



COLLEGE- and **CAREER-READINESS** STANDARDS
and ASSESSMENT RESOURCES

College- and Career-Readiness Standards and Assessment Resource List

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SOUTHEAST Comprehensive Center

at American Institutes for Research ■

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Introduction

The Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC) at American Institutes for Research (AIR) publishes this biannual update of college- and career-readiness standards and assessment (CCRS-A) resources. This list of resources is designed to assist staff in state education agencies (SEAs) and other educators in their curricula, instruction, standards, and assessment efforts.

Federal legislation from the U.S. Department of Education (ED), such as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), requires SEAs to support and guide schools and school districts in preparing students to graduate prepared for success in college and careers. The [College & Career Readiness & Success \(CCRS\) Center at AIR](#)—one of seven national content centers—is at the forefront of assisting 15 regional comprehensive centers (RCCs) and SEAs in these efforts. The CCRS Center provides essential materials and technical assistance (TA) that include briefs; a resource database of topics such as career pathways, measuring CCR, and data use; an interactive state map that provides summaries of CCR policies; an organizer to assist in strategic planning, decision-making, and alignment of initiatives; and implementation guides that provide the latest research and practice to aid states in implementing CCR initiatives. Additional details are available on the center’s website and in its [blog](#), which shares lessons learned from national organizations and state leaders.

In addition to federal priorities related to college and career readiness, SEAs are charged with implementing standards and assessments that provide appropriate benchmarks for measuring instruction, learning, and school improvement. The national content center—[Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation \(CSAI\) at WestEd](#)—is a primary source for resources and TA on this topic. CSAI offers an interactive mapping tool that provides snapshots of each state’s standards and assessment implementation efforts, guidance documents, policy briefs, research papers, and updates on implementation work in the field.

To provide support to SEAs in the above efforts, SECC has compiled this list of briefs, reports, tools, and other materials that address ESSA, standards, assessment, core subject areas, and related topics. Sources for these materials include the RCCs, national content centers, and other organizations that specialize in education policy, research, and/or TA. To enhance usability of this list, featured resources are categorized into seven sections as defined below.

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For more information or assistance regarding CCRS-A resources, contact SECC Director [Beth Howard-Brown](#) or [Concepcion Molina](#), senior TA consultant.

Section 1: Every Student Succeeds Act Resources

Elevating School Leadership in ESSA Plans: A Guide for States

This web page, hosted by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), contains a compilation of resources designed to assist states in using new funding opportunities under ESSA to support school leaders. The web page provides links to resources for five topics: (a) Elevate school leadership in your plan, (b) Explore the new ways ESSA elevates principals, (c) Invest to strengthen your state’s principal pipeline, (d) Put it all together for submission, and (e) Seek support as you roll out your ESSA plan. It includes additional resources such as a comprehensive, annotated bibliography of school leadership resources and selected guidance documents related to school leadership and ESSA plan development.

<http://www.ccssoessaguide.org/guide-for-states/>

Advancing Equity Through ESSA: Strategies for State Leaders

This framework, developed by CCSSO and The Aspen Education & Society Program, offers assistance to state leaders in using the provisions of ESSA to close equity gaps. The document is organized around eight equity priorities: (a) closing funding gaps, (b) improving low-performing schools, (c) increasing access to effective teachers and leaders, (d) supporting English learners, (e) increasing access to advanced coursework, (f) addressing disproportionate discipline practices, (g) addressing students’ social-emotional learning needs, and (h) improving access to high-quality instructional materials. Within each priority, the authors identify leverage points (specific ESSA language and provisions) states can use to improve equity in opportunities and outcomes.

The authors also provide a list of high-impact actions state leaders can take to close the opportunity gaps and improve achievement along with a set of guiding questions to promote conversations on how to make each strategy an effective lever for achieving equity. State leaders are encouraged to use ESSA to advance and complement existing state or local equity initiatives and to assemble teams with diverse perspectives.

<http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2016/ESSA/AdvancingEquityThroughESSA101316.pdf>

Leveraging ESSA: Strategies to Support Students’ K–12 to Postsecondary Transitions

This policy brief, prepared by Higher Ed for Higher Standards and its partners (CCSSO, National Association of System Heads, and the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association), provides guidance for leveraging provisions in ESSA to ensure successful transitions from high school to postsecondary education. The document outlines the ESSA requirements and opportunities that address transitions and stresses the need for higher education and K–12 partnerships that work together to improve student transitions from high school to college.

