

CALIFORNIA PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT COLLABORATIVE

May 2019 Newsletter

CPAC Spring 2019 Convenings

This spring, CPAC held two 1-day statewide convenings to address two essential questions: *"How is our system of performance assessment helping students to demonstrate progress toward meeting Graduate Profile outcomes (or pathway outcomes) and how do we know?"* and, *"How could we be more intentional about capturing and using rich student learning data to demonstrate individual and collective progress?"* During the convenings, participants engaged in collective and independent inquiry, reflection, and planning based on these questions. Presenters included state-based performance assessment leaders whose experiences and learnings participants used to inform their next steps implementing performance assessments.

CPAC Northern California Convening

On March 5, 30 teachers and leaders convened in Oakland, CA, to discuss and learn more about performance assessment and student learning outcomes. Participants began the morning with a reflective activity during which they had to [Take Stock](#) of the data available to them in their home schools and districts. During the activity, adapted from the [ALP Assessment for Learning Self-Reflection Tool](#), participants recorded the student assessment data that they collect and considered how it is used, including how assessment data is integrated into curriculum and instruction and how the data created from each assessment not only illuminates inequities but creates actionable, equitable feedback. Teams shared assessment practices with one another through a gallery walk and a debrief. Following this activity, Anna Maier, Research Analyst and Policy Advisor at Learning Policy Institute (LPI), shared an update on California policy and introduced a presentation by

Elliott Asp, Senior Partner at the [Colorado Education Initiative](#), and Angela Landrum, Principal Consultant in the Assessment Literacy Program of the [Colorado Department of Education](#). Asp and Landrum presented on Colorado's efforts to create a [statewide menu of options for graduation requirements](#) that allows schools to use performance assessment as a culminating measure of student learning outcomes. At the end of the day, participants had time to engage in team planning, connect with colleagues, and discuss challenges.

CPAC Southern California Convening

On March 26, roughly 60 teachers and school and district leaders met in Burbank, CA, to discuss their data and student assessment practices. Throughout the day, participants met in both school and pathway teams and in cross-functional, role-alike groups to consider how their assessment practices reflected an integrated, equitable system aligned to well-articulated student outcomes. Paul Leather, Director for State and Local Partnerships at the Center for Innovation in Education, described how several states are working to develop and implement a statewide system of performance assessment, using his work with [Performance Assessment of Competency Education \(PACE\)](#) in New Hampshire. Leather also described the blend of state, PACE, and local assessments New Hampshire teachers use to assess student learning, and shared students' reflections on the value of performance assessment and the role of teacher ownership in creating sustainable pedagogical change. After the presentation, role-alike teams discussed connections between the work Leather described and their own, and identified shared challenges. Finally, participants split up into school, pathway, or district teams and strategized next steps for their performance assessment systems based on the day's activities, presentation, and discussions.

ALP Convening

Since 2016, CPAC has been a part of the [Assessment for Learning Project \(ALP\)](#), which held its annual meeting in Louisville, KY, in early April. The 3-day meeting, with the theme “Gifts to the Field,” featured collective learning opportunities and provided participants with a wealth of helpful resources. Several CPAC partners received ALP micro-grants to participate in the meeting, including June Jordan School for Equity, Fremont High School, San Francisco International High School, Los Angeles Unified School District, and San Francisco Unified School District.

During the meeting, participants mapped team journeys, engaged in peer learning sessions, and brainstormed opportunities for collaboration and further inquiry. Nancy Le of Los Angeles Unified, Jennifer Lutzenberger Phillips of ConnectEd: The Center for College and Career, and Anna Maier and Charlie Thompson of LPI presented a peer learning session based on **Designing Accessible Performance Assessments** (see below), which provides guidance for adopting a [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#) approach to creating modifications and accommodations of performance assessments for English learners and students with special needs. Participants in this session used a [jigsaw protocol](#) (modeled after a professional learning activity that Le used with teachers in Los Angeles Unified) to review sections of the guide and then discuss it as a whole with colleagues. Participants expressed interest in creating a micro-credential course based on the guide for teachers.

Designing Accessible Performance Assessments Guide

A question that has shaped the work of the CPAC community since the beginning is: *How can we design and implement performance assessments that equitably serve all students?* CPAC representatives from Los Angeles Unified, Oakland Unified, Pasadena Unified, ConnectEd, the Learning Policy Institute (LPI), and Envision Learning Partners identified the need to more clearly define best practices for meeting the needs of students with disabilities and English learners when designing and implementing performance assessments.

