

SPECIAL EDITION POLICY BRIEF

NACCTEP

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Special Edition Policy Brief of the National Association of Community College Teacher Education Programs

Contents:

Accountability and
Assessment: Paths to
Success

What is Accountability and
Why is it Important?

So Many Choices!

What Should be Measured
and How?

Attitudes and Beliefs about
Assessment

This Policy Brief is developed by the
National Center for Teacher
Education of the Maricopa
Community Colleges

NACCTEP

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
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TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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Welcome to the newly formatted Policy Brief. This month's Brief is a special edition that focuses on accountability and assessment. As an Association, NACCTEP continues to support quality teacher preparation program development. Accountability and assessment are both key components of the program development process.

Accountability and Assessment: Paths to Success

The topic, practices and requirements of accountability are becoming increasingly important and influential in education and will likely continue to receive, and in some cases demand, more attention and effort from educators.

What is Accountability and Why is it Important?

Accountability refers to the responsibility to verify merit, capability, or fulfillment of goals. Educational policies, institutions, programs, teachers, and students are all held accountable in some manner to the achievement of educational goals. The vehicles used to ensure accountability are "assessment" and "evaluation," which refer to a host of methods for monitoring and measuring student achievement and the effectiveness of education. The term "outcomes" commonly refers to indicators of achievement by a student, program, or institution. Education and learning outcomes occur as the result of training or instructional intervention intended to produce new knowledge or improvement of existing skills. Outcomes often take the form of test scores or other indicators of a student's mastery or academic performance. Learning outcomes, when aggregated across students, also may be used as a metric for assessing teaching competency or overall performance and quality of learning institutions. Accreditation boards assess new educational programs based on student learning outcomes along with alignment of curriculum with appropriate knowledge and skills, and teacher qualifications and credentials. Similar methods and practices are used to assess K-12 schools, colleges, and universities or components of these institutions such as funded programs.

Assessment provides the means to make "data-driven" decisions to continuously improve, and the primary metric of educational assessment is student learning and performance. Assessments are conducted at many levels of education. They range from a teacher's observation of a student's progress to the evaluation of the practices of the Department of Education by the U. S. General Accounting Office. Verification of achievement is accomplished by qualitative and quantitative analyses of empirical data. Data-driven decisions are performed at all levels by teachers, administrators, and those who implement educational policy. Although the analysis of data is usually viewed as a task for researchers, data-driven decisions do not always include formal or quantitative calculation. Teachers make data-driven decisions on a daily basis to address individual and class learning needs, even though there may be no testing involved or systematic collection of data. To assess larger components of education, standardized test scores, graduation rates, and teacher qualifications may be evaluated. Assessment must occur frequently to ensure sound decision-making based on current and continuous evidence of student performance and growth of knowledge and skills. Formal and informal, quantitative and qualitative educational assessment focus on the same goal—student learning leading to academic success.

Educational accountability can be viewed using the business analogy of serving "customers." Each level of education serves one or more types of customers. Students in K-12 schools and adult students in college are the primary customers.

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NACCTEP Mission

To promote the community college role in the recruitment, preparation, retention, and renewal of diverse preK-12 teachers and to advocate for quality teacher education programs in the community college.

They expect to receive guidance on learning and appropriate curriculum that will help them succeed. Parents and adult students are customers of public learning institutions that they support with tax dollars. They hold the institutions accountable to hire qualified personnel who effectively support academic success. Teachers are customers of administrators and expect them to pay an adequate wage and help them develop their teaching career. Administrators are customers of government agencies that provide funding and special programs to address specific needs and improve their institutions. The public as a whole is the customer of government officials who set policies that control the education budget and special programs nationwide. The public holds such officials and their decisions accountable for adequate and fair policies and funding decisions intended to maintain quality and continuous improvement. Since the public includes everyone, accountability travels a full circle from students in the classroom to officials in the White House. Assessment is the tool of accountability and provides data used to make good decisions on how best to serve customers. The results of various types of assessment are used to measure student success, align curriculum with social needs, verify teacher and administrator competency, and promote effective and equitable management of funds and resources. The accountability challenge is to use assessment methods that ensure all customers are served well across each level of education.