The brief identifies specific strategies for improving student transitions that include *speed up* interventions for students who have mastered high school course content and are ready to pursue college credits and *catch up* interventions for students needing to fill any gaps in their learning before they graduate. A final section of the guide contains examples of *speed up* and *catch up* interventions that are being implemented by K–12 and higher education partnerships in a number of states.

<http://higheredforhigherstandards.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/HEHS-ESSA-postsecondary-transitions-11182016.pdf>

Non-Regulatory Guidance—Early Learning in the Every Student Succeeds Act: Expanding Opportunities to Support our Youngest Learners

This document was issued by ED after the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was reauthorized under ESSA. Because this reauthorization shifted the focus of the law from K–12 to a more inclusive preK to 12 continuum, this guidance was developed to “remind state and local decision-makers about the importance of investing in early learning, highlight the opportunities available under the law to strengthen early education, and provide examples of how states and local communities may support young children’s success in school” (pp. 4–5).

The document looks at how state and local policymakers can leverage ESSA to (a) expand access to high-quality early learning; (b) encourage alignment, collaboration, and coordination from birth through Grade 3; and (c) support educator professional development and capacity building. The Appendices contain a matrix summarizing the required and allowable early learning activities by legislative title and section along with an annotated list of early childhood resources by topic area that includes hyperlinks to each document.

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essaelguidance10202016.pdf>

Evidence-Based Improvement: A Guide for States to Strengthen Their Frameworks and Supports Aligned to the Evidence Requirements of ESSA

This guidance document was developed by WestEd to support evidence-based decision-making throughout a district’s and school’s comprehensive (continuous, systemic, and cyclical) improvement process. Its primary goal is to build SEA capacity to help local education agencies (LEAs) (a) understand the evidence-related requirements of ESSA and (b) select and use evidence-based interventions for district and school improvement. Introductory sections 1–3 provide background information about ESSA evidence-based decision-making requirements, a framework for a continuous improvement process that reflects evidence-based decision-making, and recommendations for effectively using the tools in the guide. Section 4 contains a set of six tools to assist states and schools as they plan for and implement evidence-based improvement strategies. Descriptions of each tool include a summary of properties (e.g., purpose, outcomes, time required, modifications) and a five-step process for implementation and use.

Although the primary audience is teams composed of SEA staff responsible for assisting and monitoring districts in the selection and implementation of evidence-based practices as defined in ESSA, some of the tools in this guide are designed to be used by LEAs. Section 5 contains an annotated set of additional resources and an Evidence-Based Improvement Resources Vetting Rubric.

<https://www.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Evidence-Based-Improvement-Guide-FINAL-122116.pdf>

Decision Guide for Implementing ESSA: State Considerations for Effective Grant Programs

This report from CCSSO highlights the major non-accountability changes contained in ESSA and how these modifications will affect the services that states and districts deliver to schools and students. The document examines Title I; Title II, Part A; and Title IV, Part A; summarizing the changes to allocation rules, program design and spending, and reporting requirements on spending. A final section of the guide includes an examination of cross-cutting rules that impact all these grant programs.

This report also provides a set of questions designed to help SEA staff (a) identify connections between spending rules and program delivery, (b) identify connections between state administrative processes and program delivery, and (c) understand how ESSA changes affect SEA capacity. SEA staff can use these resources to inform changes to policies, practices, procedures, organizational structure, and/or staff roles and responsibilities that may be required by ESSA’s non-accountability changes.

<http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2016/ESSA/CCSSODecisionGuideForESSAImplementation.pdf>

Communicating the Every Student Succeeds Act: Digital Communications Toolkit

This toolkit from CCSSO outlines strategies SEAs can employ to effectively manage digital communication efforts around ESSA. The toolkit provides digital guidance for using multiple platforms to help stakeholders stay informed and involved, including examples from several states. The CCSSO provides customizable “one-pagers” for communicating information about ESSA on SEA websites, including suggestions for content such as (a) a brief introduction, (b) an overview, (c) a timeline of state ESSA activities, and (d) a list of upcoming opportunities for stakeholder involvement. The toolkit also addresses the use of social media as an effective platform for informing stakeholders about ESSA with tips, samples, and examples for using Twitter and Facebook.

