

**01/20/16**  
**PRESENTATION:**  
**ALASKA MEASURES**  
**OF PROGRESS**  
**TESTING**

<TARGET><BILL></BILL><SUBJECT>01-20-16 PRESENTATION  
ALASKA MEASURES OF PROGRESS  
TESTING</SUBJECT><COMM>HEDC29</COMM></TARGET>



# Alaska Measures of Progress

Presentation to Joint Legislative Meeting  
January 20, 2016

# Leading up to new assessments

- Alaskans called for a review of the reading, writing and mathematics standards at a statewide education summit, which began a process of review in 2009.
- State Board of Education & Early Development adopted new standards in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics in June, 2012.
- New standards required a new assessment to measure student progress.

# Selection of Assessment Vendor

- The department issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) through the formal state procurement process.
- The RFP evaluation committee consisted of department staff, a school improvement coach, and a state Representative.
- The RFP evaluation committee recommended selection of the Achievement and Assessment Institute (AAI) of the University of Kansas Research Center as the assessment vendor.
- DEED announced the selection of AAI on January 14, 2014.

# Assessment System Components

- The year end (summative) assessment is called Alaska Measures of Progress, or AMP for short.
  - Administered to students in grades 3-10 in the spring.
  - AMP is computer based.
  - Tests in 2015 and 2016 contain all machine scoreable questions.
  - Listening items will be field tested in 2015-2016 and will be part of the test in 2016-2017.
  - Performance tasks were removed from 2016 test, and are tentatively planned to be field tested in 2017.
  - The test will be “stage adaptive” in 2016-2017, allowing a student to receive the next set of questions that better meet their achievement level.
  - The test will be fully developed by spring 2018.

# Optional Tools for Districts

**Interim assessments** can be used several times a year to check student progress.

- A bank of computer-based testlets (8 – 15 items each) is being expanded.
- Reports from interim assessments will provide information on student growth within the year and may be used to predict achievement on the AMP.
- All districts will have access to these assessments to use at their discretion.

**Formative resources** are instructional tools that a teacher can use to understand the student's knowledge of a specific concept or skill.

- Use of the formative resources can help teachers diagnose student errors and provide remediation.
- Formative resources will be available to all districts to use at their discretion.

# First Administration of AMP

- AMP was administered during a 5-week window from March 30 – May 1, 2015.
- The first on-line administration of AMP was generally successfully.
- 95.9% of students participated in the assessment statewide.

# Establishment of Score Ranges

- Alaska educators met in Anchorage the week of July 6 to participate in a process called standard setting, which is where recommendations are made regarding how well a student must do to meet the standards.
- The State Board of Education & Early Development put the score ranges out for public comment at the August 24 meeting.
- The board took testimony, and adopted the score ranges, at the October 9 meeting.

# Reports and Data Release

- Reports for AMP were made available in a digital format to districts, and by hard copy for parents. Reports include:
  - Student Report
  - School & District Detail Report
  - School & District Summary Report
- Data on the percentage of students scoring at each achievement level is available on the DEED website at <http://education.alaska.gov/tls/Assessments/Results/results2015.html>
- Data on subgroup performance will be available in the near future by viewing the district and school report cards.

# Issues & Concerns

- Several issues were identified by superintendents and others related to reports and data.
- Reports distribution and data files were delayed until late November due to numerous data quality checks and corrections needed to ensure accurate reports.
  - These delays created uncertainty about whether the contractor had the capacity to create timely and accurate data files and reports.
- Reports did not provide sufficient level of detail regarding information on how students were performing on clusters or groups of standards.
  - Concern was raised that students should not be tested if the assessment results could not be used to help teachers improve instruction.

# State Board of Education

- The State Board of Education heard a presentation on AMP at the December 10, 2015 meeting.
- Board members requested that the department work with superintendents and the vendor on resolving the issues of concern.
- Board members also requested a comprehensive review of the assessment system.
- The department will provide an update to the board at the March meeting.

# Actions and Steps to Resolution

- Commissioner Hanley and several department staff met with a working group of the Alaska superintendents on November 20 to hear and understand concerns.
- A follow up meeting with superintendents was held on January 14 to explore some possible resolutions.
- Discussion centered around the use of AMP for 2016 and what options will be made available to the state through the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

# Plan for 2016

- AMP will be used for spring 2016 assessment.
- Issues of timely and accurate reporting for 2016 tests will be resolved through use of a high quality subcontractor with reports delivered by late June.
- Reports will be redesigned to provide more information at a deeper content level on student, school & district reports (to be designed with a working group).
- Improvements have been made to the logistical administration of the test for 2016.
- Any changes to the assessment system for 2017 and beyond will be considered as part of the stakeholder discussions in creating the state plan for assessments and accountability for ESSA.

## PRELIMINARY 2015 DATA

### Statewide Results

#### All Grades

Subject	Meets the Standards		Partially Meets the Standards		Total Tested
	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	
	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	
English Language Arts <sup>2</sup> ELA <sup>2</sup>	3,287 // 4.51%	22,047 // 30.25%	26,297 // 36.08%	21,258 // 29.16%	72,889
Mathematics <sup>2</sup> Math <sup>2</sup>	3,986 // 5.47%	18,725 // 25.70%	33,592 // 46.10%	16,568 // 22.74%	72,871

#### Grade 3

Subject	Meets the Standards		Partially Meets the Standards		Total Tested
	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	
	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	
English Language Arts <sup>2</sup> ELA <sup>2</sup>	873 // 9.06%	2,535 // 26.32%	1,731 // 17.97%	4,493 // 46.65%	9,632
Mathematics <sup>2</sup> Math <sup>2</sup>	1,165 // 12.07%	2,747 // 28.47%	3,992 // 41.37%	1,746 // 18.09%	9,650

#### Grade 4

Subject	Meets the Standards		Partially Meets the Standards		Total Tested
	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	
	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	
English Language Arts <sup>2</sup> ELA <sup>2</sup>	843 // 8.96%	2,918 // 31.03%	1,791 // 19.04%	3,853 // 40.97%	9,405
Mathematics <sup>2</sup> Math <sup>2</sup>	778 // 8.27%	2,870 // 30.50%	4,473 // 47.53%	1,290 // 13.71%	9,411

**Grade 5**

Subject	Meets the Standards		Partially Meets the Standards		Total Tested
	Level 4 Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Level 3 Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Level 2 Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Level 1 Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	
English Language ArtsELA <sup>2</sup>	380 // 4.13%	3,491 // 37.96%	2,375 // 25.83%	2,950 // 32.08%	9,196
MathematicsMath <sup>2</sup>	407 // 4.42%	2,775 // 30.15%	4,558 // 49.53%	1,463 // 15.90%	9,203

**Grade 6**

Subject	Meets the Standards		Partially Meets the Standards		Total Tested
	Level 4 Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Level 3 Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Level 2 Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Level 1 Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	
English Language ArtsELA <sup>2</sup>	276 // 3.06%	3,099 // 34.40%	3,736 // 41.47%	1,899 // 21.08%	9,010
MathematicsMath <sup>2</sup>	706 // 7.83%	2,170 // 24.06%	4,597 // 50.96%	1,547 // 17.15%	9,020

**Grade 7**

Subject	Meets the Standards		Partially Meets the Standards		Total Tested
	Level 4 Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Level 3 Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Level 2 Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Level 1 Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	
English Language ArtsELA <sup>2</sup>	311 // 3.47%	2,374 // 26.45%	4,219 // 47.01%	2,070 // 23.07%	8,974
MathematicsMath <sup>2</sup>	218 // 2.43%	2,449 // 27.29%	4,863 // 54.20%	1,443 // 16.08%	8,973

**Grade 8**

Subject	Meets the Standards		Partially Meets the Standards		Total Tested
	Level 4 Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Level 3 Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Level 2 Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Level 1 Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	

English Language Arts <sup>2</sup> ELA	198 // 2.16%	2,653 // 28.95%	4,512 // 49.24%	1,801 // 19.65%	9,164
Mathematics <sup>2</sup> Math	136 // 1.48%	2,226 // 24.27%	5,771 // 62.93%	1,037 // 11.31%	9,170

### Grade 9

Subject	Meets the Standards		Partially Meets the Standards		Total Tested
	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	
	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	
English Language Arts <sup>2</sup> ELA	279 // 3.08%	2,687 // 29.69%	3,962 // 43.77%	2,123 // 23.46%	9,051
Mathematics <sup>2</sup> Math	343 // 3.80%	2,024 // 22.42%	3,103 // 34.37%	3,557 // 39.40%	9,027

### Grade 10

Subject	Meets the Standards		Partially Meets the Standards		Total Tested
	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	
	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Count // Percentage <sup>1</sup>	
English Language Arts <sup>2</sup> ELA	127 // 1.50%	2,290 // 27.08%	3,971 // 46.96%	2,069 // 24.46%	8,457
Mathematics <sup>2</sup> Math	233 // 2.77%	1,464 // 17.39%	2,235 // 26.55%	4,485 // 53.29%	8,417

\* Results cannot be published without releasing personally identifiable information.

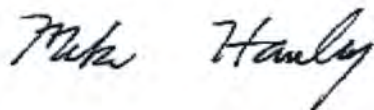
<sup>1</sup>The percentage of students at each achievement level only includes students who participated in the content assessment.

<sup>2</sup>ELA = English Language Arts; Math = Mathematics

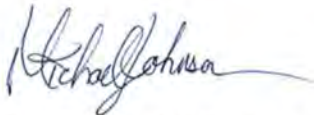
<sup>2</sup>ELA = English Language Arts; Math = Mathematics

As the implementation regulations are being developed for the recently enacted *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA), the opportunity exists to return the educational decisions affecting children back to where they belong, the state and local school district. Alaska is a state of extremes; our districts are both urban and rural, most are not connected to a road system, the ethnic diversity is enormous, many families still live a subsistence lifestyle, and indigenous languages are sometimes the first language.

“One size fits all” does not work for Alaska. This is particularly true for student assessments. We strongly encourage allowing states maximum flexibility to use multiple student assessment tools with local school districts having the option to select the best tool to measure the progress of their students.