Assessments must provide outcome data that is recognized by educational customers as accurate, relevant, and useful for making decisions. Assessments must be reliable and valid to produce such data. Reliability refers to the capability of an assessment, such as an achievement test, to measure the same ability for each student each time it is used and across different forms of the same test. Validity refers to the capability to measure what is valuable and intended to be measured. An invalid test might measure ability to recall certain information but fail to measure practical application of the knowledge. The term "external validity" has been used to describe the degree that college curriculum is aligned with the knowledge and skills most needed by employers. In teacher education programs, the test of external validity is how well graduates are able to teach in real classrooms. Currently, there is concern about the validity of teacher certifications. Teacher qualification should be based on actual teaching ability and knowledge of subject matter areas taught.

Hours of teaching experience and test scores do not necessarily translate to level of ability. Without reliable and valid assessment of learning outcomes, one cannot assume that students have achieved anything, and cannot identify the best teachers and instructional methods that promote academic success. In the absence of valid and reliable data on learning outcomes, one cannot be sure of what is being measured or if the measures are accurate across students and at different stages of learning progress. In a court of law, data used to establish guilt or innocence must be deemed both reliable and valid by the jury. In education, stakeholders, who support and benefit from student success, are the jury.

NCLB and Accountability

The importance of accountability in education cannot be overstated. Conducting assessments that verify compliance with government mandates is an essential process. Some states tie most of their funding allocations to the results of summative assessments of institutional performance. At the national level, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) states that accountability is central to the success of the nation's educational system. There are significant funding consequences for schools and districts that do not achieve outcomes defined by NCLB. According to the Executive Summary of NCLB, schools or districts that do not achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) are subject to "improvement, corrective action, and restructuring." A recent article in the Chicago Tribune stated that Chicago Public Schools will pay for their own tutoring services as a result of failing to show acceptable evidence of AYP. In publications on the 2006 education budget, "the Administration's Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) indicated that Vocational Education State Grants Program was rated ineffective, because it has produced little or no evidence of improved outcomes for students." As a result, Perkins funds are to be re-channeled into other programs. Summative assessments like these have very strong impact on resource allocation at all levels by impelling decisions to retain, alter, or eliminate entire programs and teaching practices. Recent assessments have also resulted in criticism of teacher qualification standards by examining outcomes such as the percentage of teachers who pass certification exams. The magnitude of summative assessment's impact on education makes it imperative that sound principles and proven methods are used to draw conclusions about the competence and performance of educators and learning institutions.

Accountability is a two-way street. Those who conduct summative assessments must be held accountable for the reliability and validity of their methods, data collected, and recommendations. Educators must be held accountable for compliance with national mandates, but government officials who create them must also be held accountable for implementation of equitable and feasible requirements. A valid mandate must address a recognized need or help solve an important problem instead of simply demanding improvement in the absence of resources needed to improve. The implementation of new mandates must be accompanied by sufficient funds and guidance to comply. NCLB has been criticized on these grounds. Critics point out that since traditional measures of institutional effectiveness (e.g., graduation rate, retention) fall short of AYP compliance, better guidance, and in some cases, additional funding should be provided to support the efforts of educators to improve their institutions. These claims are based on data that implies a need for formative adjustment of certain NCLB mandates. If sound methodology is used to verify compliance with equitable and well-supported policies, summative assessments will less likely be mistaken as a punitive tool and more likely reveal pathways to success.