<http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2016/ESSA/DigitalToolkit12022016.pdf>

Key Issues in Aggregating Indicators for Accountability Determinations Under ESSA

This paper from CCSSO examines the options states have for aggregating indicators for accountability under ESSA. The author identifies five key issues (“decision points”) that states must consider when determining how to aggregate multiple indicators: (a) system purpose, (b) type of aggregation, (c) weights, (d) method for rating calculation, and (e) communication of rating(s). The guidance document provides policymakers with an overview of each issue, discussions about the implications of various approaches within each option, applicable theoretical and state examples, and a set of key questions for state and local leaders to consider when designing systems for aggregating accountability indicators that meet the requirements of ESSA.

<http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2016/ESSA/KeyIssuesinAggregatingIndicators.pdf>

Resources: The Every Student Succeeds Act

This web page, hosted by CCSSO, contains a compilation of resources designed to assist states in implementing ESSA. It provides users with a table of contents that contains 13 hyperlinked topics such as (a) state’s ESSA draft plans, (b) ESSA overview resources for states, (c) accountability, (d) English learners, (e) federal funding streams, and (f) standards and assessments. Under each of the 13 topics, policymakers will find a variety of resources and supports, including guidance documents, webinars, tools and toolkits, PowerPoint presentations, and links to additional websites.

http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Programs/Every_Student_Succeeds_Act.html

Every Student Succeeds Act State and Local Report Cards Non-Regulatory Guidance

This significant guidance from ED is intended to assist state and local education agencies in meeting the report card requirements outlined under Title I, Part A, of ESEA, as amended by ESSA. Guidance is organized by specific topics, such as SEA and LEA responsibilities and reporting area requirements (e.g., reporting on state accountability systems information, state performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, per-pupil expenditures, and postsecondary enrollment rates for each high school). Hyperlinks are provided for accessing additional information on a topic, and appendices provide examples of LEA reports and checklists that agencies can use to track compliance with report card requirements.

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essastatereportcard.pdf>

Every Student Succeeds Act: Accountability, State Plans, and Data Reporting: Summary of Final Regulations

This document from ED provides a summary of the final regulations for implementing the major provisions of ESSA pertaining to school accountability, data reporting, and state plans. This fact sheet summarizes ESSA regulations for (a) accountability, (b) statewide accountability systems, (c) supporting low-performing schools, (d) data reporting, and (e) consolidated state plans.

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essafactsheet1127.pdf>

Consolidated State Plans

This CSAI web page houses resources designed to help SEAs articulate their visions and goals in the consolidated state plan or individual program plans required by ESSA. It includes a brief overview of the revised consolidated state plan template and a summary of the requirements for consultation with and review by the governor's office prior to submission. The site provides SEAs with a link to consolidated state plan resources that are grouped into three categories: (a) Resources from ED, (b) Resources from CSAI, and (c) Additional resources from other organizations. Each category allows users to access a variety of consolidated state plan resources such as tools, Dear Colleague letters, and guidance documents.

The site also includes links to each state's draft plan (if available) as well as SEA resources related to stakeholder involvement and/or plan development and submission.

<http://www.csai-online.org/spotlight/consolidated-state-plans>

State ESSA Communication Tools

This CSAI web page contains several state-developed communication tools designed to help SEAs provide information about ESSA and the act's impact on state accountability systems. The site provides hyperlinks to resources in three searchable categories: documents, presentations, and videos. Each category contains tools that are identified by state and accompanied by a brief annotation.

<http://www.csai-online.org/spotlight/state-essa-communication-tools>

State Planning Tool for Standards-Based Accountability Under the Every Student Succeeds Act

This resource from the CCRS Center provides SEAs with a set of tools to support their staff in aligning state accountability systems and policies with college- and career-readiness goals under ESSA. The toolset is designed to assist SEAs with identifying and closing policy and regulatory gaps between ESSA standards-based accountability requirements and state statutes. The Accountability Gap Analysis Template section of the toolset helps agency staff identify gaps in the following ESSA accountability-related policy areas: (a) academic standards, (b) statewide assessments, (c) accountability indicators and determinations, (d) school improvement, and (e) public reporting. The Accountability Requirements Close-Up section provides SEA staff with an in-depth look at ESSA's policy provisions and policy shifts from the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 as well as links to resources that support college and career readiness.

