

**SPECIAL ISSUE**  
**Redesigning Assessment and Accountability**

education policy analysis  
archives

A peer-reviewed, independent,  
open access, multilingual journal



Arizona State University

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Volume 26 Number 14

January 29, 2018

ISSN 1068-2341

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**Integrating Performance Assessments Across a PK-20  
Continuum: A Locally Developed Collaboration**

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**Citation:** McCurdy, K., Reagan, E. M., Schram, T., & Rogers, A. (2018). Integrating performance assessments across a PK-20 continuum: A locally developed collaboration. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 26(14). <http://dx.doi.org/10.14507/epaa.26.3437> This article is part of the special issue, *Redesigning Systems of Assessment and Accountability for Meaningful Student Learning*, guest edited by Soung Bae, Jon Snyder, and Elizabeth Leisy Stosich.

**Abstract:** A response to Stosich et al.'s (2018) article reviewing ways in which states have taken up performance assessments, this commentary seeks to extend the focus and use of performance assessments to preservice teacher education. As such, the authors describe

statewide initiatives in New Hampshire that are working to integrate performance assessments along a PK – 20 continuum by articulating how Stosich et al.’s key points of educator capacity, context, and assessments for and of learning are developing in one state. This commentary highlights key contextual factors for the lasting implementation of the performance assessments as well as raises critical new challenges and opportunities for understanding this tool as an assessment for and of learning.

**Keywords:** teacher performance assessments; preservice teacher education; school-university partnership

### **Integración de evaluaciones de rendimiento en un continuo PK-20: Una colaboración desarrollada localmente**

**Resumen:** Como una respuesta al artículo de Stosich et al. (2018) sobre las evaluaciones del desempeño del estado, este comentario amplía el enfoque y el uso de las evaluaciones del desempeño a la formación docente pre-servicio. Los autores describen iniciativas estatales en New Hampshire que están trabajando para integrar evaluaciones de desempeño a lo largo de un continuo PK-20 y articulan cómo se desarrollan los puntos clave de Stosich de capacidad educativa, contexto y evaluaciones para y de aprendizaje en un estado. Este comentario destaca los factores contextuales clave para la implementación duradera de las evaluaciones de desempeño, así como plantea nuevos desafíos y oportunidades para entender esta herramienta como una evaluación para el aprendizaje.

**Palabras clave:** evaluaciones de desempeño docente; educación de profesor de pregrado; asociación escuela-universidad

### **Integração das avaliações de desempenho em um PK-20 contínuo: Uma colaboração desenvolvida localmente**

**Resumo:** Como resposta ao artigo Stosich et al. (2018) em avaliações de desempenho do estado, este comentário se estende a abordagem eo uso de avaliações de desempenho de pré-formação contínua de professores. Os autores descrevem iniciativas estaduais em New Hampshire que estão trabalhando para integrar as avaliações de desempenho ao longo de um PK-20 contínua e articular pontos como principais Stosich de educacional capacidade, contexto e avaliações para a aprendizagem e desenvolver um estado. Este comentário destaca a chave para a implementação de avaliações de desempenho fatores contextuais, bem como novos desafios e oportunidades duradouras para entender isso como uma ferramenta de avaliação para a aprendizagem.

**Palavras-chave:** avaliações de desempenho do professor; formação de professores de graduação; associação escola-universidade

## **Integrating Performance Assessments Across a PK-20 Continuum: A Locally Developed Collaboration**

In the article, “How Do States Integrate Performance Assessment in Their Systems of Assessment,” Stosich, Snyder, and Wilczak (2018) contribute an important review of PK-12 state-level policies and practices at a time when performance assessments are entering a new stage of maturity within the national discourse on systems of educational accountability. Their focus on the actions of key stakeholders across multiple states to implement and/or support performance assessments in PK-12 schools, regardless of the catalysts that prompted such actions, reveal four “common but distinct” (p. 7) strategies for incorporating those assessments into systems of accountability ranging from classroom-specific purposes to federal testing requirements. We

highlight three broadly applicable points that extend across this analysis of these four approaches, and then extend our commentary to invite consideration of how their analytical framework might be expanded.

The first point, and of particular significance within a context of contested policies around use of performance assessments in the service of classroom purposes as well as for broader consequential aims (e.g., as part of statewide assessment systems), stems from Stosich et al.'s repeated finding pertaining to the need to *build the capacity of educators* to use performance assessments in practice. Second, amidst ongoing efforts to highlight potential educative benefits associated with using performance assessments, the authors direct attention to the challenging aim of designing tools that act as assessments *of learning* as well as assessments *for learning*. Third, reflecting the fundamental premise that *context matters*, Stosich and colleagues clearly describe how performance assessments can take shape in different ways and in response to varied prompts or pressures. This sets the stage for their articulation of a "multilayered system of assessment practices" that is "influenced by actors at all levels of the educational system" (2018, p. 19), including decision-makers at the school, district or network, state, and federal level.

As we consider the compelling need identified by Stosich and colleagues (2018) to build educator capacity, we believe the findings underscore the need to promote a higher education voice within this ecosystem, operating with these other decision-makers through a lens of shared responsibility that incorporates a continuum of PK-20, and not simply a PK-12, perspectives. The inclusion of higher education teacher educators in the complex, multi-layered assessment system has the potential to promote mutual responsibility (Cochran-Smith, 2016; Sahlberg, 2010), characterized by collaboration across multiple policy-making levels, in which multiple stakeholders operate with a shared and co-created vision. A performance assessment at the PK-12 level, therefore, is enhanced when there are performance assessments as part of teacher preparation and vice versa. Creating a broad system of performance assessments across a PK-20 continuum can serve to raise questions, increase comfortability, and deepen respect around the nature and use of these assessments. Such an environment of mutual responsibility is also characterized by open dialogue that enhances trust across all stakeholders and supports continuity in the development and implementation of performance assessments. Educator capacity to take up and ultimately realize the full, "beneficial use of performance assessments" (Stosich et al., 2018, p. 19) that such a system has to offer for student learning is attended to, augmented through, and embedded in a culture and context of inquiry.