Formative Assessment

Summative assessment facilitates the drawing of final conclusions about methods, practices, and policies. However, assessment is also a tool for measuring in-process or formative change prior to a conclusive judgment. Even the best educational innovations require some formative adjustment before their full benefits can be realized. Formative assessment methods are used to measure the effects of new teaching methods, policies, and programs as they are being implemented. Formative assessment is essential for ensuring that the full potential of an educational innovation is realized before summative conclusions are made. This was found to be true for new programs launched by President Lyndon Johnson in the early years of social and educational reform. At that time, program evaluators concluded that many of these programs had great potential, but a lack of appropriate summative measures and formative assessment during implementation phases caused misleading conclusions about program merit.

Formative assessment is also needed at the institutional level. An assessment of teacher attitudes by focus groups or surveys can reveal challenges to new policies such as a mandate to share learning activities and other tools produced by individual teachers. Perhaps teachers would agree to share and collaborate more if administrators were required to formally recognize the originators of new and effective designs. The identification of potential challenges from educators is key for ensuring compliance.

Formative assessments are conducted by teachers at the classroom level. A competent teacher would not think of testing students and assigning a final grade without providing practice and feedback on performance during learning progress. There are hundreds of different types of "classroom assessment" techniques for helping teachers diagnose learning challenges and fine-tune teaching efforts to ensure that each individual progresses at an optimal rate. While formative assessment is a vehicle for perfecting teaching and educational practice, summative assessment provides a means for final conclusions about merit and worth. Both methodologies afford practical, data-driven decisions at all levels of education.

So Many Choices!

When accountability standards are assigned by higher levels of the educational system, choices on how to comply may differ across institutions. Government policies are described in general terms that must be further interpreted and specified within the context of each region, state, and local district. NCLB generally describes requirements for AYP schools and districts, but the choice of specific assessment methods and criteria is left to each state. Learning institutions and teachers must further specify instruction and assessment practices to achieve AYP. The new standards have direct implications for teacher licensure and college curriculum for teaching and administrative degrees in education. Education students must become more familiar with assessment theory and acquire more skill for using assessment if AYP is to be achieved on a continuous basis. While administrators are required to become more savvy assessors of teacher competency and qualification, teachers must demonstrate more skill for using classroom assessment to measure and improve student learning.

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Making the Right Choice

Further, educators at all levels need to communicate their choices of assessment methods and report results of assessments in a manner that stakeholders understand and recognize as valid and acceptable. Making the right choices among a host of assessment strategies, methods, and practices is further complicated by differing philosophical and technical points of view on assessment.

Differing opinions are common among researchers, educational administrators, and teachers on the most appropriate way to assess student achievement and the attainment of educational goals. One of the most publicized debates on assessment revolves around the use of “norm-referenced” versus “criterion-referenced” testing, even though both forms of testing can reveal important information on the performance of districts, institutions, teachers, and populations of students. Norm-referenced tests provide summative, though comparative, measures of knowledge and skills that are considered important across learning institutions and national regions. Test items systematically vary widely in difficulty to identify a student’s level of performance and achievement relative to age and grade level. For example, a student in the 4th grade may perform at a 7th grade level in reading comprehension but demonstrate only a 3rd grade level of ability in mathematics. This information provides diagnostic value to students and teachers alike and may be used to align particular areas of talent with academic majors and career choices. Test scores are commonly ranked by percentiles in fundamental disciplines to identify strong and weak areas of ability compared to state and national averages. Two major points of contention among critics of norm-referenced testing are:

(1) Students need to be recognized for their individual and unique abilities, qualities, and achievements without being compared to others