<http://www.ccrscenter.org/implementation-tools/state-planning-tool-standards-based>

Section 2: Assessment and Accountability Resources

Make Assessment Work for All Students: Multiple Measures Matter

This Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) study is the third document produced as part of an ongoing NWEA Assessment Perception Study. It examines the perceptions that students, parents, teachers, principals, and superintendents have about assessments. Educators are encouraged to use the results of this study to inform their implementation of new high-quality, multiple measure assessments mandated by ESSA. The five key findings listed in the study highlight the need for (a) improving communication among stakeholders to ensure that all impacted groups are knowledgeable about the types of assessments and their purposes, (b) educating administrators about the assessment provisions in ESSA and opportunities to reform current assessment systems made possible by ESSA, and (c) ensuring that teachers have the training and resources they need to use assessment data to inform instruction.

The details of the study are presented in three sections, each with narrative and graphic explanations of the results, disaggregated by subgroup when applicable. The document concludes with recommendations for further actions based on the survey findings, a description of the study's methodology, and a discussion of the relationships between this study and a 2014 study in this NWEA series.

https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2016/05/Make_Assessment_Work_for_All_Students_2016.pdf

Assessments for High School Graduation: Which Assessments Are States Requiring Students to Take, or to Take and Pass, for High School Graduation?

This two-page document from CSAI provides a summary of current assessment requirements for high school graduation in U.S. states, including the District of Columbia and U.S. territories. The CSAI scan indicates that 30 of the states reviewed do not require students to take and pass an assessment as a condition of their high school graduation. However, 23 of the states scanned have some form of assessment requirement in place. A map provides a snapshot view of those states, color-coded to identify which of four general assessment categories aligns to each state's current assessment requirements. This summary document also includes a discussion of unique assessment requirements in four states and a table that describes future assessment requirements for seven other states. The full report is available at http://www.csai-online.org/sites/default/files/CSAI_Update_HSGraduationAssessmentRequirements.pdf

Innovative Solutions for Including Recently Arrived English Learners in State Accountability Systems: A Guide for States

This report by ED provides SEAs with research- and evidenced-based guidance for developing an accountability and assessment model for recently arrived English learners (RA ELs). The report emphasizes the need for models that (a) are grounded in a state's theory of action to improve linguistic and academic outcomes for RA ELs and (b) meet the requirements outlined in ESSA. This guidance also can be used to evaluate a state's proposed or current approaches to RA EL assessment and accountability. While states may choose to treat RA ELs the same as all other students, this document focuses on the exception options for how RA ELs are included in state assessment and school accountability systems.

The report outlines seven suggested guidelines for RA EL assessment and accountability model development:

- Establish a clear, statewide definition of a recently arrived English learner.
- Develop a theory of action for RA EL accountability models.
- Carefully consider RA EL options permitted under ESSA provisions and related regulations relative to the state’s assessment and accountability model.
- Determine the appropriate exception based on a theory of action and aligned RA EL accountability model.
- Validate assessment use in the state’s chosen RA EL accountability model.
- Establish procedures for implementing the state’s chosen RA EL accountability model.
- Establish evaluation criteria and an evaluation process for the state’s chosen RA EL accountability model.

The guidelines are further developed in the document with a description that includes an explanation of key elements as well as suggested considerations that may be useful as states make decisions related to each guideline.

<https://www.wested.org/resources/including-recently-arrived-english-learners-in-state-accountability-systems/>

Measuring Social and Emotional Learning

This web page from CSAI offers resources designed to help state and local education agencies plan and implement measures of social and emotional learning (SEL) in line with the ESSA provision that allows states to report at least one non-academic indicator of student success. This compilation of resources currently includes 15 entries grouped into 3 categories: (a) ESSA and SEL, (b) compendiums and lists of SEL assessments, and (c) considerations in selecting SEL assessments. Within each category, users can access various resources including tools, articles, and abstracts about SEL, and guidance documents. There is an overview page for each resource with information such as a brief description, content comments, resource link, resource type, date published, intended grade levels/subject areas, and related resources.

<http://www.csai-online.org/collection/2799>

Innovation in Accountability: Designing Systems to Support School Quality and Student Success

This report from the Center for American Progress examines potential indicators for broadening the definition of school accountability under ESSA. The authors identify three less commonly used areas of quality for policymakers to consider when designing a more holistic picture of school performance: (a) social and emotional learning, (b) school climate and culture, and (c) resource equity. The authors discuss various aspects of each domain as a measure of school quality and student success, and they share recommendations for steps that states can take to create a more comprehensive system of accountability to support continuous school improvement.