Michael Hanley  
Commissioner of Education  
Alaska Department of Education & Early Development



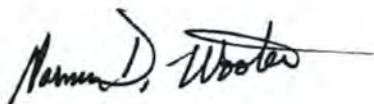
Dr. Michael Johnson  
President, Alaska Superintendents Association



Dr. Lisa Skiles Parady  
Executive Director, Alaska Superintendents Association



Tiffany Jackson  
President, Association of Alaska School Boards



Norman Wooten  
Executive Director, Association of Alaska School Boards

## Alaska Superintendents Association

234 Gold St. • Juneau, AK 99801-1101

Phone: (907) 586-9702 / (800) 478-9702 • Fax: (907) 586-5879



### **Invited Testimony to the Joint Education Committees**

Wednesday, January 27

8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Call Number 1-844-586-9035

Dr. Lisa Skiles Parady, Executive Director Alaska Council of School Administrators/Alaska Superintendents Association/Alaska Secondary School Principals  
(will introduce by phone)

Dr. Michael Johnson, Superintendent, Copper River School District  
Alaska Superintendents Assoc. President

Dr. Deena Paramo, Superintendent, Mat-Su Borough School District

Dr. Bob Crumley, Superintendent, Chugach School District  
Alaska Superintendent of the Year - 2016

Steward McDonald, Superintendent, Kodiak Borough School District

Kevin Shipley, Superintendent, Kake School District

Ed Graff, Superintendent, Anchorage School District

Chris Reitan, Superintendent, Galena City School District

Sue Johnson, Superintendent, Kuspuks School District

Dr. Dave Herbert, Superintendent, St. Mary's School District

Date: January 25, 2016

To: Joint Education Legislative Committee

From: Sean Dusek, Superintendent, Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

Re: Comment on AMP and SLOs

Dear Members of the Joint Education Committee:

I am unable to call into your meeting tomorrow and instead offer the following two comments written on behalf of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District.

1. AMP – Alaska Measures of progress

Although the state's contract with AAI to implement the AMP testing continues, I feel it is important to share that the past performance of AAI in meeting this contract has not been satisfactory. I want you to know that KPBSD is working with DEED to improve our overall assessment system that provides results that can be utilized to improve student learning. The Every Student Succeeds Act and No Child Left Behind Act require a statewide assessment and we are hopeful that DEED will continue to explore assessments that best serve the needs of Alaska's students, which may require immediately developing a new RFP to consider a new assessment for the spring of 2017.

2. Regulations related to district's educator evaluation system particularly Student Learning Objectives

I am pleased that with the recent Federal reauthorization of ESEA (Every Student Succeeds Act), DEED is working to be proactive in requirements for educator evaluations in the state of Alaska. I support the department's recommendation to open a period of public comment on the proposed regulations with the option to repeal the SLO pilot requirement. As a part of our input, we also suggest the state require formal teacher evaluations every 3 years for teachers who successfully completed the formal evaluation. The interim years would be available for districts to conduct teacher enrichment evaluations that are self-directed, meaningful and based on student learning data. This is currently embedded within the KPBSD Danielson based system. KPBSD has utilized this approach for many years with successful educators and it has worked well as measured by the district's student achievement results. We look forward to working closely with the department on reviewing and revising the evaluation system and thank them for all of the hard work that has been done on the system.



## OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Deena M. Paramo

**Mission: Mat-Su Borough School District prepares students for success**

### MSBSD State Assessment Summary, Concerns and Recommendations

#### **According to State Regulations:**

Comprehensive System of Student Assessment - Presented as the vision of the D.E.E.D. Assessment Team (Reference: AK Principal's Conference - AMP Power point presentation 10/14, Slide 14)

##### *4 AAC 06.700. Purpose*

Statewide student assessment is one component in a system to measure and make accountable the state education system. The purposes of statewide student assessment specifically are to

- (1) ascertain on a statewide basis the extent to which children of the state are attaining state standards as described in 4 AAC 06.737;
- (2) produce statewide information to facilitate sound decision making by policy makers, parents, educators, and the public; and
- (3) provide a focus for instructional improvement.

#### **Initial AMP Proposal – Robust Assessment System: Three Types of Assessments**

1. Summative Fixed Year Assessment for Two Years – September Scores Delivered 1<sup>st</sup> Year; May On-Going Summative Adaptive FY17 - September Scores Delivered 1<sup>st</sup> Year; May On-Going
2. Testlets (Formative Bank – Available Fall 2014)
3. Interim Assessments (Growth Assessment Bank for Fall and Winter – Available Fall 2015) (Reference: D.E.E.D. AK's Comprehensive Student Assessment System Power point presentation 8/14, Slide 16)

Technology Based Format: Computer-based testing schedule does not need to be the same for students across the district or within a school. (Reference: D.E.E.D. AK's Comprehensive Student Assessment System Power point presentation 8/14 Slide 18). There is greater flexibility in test administrations – which eases the burden on schools. (Reference: D.E.E.D. AK Principal's Conference AMP 10/14, Slide 31.)

Test Items: Developed around

1. Claims – Big ideas of the standards
2. Targets – Groups of standards to reflect how students learn
3. Evidence Statements – Specific skills demonstrating learning

Summative Assessment Framework replaces the Test Blueprint: "Helpful for educators because it organizes the standards around big ideas or broad statements and further defines specific skills students would need to demonstrate in order to show mastery of the standards." (Reference: AMP Summative Assessment Framework PowerPoint by AAI, Slide 6)

Teacher Evaluation System: AMP will be used as one of the required SLO data points once approved by the Commissioner. (D.E.E.D. 2014 Principals' PreConference Session: Telling Your Story with Student Learning Objectives, Slide 21). SLO Assessment Data must include a pre- and post-assessment during the duration the teacher taught the students. (D.E.E.D. 2014 Principals' PreConference Session: Telling Your Story with Student Learning Objectives, Slide 25).

### AMP Implementation Issues:

1. Test Administration Challenges:

Test ticketing process was burdensome – each student had eight testing tickets with usernames and unique passwords. Sites had to print, cut, and organize the tickets for each student. If students had to change computer devices between testing blocks, the system required them to login again for previous tests taken prior to continuing on.

On-going technology issues between the KITE client and our Local Caching Servers. The new version this year is not properly uninstalling the old version. AAI is currently 'repackaging' the LCS software so schools are unable to access the system currently.

2. Changes to Assessment Timelines and Administration:

Performance Task test administration would take away district and site flexibility by requiring same day, same grade administration.

The timelines for testlet availability moved from September of 2014 to January of 2015. Interim assessments were initially supposed to be available in Fall of 2015; this was revised to Fall of 2016. Currently documentation reflects TBD for release dates for the Interim assessments. These were critical components of the proposed Summative Assessment Framework.

3. Report Challenges:

Receiving student reports in December created undue burden on districts in trying to deliver the scoring reports within 20 days. This is a burden in-district as we have a 40% transient rate and out of district. Several large districts refused to forward assessments to the receiving district. As of January 12, the MSBSD has still not received over 300 student reports requested from the state for new students to our district. This was a solution proposed by D.E.E.D. in response to our concerns about access reports.

Reports were pulled back three times due to errors. This delayed the delivery of information and created frustration for district and site test coordinators. The last error in 5<sup>th</sup> grade reports was unable to be corrected as reports had already been disseminated.

4. Report Limitations:

Per DEED recommendations on the AMP Student Explanation Materials: "*this information is not intended to be used to make instructional decisions.*" The new reporting system virtually eliminates standards-based subgroup reporting. The new designations of 'partially meeting' or 'meeting' provides little information to educators, students, and parents. Original presentations of AMP indicated subgroup reporting would be available.

5. D.E.E.D. Responsiveness:

When initial concerns were shared with D.E.E.D., the department responded by contacting all of our district principals and superintendents statewide diminishing the concerns and specifically stating, "I am aware that there is misinformation out there regarding the scheduling of the performance tasks...I don't want inaccuracies to be a distractor to you or your staff."

The board has yet to hear back on its resolution dated October 21, 2015 requesting to delay implementation of the Performance Tasks and the SLO pilot and allow districts the opportunity for choice in a state summative assessment.

### **Responding to Brian Gong's testimony at the December State School Board Meeting:**

#### 5 Criteria for State Summative Assessments

1. Alignment - Assess student achievement in relation to the state content standards. Key aspect in test validity. Allows us to have confidence in the test.  
MSBSD Response: Based on the limitations of test reporting, districts are unable to ascertain if students are mastering state content standards. Therefore, we do not have confidence in the assessment.
2. Fairness – Care is taken to provide appropriate accommodations found in summative assessments – expensive to develop. Must have standardized testing procedures and security.  
MSBSD Response: Student accommodations worked smoothly for the most part; staff reported the accessibility tools were a good addition to the test.
3. Yield Comparable Results – Allows for comparisons across schools, districts, years.  
MSBSD Response: Limitations to this due to the changing of the format from fixed to adaptive assessment format. Limited to Alaska comparability only.
4. Incorporate state adopted achievement levels and other policies  
MSBSD Response: Does not comply with 4 AAC 06.700. *Purpose of a state-wide assessment is to (1) ascertain on a statewide basis the extent to which children of the state are attaining state standards as described in 4 AAC 06.737; and (3) provide a focus for instructional improvement. The new designations of 'partially meeting' or 'meeting' provides little information to educators, students, and parents.*
5. Transparent – Documentation and reporting information available  
MSBSD Response: All previous reports and webinars are archived on the D.E.E.D. website.

#### **MSBSD Conclusions:**

According to state regulations and the initial AMP proposals, MSBSD was under the impression AMP would provide a robust assessment system for use at the state, district, school, teacher, programmatic, and student level. After a full season of implementation and dissemination of reporting information, MSBSD concludes the AMP summative assessment is useful for state compliance purposes only. There is no value added to districts from the assessment; and in fact learning opportunities are lost as a result of having to administer the assessment.

#### **MSBSD Recommendations**

Per the MSBSD Board Resolution dated October 21, 2015, the district is requesting the State School Board consider the right of districts to choose a nationally-normed assessment in lieu of the current state assessment. This latitude has been approved in the newly authorized Every Student Succeeds Act (E.S.S.A.).