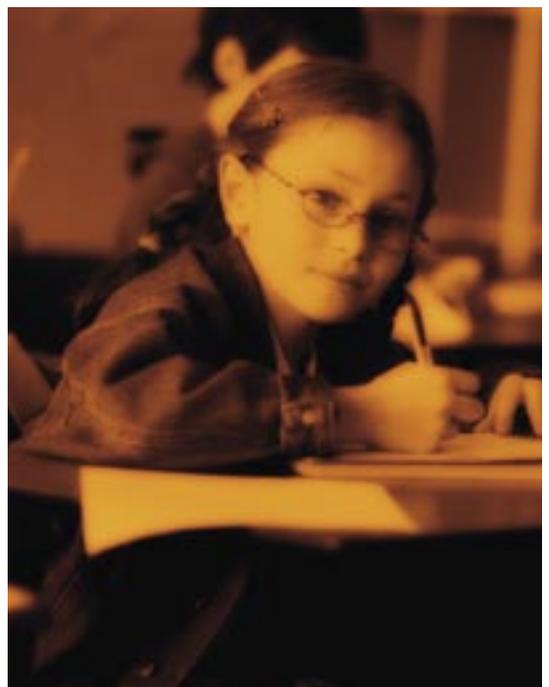
(2) Since norm-referenced testing focuses on fundamental academic skills, test scores fail to capture specific, practical abilities that predict student success outside the academic environment.

Using norm-referenced score averages to judge the performance of teachers and institutions is problematic, because so many factors, which are not under educational control, influence academic test performance (e.g., socioeconomic levels, institutional resources). Additionally, certain types of talent and ability that are fostered by good teachers are not reflected in measures of fundamental academic skill or normalized comparisons among students.

Educators who feel tests should measure specific skills on an individual basis without comparison to large populations of students may choose criterion-referenced testing over norm-referenced testing. Criterion-referenced tests are designed to show each individual’s degree of ability on pre-specified skills without reference to average scores and other statistical aggregations across students.

The level of desired performance for each test item is defined in advance, and percentages are used to report the degree of each student’s mastery of each skill. This method of assessment goes hand-in-hand with competency-based instruction, which is popular for adult training and professional/technical education. The focus on explicitly defined competencies works well for qualifying individuals for certifications and licensure for particular professions such as teaching. Robust sets of competencies have been defined for teaching in K-12 schools and for teaching adults in college. The rising emphasis on measuring teacher competency relevant to specific skill sets suggests that criterion-referenced testing will play an increasingly important role in evaluating practicing teachers and certifying new teachers. The high degree of specificity and diagnostic capability of criterion-referenced testing make it an ideal formative assessment tool.

Norm- and criterion-referenced testing are both useful tools for guiding and verifying academic success, but each fulfills a different need concerning accountability. Norm-referenced testing helps educators strive for a uniform measure of achievement by all students and identifies strong and weak areas of individuals. It also enables comparisons among different student populations as defined by ethnic, socioeconomic, and geographical boundaries.





Its comparative nature helps identify problems such as ethnic bias, fundamental differences in curriculum, and special needs across institutions and regions. Comparison of performance with others is somewhat unavoidable in real-life situations, and the spirit of competitive scoring has even been shown to enhance motivation in some environments (e.g., sports). In support of criterion-referenced testing, the explosion of information and rapid advancement of technology has created the need for greater specialization in disciplines like engineering and science. Demonstrating specific competencies is essential to launch careers in technical and service-oriented fields like electronics, nursing, and teaching. College programs that focus on professional/technical competency can qualify for special funding and support from government and private organizations and companies that have a mission to help build the workforce. With the complementary capabilities of norm- and competency-referenced testing kept in mind, both can be valued for their different roles in supporting accountability in education.

What Should be Measured and How?

Most forms of assessment deal with measurement in some form, and measurement typically involves numbers and numerical calculation. There are distinct advantages for numerically capturing, analyzing, and reporting learning outcomes and the performance of teachers and learning institutions. The most obvious is economy of expression. Less than a page of quantitative measures can define the annual performance of an entire school, in each grade level, and in each discipline, compared to the educational performance of the district, national regions, or the entire nation. Data collection and analysis can be automated via computer databases and communication networks in ways that enable constant monitoring of performance and change within and across institutions. Diagnostic use of quantitative methods can pinpoint strengths and weaknesses of instructional practice. The burgeoning of knowledge of cognitive processes and development of new and more effective methods of teaching could not have been achieved without the use of quantitative and empirical research and inferential statistics.

