REIMAGINING BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS

Scott F. Marion, National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment
James W. Pellegrino, University of Illinois Chicago
Amy I. Berman, National Academy of Education
Editors

National Academy of Education
Washington, DC
The National Academy of Education (NAEd) advances high-quality research to improve education policy and practice. Founded in 1965, the NAEd consists of U.S. members and international associates who are elected on the basis of scholarship related to education. The Academy undertakes research studies to address pressing educational issues and administers professional development fellowship programs to enhance the preparation of the next generation of education scholars.
STUDY ON THE IMPLEMENTATION AND USE OF BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS

Steering Committee

Scott F. Marion (Co-Chair), National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment
James W. Pellegrino (Co-Chair), University of Illinois Chicago
Linda Darling-Hammond, Learning Policy Institute and Stanford University
Edward Haertel, Stanford University
Jennifer Randall, University of Michigan
Lorrie A. Shepard, University of Colorado Boulder
Guillermo Solano-Flores, Stanford University
James P. Spillane, Northwestern University
Jonathan A. Supovitz, University of Pennsylvania

Staff

Amy I. Berman, Deputy Director
# Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS \hspace{1.5cm} vii

1 REIMAGINING BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS: AN INTRODUCTION \hspace{1.5cm} 1
Scott F. Marion, National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, James W. Pellegrino, University of Illinois Chicago, and Amy I. Berman, National Academy of Education

2 THE STRUGGLE TO IMPLEMENT BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS: EXPLANATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES \hspace{1.5cm} 17
Morgan S. Polikoff, University of Southern California, and Ethan L. Hutt, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

3 HUMAN LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES TO INFORM ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS \hspace{1.5cm} 48
Susan R. Goldman, University of Illinois Chicago, and Carol D. Lee, Northwestern University

4 CLASSROOM ACTIVITY SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT AMBITIOUS TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT \hspace{1.5cm} 93
Maria Araceli Ruiz-Primo, Stanford University, and Erin Marie Furtak, University of Colorado Boulder

5 ASSESSMENT LITERACY AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING \hspace{1.5cm} 132
E. Caroline Wylie, National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, and Margaret Heritage, Heritage Consulting
6 DISTRICT AND SCHOOL PRACTICES AND ASSESSMENTS TO SUPPORT A LEARNING-CENTERED VISION 167
Elena Diaz-Bilello, University of Colorado Boulder, and Jared Anthony, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

7 STATE PRACTICES AND BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS 200
Carla Evans, National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, and Erika Landl, National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment

8 DEVELOPING, IMPLEMENTING, AND INSTITUTIONALIZING COMPLEX EDUCATIONAL INNOVATIONS: CONSIDERATIONS FOR BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS 237
Donald J. Peurach, University of Michigan, and Jennifer Lin Russell, Vanderbilt University

9 POLICY INFLUENCES ON AMBITIOUS CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION, ASSESSMENT, AND LEARNING 273
Laura S. Hamilton, American Institutes for Research, and José Felipe Martínez, University of California, Los Angeles

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS, AUTHORS, AND REVIEWERS 309
Acknowledgments

High-quality assessments are a critical component of the U.S. educational system. Educational assessment can provide information that can be used for making decisions about student learning; teachers, curricula, programs, and schools; resources and funding; and other aspects of educational policy. When used appropriately, educational assessment can serve as an integral tool for the improvement of teaching and learning. No one test, however, can address these multitude of uses and that is why it is critical to have in place balanced assessment systems.

This volume explores the history of balanced assessment systems and reimagines balanced assessment systems that center equitable classroom learning environments. In doing so, it provides guidance to state and local educational agencies, as well as schools and teachers, regarding how to (1) foster and maintain a culture of productive assessment use to improve ambitious and equitable teaching and learning at the classroom level; (2) design policy, professional learning, and other local systems necessary to implement balanced assessment systems; and (3) implement processes to use aggregate data to continually improve the assessment system itself to better serve all students, especially those most disenfranchised.

The work leading to this volume was made possible by a generous grant from Smarter Balanced/University of California, Santa Cruz. The National Academy of Education (NAEd) is especially grateful for the support of Tony Alpert, Executive Director; Rochelle Michel, Deputy Executive Program Officer; and Melissa Estuesta, Contract Monitor.

The NAEd steering committee formed to lead this project includes Linda Darling-Hammond, Edward Haertel, Jennifer Randall, Lorrie Shepard, Guillermo Solano-Flores, James Spillane, and Jonathan Supovitz. Each of them committed significant time from their busy schedules to help shape this volume, guide the critical reimagination of balanced assessment systems, and provide numerous rounds of critical feedback to the chapters within this volume.
We want to thank the chapter authors for their critical contributions to this volume. Each chapter stands on its own as an important contribution to the field. It was through the authors’ willingness and effort to work across chapters, and with the steering committee and external reviewers, that this collection became a coherent and comprehensive volume.

This volume would not be what it is without the wise and generous support and feedback from our external reviewers:

Courtney Bell, University of Wisconsin–Madison
Kathryn Dewsbury-White, Michigan Assessment Consortium
Debbie Durrence, Gwinnett County Public Schools
John Q. Easton, Institute for Policy Research at Northwestern University
Brian Gong, National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment
Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Connecticut State Department of Education
Peter Leonard, Chicago Public Schools
Scott Norton, Council of Chief State School Officers (retired)
William R. Penuel, University of Colorado Boulder
Allison Timberlake, Georgia Department of Education

These reviewers gave tremendously of their time and insights. In addition to reviewing specific chapters numerous times, they, along with the steering committee and authors, participated in a two-day workshop to make this volume what it is. For more information about the reviewers, see their biographical sketches at the end of this volume along with the biographical sketches of the authors and steering committee.

This volume and all of its chapters were extensively reviewed and we want to thank Judith Warren Little, Chair of the Standing Review Committee, for overseeing this process.

Finally, we want to acknowledge the work of the NAEd staff: Abigail Bell, Tess Bonnette, Dian Dong, and Gregory White. The staff worked tirelessly from the very conception of the project to bring it to fruition and to coordinate the many moving parts of this process.

We hope this volume contributes to and informs the critical work of classroom and school educators, district and state personnel, federal and state policymakers, and assessment vendors.

Scott F. Marion, Committee Co-Chair and Volume Co-Editor
James W. Pellegrino, Committee Co-Chair and Volume Co-Editor
Amy I. Berman, Volume Co-Editor