

Connecticut Mastery Examination Task Force

“The Purpose of a State Assessment Program”

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Varied purposes for statewide assessment

⌘ All states

- To serve as an indicator of student mastery of the state's academic content standards
- To provide aggregate information about a school's academic performance and to give information about that school relative to other schools

⌘ Some states

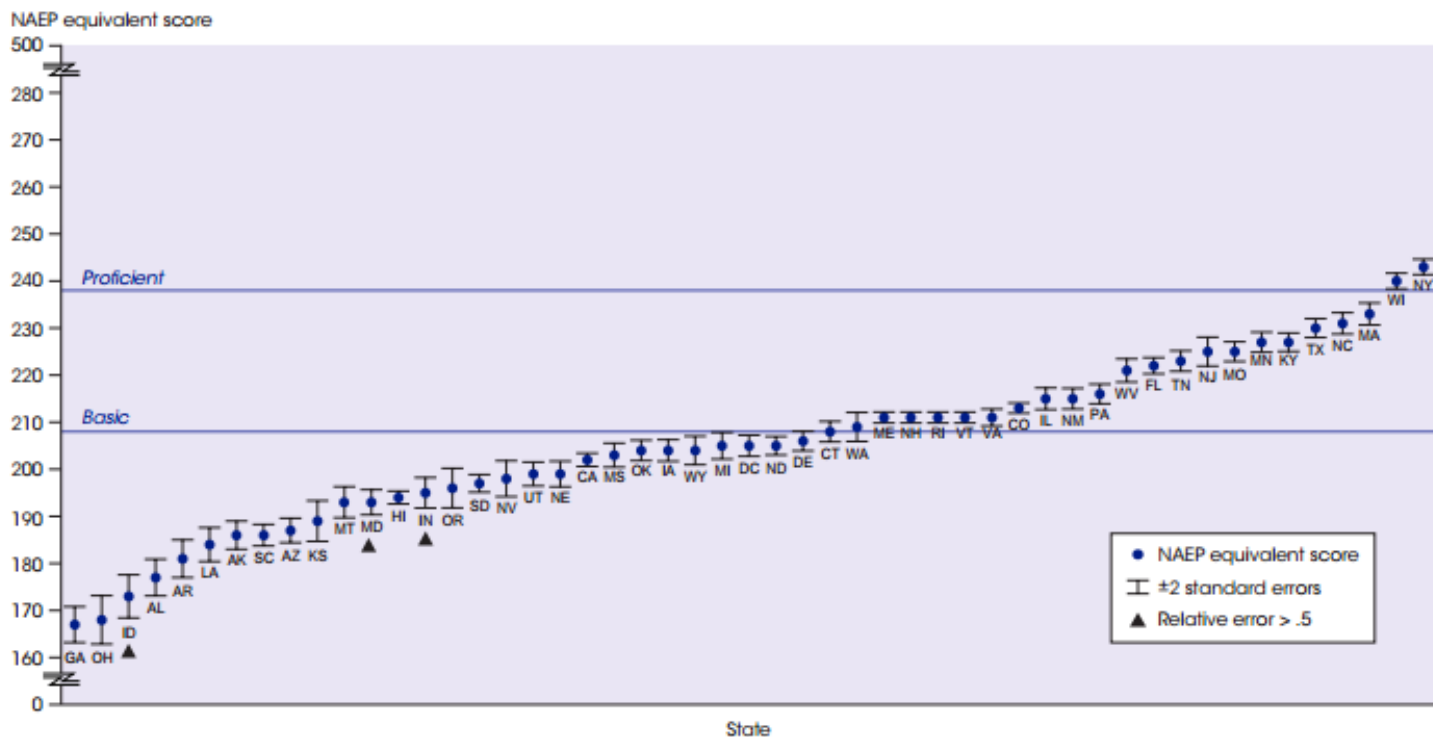
- To provide information about year-to-year growth of student achievement
- To provide information for program evaluation
- To provide information for a variety of other policy-related initiatives. For example:
 - As an indicator for student promotion or graduation
 - As a partial indicator for teacher and leader evaluation

Federal Requirements

- ⌘ The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), sometimes known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires that all states assess all students in reading, mathematics and science.
 - reading and mathematics in grades 3 through 8, once in high school
 - science at three grade spans
- ⌘ Also, "1%" assessments for students with severe cognitive disabilities.
- ⌘ Also, English Language Proficiency tests must be administered to English Language Learners.
- ⌘ Beyond these rules, state requirements vary.

The Case for Comparability

Figure 1. NAEP scale equivalents of state grade 4 reading standards for proficient performance, by state: 2013



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2013 Reading Assessment.

Developing New Tests

- ⌘ States led the development of two consortia:
 - Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium
 - Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)
- ⌘ CCSSO published *High-Quality Assessment Principles*, which are criteria for states to use to ensure that new assessments match the rigor of their college- and career-ready standards.

State Chiefs Support High Quality Assessments

- ⌘ In October 2014, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) released a joint set of commitments to support state and districts leaders in ensuring that their students take high-quality and thoughtfully selected assessments as part of a comprehensive system.
- ⌘ CCSSO and CGCS set forth principles that led to high quality assessment criteria.

What Is Different?

- ⌘ High-quality, summative assessments should meet the following criteria:
 - Aligned with college-and career-ready standards that are internationally benchmarked,
 - Assess higher-order cognitive skills and critical abilities,
 - Instructionally sensitive and educationally valuable,
 - Valid, reliable, and fair.