Test designers use these techniques to measure reliability and certain types of validity to refine test accuracy, improve equitability across different populations of students, and improve the alignment of test items with intended learning outcomes. Many claim that quantitative assessment has been the most powerful asset to the improvement of education. When quantitative methods can be used appropriately, educators should take full advantage of their power and versatility.

Quantitative assessment techniques cannot capture all the benefits and qualities nor all the shortcomings and problems associated with teaching and education. Even in the poorest performing schools and colleges, some teachers work extra hard to help students develop ethical and moral strengths and improve their motivation and self efficacy. These are outcomes that cannot usually be quantified but may determine both academic success and the general well-being of students in society.

There are other learning outcomes that are made up of highly integrated cognitive abilities, which also cannot be reliably assessed using quantitative methods. For example, the ability to think critically, be creative, work with others effectively, and exploit individual and unique potential are qualities that are fostered by the best teachers. It is important to detect and report the growth and progress of such abilities and qualities. How can teachers who inculcate such qualities be identified and credited? How can teachers recognize students with superior qualities if the only metrics we use are quantifiable knowledge and skills? Qualitative methods of assessment play a key role in addressing this need.

Qualitative methods for measuring learning outcomes have gained more acceptance in education in the last two decades. This is partly due to the successful application of qualitative methods in other fields. Anthropologists describe ancient cultures by studying artifacts. Psychiatrists diagnose and treat various mental illnesses based on qualitative observation. Art and film critiques assess the quality of creative efforts based on qualitative judgment. Teachers assess learning challenges and predict student success based on intuitive judgments of behavior and learning engagement.

Qualitative assessment leverages teachers' ability to make good instructional decisions based on holistic information about students. Advocates of qualitative assessment point out the need for assessment vehicles and methods that capture robust data that reveals individual characteristics, talents, potential, and even different forms of intelligence. Student portfolios can show the degree of engagement in learning, rate of personal growth, and motivation to apply what was learned. Portfolios may contain a compilation of creative writing, artwork, plans for future careers, and special projects. Portfolios for adult learners may be shared with potential employers to demonstrate technical or business acumen. Teachers' portfolios demonstrate competency and continuing professional development by providing examples of instructional tools they have developed, special methods they use in the classroom, and customized learning activities and lesson plans. Portfolios can be combined with quantitative information such as test scores, grades, e-portfolios and hours of voluntary work to provide an even more comprehensive expression of individual achievement.

The ability to work effectively with others in a team or collaborative environment is another skill area that is difficult to assess using standard quantitative methods. Interpersonal and collaborative skill is recognized as critical to employers and to the success of individuals in society. Assessment of collaborative skill and other complex skills, such as teaching, often works best via direct observation. At the college level, observations can be recorded and "scored" by both teachers and peers during work on joint projects. Feedback and scoring rubrics are based on competency-based objectives that specify certain methods and strategies and the behaviors that reflect their proper application. These might include showing respect for others' views, encouraging equal contribution from all members, and effective delegation of tasks and responsibilities. Direct observation is useful for assessing teaching ability by "master" teachers who provide useful feedback to student teachers and those with less experience as they work together in the classroom. Peer assessment can be combined with such coaching techniques to promote mutual trust, respect, and social skills.

The challenges of deciding what to assess and how to assess it are numerous, but there is no lack of good methodology. The right choices often depend on contextual issues and unique situations that surround the people, processes, and organizations being assessed. One size does not fit all! Schools, colleges, and students differ in important ways. Some knowledge and skills are quantifiable, and some are not. Yet, to some degree, judgments of performance at all levels must include measures that are common across education, or the assurance of equal opportunity and uniform quality cannot be achieved. This is especially true for public schools where norm-referenced testing and other quantitative methods remain a staple in educational assessment—all students are expected to develop certain fundamental skills in reading comprehension, math, and other fundamental academic disciplines. Acceptable baseline performance in these areas is established and used as a point of departure for detecting improvement and individual growth and ability. Adult learning institutions differ from K-12 in important ways, and assessment of teacher and student performance must include other types of data to ensure proper use of accountability policy and assessment practices. K-12 schools must provide close supervision for students who are undergoing rapid intellectual, physical, and emotional development. Assessments need to track the performance of schools in promoting ethical growth and maturity as well as academic skill. Post-secondary institutions accommodate adults who are employed or may soon begin a career.