To that end, the LPI team worked with Kiera Chase at ConnectEd, Julie Kessler at San Francisco Unified, and Ruth Chung Wei at Envision Learning Partners to create a resource guide that presents tangible modifications and accommodations that can be employed to make performance assessments more equitable.

The guide is grounded in principles of [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#), which help educators support access for all students by removing the barriers experienced by students with disabilities and/or English learners. A common way to understand how UDL principles work is to imagine a ramp designed to support wheelchair access in a building: the ramp is designed to improve access to a particular population (i.e., those using a wheelchair), but people with strollers, people with difficulty walking, and the general public can all benefit from the ramp.

Similarly, there are tangible classroom practices that can be employed with English learners and students with disabilities in mind when designing and implementing performance assessments. For example, providing a PowerPoint slide template to students completing defense and capstone presentations might particularly support students with certain disabilities, but doing so also would provide a meaningful scaffold for their peers without identified disabilities. A promising practice for supporting English learners’ academic performance and sense of belonging is celebrating their bilingualism by allowing them to integrate their native tongue into their capstone or defense presentation. This practice might also be employed for students learning a foreign language to help them increase their proficiency.

More examples of ways to design performance assessment systems around UDL principles are provided in *Best Practices for Designing Accessible Performance Assessments*, available [here](#) and [on the CPAC page on the LPI website](#). We encourage you to adopt these practices in your own local contexts and share back any feedback you have after trying them out. Creating this guide was truly a collaborative effort, so we thank the many CPAC members who provided valuable feedback on this important resource!

EdWeek Blog Series: Culturally Relevant Performance Assessments

At the Fall 2018 CPAC convening in Burbank, a team of representatives from the Hawaiian-Focused Charter Schools (HFCS) network and the Hawai'i Department of Education (HDE) shared their best practices for designing and implementing high-quality, culturally relevant performance assessments at the state and local levels. That presentation inspired a three-part blog series on *EdWeek* that explores how to support culturally relevant performance assessments at different levels of the educational system, and in a range of contexts.

In the [first blog post](#), Brooke Taira and Kau'i Sang with the Office of Hawaiian Education at the HDE describe how their team has been able to foster a state policy environment that supports the implementation of culturally relevant performance assessments across Hawaii. In the [second blog post](#), members from the HFCS team share lessons from their experience operationalizing culturally relevant performance assessments at the school network level. The blog posts show how culturally responsive performance assessments can provide space for students to reflect on their own identities and educational trajectories.

The final post in the series will explore what culturally relevant performance assessments look like in local CPAC district contexts.

The Young and the Woke

The latest [episode](#) of the podcast "The Young and the Woke" is live! Created and produced by Young Whan Choi of Oakland Unified School District (OUSD), the podcast features the voices and experiences of OUSD students.

The episode features Julisa Liang, a senior at Oakland High School in the Law and Social Justice Academy. Her life reflects the motto found on most U.S. currency—"e pluribus unum"—out of many, one. She seems to be able to find common ground with whomever she meets,

whether she is riding AC transit, ringing up customers at Target, buying tacos in the Fruitvale, or discussing controversial topics in school. This notion that we as human beings can be different, and still unified, feels so important in this moment.

Colorado Education Initiative: High School Redesign

Are you interested or involved in high school redesign? This summer, the [Colorado Education Initiative \(CEI\)](#) is offering an exciting and unique learning opportunity just for you!

In late June, CEI will host the High School Redesign Accelerator, a 3-day convening on redesigning high school to ensure equitable outcomes for all students through rigor, relevance, and social-emotional learning. The Accelerator provides a unique experience for school teams to work with leading thinkers and practitioners to build the mindsets needed to innovate, to experience cutting-edge practices in school redesign, and to develop action plans to accelerate local redesign efforts.

During the convening, high school teams of two to four will work with expert educators, network with like-minded school teams, and build a plan to put their own design efforts into action. Experts will work directly with school teams as coaches. Apply early; the event can only accommodate 220 attendees.

More information is available on [this flyer](#) and you can register [here](#). CEI is a member of the [Assessment for Learning Project](#), along with CPAC, and brings substantial expertise to this work. Please do not hesitate to let us know if you have any questions about this opportunity.

Contact Us

We welcome your contributions. Please email cpac@learningpolicyinstitute.org with any comments, questions, or events/resources you would like to share with the CPAC network.



About CPAC

The California Performance Assessment Collaborative (CPAC) represents educators, policymakers, and researchers who are working to study and advance the use of authentic approaches to assessment, such as presentations, projects, and portfolios, which require students to demonstrate applied knowledge of content and use of [21st-century skills](#). To learn more about CPAC, check out the [CPAC website](#).