<https://cdn.americanprogress.org/content/uploads/2016/12/07121810/FifthIndicator-InnovationFinalPDF.pdf>

High Stakes for High Schoolers: State Accountability in the Age of ESSA

This report from the Thomas B. Fordham Institute evaluates the degree to which state accountability systems prioritize the needs of high-achievers. Each state’s accountability system was rated using a rubric with three indicators for all states and one additional indicator for the 39 states whose systems also include a summative high school rating. Results of the study indicate that only 4 of those 39 states met all indicators. Only three of the states that lacked a summative rating met the criteria that applied to them. Overall results of the study are presented in both narrative and table formats. The document also provides individual state profiles that include an overall rating (number of stars received) based on the number of indicators that apply, annotated ratings for each individual indicator, and in some cases screenshots of documents pertinent to the evaluation results.

The authors encourage states to redesign their accountability systems to ensure that high schools are providing incentives focused on improving the achievement levels of all students, including high-achievers. They outline four specific steps that states can take to make sure the needs of high-achievers are addressed, and they recommend that ED allow states to use a performance index for rating academic achievement. An earlier companion report, *High Stakes for High Achievers: State Accountability in the Age of ESSA*, examined this issue from a K–8 perspective and also is available on the foundation’s website.

<https://edex.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/publication/pdfs/11.15%20-%20High%20Stakes%20for%20High%20Schoolers%20-%20State%20Accountability%20in%20the%20Age%20of%20ESSA.pdf>

Section 3: Career and Technical Education Resources

Career and Technical Education in High School: Does it Improve Student Outcomes?

This report by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute provides the results of a study undertaken to determine the impact of high school participation in career and technical education (CTE) on student outcomes in the state of Arkansas. Arkansas was the focus of the study because of its (a) extensive data set linking secondary, postsecondary, and labor market information for three cohorts of more than 100,000 students; (b) recent reform efforts in career readiness and CTE; and a (c) graduation requirement that all students take six units of career-focused coursework.

The study found that CTE has a positive impact on student outcomes in several ways. For example, students who took more than the average number of CTE courses were more likely to graduate from high school, enroll in a two-year college, be employed, and have a higher income than those who took fewer courses. The study also found that students who earned credits in a formal, coordinated program of study reaped even higher benefits.

The author provides a detailed description of the study's findings in a three-part Results section organized by specific questions addressed by the study. Recommendations for Arkansas, other states, and the federal government also are discussed. The report stresses the importance of providing high-quality CTE that is aligned to the needs of the labor market and concludes with a call for a thoughtful reauthorization of the Perkins Act that is informed by research.

<https://edexcellence.net/publications/career-and-technical-education-in-high-school-does-it-improve-student-outcomes>

More Than One C: Educating Students to be Ready for Careers and College

This policy brief from the Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC) discusses the bias toward college over career readiness in this country that marginalizes the needs and aspirations of students who prefer careers to college after high school. The authors discuss factors that contribute to that bias, barriers to elevating the status of career readiness, and recommendations for how districts can achieve a more balanced approach to addressing college and career readiness. Two key recommendations include (a) broadening accountability systems that typically rely on college-only outcomes to include measures of career readiness that reflect the needs of the community and (b) creating integrated pathways that provide options for students to become career and college ready as opposed to tiered systems that prepare students to be career or college ready.

Although this report focuses on how California districts can use their Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAPS) to bring about needed change, references are also made to integrated pathways and resulting accountability systems developed by the states of Georgia and Kentucky. The discussions, concerns, and recommendations posed by the authors have implications for all states seeking to achieve a better balance between career and college readiness.

<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED571635.pdf>

Integrating Employability Skills: A Framework for All Educators

Developed by the CCRS Center, the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders, and RTI International, this modifiable professional learning module offers RCCs, state regional centers, and SEA staff resources for embedding employability skills into instruction and bringing employability skills to the forefront of state and local education efforts. The module defines employability skills as general skills and knowledge that are necessary for job success (e.g., critical thinking skills, problem solving skills, or collaborating with others). The training module includes a facilitator’s guide, PowerPoint presentation, workbook, handouts, and sample agenda.