Institutional Performance

The capability to prepare adult students for the workforce is a critical role of post-secondary education, but even further delineation among institutions is needed to define and measure college performance. Community colleges differ from universities. They do not have the same rate of graduation as universities, because as many as 85% of community college students are working adults who seek certifications, academic transfer, or attend courses to simply update their existing knowledge and skills.

Consequently, institutional performance must be measured using different indicators and data than that used for universities, and assessment methods may also differ. Measuring successful placement of graduating students in the workforce is one critical indicator of community college success, while the percentage of students who complete their initial 4-year degree and are accepted into graduate programs is more important to universities. The difficulty of tracking students during college attendance and after they leave college is challenging for community colleges. This is partially due to laws and policies that protect privacy and restrict access to personal information such as hiring, dismissal from jobs, promotions, and other indicators of post-college success. Additionally, community colleges have traditionally reduced barriers to attendance by refraining from the use of admission criteria such as minimal standardized test scores and high school GPA. Conversely, universities use such restrictive criteria to raise the level of their students' performance, probability of graduation, and promote their organization based on high admission standards. While community colleges attract students by removing barriers of entry, universities often compete by reserving admission to the highest-performing students.

Other factors that differ across the same type of institutions must also be considered when assessing educational quality and improvement. Socioeconomic and cultural differences in student populations affect capability to perform, student behavior, and educational outcomes. Consequently, assessment and performance criteria should be adjusted for these factors. Institutions vary in resources and monetary support. Schools that need teachers badly are forced to hire unqualified personnel, but this should be viewed as a barrier to perform, not a failure to perform. These institutions and the teachers and administrators who struggle to improve them need additional support. Increases in performance mandates must therefore be accompanied by additional support for institutions that have inadequate resources to comply with the new standards. Mandates for improvement that are infeasible when applied to these institutions will be perceived by educators as unfair and impractical.

Differences in student background also result in unique challenges that must be considered when assessing institutional performance. The County of Queens in New York has experienced a high growth in its ethnic population, which is now more than twice as large as the national average. This first resulted in a breakdown in discourse between faculty and students. Queens Community College responded to this challenge by restructuring the way teachers, students, and the community work together. The restructuring of how students and teachers interact in a "community of practice" has enabled Queens to continue to improve. Some institutions need special support to launch new programs like the one implemented at Queens. Research on assessment practices has indicated that such innovations can take several years to show positive results, but summative decisions have sometimes been made too quickly or have been based on methods that are incapable of detecting positive in-progress change. The consequences of setting the wrong standards for educational improvement, ignoring contextual differences, or using the wrong methods can delay or even reverse progress in educational reform.

The rapid advancement of technology-enhanced learning is having a strong and positive impact on education but is also creating a need for new methods of assessment. Learning "objects," simulations, and other computer-enhanced instructional components provide opportunities for students to individually develop knowledge and skills, but on-line and automated forms of assessment are not yet mature. On-line learning also changes the role of teachers who take on new tasks for "coaching" and guiding while reducing their lecture workloads. Many college teachers now manage large bodies of students who communicate by phone, email, and distance learning systems. Teaching skills for guiding remote learning and automated instruction differ significantly from those used in the classroom. Consequently, the need for new and improved methods of assessing teachers' and students' ability to exploit technology is on the rise.

Attitudes and Beliefs about Assessment

Hundreds of communications and letters have been received by government officials from educational leaders affirming their support for higher standards of accountability and more emphasis on assessment.