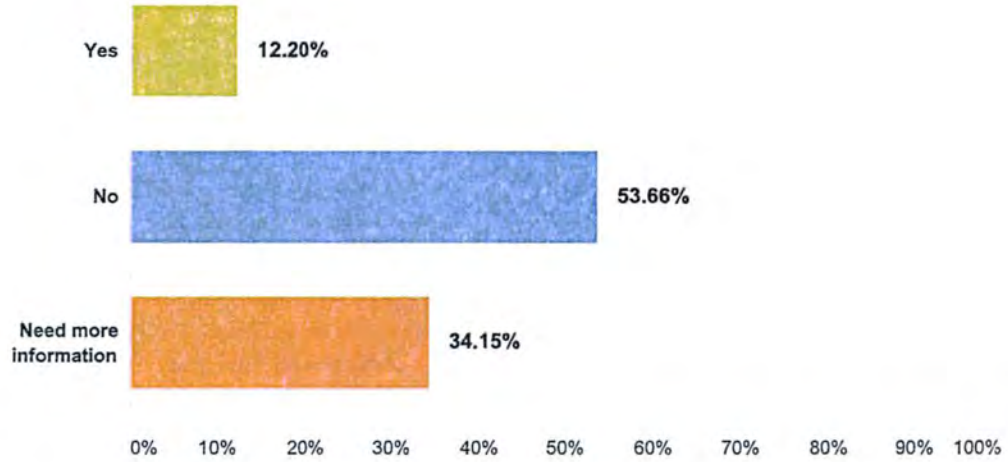
**District AMP Survey Results**  
**January 20, 2016**  
**Responses received from 42 districts**

Executive Director Dr. Lisa Skiles Parady  
LParady@alaskaacsa.org  
Cell: 907.903.1689 Office: 907.586.9702

ASA Superintendent Survey

**Q1 Does your district support continuing with the AMP assessment?**

Answered: 41 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	12.20%	5
No	53.66%	22
Need more information	34.15%	14
<b>Total</b>		<b>41</b>

**1. Does your district support continuing with the AMP assessment? Other (please specify)**

There is no universal agreement in this district as at other levels including our state department, our legislature, etc. I am very disappointed in the way this has rolled out, the way results were reported, and the total lack of a clear and articulated understanding of how and why we test children. I think it is a reflection and end product of the continual bad practice and ignorance around testing, test purposes, and allowing people to make bad decisions that never result in a useful and meaningful product or the critical data we hoped would help inform instruction and elevate what we do for and with kids.

We are leaning more toward seeing into the possibility of adopting MAP

Not sure how the performance tasks would improve/enhance.

WE need to know the alternative before we make decisions.

The committee of superintendents didn't feel it met clearly the state of Alaska needs and it wasn't generating useful information on the status of each child

Would like to know the alternatives before making another change.

My personal preference is to discontinue AMP assessments. However, I do not have enough information about how this will affect how it will look to our public when we are bound to pay for this year anyway.

If we have to...finish it this year then run fast.

Only supportive if detailed adjustments are made immediately showing that schools can utilize the data in an efficient manner.

I believe that we need to give the AMP a chance to be fixed. I believe that the AMP was never intended to be rolled out in just one year. The implementation phase was to last a few years. AAI deserves a chance to work with EED to get the flaws fixed. If it cannot meet EED's expectations, then it should be scrapped. Can the cut scores be re-set to a more realistic level? Can the reports be re-designed to give teachers/principals information needed to affect instructional practices? Can the AMP results be presented to parents in a way that measures growth rather than as a categorization of proficiency levels?

My district has not taken a position on this issue. I don't believe we would be in support of giving the same test with the same results we had last year.

Before a logical decision can be made, I believe we need more information. With that said, my personal thoughts are to discontinue AMP, and if MAP meets the needs, then I would be in favor of moving in that direction.

It needs to be useful and something that will help our students improve their learning.

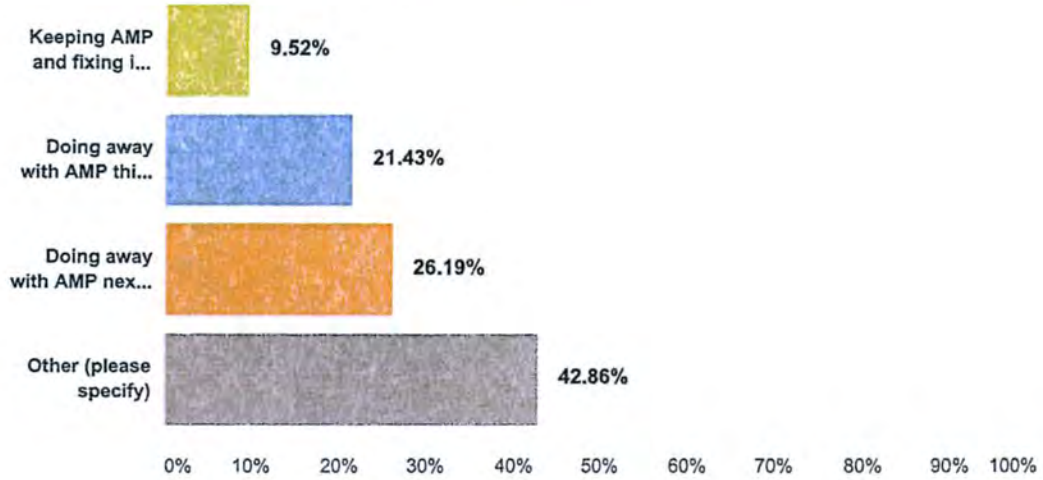
I would support this years testing only. I think we are already committed but I am a no for future years. The company has not met deliverable items and I have no confidence in them moving forward.

I do not support continuing with the AMP assessment but the DBSD Board has not established a position for the District. As the requirement to participate in this assessment is grounded in statute, I shy from making a "political" statement for the District without clear guidance from the Board as a whole.

ASA Superintendent Survey

Q2 With regard to AMP, do you support:

Answered: 42 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Keeping AMP and fixing it to be workable	9.52%	4
Doing away with AMP this year or pausing AMP this year	21.43%	9
Doing away with AMP next year and getting a bid out on a new assessment	26.19%	11
Other (please specify)	42.86%	18
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>

**2. With regard to AMP, do you support: Other (please specify)**

I fall somewhere between the first two bubbles- continue and fix it, or take a slight pause and get it right before we move on. Be forewarned if the same people who created this nightmare become who we trust to fix it, we won't end up with anything that is significantly different. And the pause will only fuel the fire of the poorly informed to keep chanting it needs to go.

MAP is an assessment most useful to teachers. I would DEED to find a way to make this work as a statewide assessment.

Smarter Balanced or PAARK

I think that AMP has been irreparably damaged in reputation and that the change in Federal law provides us an opportunity to reset

I'm in favor of doing away with AMP this year or pausing AMP this year IF the communication regarding that change is very clear and comes directly from DEED in a form that all districts can use with their communities and the media so the messaging is consistent across the state.

I see two options: 1. Going out for bid again for a statewide assessment provider for a statewide assessment aligned to our standards that provides summative information about our student's growth with the Alaska Math and English/language arts standards. We also need a statewide assessment that provides detailed individual student information that can be utilized to influence classroom instructional practices. 2. Go with a current formative assessment provider that is aligned to the common core that can provide summative information as well as specific student information that can influence classroom practices.

Doing away with AMP next year and exploring other options i.e. MAP

Using the MAP test if it can address state standards

I'd like the state to complete an RFP process in which multiple vendors could submit proposals, including the current (AMP) vendor, to get a full picture of the options to build the best assessment and accountability system for Alaska.

I would like to pause AMP as we have much to do without spending time on something we have lost confidence. However, I do not want us to break any regulations or perceptions that we pay for things without using them. Much to weigh before making decision.

I am interested in both pausing AMP this year (and until a valid assessment can be developed) and getting a bid on a new assessment.

AMP was a \$25 million investment and it was never presented as an assessment that would/could be implemented in just one year. Maybe during the implementation phase, the results should be "paused" and used only for the purpose of fine-tuning the assessment. If the AMP is done away with, consideration must be given to districts that struggle with internet speed and connection quality. While it is likely unrealistic to go back to paper/pencil assessments, it must be recognized that there are still places in Alaska with little more than dial-up internet connections. Additionally, if the direction is a statewide adoption of MAP (because 37 districts already use that), then consideration must be given to districts who have chosen Renaissance or AimsWeb to either be allowed to continue with those assessments or given time and fiscal resources to adopt and implement MAP.

I think the right thing to do is pause this year in order to fix AMP for next year, then get a bid on a new assessmet

I would suggest discontinuing AMP for next year, and seriously look into whether or not MAP can provide us with the information that we need to guide instruction.

Make this the last year of AMP while developing a plan going forward.

I would support any of the above as long as the creation of a workable assessment/accountability system was done in a collaborative manner.

My district would rather go back to SBA then leave the districts to prove the standards are at a proficient level for all.

If State can articulate vendor expectations with clear deadlines then we can make an informed decision on AMP

ASA Superintendent Survey

**Q3 Please share any additional thoughts you have about AMP or statewide assessment in Alaska:**

Answered: 35 Skipped: 7

**3: Please share any additional thoughts you have about AMP or statewide assessment in Alaska:**

We use NWEA MAP assessments for our formative benchmark assessments and as a universal screener. This assessment is aligned to the Alaska ELA/Math standards and give meaningful information to pinpoint instructional decisions for students and schools. The AMP assessment is not instructionally relevant and although work is being done to improve the assessment, it's going to be years before it's a reliable tool for anything. We can't waste more of our students time by saying just keep taking the test because someday it might help you.

I've been engaged in this for years, often in the cheap seats making suggestions, at other times in more significant leadership roles on our efforts. We have a bad history of poor performance when compared to other students in other states, in how we compare our state investment and the product we produce, if the product is measured well by test scores and college success. People in America and Alaska use testing to further an agenda more often than they use it for smart instructional purposes. I'm afraid that won't change anytime soon. Our other issue is our short attention span. In the minds of most, tests are interchangeable, results close enough that who cares what we do or use. The AMP test needed five plus years to run its course and be the adaptive test everyone wanted, and by stopping the performance tasks and other developmental parts of that five year process we have only assured the critics that they are right. This will one day be viewed as a 25 million dollar mistake, and that is why EED is exploring breaking the contract to limit that loss.

The online format was a great upgrade - saving our district thousands in air charter and man hour costs. We have to quit switching just to switch, MAP is only a good idea for those districts already implementing this assessment. AMP will work just fine as a summative assessment, with a few tweaks to provide more diagnostic info for teachers. We need to pick an assessment and stick with it.

We have way too many assessments already-- CPAA preK, early literacy, LEP, workkeys, MAP, AMP to name a few. We need to stop measuring and teach.

The AMP test doesn't provide essential information.

The consortium has more influence, resources and expertise than AMP. They are further along with developing questions and formative assessments.

AMP must tie in more directly with standards, and should provide more instructional information.

We need a test selected for meeting student instructional needs. We do not need a test selected solely to meet federal requirements, satisfy political concerns, and clouded by threat of litigation. At true nationally comparative test that sets a high rigorous expectations with enough information to inform school-wide instructional decisions.

The District is one of the 37 districts utilizing MAP for the past several years.

Since we only have a year to year contract, I do not see the down side of reviewing our assessment to determine if there is something that better meets our needs both test and dollar wise in light of new federal laws.

I don't know that the state needs to bid on a new assessment if NWEA MAP meets the new federal requirements and provides districts with information they can use to guide instruction. There seems to be a great deal of support for use of an existing instrument, such as MAP.

Get rid of this dreadful assessment.