<http://www.ccrscenter.org/implementation-tools/integrating-employability-skills>

Section 4: English Language Arts Resources

ELA/Literacy Assessment Item Alignment Modules

This series of PowerPoint modules was developed by Student Achievement Partners to help educators learn about and create high-quality assessment items that align with college- and career-readiness standards in reading literature and informational text. Although the modules were designed using the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), they also can be used in states that have developed their own college- and career-readiness standards for reading. This suite of 10 modules includes a user guide that delineates how state leaders and district or school staff can use the modules to meet a variety of purposes. The first module is an introduction to the four essential characteristics of high-quality assessment items that are aligned to the reading standards. High-quality items should (a) align to the specifics of the grade-level standard, (b) require close reading, (c) focus on the central ideas and important particulars in the text, and (d) require the use of evidence.

The other nine modules are grade-level specific and guide participants through determining which test item examples are high-quality and aligned to standards. Users also can access minilessons for additional examples of high-quality aligned items and other supplemental resources from the modules' home page.

<http://achievethecore.org/page/2885/ela-literacy-assessment-item-alignment-modules>

Integrating Speaking and Listening Standards into Instruction—A Review of Resources

This document from CSAI provides an overview of current practices in 29 states for teaching college- and career-readiness standards in the areas of speaking and listening. This review was undertaken as a first step in helping state leaders meet future federal requirements to assess speaking and listening standards as part of their state's ELA assessment. A multipage table contains a description of each state's approaches to teaching speaking and listening skills with a link to the source from which the information was obtained. Some of the approaches include professional learning opportunities, educational courses, written frameworks, guidance documents, literacy plans, formative classroom assessment strategies, instructional strategies, resource lists, curricular materials, and toolkits. A list of key findings summarizes common instructional strategies employed in the states that were reviewed.

http://www.csai-online.org/sites/default/files/CSAI%20Report_SpeakingandListeningResources.pdf

Section 5: Mathematics Resources

Mathematics Assessment Item Alignment Modules

This series of PowerPoint modules was developed by Student Achievement Partners to help educators learn about and create high-quality assessment items that align with college- and career-readiness standards in mathematics. Although the modules were designed using the Common Core, they also can be used in states that have developed their own CCR standards for mathematics. This suite of modules includes a user guide that delineates how state leaders and district- or school-level staff can use the modules to meet a variety of purposes. Each grade-level PowerPoint (Grades 3–8 and high school) provides guidance on item development and alignment based on information from the Council of Chief State School Officers Criteria for High-Quality Assessments and lessons learned from the development efforts of assessment consortia and individual states.

The modules are based on a set of 10 alignment principles. Each principle is explained and then illustrated by at least one assessment item that represents a good example of that principle and a discussion of what makes it a good example. The PowerPoints are accompanied by grade band worksheets that contain items from existing chapter assessments in math. Participants are asked to solve each problem, apply a set of questions to determine how well the problem meets the criteria for high-quality aligned items presented in the module, and then revise the problem to improve its quality. Users also can access minilessons for additional examples of high-quality aligned items and other supplemental resources from the modules' home page.

<http://achievethecore.org/page/2886/mathematics-assessment-item-alignment-modules>

A Framework for Re-envisioning Mathematics Instruction for English Language Learners

This Council of the Great City Schools resource was developed for teachers and others who are involved in curriculum development and materials selection. It provides a framework for understanding and implementing effective mathematics instruction for English language learners (ELLs), addressing the interdependent nature of developing academic language skills and conceptual understanding. It also serves as a guide for selecting high-quality resources that align with college- and career-ready standards and support both conceptual understanding and language development for ELLs and students with other language-related needs.

The report begins with background information on the principles and theory of action that guide ELL instruction. This discussion is followed by a set of key instructional practices that promote mathematical proficiency and address students' language-related needs. Each key practice includes a detailed narrative explanation and a bulleted list of what implementation looks like in the classroom.

The second half of the framework focuses on a three-level process for reviewing and selecting materials that are aligned to mathematics standards and address the specific learning needs of ELLs.

<http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/87/FrameworkForMath4ELLs.pdf>

The Back on Track Study: Using Online Courses for Credit Recovery

This web page, hosted by AIR, contains links to four research briefs that examine the use of online courses for credit recovery. The briefs are based on research conducted by AIR and the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research to investigate the impact of online versus face-to-face Algebra I credit recovery on ninth grade students' academic outcomes. State, district, and school administrators can use these research findings to make evidence-based decisions about credit recovery options for students at risk of not meeting graduation requirements.