However, attempts to implement higher standards in the absence of better guidance and tangible support remains a contentious issue to be resolved. K-12 institutions and colleges that offer teaching degrees and certifications need help in interpreting and complying with new mandates for teacher qualification. Community colleges need to understand how their professional and technical programs are assessed and what is expected by officials who determine eligibility for federal and state funds. It is not enough to simply demand improvement! Currently, there are disagreements on what qualifies as fair and equitable assessment at each level of education and for treatment of special situations like those of "impoverished schools." There are differing positions on how to strengthen accreditation methods and requirements for teacher and teacher assistant credentials. These differences must be resolved through awareness and acceptance of assessment as a facilitative tool and not a punitive instrument of "outsiders" who are unaware of the real challenges faced by educators. Originators of education policies and mandates must follow best practices for supporting, as well as requiring, improvement. Infeasible mandates or those lacking clear guidance for compliance will increase suspicion and lose the respect of educators. To ensure that accountability is embraced, assessment and the principles that govern its application must be sound, well understood, and implemented in a manner that reveals the pathways to educational improvement and student success.

Sources of Information

On-Line Sources

- An Assessment Framework for Community College: Measuring Student Learning and Achievement as a Means of Demonstrating Institutional Effectiveness:** produced by the League for Innovation, this white paper provides a robust set of guidelines for assessing learning in community colleges. It describes a model for the "learning college" and six principles for improving learning potential for students. <http://www.league.org/publication/whitepapers/0804.html>
- Classroom Assessment Techniques:** provides practical guidelines for assessing learning in the classroom, using assessment to guide learning, developing clearly defined goals and outcomes, and instruction on how to use the Teaching Goals Inventory supported by the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Harvard Seminars in Assessment. <http://www.sieue.edu/~deder/assess/catmain.html>
- College and Career Transitions Initiative (CCTI):** a funded program by the Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE). It offers a "planned framework" for working with other leading site partnerships committed to enhancing college and career transition strategies, programs of study, and academic performance. www.league.org/ccti
- Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE):** a tool for assessing quality in community college education. CCSSE results help colleges focus on good educational practice that promotes high levels of student learning and retention. <http://www.ccse.org>

Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE): a tool for assessing quality in community college education. CCSSE results help colleges focus on good educational practice that promotes high levels of student learning and retention. <http://www.ccse.org/>

Letter to Secretary Paige on the Bush Administration's failure to properly implement No Child Left Behind: produced by the House Committee on Education and the Workforce Democratic Staff (January 8, 2004). Signed by 10 U. S. senators, this collection of comments and recommendations points out potential shortcomings of certain NCLB mandates and the need for additional guidance and follow-through support by the current administration. <http://edworkforce.house.gov/democrats>

International Board of Standards for Training, Performance, and Instruction: a well structured group of competencies student teachers and practicing teachers should strive for to provide the best learning facilitation and to measure learning in classroom settings, especially modern K-12 and college learning environments with technology-enhanced learning resources. <http://www.ibstpi.org/>

Measurement and Evaluation: Criterion- Versus Norm-Referenced Testing: a table that compares the two forms of testing and provides comparisons based on purpose, content, item characteristics, and score interpretation. <http://chiron.valdosta.edu/whuitt/col/measeval/crmref.html>

National Student Survey of Engagement (NSSE): provides 89 questions that identify how students use their time at college, their motivation associated with scholastic work, and many other indicators of engagement in learning. The survey has been used by more than 730 institutions. <http://www.indiana.edu/~nsse/>

Key policy letters signed by the Education Secretary or Deputy Secretary: produced by the U. S. Department of Education (January 24, 2002). Provides views on accountability and summary of requirements of NCLB with guidance and descriptions for meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements. <http://www.ed.gov/print/policy/elsec/guid/sectletter/020724>

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001: Executive Summary: distributed by U. S. Department of Education (January 7, 2002). This document is a summary of NCLB that provides a good overview of its policies, mandates, and requirements. Links to more detailed documentation are also provided. <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/overview/intro/execsum.html>

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