We need a statewide assessment that provides summative information about our student's growth with the Alaska Math and English/language arts standards. We also need a statewide assessment that provides detailed individual student information that can be utilized to influence classroom instructional practices.

Most districts already have something that works, why continue with the burden of the AMP test!

The MAP test is an easier test for teachers to administer and prepare students to take.

The AMP is not working in our state and the loss of confidence from stakeholders surrounding last years AMP debacle is not fixable.

The amount of time preparing DTC's, staff, and students for an assessment that is only a one-shot look is disconcerting to say the least. If we need to put in this much time then it should provide us with useful information that helps us to improve instruction. If it is meant as just a quick shot at where our students are at one point in the year then we need to make it a simple testing day without a lot of time spent preparing or taking the assessment.

I am willing to share MSBSD work in regard to AMP and assessment in general.

The multi-year implementation of AMP does not make the weaknesses in the assessment itself tolerable, and rather it only exasperated everything. The technology alone was very outdated for an online assessment, and the fact that in today's world there was no connection to instruction calls into question the foundations that went into developing the AMP assessment. When a tool is used to assess an educator's effectiveness, then we need to make sure that there is confidence that the tool is an accurate measure of an educator's effectiveness, which AMP is not. The reports were beyond appalling and nailed the coffin shut on AMP for our district.

With so many valid tests out there, why spend the \$\$ just to be different!!

While not perfect, the AMP seems to provide a more realistic measure of student academic achievement that is comparable to the SAT and ACT. For years, we've had parents complain that their children are performing at grade level and are proficient on the SBAs, but then when they take the ACT or SAT, they fall short. I fully expect the AMP will be scrapped either this year or next year because of the overwhelming opposition to it, especially in Mat Su and Anchorage. Further, I do not believe that there will be the financial resources available that will be needed to have a vendor develop another statewide assessment. While not perfect, I believe that the AMP could have potential as a statewide assessment if it is appropriately modified.

The AMP test is not the best the State of Alaska can do for our kids. We need to temporarily fix it while we work to find a better assessment that can inform instruction.

The DEED needs to be given the opportunity to make this assessment work. While there may be issues with the reporting, we need to give it a fair shot. It makes no sense to throw the baby out with the bath water.

The intentions of AMP are good, but I would have thought the State would have had this better outlined on its expectations before entering into a contract.

Let's not throw out the baby with the bathwater.

Reports from AMP did not provide meaningful data for improving instruction and student achievement and I would like to have a state assessment that does.

MAP should be explored as a higher quality, more cost effective and more efficient assessment.

I believe a better use of funds would be to take part of the funds to support district's use of Star, MAPs, new assessment used is Vancouver etc and part of the funds to cover the state ESEA compliance piece. I don't believe AMP can adjust to the teachers/school needs. Further I am very uncomfortable with a group that didn't get reporting correct sub-contracting. The bar combo whiskey graphs were very poor psychometric choices

These questions are not yes/no questions. If we are going to have some state assessment, then we should continue to work to make it useable for districts. Question 2 can be a combination answer. Whether or not you have a single state assessment is the real question. Everyone does not use MAP, AimsWeb, etc. There are always going to be problems with any single test. In any format, there should not be a test that requires passing in order to graduate. I am in favor of still allowing districts to set their own graduation requirements, If a test needs to be taken, then there should be options for districts to select the one of their choice. Again, it should not be a graduation requirement. There is no correlation between the desires of the students and families in BSSD definition of success and a state test.

AMP need to go away. This test is not giving us any information or support in improving the instruction and success of our students. The stress of this ineffective assessment adds to the pressure placed upon educators and students. This pressure makes academic progress even more difficult.

We need a test that is useful. Something that is aligned with our standards. Results need to be useful so teachers can use them to drive instruction. This is what was pitched when they came out. It is NOT what we received. A lot of resources have been put into AMP and unless it can be fixed so it's useful, I think putting more resources into this test is a mistake and a poor use of valuable and dwindling state resources.

AMP is probably too damaged in the minds of districts and community to continue, but before getting rid of it we need to know what the plan would be to continue or replace. It may be the best assessment we could have in the long run.

I think we should use AMP this spring, 2016, then take a "pause year", 2017, to issue an RFP, vet vendors, develop a new assessment that meets the requirements of ESSA, is aligned to the standards, and has extremely detailed reporting. I also think superintendents and assessment coordinators should be part of the group vetting vendors and assisting in designing the assessment and reports.

I do not feel that it is feasible to throw out the AMP this year and adequately replace it. I do feel we should develop and put out to bid a new test. The legislature needs to make a final yes or no on standards so the new test can be aligned to the standards tested.

IF AMP were to go away this year, I feel that as a district we should still be expected to provide some sort of standardized performance information to the public.


**Superintendents willing to testify to a legislative committee regarding AMP or statewide assessment:**

Copper River School district	Michael Johnson
Craig City School District	Jack Walsh
Galena City School District	Chris Reitan
Hoonah City School District	PJ FORD slack, PHD
Juneau Borough School District	Mark Miller
Kake City School District	Kevin Shipley
Kodiak Island Brough School District	Stewart McDonald
Kuspuk School District	Sue Johnson
Mat-Su Borough School District	Deena Paramo
Nenana City School District	Eric Gebhart
North Slope Borough School District	Glen Szymoniak
Petersburg City School District	Erica Kludt-Painter (and district test coordinator, Bridget Wittstock)
Pribilof School District	Connie A. Newman
Tana City School District	Thérèse Ashton
Valdez City School District	Jim Nygaard
Yakutat City School District	Robin Gray

## Alaska Superintendents Association

234 Gold St. • Juneau, AK 99801-1101

Phone: (907) 586-9702 (800) 478-9702 • Fax: (907) 586-5879



Alaska Superintendents demand and support a strong system of accountability. We will not support an assessment program that is developed without our input or that does not inform student instruction.

The Alaska Superintendent Association (ASA) has been and continues to be ready to share its educational assessment expertise to collaboratively develop an effective, comprehensive assessment framework that accurately reflects student learning that is useful in guiding and informing student instruction.

The credibility of the Alaska Measure of Progress (AMP) has been called into question because it does not meet this criteria. More specifically, “The AMP information is not intended to be used to make instructional decisions...” (Achievement and Assessment Institute, University of Kansas, 2015).

A state level assessment is a condition of Alaska’s waiver from the requirements of No Child Left Behind. Due to the testing vendor’s failure to provide credible reports, it is necessary for the state to pause its implementation of the current accountability system, including the 2016 administration of AMP. It is in the best interests of Alaska’s students that DEED initiate a comprehensive and collaborative review of the entire system. Alaska’s students deserve a system of accountability that accurately informs both classroom instruction and public understanding of student achievement.

**Mike Hanley**  
*Commissioner*  
P.O. Box 110500  
Juneau, AK 99811-0500  
education.alaska.gov



**Eric Fry**  
*Information Officer*  
907.465.2851  
cell: 907.321.5564  
eric.fry@alaska.gov

## Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**January 26, 2016**

### **Alaska will pursue new assessment options**

JUNEAU - The Alaska Department of Education & Early Development will issue a new Request For Proposals (RFP) to replace the Alaska Measures of Progress (AMP) assessment for the 2016-2017 school year. "After careful consideration, I believe that it is in the best interest of Alaska to consider new assessment structures that better align to instructional needs and are allowable due to changes in federal law," said Alaska Education Commissioner Mike Hanley.

While the first administration of the new computer-based assessment went smoothly last spring, multiple issues since then have resulted in increasing frustration among Alaskan educators. These issues included delayed reports, reports needing to be corrected, and an insufficient level of information regarding student performance. While the department has been engaged in problem-solving with school districts to improve the 2016 AMP administration and reports, there has been a growing lack of confidence among educators statewide in the assessment.

The recent passage of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) provides new flexibility to states in designing their assessment system. "I believe that Alaska needs to take full advantage of the opportunity the new ESSA provides," said Commissioner Hanley, "and I believe time is of the essence for moving in a direction that better serves Alaska's students."

In order to meet current state and federal requirements, it will be necessary for the AMP assessment to be given again this spring. However, the department will immediately begin collaborating with stakeholders to determine the assessment approach that will work best for Alaska's students, and to inform a request-for-proposal process.

"I sincerely appreciate the efforts of Alaskan educators in helping to develop the AMP assessment," said Commission Hanley, "and I am confident that the lessons learned from AMP will serve us well as we move forward together."

For more information, contact Eric Fry, Information Officer, at 907-465-2851 or [eric.fry@alaska.gov](mailto:eric.fry@alaska.gov).

A large, faint watermark of the Department of Education & Early Development logo is visible in the background of the lower right section of the page. It features a stylized figure holding a torch, surrounded by the words "DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & EARLY DEVELOPMENT".