Titles in the Getting Back on Track series are *Comparing the Effects of Online and Face-to-Face Credit Recovery in Algebra I*, *The Role of In-Person Instructional Support for Students Taking Online Credit Recovery*, *Who Needs to Recover Algebra Credit After Ninth Grade*, and *What Math Content is Taught and Learned in Online and Face-to-Face Algebra Credit Recovery Courses?*

<http://www.air.org/project/back-track-study-using-online-courses-credit-recovery>

Section 6: Science Resources

Early STEM Matters: Providing High-Quality STEM Experiences for All Young Learners

This policy report from the Early Childhood STEM Working Group examines ways to provide universal access to high-quality STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education in preschool and other early care settings, including the home. The document provides guidance to federal, state, and district policymakers as well as other stakeholders who want to promote early childhood STEM education. The authors discuss four guiding principles that reflect best practices and their collective philosophy regarding early STEM education: (a) children need adults to develop their “natural” STEM inclinations, (b) representation and communication are central to STEM learning, (c) adults’ beliefs and attitudes about STEM affect children’s beliefs and attitudes about STEM, and (d) STEM education is not culturally neutral.

The report identifies six recommendations that policymakers and other stakeholders should consider when designing an early childhood STEM education program: (a) raise the profile and understanding of early childhood STEM education via advocacy and messaging; (b) revamp pre-service and in-service STEM-related training and supports for early childhood teachers; (c) establish initiatives, resources, and supports that promote parents’ and families’ involvement and engagement in their young children’s STEM education; (d) make high-quality early STEM resources and implementation guidance available to practitioners; (e) ensure that early learning and development standards explicitly address the STEM disciplines and align with K–12 standards; and (f) develop and support a research agenda that informs developmental trajectories, effective resources, and best practices in early childhood STEM education. The authors provide an overview of each recommendation and specific steps that stakeholders can take to implement the recommendation.

https://d3lwefg3pyezlb.cloudfront.net/docs/Early_STEM_Matters_FINAL.pdf

Science Assessment Item Collaboration

The purpose of this web page from CSAI is to assist SEAs in developing large-scale Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) assessments. The CCSSO, Science Assessment Item Collaborative (SAIC), and WestEd provide SEA staff with four related resources that document the processes states can follow in designing NGSS-aligned assessments, test items, and item clusters to measure the three-dimensional learning represented in the new science standards. The guiding documents include an Assessment Framework, Item Specification Guidelines, Grade 5 Item Cluster Prototype, and a High School Item Cluster Prototype.

Links to the documents can be found by selecting the *Download Spotlight Resources* button or by scrolling down to links under each image. The site also contains archived supplemental webinars.

<http://www.csai-online.org/spotlight/science-assessment-item-collaborative>

Section 7: General Resources

CCReady: Discover State-Created Tools, Resources, and Standard Implementation Success Stories

This website, hosted by CCSSO, contains a compilation of resources designed to assist states, districts, and schools in implementing college- and career-readiness standards in ELA and mathematics. The resources, developed by CCSSO, SEAs, and other expert organizations are grouped into eight searchable categories: (a) Implementation Tools and Resources; (b) State Spotlights, with examples of promising implementation practices; (c) Case Studies; (d) Early Learning; (e) English Language Arts Resources; (f) Mathematics Resources; (g) Webinars and Newsletters from the Implementing the Common Core State Standards (ICCS) Collaborative; and (h) State and District Stories of High Standards Implementation.

http://www.ccsso.org/CCSS_Forward_State_Resources_and_Success_Stories_to_Implement_the_Common_Core.html

Tools Being Talked About

This table, available at the Gates Foundation’s K–12 Education website, identifies a set of tools designed to assist district leaders, schools, and teachers in implementing the Common Core. These resources are grouped into four categories: (a) College-Ready Standards and Assessments, which includes tools for determining the alignment of curricula, lessons, and assessments, along with tools that support Common Core-aligned instruction in ELA and math; (b) Tools and Systems to Support Effective Teaching, which includes teacher observation tools and professional development resources; (c) Creating the Right Conditions, which includes tools for looking at topics such as resource allocation and data use; and (d) Getting Better at Implementation. Each set of tools is tied to a guiding question and includes a brief description and a link to the source.

https://static.helpjuice.com/helpjuice_production/uploads/upload/image/2756/86163/Tools-Being-Talked-About-01.14.16.pdf