As an example, there have been multiple parallel efforts in New Hampshire to support the development and implementation of performance assessments along a PK-20 continuum. In their article, Stosich et al. (2018) highlight New Hampshire's Performance Assessment of Competency Education (PACE) as a performance assessment that is locally developed by educators and used as part of federal accountability reporting requirements. Here we highlight other efforts across the state to build educator capacity including the adoption of a teacher candidate performance assessment in higher education, and joint efforts between PK-12 educators, university faculty, and state policy makers to support a PK-20 continuum.

In 2013, a consortium of teacher educators across all institutions of higher education in New Hampshire adopted the New Hampshire Teacher Candidate Assessment of Performance (NH TCAP) as a performance assessment to support teacher candidate learning and assess readiness to teach. Both PACE and the NH TCAP are locally developed performance assessments, reflecting the culture of a state that values such local influence, and allows, as Stosich and colleagues discuss, the historical, political, and educational factors that are important to the New Hampshire contexts to be considered. The development of the NH TCAP was influenced by a shift in the national discourse of teacher preparation to include performance assessments. Members of the consortium adapted an

existing teacher candidate performance assessment (i.e., Performance Assessment for California Teachers, Pecheone & Chung, 2006) for the state context and came to agreement around key implementation issues such as facilitation of the Teacher Performance Assessment with teacher candidates; scorer training; instructor involvement and assistance; and the consequential nature of the assessment. Specifically, in this process, the consortium explicitly addressed key components of each of the institutions, the policy context of the state, and ways in which their joint efforts can cultivate the space for conversations around preservice teacher learning, assessment, and accountability.

Drawing on and inspired by examples of other initiatives around teacher performance assessments taking place across the country, the NH TCAP aspires to strike a balance between assessment of and assessment for learning. As with assessments that Stosich et al. highlight exist at the PK-12 level, the NH TCAP seeks to provide opportunities for deep and meaningful learning within higher education. In contrast to other teacher candidate performance assessments across the country (Reagan, Schram, McCurdy, Chang & Evans, 2016), the NH TCAP is housed at the institutional level and is one of multiple measures that determine readiness to teach as determined by the institutions. As such, it has the capacity to continue evolving as teacher educators collect and analyze data about the efficacies and challenges faced by teacher candidates, cooperating teachers, and university faculty. In this way, it serves as a tool for learning at multiple levels. As Stosich et al. comment on similar efforts at the PK-12 level, this approach enabled teacher educators to develop a system of assessment that incorporates locally-developed assessments to “encourage more meaningful learning opportunities for [teacher candidates] by creating cohesion across curriculum, instruction, and assessment” (2018, p. 18). The NH TCAP serves as the vehicle by which teacher educators can engage in rich conversations around effective practice within and across institutions. Furthermore, as a performance assessment, the NH TCAP serves as a practical example for preservice teacher candidates to explore the potential of performance assessments through the process of responding to prompts and unpacking and understanding rubrics, as well as experiencing the process themselves.

The NH TCAP represents one of multiple initiatives across the state to design and implement performance assessments and promote coherence across levels and layers of education in the state. Other state-level initiatives include strengthening of PK-20 partnerships through annual summits of state-level policy makers, district- and school-based practitioners, and teacher education faculty. These initiatives also fundamentally share the belief that “creating a multilayered system of assessment practices can provide more coherent or fragmented support for performance assessments” (Stosich et al., 2018, p. 19). A context of innovation is necessarily supported by the buy-in from all stakeholders. While there is work to be done, these initiatives are one step towards tighter integration of the implementation of performance assessments. Such a network of PK-20 partnerships and associated supporters could intimately contribute to a context that gives rise to reflection about the relationships among curriculum, instruction, and assessment across the full spectrum of student learning. These parallel initiatives of the NH TCAP and PK-20 partnerships are also creating a safe space for embracing a more critical look at not only the benefits but the factors (ie. educator capacity, financial resources) potentially limiting the full realization of performance assessments.

Over the past decade, New Hampshire policy makers, teacher educators, and school partners have worked deliberately and thoughtfully to conceptualize a learning and assessment system that developed from and encourages the shared values of this community: strong local control where the voices from multiple engaged stakeholders are encouraged and considered. The process for the development of such performance assessments was slow at times because it was recognized by all

that careful attention needed to be paid to the needs and identities of all members in the ecosystem. These conversations included deep attention to respective histories, shared and different values, as well as shared and divergent trajectories. Ultimately the critical component and binding thread for the New Hampshire context was the recognition of and commitment to the belief that the learning of New Hampshire's PK-12 students is deeply tied to the preparation of its teachers. New Hampshire's example extends Stosich and colleagues' review of emerging PK-12 practices around performance assessment to teacher preparation demonstrating a cohesive and sustaining statewide effort in order to realize fully learning opportunities of these assessments for students and teachers.

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**SPECIAL ISSUE**  
**Redesigning Assessment and Accountability**

**education policy analysis archives**

Volume 26 Number 14

January 29, 2018

ISSN 1068-2341



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