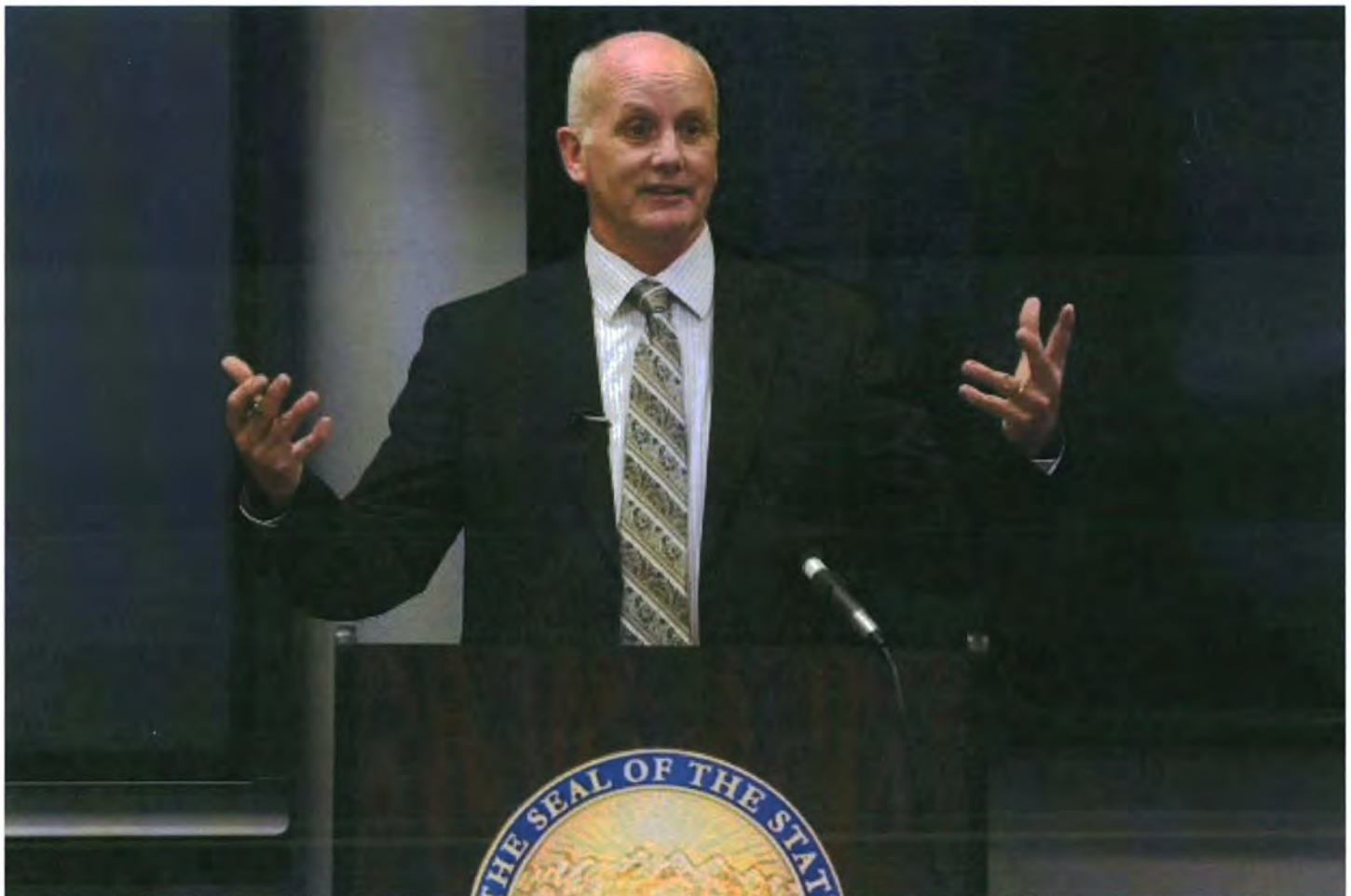
**EDUCATION  
& EARLY DEVELOPMENT**

## SECTIONS

## Education

# Alaska superintendents praise plan to look for new standardized test

Tegan Hanlon | January 27, 2016

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Bill Roth / ADN

Alaska superintendents who testified at a legislative hearing Wednesday praised the state education department's decision to scrap the [Alaska Measures of Progress test](#) and look for a new standardized exam for next school year.

But the new test — whatever it may look like — must provide [score reports that can inform teachers and](#)

parents, said superintendents who testified. That demand for more in-depth reporting has been the steady, vocal message from state educators since they received score reports from the new exam in the fall. They said the reports didn't dive deep enough into what specific academic standards students met and didn't meet.

"I am elated to hear that the AMP test will be discontinued," Dave Herbert, superintendent of St. Mary's School District on the Yukon River delta, told legislators at Wednesday morning's Joint House-Senate Education Committee meeting.

However, Herbert said his community didn't understand how the state could have spent so much time and money on the Alaska Measures of Progress test, and then not get useful score reports out of it.

"We find this simply to be unacceptable," he said. "My hope in moving forward is that the state will very carefully analyze any future assessments and make sure that any assessment that's adopted informs instruction."

Kevin Shipley, superintendent at the Kake City School District in Southeast Alaska, said Alaska's school system needs to establish a statewide plan for standardized testing, academic standards and teacher evaluations.

"We need to get it right this time," Shipley said. "In our tight financial time we cannot afford missteps."

In a brief statement at the end of the morning meeting, Alaska Education Commissioner Mike Hanley said the state couldn't continue with the AMP test because too many people had lost confidence in it as a testing tool.

"We're going to make sure we do it right," Hanley said.

Some Alaska legislators said at the end of the meeting they had many questions for Hanley about what went wrong with the standardized test, but they had run out of time.

"I want to congratulate you for the courage to change," Rep. Liz Vazquez, R-Anchorage, told Hanley. "But I do want to explore what went wrong with AMP."

Hanley said in an interview after the meeting that no big, recent event prompted him to announce the education department would issue a new request for proposals to replace the statewide standardized test by spring 2017.

Alaska students have only [taken the AMP test once](#) -- last spring.

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About a year before, the state education department contracted the Achievement and Assessment Institute at the University of Kansas to develop an Alaska-specific standardized test based on new academic standards for English and math.

The contract would span five years and total \$25 million. Margaret MacKinnon, the education department's director of assessment and accountability, said in an email Wednesday the state has paid the Kansas research center about \$7.1 million so far.

The state expects to pay about \$9.1 million total for two years of testing, MacKinnon said. The state can get out of the contract with the research center each June, Hanley said.

Alaska's students will again take the AMP in March, as required by state and federal law. The center has hired a subcontractor at its own expense to help with score reports.

Hanley said he hopes to have a different test in place by next spring.

When the Kansas institute was chosen about two years ago, Rep. Lance Pruitt, R-Anchorage, was the only lawmaker to sit on the five-member search committee. He said Hanley asked him to sit on the committee.

Pruitt said Wednesday he didn't remember much from the three-day selection process and he said a lot of the conversations during that time were confidential.

He said he couldn't remember if he gave the Kansas research center the highest score, but he remembers the center appeared to be the most willing to make sure the test was the right fit for Alaska's school districts.

Hanley said since the Kansas center is a relatively small operation, he felt Alaska could have a big say in the development of the test. The center also developed a statewide test for Kansas.

Alaskans reviewed all of the questions on the AMP and wrote some of the reading passages, Hanley said. "We had Alaskans set some of the cut scores, so we were very engaged in that respect," he said.

Hanley said that while the administration of the computer-based standardized test went well, the score reporting did not. The score reports got delayed for weeks. Once released in November, they showed less than half of the student's met new education standards for English and math.

But that wasn't the problem. The reports had confusing graphics and didn't go deep enough into students' performances, Hanley said.

"We felt we had set clear expectations," he said.

Marianne Perie, a project director at the Kansas center, has said problems started in late summer when two of the center's top employees had to take extended time off, one eventually quitting, amid serious medical concerns.

Neal Kingston, director of the Kansas center, said Wednesday the center wasn't prepared for so many Alaska students to have to take the test on paper because they didn't have computer access. That created problems with data collection, he said.

Kingston said the center also saw a lot of students start taking the test in one school and finish it in another.

While these were problems the center faced, he said he didn't want them to sound like excuses.

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He said the center had planned to address challenges in the second administration of the test. Eventually, the test would include questions that required students to write out answers. Those questions would have also increased the depth of score reports, he said.

Hanley said the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, which ended the more rigid No Child Left Behind law of 2001, provides new flexibility for states in designing their testing systems. However it still requires a

statewide standardized test.

But James Fields, chair of the Alaska Board of Education and Early Development, said he hopes with the next standardized test, educators and parents will see usable data sooner than three years out.

Contact *Tegan Hanlon* at [thanlon@alaskadispatch.com](mailto:thanlon@alaskadispatch.com) or on *Twitter*

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## MSBSD State Assessment Summary, Concerns and Recommendations

### According to State Regulations:

Comprehensive System of Student Assessment - Presented as the vision of the D.E.E.D. Assessment Team (Reference: AK Principal's Conference - AMP Power point presentation 10/14, Slide 14)

#### *4 AAC 06.700. Purpose*

Statewide student assessment is one component in a system to measure and make accountable the state education system. The purposes of statewide student assessment specifically are to

- (1) ascertain on a statewide basis the extent to which children of the state are attaining state standards as described in 4 AAC 06.737;
- (2) produce statewide information to facilitate sound decision making by policy makers, parents, educators, and the public; and
- (3) provide a focus for instructional improvement.

### Initial AMP Proposal – Robust Assessment System: Three Types of Assessments:

1. Summative Fixed Year Assessment for Two Years – September Scores Delivered 1<sup>st</sup> Year; May On-Going Summative Adaptive FY17 - September Scores Delivered 1<sup>st</sup> Year; May On-Going
2. Testlets (Formative Bank – Available Fall 2014)
3. Interim Assessments (Growth Assessment Bank for Fall and Winter – Available Fall 2015) (Reference: D.E.E.D. AK's Comprehensive Student Assessment System Power point presentation 8/14, Slide 16)

Technology Based Format: Computer-based testing schedule does not need to be the same for students across the district or within a school. (Reference: D.E.E.D. AK's Comprehensive Student Assessment System Power point presentation 8/14 Slide 18). There is greater flexibility in test administrations – which eases the burden on schools. (Reference: D.E.E.D. AK Principal's Conference AMP 10/14, Slide 31.)

Test Items: Developed around

1. Claims – Big ideas of the standards
2. Targets – Groups of standards to reflect how students learn
3. Evidence Statements – Specific skills demonstrating learning

Summative Assessment Framework replaces the Test Blueprint: "Helpful for educators because it organizes the standards around big ideas or broad statements and further defines specific skills students would need to demonstrate in order to show mastery of the standards." (Reference: AMP Summative Assessment Framework PowerPoint by AAI, Slide 6)

Teacher Evaluation System: AMP will be used as one of the required SLO data points once approved by the Commissioner. (D.E.E.D. 2014 Principals' PreConference Session: Telling Your Story with Student Learning Objectives, Slide 21). SLO Assessment Data must include a pre- and post-assessment during the duration the teacher taught the students. (D.E.E.D. 2014 Principals' PreConference Session: Telling Your Story with Student Learning Objectives, Slide 25).

### AMP Implementation Issues:

1. Test Administration Challenges:

Test ticketing process was burdensome – each student had eight testing tickets with usernames and unique passwords. Sites had to print, cut, and organize the tickets for each student. If students had to change computer devices between testing blocks, the system required them to login again for previous tests taken prior to continuing on.

On-going technology issues between the KITE client and our Local Caching Servers. The new version this year is not properly uninstalling the old version. AAI is 'repackaging' the LCS software so schools are currently unable to access the system.

2. Changes to Assessment Timelines and Administration:

Performance Task test administration would take away district and site flexibility by requiring same day, same grade administration.

The timelines for testlet availability moved from September of 2014 to January of 2015. Interim assessments were initially supposed to be available in Fall of 2015; this was revised to Fall of 2016. Currently documentation reflects TBD for release dates for the Interim assessments. These were critical components of the proposed Summative Assessment Framework.

3. Report Challenges:

Receiving student reports in December created undue burden on districts in trying to deliver the scoring reports within 20 days. This is a burden in-district as we have a 40% transient rate and out of district. Several large districts refused to forward assessments to the receiving district. As of January 12, the MSBSD has still not received over 300 student reports requested from the state for new students to our district. This was a solution proposed by D.E.E.D. in response to our concerns about access reports.