Core to College Evaluation: Sustaining Core Strength—How Core to College States Continue Alignment Efforts Between K–12 and Higher Education

This report from WestEd provides insight into how states involved in the Core to College Initiative are continuing to support and advance their alignment efforts between K–12 and higher education, aiming to ensure that students are better prepared for entry-level, credit bearing postsecondary coursework. The evaluation is based on case-study data gathered from three states: Hawaii, Louisiana, and Washington. In those three states, evaluators focused on (a) collaboration efforts between K–12 and higher education designed to ensure alignment between the two systems; (b) the use of assessment results in course placement policies, practices, and decisions; and (c) next steps each state is taking to strengthen student college and career success. Case studies include examples of alignment and collaboration strategies, existing Core to College networks, and assessment-based placement processes/policies. The evaluation concludes with lessons learned and a discussion of six common factors that contributed to the states’ successes.

https://www.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/1461610122C2C_SustainingCoreStrength-3.pdf

Looking Under the Hood of Competency-Based Education: The Relationship Between Competency-Based Education, Practices, and Students' Learning Skills, Behaviors, and Dispositions

This report by AIR describes the relationship between competency-based education (CBE) practices and changes in student learning capacities. Although experimental schools and comparison schools both used CBE practices to some degree (preventing researchers from making a clear distinction between the two), and their implementation was inconsistent among both school types, the researchers were able to identify six specific CBE practices associated with improved student learning capacities of ninth graders.

These practices include (a) a clear sense of the *learning targets*; (b) a *measurement of learning* that demonstrates mastery of the learning targets, (c) *instructional approaches and supports* delivered through a variety of formats; (d) flexibility in *when and where learning takes place*, including opportunities for school-related work that happens outside the building during the school day; (e) *assessment of learning* using nontraditional measures; and (f) *pacing and progression* options, such as extra time for learning and options for redoing assignments and retaking exams. The full report provides a detailed analysis of the findings, including how the findings vary by subject area along with recommended directions for future research.

<http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/CBE-Study%20Full%20Report.pdf>

Opportunities to Create Next-Generation High Schools: Five Toolkits to Help School Leaders Transform High Schools

This series of toolkits from the Alliance for Excellence in Education was developed to help school, district, and state leaders “rethink” high schools and engage in reform efforts that improve student outcomes, especially among traditionally underserved populations. Each toolkit addresses a different topic: Early College & Dual Enrollment, Advanced Placement & International Baccalaureate Programs, Career & Technical Education, Deeper Learning, and Personalized Learning. Each toolkit is a PowerPoint document that contains (a) an explanation of the topic/educational approach and a discussion of its importance in improving student learning; (b) information about how ESSA provisions can be used to support and fund high school reform in that area; (c) state, district, and school examples of policies, practices, and procedures that support reform initiatives; (d) links to research and other additional information on the topic; and (e) tools for planning and implementation.

Each PowerPoint also includes a searchable Table of Contents that allows users to navigate directly to a specific section by clicking on the section title. Users also can click on embedded video and audio clips and embedded hyperlinks to sources credited on individual slides or listed in the Research and Resources section.

<http://all4ed.org/nghs/>

K–3 Policymakers' Guide to Action: Making the Early Years Count

This report from Education Commission of the States (ECS) identifies six policy levers that are essential for improving the quality of states' kindergarten through third-grade (K–3) systems. These policy levers are (a) funding; (b) quality full-day kindergarten and mandatory attendance-age requirements; (c) workforce development; (d) alignment across the continuum; (e) curriculum, instruction, and assessments; and (f) accountability metrics. The report contains a

discussion of each lever and a set of actions that states can consider for developing and/or strengthening policies in each of these areas. This document also contains a link to a companion ECS resource (<http://www.ecs.org/50-state-comparison-k-3-quality/>) that state policymakers can use to conduct a K–3 system policy audit prior to or in conjunction with implementing policy changes that address the above levers.

http://www.ecs.org/ec-content/uploads/K-3_Policymakers_Guide_to_Action.pdf

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SECC is one of 15 regional centers established by the U.S. Department of Education. The primary goal of the regional centers is to build the capacity of the state education agencies and statewide systems of support to implement the Every Student Succeeds Act. Links to the other regional centers, the content centers, and ED may be found on the SECC website (southeast-cc.org). The contents of this publication were developed under a grant from ED. The contents do not, however, necessarily represent the policy of ED, and one should not assume endorsement by the federal government.