doors for flexibility New Mexico has not yet utilized to build a comprehensive system of assessment.
 - The recent **Yazzie/Martinez vs the State of New Mexico** decision
- sets the stage for transforming support for all students, especially students with disabilities and students of color.
- In the face of **extreme teacher shortages**, New Mexico must recommit to valuing teachers as professionals.

“It’s time for change. Traditional and innovative performance assessments better measure the desired milestones and attributes for college and career readiness.”

– Dr. Veronica C. Garcia, SFPS Superintendent

Who’s involved?

Future Focused Education stands with district, state, and community leaders who are urging New Mexico legislators to explore new possibilities for student assessment.



Join us in remodeling student assessment?

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A collective vision is under construction

Based on broad stakeholder input, we are co-creating a roadmap for remodeling student assessment in New Mexico. This vision is under construction as we engage with additional groups. What do you think?

What does innovative assessment look like?

- Applied and hands-on (i.e. performance-based, as modeled by New Hampshire)
- Linguistically, culturally, and real-world relevant
- Affirms both a collective statewide vision and local self-determination
- Measures progress and supports improvement Clearly understood by parents and community
- Assesses the depth and breadth of student learning
- Gives students multiple ways to demonstrate what they know
- Prioritizes student learning

How do we get there?

- Convene local districts to build on current innovation and clarify a common vision for assessment in New Mexico.
- Empower and build assessment literacy for teachers and leaders and incorporate assessment literacy into teacher preparation programs.
- Develop district and statewide graduate profiles that reflect the distinct knowledge, skills, and attitudes their communities value most.
- Establish a state policy that allows school districts to apply for waivers from some testing requirements in order to pilot innovative approaches to assessment.
- Apply to ESSA Section I204 (Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority) to allow a subset of districts to pilot different assessments from the rest of the state.
- Listen to student and community voice in an ongoing way.

Where do we start?

Graduate profiles

Engage stakeholders to redefine student success with more breadth and depth. The resulting graduate profile informs a new system of assessments.

Promising New Mexico Examples:

- Santa Fe Public Schools' Attributes of a Graduate
- Mission: Graduate's Central New Mexico Graduate Profile

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

Many CTE programs use performance tasks to assess learning targets, providing an optimal setting to pilot approaches to assessing the hard and soft skills employers look for. These could then inform assessment design across subjects and courses beyond CTE.

Promising New Mexico Examples:

- Leadership Schools Network
- CT student organizations (e.g. FFA)

Courses with fewer required tests

Identify courses and grades with fewer state-mandated tests and begin piloting innovative assessments there. Demonstrating that alternative approaches can be effective in these settings helps make the case for valid alternatives across the system.

Promising New Mexico Examples:

- State Seal of Bilingualism-Biliteracy
- Next Generation Science Standards



Read the full white paper at futurefocusededucation.org/white-paper

Learn more about performance assessment at performanceassessmentresourcebank.org

Learn more about New Hampshire's pilot assessment system at education.nh.gov/assessment-systems/pace.htm