Reports were pulled back three times due to errors. This delayed the delivery of information and created frustration for district and site test coordinators. The last error in 5<sup>th</sup> grade reports was unable to be corrected as reports had already been disseminated.

4. Report Limitations:

Per DEED recommendations on the AMP Student Explanation Materials: "this information is not intended to be used to make instructional decisions." The new reporting system virtually eliminates standards-based subgroup reporting. The new designations of 'partially meeting' or 'meeting' provides little information to educators, students, and parents. Original presentations of AMP indicated subgroup reporting would be available.

5. D.E.E.D. Responsiveness:

When initial concerns were shared with D.E.E.D., the department responded by contacting all of our district principals and superintendents statewide diminishing the concerns and specifically stating, "I am aware that there is misinformation out there regarding the scheduling of the performance tasks...I don't want inaccuracies to be a distractor to you or your staff."

The board has yet to hear back on its resolution dated October 21, 2015 requesting to delay implementation of the Performance Tasks and the SLO pilot and allow districts the opportunity for choice in a state summative assessment.

### **Responding to Brian Gong's testimony at the December State School Board Meeting:**

#### **5 Criteria for State Summative Assessments**

1. Alignment - Assess student achievement in relation to the state content standards. Key aspect in test validity. Allows us to have confidence in the test.  
MSBSD Response: Based on the limitations of test reporting, districts are unable to ascertain if students are mastering state content standards. Therefore, we do not have confidence in the assessment.
2. Fairness – Care is taken to provide appropriate accommodations found in summative assessments – expensive to develop. Must have standardized testing procedures and security.  
MSBSD Response: Student accommodations worked smoothly for the most part; staff reported the accessibility tools were a good addition to the test.
3. Yield Comparable Results – Allows for comparisons across schools, districts, years.  
MSBSD Response: Limitations to this due to the changing of the format from fixed to adaptive assessment format. Limited to Alaska comparability only.
4. Incorporate state adopted achievement levels and other policies  
MSBSD Response: Does not comply with 4 AAC 06.700. *Purpose of a state-wide assessment is to (1) ascertain on a statewide basis the extent to which children of the state are attaining state standards as described in 4 AAC 06.737; and (3) provide a focus for instructional improvement. The new designations of 'partially meeting' or 'meeting' provides little information to educators, students, and parents.*
5. Transparent – Documentation and reporting information available  
MSBSD Response: All previous reports and webinars are archived on the D.E.E.D. website.

#### **Assessment Costs:**

Per D.E.E.D., the AMP assessment costs \$66.72 per student.

Mat-Su pays \$12.50 per student for the MAP assessment +\$2.50 to add science.

Per NWEA, a state summative assessment, plus access to growth assessments throughout the year, would range between \$25 and \$30. The addition of performance tasks would be \$5 per student.

#### **MSBSD Conclusions:**

According to state regulations and the initial AMP proposals, MSBSD was under the impression AMP would provide a robust assessment system for use at the state, district, school, teacher, programmatic, and student level. After a full season of implementation and dissemination of reporting information, MSBSD concludes the AMP summative assessment is useful for state compliance purposes only. There is no value added to districts from the assessment; and in fact learning opportunities are lost as a result of having to administer the assessment.

#### **MSBSD Recommendations:**

Per the MSBSD Board Resolution dated October 21, 2015, the district is requesting the State School Board consider the right of districts to choose a nationally-normed assessment in lieu of the current state assessment. This latitude has been approved in the newly authorized Every Student Succeeds Act (E.S.S.A.).

October 8, 2015

Alaska State Board of Education

RE: AMP Testing and accountability program

Ladies and Gentlemen:

First let us state that we appreciate DEED and Commissioner Hanley for the large amount of work that they have put into this endeavor. There are many fine people working in the department and meeting the needs of our students. The state is required by our NCLB waiver to create a system of evaluation that tests for college and career readiness. The system currently approved by the US Department of Education and now being finalized, may well be the only or best solution to the current problem. On the other hand, maybe it is not.

We feel that we would be remiss in not providing the state board with an update and express our concerns, questions and recommendations regarding the current testing and accountability program.

The Vision set out by the Alaska State Board of Education is "To ensure quality standards-based instruction to improve academic achievement for all students." In March of 2009, the Board adopted the Alaska Education Plan and its goals. You reaffirmed those in September 2012, with the desire to continue with that plan. Also, in 2012 the state applied for and received a waiver from NCLB requirements.

The Alaska Standards that were adopted align to a large extent, over 90%, with the Common Core Standards. According to the document, "the plan answers these fundamental questions: What is Alaska's vision for its schools and students? What are our goals? What attributes and skills do we want high school graduates to possess? What actions will meet these goals and make this vision a reality?"

In short, the vision and goals in the Alaska Education Plan are our destination. The actions are the roadmap. Knowing where we want to go, we can determine if our expenditures of money and effort are efficiently and effectively getting us there. The public, having a clear vision for our schools and students, can measure performance against goals."

At the time of the waiver, based on the plan that was in place, there was general consensus that we were headed in the right direction for the students and taxpayers of the state. However the devil was in the details. After three years of implementation and recently receiving additional training for going forward, we have several concerns.

As superintendents we are first and foremost student advocates and in addition to looking at the goals set out by the State School Board, we must ask:

"Is the current system what is best for our students?"

"Is the current system the best for our staff and community?"

"Is the current system the best for public education across our state?"

Unfortunately, we believe the answer would be no. In its current development it "will not have the capacity to guide or inform instruction." We examined the goals and vision set out by the State School Board and we do not feel that we are meeting those with our current plan.

Specifically, our concerns are:

1. AMP test will give very limited information on students that will let districts inform, adjust or design instruction, targeted to student needs. Other than a score from 1 to 4, each student will receive scores for each of four broad claim categories. We are unclear how that relates to a standards based system since we only receive general information on how a student, school and district performed with regard to a new standard, with no information that will assist in directing or targeting future instruction.
2. Since every state chooses their own assessments and sets their own proficiency scores, there is no valid way to compare Alaska students with students from other states. This does not allow us to assess our global competitiveness.
3. According to training for the Superintendents last week we were informed that the test is aligned to the standard that "all students would be able to enter college without the need for remediation". This focus marginalizes students who are on a Vocational Career path, and thus questions the need for the other "Career Ready" tests given by the state. The score reflects only a point in time and therefore has little to no meaning to the students.
4. Students will be taking a minimum of two days (not recommended by the department), with the recommendation being no more than an hour a day, or 4 to 5 days of AMP testing depending on how a school chooses to administer the exams. Interim tests are supposed to be available that would provide additional days of testing, but would give data to allow teachers to target students' needs and to assist in guiding student instruction. These tests were to have been available for district use during 2015, but are still not available to date.
5. We were required to create a new teacher evaluation system that was originally to be tied to the AMP scores or the growth model. The growth model for AMP is at least 3 years away, and there are apparently no plans to relate AMP results to teacher evaluation. We are not advocating tying teacher evaluation to the tests, but illustrating how the intent of the system has changed. How does this change affect the systems original design or plan?
6. The state has a very large multi-year contract with the University of Kansas for this testing regimen, with plans to expand the testing to an adaptive/growth model over the next few years. Wouldn't it make sense to give districts and students the opportunity to adapt to how standards are tested prior to changing the test, and how can we assure validity of the growth model when the test changes forms?
7. Since over 30 districts in the state currently use tests that provide targeted feedback on student achievement that are already adaptive, aligned to the standards, and provide national and state scores, is it prudent to continue with our current state-wide testing plan? There are also several exams that our students already take that provide for college and career readiness. Could these not be utilized to provide a truer comprehensive system of assessment?
8. There is no curricular or performance task related list of what it is we expect our High School students to do, or what particular courses a student should have mastered when they graduate. This list could show the difference between where we have been verses where we are going. How does this meet the goal of a clear vision for the public?
9. With the new standards, districts have struggled to rewrite and provide curriculums that are not text-book based. The Department does not currently have the resources or desire to provide or do

that work. Research has shown that without a spiraled, vibrant and changing curriculum that tests scores will not substantially rise. Without a curriculum framework to drive instruction to the standards, how do we expect districts to raise student educational achievement?

10. With the changes to the original testing/evaluation/instruction system, the only purpose we see for the AMP is to provide a rating for schools, give students feedback on where they stand to the new Alaska Standards and to meet the requirements of NCLB waiver. Is this truly an efficient and economic system for the data and information provided?

So where does this leave us? It may well be that we have to continue with the current plan to meet the US Department of Education requirements, but when ESEA is reauthorized, we would encourage the State Board of Education to make drastic changes to our current accountability structure. It would be beneficial to have the department, in conjunction with superintendents, educators, business people and parents create a more vibrant, long term and effective integrated system of standards, curriculum, instruction, evaluation and review. This system could be designed to give not only valuable information on where our students stand in relation to State, and National Standards, but would also allow districts and the Alaska Department of Education to adjust practices, to provide targeted instruction for each student, and give all Alaskans a reliable measure on how their students and schools are doing.

We thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Kevin Shipley  
Bob Bolen  
Dr. Josh Coughran  
Dr. PJ Ford-Slack  
Patrick Mayer  
Eric Gebhart  
Erica Kludt Painter  
Danny Frazier  
John Conwell  
Rich Carlson  
Shawn Arnold  
Dr. Deena Paramo  
Eugene Avey  
Jim Holien  
Laurel Jackson  
Jack Walsh  
Robin Gray  
Dr Mary Wegner  
Therese Ashton

The division intends to award up to \$750 per summer meal site or \$150 per day care homes. Approximately 35 to 60 summer meal sites will be chosen, for a total of \$28,000 in grants. Applications will be accepted through February 29. See [http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag\\_grants.htm](http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_grants.htm). Contact: Johanna Herron, 907-761-3870, [johanna.herron@alaska.gov](mailto:johanna.herron@alaska.gov)

### **Request for AMP Item Reviewers**

The Achievement and Assessment Institute (AAI) and the Department of Education & Early Development are seeking current Alaska educators to participate in the review of reading passages as well as mathematics and science items for future Alaska Measures of Progress (AMP) assessments.

Selected educators should have in-depth knowledge of the Alaska English Language Arts and Mathematic Standards in grades 3-10 and will participate in either a Bias & Sensitivity Review or a Content Review.

Educators' feedback during bias and sensitivity reviews will ensure that the test materials are appropriate and accessible for all students, free from bias and sensitivity, and respectfully representative of all Alaska students.

For content-focused reviews, educators will ensure that there are no barriers to validly measuring student achievement, while ensuring that the integrity of the content is maintained.

Scheduled reviews will be March 18-27; mid June-July; and September 23-October 2. Stipends are available. The online application to participate is located at [http://bit.ly/amp\\_reviews](http://bit.ly/amp_reviews). For more information, contact [amp\\_info@ku.edu](mailto:amp_info@ku.edu).

### **AMP It Up! Day is set for January 26**

In response to districts' requests, the Department of Education & Early Development has scheduled AMP It Up! Day 2016 for January 26. Participation is optional but encouraged. Districts and schools will work with the Achievement and Assessment Institute (AAI) to simulate computer-based testing conditions. Districtwide participation will provide information on each building's Internet connectivity while statewide participation will provide AAI with performance of its servers..

In addition to providing vital information on technological capacity, participation will provide students and teachers further opportunity to get more practice using the KITE System. District and school personnel may practice testing procedures such as prepping devices, scheduling test sessions, troubleshooting problems, and getting support from the AAI Service Desk. Participation will help everyone prepare for the opening of the AMP summative assessment computer-based window on March 29.

Link to AMP It Up! Day 2016

Guidance: [https://education.alaska.gov/tls/Assessments/AMPInterimTestlet/AMPitUpDayGuidance\\_FINAL.pdf](https://education.alaska.gov/tls/Assessments/AMPInterimTestlet/AMPitUpDayGuidance_FINAL.pdf)

### **Educator Evaluation and Support Monthly Webinar – Additional Session**

An additional session of the Educator Evaluation Winter Update webinar is scheduled for Wednesday, January 27 at 3:30 p.m. Join us to share your input on the implications of the federal Every Student Success Act (ESSA) on educator evaluation regulation changes. Also, the department will share the latest information on educator evaluation. Access information and resources will be located at: <http://www.livebinders.com/play/play?present=true&id=1816085>.

The purpose of the monthly webinar series on educator evaluation is to have regular opportunities to share information between districts and to receive the latest updates from the department. Every district will be given an opportunity to share updates on their progress on educator evaluation. Small-break out rooms may be used to allow further discussions. In addition, the department will share updates and there will be time left specifically for questions and answers. For questions, please contact Cecilia Miller at [Cecilia.miller@alaska.gov](mailto:Cecilia.miller@alaska.gov) or 907-465-8703.

Chairman Keller and Committee,

January 27, 2016

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this most important topic, the Alaska Measures of Progress (AMP) tests. I request that this written testimony be made a part of the public record.

1)

AMP is a summative test designed to weigh and measure Alaska students to Alaska standards at the end of the year. It was never designed to be a formative test, and that fact cannot be lost.

I the cut score development meeting last year and observed the process. Nearly 100 teachers spent three days custom fitting the test questions to the needs of Alaska students. In other words, a custom made suit was being tailored to Alaska students. I was very impressed with the process and commended the Department of Education & Early Development as such. The superintendents were not present. Is the work of these teachers, who are in direct contact with their students and are fully aware of what their students should know at grade level, to be discounted?

2)

The districts and their educational leaders that were found wanting are uncomfortable with the test results. Their accountability to their parents and you, the state, is in their educational leadership, they have a vested interest in calling the test a failure, instead of themselves. If their students performed poorly on the AMP test, then they should be held accountable and take responsibility. That is what a good leader does. It is a poor craftsman who blames their tools.

3)

It must be kept in mind that you, the Legislature, are held accountable by the courts for your school system, not the superintendents. Re: Molly Hootch, Moore and Kaysulie.

4)

Your Department of Education & Early Development just announced they have cancelled the last three years of a (5) year contract to administer this test. Did they ask your permission? Did the State Board of Education vote on this and approve it? It is likely the Legislature has just been contractually obligated to pay \$15 million to the test developers, for a test DEED has announced they will not be administering. It seems this is free money for the developers of AMP. In addition, the DEED has also contracted to "fix" the AMP which is just more money down the drain.

5)

You have under the new ESSA a requirement to administer a summative test, not formative tests. This requirement has not changed and AMP is the only test approved by the State Board of Education that is summative.

The MAP being suggested by the various superintendents is formative, not summative so it does not meet the requirements of the new ESSA. I have included a review in previous email.

MAP has to be administered three times a year, one hour at a time. It is adaptive just like the AMP. Both tests are adaptive, this means every individual student gets a different test. It is three times longer than AMP. The cost to districts of AMP infrastructure was never mentioned. What are those costs? It appears as much of the opposition to the AMP is because it is perceived to be connected to the Common Core debate.

6)

The data mining of the children, very important to the anti-CC crowd, is present in both the AMP and MAP. The major difference is the data for MAP is stored in the Northwest.

7)

Under the new ESSA the state must intervene in the lowest 5% of schools and any school with a subpopulation failing to achieve, both data points are present in AMP.

Conclusion.

I suggest the decision to dump AMP is premature and expensive because of two factors: a) the districts have completed the training; and b) districts have invested in the infrastructure.

The best path forward:

a) Require DEED to continue testing using AMP until the end of the contract 2020.

b) Cancel the RFI and the subsequent RFP for the new test unless either DEED pays for it out of its current administrative budget, or it is paid for out of the dissenting superintendents' school district budgets, the BSA.

(DEED seem to freely obligate districts and boards to costs they create).

c) Require districts to use a summative test to keep the state in compliance with ESSA, while encouraging them to administer formative tests.

d)The State Board of Education did you no favors last year when it eliminated the CAT and IOWA testing as alternative summative reports, and made AMP the only summative report. This can, and should, be undone by Legislative action.

Accountability is uncomfortable, it requires adaptation or evolution. I have faith parents and districts will correct poor educational leadership if given truthful information and time.

The focus should be on what is good for kids, not for superintendents and their districts.

David Nees  
Research Associate  
Alaska Policy Forum

# Alaska Dispatch News

Alaska Dispatch News

Jan 27 2016 - 6:00am

Marc Lester / ADN

Alaska's Department of Education announced Tuesday that it will get rid of the new statewide standardized test less than a year after students in grades 3 through 10 took the exam for the first time.

Alaska Education Commissioner Mike Hanley said in a statement sent around 7 p.m. that the department will issue another request for proposals to replace the test, called the Alaska Measures of Progress, in time for the 2016-17 school year.

"After careful consideration, I believe that it is in the best interest of Alaska to consider new assessment structures that better align to instructional needs and are allowable due to changes in federal law," Hanley said in the statement.

In 2014, the state announced that it would engage in a roughly \$25 million, five-year contract with the Achievement and Assessment Institute at the University of Kansas to develop an Alaska-specific standardized test. Questions would match up with new state standards for English and math.

Students took the Alaska Measures of Progress for the first time in spring 2015. To prepare, some school districts bought new laptops and upgraded their network bandwidth to handle the test, which is administered over the Internet.

Problems arose when the reports on students' scores got delayed over and over again. Once the scores were released, some superintendents called them too vague to tell them where they needed to improve instruction. Hanley announced last week that the Kansas-based research center would hire a subcontractor at its own expense to fix reports this year.

But Hanley said in the statement Tuesday that the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, which ended the more rigid No Child Left Behind law of 2001, provides new flexibility for states in designing their testing systems.

Students will continue to take the Alaska Measures of Progress test this spring to meet state and federal requirements. "However, the department will immediately begin collaborating with stakeholders to determine the assessment approach that will work best for Alaska's students, and to inform a request-for-proposal process," the statement said.

Contact Tegan Hanlon at [thanlon@alaskadispatch.com](mailto:thanlon@alaskadispatch.com) or on Twitter

## Janet Ogan

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**From:** David Nees <davidneesak@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 05, 2016 7:38 AM  
**To:** Rep. Liz Vazquez; Rep. Wes Keller; Sen. Cathy Giessel  
**Cc:** Rep. Lynn Gattis; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Charisse Millett  
**Subject:** Politico's take on testing cancellation

By Caitlin Emma | 04/05/2016 10:00 AM EDT

*With help from Allie Grasgreen Ciaramella, Kimberly Hefling, Brian Mahoney, Sabrina Rodriguez and Aubree Eliza Weaver*

**ALASKA HAD DOUBTS BEFORE TESTING SEASON BEGAN:** The Alaska Department of Education was concerned about this year's computer-based statewide student assessments even before last week's Internet connectivity problems, Interim Commissioner Susan McCauley told Morning Education. "We had very shaky confidence going into this assessment, but from an administrative standpoint, assumed it would be fine," McCauley said. Alaska had already decided in February that it would begin the search for a new testing vendor for next year and beyond, and this experience made clear their need for an institution that can provide "high-quality, useful data for Alaska parents and educators." The state canceled testing entirely last week - **"While there's no way we could have predicted this outcome," McCauley added,** "there should have been a plan in place" in the event of a situation like this. "We learned a lot to better prepare us for future assessments." The University of Kansas' Center for Education Testing and Evaluation noted that other students using its tests Monday were having no trouble

- **In addition to Internet woes, the testing system also failed on another front:** Students who were disrupted were often taken back to the start of the assessment rather than where they left off. Because of this, the data surrounding test completion rates pose a problem as well. The state reports that just 8.2 percent of students completed the entire ELA portion of the Alaska Measures of Progress assessment, and just 5 percent completed the whole math portion. Only 4 percent of students were able to complete all stages of the Alaska Science Assessment exam. And those could be too high. Brian Laurent, the Department's data management supervisor, notes that these figures must be taken with "extreme caution," since there is no way to assess whether the percentages reflect actual completion of the exam or "'completion' as interpreted by the testing platform." Whatever the real figures, they will surely fall below the required 95 percent of students who must be tested according to federal law.

- **The federal Education Department had no immediate comment** on the situation in Alaska, but officials referred to past statements about the importance of testing and how similar technical glitches have been managed:



## **District AMP Survey Results**

**January 25, 2016**

**Responses received from 43 districts**

Executive Director Dr. Lisa Skiles Parady

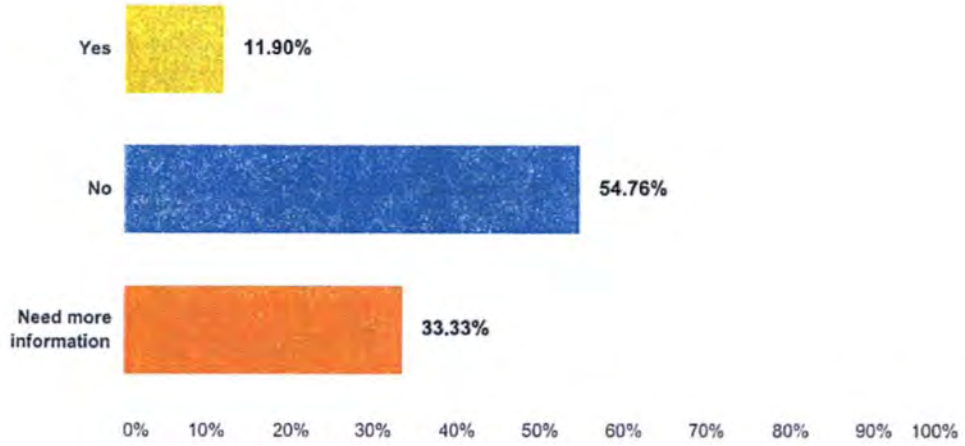
[LParady@alaskaacsa.org](mailto:LParady@alaskaacsa.org)

Cell: 907.903.1689 Office: 907-586-9702

ASA Superintendent Survey

**Q1 Does your district support continuing with the AMP assessment?**

Answered: 42 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	11.90%	5
No	54.76%	23
Need more information	33.33%	14
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>

**1. Does your district support continuing with the AMP assessment? Other (please specify)**

There is no universal agreement in this district as at other levels including our state department, our legislature, etc. I am very disappointed in the way this has rolled out, the way results were reported, and the total lack of a clear and articulated understanding of how and why we test children. I think it is a reflection and end product of the continual bad practice and ignorance around testing, test purposes, and allowing people to make bad decisions that never result in a useful and meaningful product or the critical data we hoped would help inform instruction and elevate what we do for and with kids.

We are leaning more toward seeing into the possibility of adopting MAP

Not sure how the performance tasks would improve/enhance.

WE need to know the alternative before we make decisions.

The committee of superintendents didn't feel it met clearly the state of Alaska needs and it wasn't generating useful information on the status of each child

Would like to know the alternatives before making another change.

My personal preference is to discontinue AMP assessments. However, I do not have enough information about how this will affect how it will look to our public when we are bound to pay for this year anyway.

If we have to...finish it this year then run fast.

Only supportive if detailed adjustments are made immediately showing that schools can utilize the data in an efficient manner.

I believe that we need to give the AMP a chance to be fixed. I believe that the AMP was never intended to be rolled out in just one year. The implementation phase was to last a few years. AAI deserves a chance to work with EED to get the flaws fixed. If it cannot meet EED's expectations, then it should be scrapped. Can the cut scores be re-set to a more realistic level? Can the reports be re-designed to give teachers/principals information needed to affect instructional practices? Can the AMP results be presented to parents in a way that measures growth rather than as a categorization of proficiency levels?

My district has not taken a position on this issue. I don't believe we would be in support of giving the same test with the same results we had last year.

Before a logical decision can be made, I believe we need more information. With that said, my personal thoughts are to discontinue AMP, and if MAP meets the needs, then I would be in favor of moving in that direction.

It needs to be useful and something that will help our students improve their learning.

I would support this years testing only. I think we are already committed but I am a no for future years. The company has not met deliverable items and I have no confidence in them moving forward.

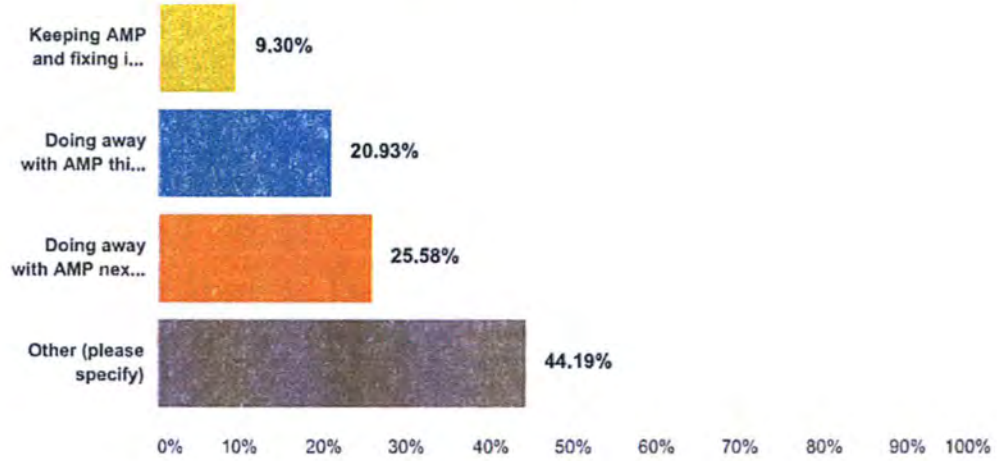
I do not support continuing with the AMP assessment but the DBSD Board has not established a position for the District. As the requirement to participate in this assessment is grounded in statute, I shy from making a "political" statement for the District without clear guidance from the Board as a whole.

Understanding that assessment has its place in education and that monitoring growth and/or progress of student achievement to improve instruction, the AMP assessment and the data provided per the reports have limited value. The AMP is designed to assess each student's level of proficiency based on standards that were put into place in 2012. Only a small group of students have had the opportunity to be exposed to the instructional curriculum and strategies aligned with those standards. The gap is demonstrated in the increased number of students falling below the meeting standards as the grade levels increase. Our district would support a gradual implementation that would include those grade levels who have had instruction aligned to the standards. Perhaps starting with assessing only 3rd grade this year and adding a grade level each year until all grade levels through 6th grade or possibly up to 8th grade are implemented. Even with this implementation, there would need to be improvements made with the assessment so that it would provide more useful information for instruction. High school levels other assessments should be considered to better align with College and Career Ready Assessments. If Alaska is truly wanting to prepare students to be globally ready and our students are expected to perform well on college entrance exams such as the SAT and ACT, assessments that are nationally or internationally normed should be used. Students in 10th grade should take the PSAT or PACT. The cost and time involved in developing, preparing, training, implementing, and reporting are far too much for the limited data that is provided. The data provided cannot help a classroom teacher or a school instructional leader target specific skills and/or students. Classroom teachers are already assessing using regular formative assessments.

ASA Superintendent Survey

Q2 With regard to AMP, do you support:

Answered: 43 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices

Responses

Keeping AMP and fixing it to be workable	9.30%	4
Doing away with AMP this year or pausing AMP this year	20.93%	9
Doing away with AMP next year and getting a bid out on a new assessment	25.58%	11
Other (please specify)	44.19%	19
<b>Total</b>		<b>43</b>

**2. With regard to AMP, do you support: Other (please specify)**

I fall somewhere between the first two bubbles- continue and fix it, or take a slight pause and get it right before we move on. Be forewarned if the same people who created this nightmare become who we trust to fix it, we won't end up with anything that is significantly different. And the pause will only fuel the fire of the poorly informed to keep chanting it needs to go.

MAP is an assessment most useful to teachers. I would DEED to find a way to make this work as a statewide assessment.

Smarter Balanced or PAARK

I think that AMP has been irreparably damaged in reputation and that the change in Federal law provides us an opportunity to reset

I'm in favor of doing away with AMP this year or pausing AMP this year IF the communication regarding that change is very clear and comes directly from DEED in a form that all districts can use with their communities and the media so the messaging is consistent across the state.

I see two options: 1. Going out for bid again for a statewide assessment provider for a statewide assessment aligned to our standards that provides summative information about our student's growth with the Alaska Math and English/language arts standards. We also need a statewide assessment that provides detailed individual student information that can be utilized to influence classroom instructional practices. 2. Go with a current formative assessment provider that is aligned to the common core that can provide summative information as well as specific student information that can influence classroom practices.

Doing away with AMP next year and exploring other options i.e. MAP

Using the MAP test if it can address state standards

I'd like the state to complete an RFP process in which multiple vendors could submit proposals, including the current (AMP) vendor, to get a full picture of the options to build the best assessment and accountability system for Alaska.

I would like to pause AMP as we have much to do without spending time on something we have lost confidence. However, I do not want us to break any regulations or perceptions that we pay for things without using them. Much to weigh before making decision.

I am interested in both pausing AMP this year (and until a valid assessment can be developed) and getting a bid on a new assessment.

AMP was a \$25 million investment and it was never presented as an assessment that would/could be implemented in just one year. Maybe during the implementation phase, the results should be "paused" and used only for the purpose of fine-tuning the assessment. If the AMP is done away with, consideration must be given to districts that struggle with internet speed and connection quality. While it is likely unrealistic to go back to paper/pencil assessments, it must be recognized that there are still places in Alaska with little more than dial-up internet connections. Additionally, if the direction is a statewide adoption of MAP (because 37 districts already use that), then consideration must be given to districts who have chosen Renaissance or AimsWeb to either be allowed to continue with those assessments or given time and fiscal resources to adopt and implement MAP.

I think the right thing to do is pause this year in order to fix AMP for next year, then get a bid on a new assessment

I would suggest discontinuing AMP for next year, and seriously look into whether or not MAP can provide us with the information that we need to guide instruction.

Make this the last year of AMP while developing a plan going forward.

I would support any of the above as long as the creation of a workable assessment/accountability system was done in a collaborative manner.

My district would rather go back to SBA then leave the districts to prove the standards are at a proficient level for all.

If State can articulate vendor expectations with clear deadlines then we can make an informed decision on AMP

The focus of education has become more about assessment and less about instruction. Is it really necessary to create a special assessment for Alaska? if our standards are in alignment with skills needed to succeed on a global scale, there should be other assessments that are already proven and available that will measure if our students are making progress and are on track to either attend a post secondary program or enter the work force. Educational leaders should use this spring and next year to fully research and find a solution that will provide our students with the best educational opportunities. With the implementation of the AMP, too much was unknown or not even developed before it was pushed out for schools to implement. Many of Alaska's schools and districts are limited with technology. While the schools may have been able to connect to the internet, most students lack the technology skills to truly perform their best. Again valuable instructional time is lost focusing on typing skills and while Alaska does have technology standards that are supposed to be being taught, many schools are focusing on solid ELA and math instruction and face to face problem solving.

**Q3 Please share any additional thoughts you have about AMP or statewide assessment in Alaska:**

Answered: 36 Skipped: 7

**3: Please share any additional thoughts you have about AMP or statewide assessment in Alaska:**

We use NWEA MAP assessments for our formative benchmark assessments and as a universal screener. This assessment is aligned to the Alaska ELA/Math standards and give meaningful information to pinpoint instructional decisions for students and schools. The AMP assessment is not instructionally relevant and although work is being done to improve the assessment, it's going to be years before it's a reliable tool for anything. We can't waste more of our students time by saying just keep taking the test because someday it might help you.

I've been engaged in this for years, often in the cheap seats making suggestions, at other times in more significant leadership roles on our efforts. We have a bad history of poor performance when compared to other students in other states, in how we compare our state investment and the product we produce, if the product is measured well by test scores and college success. People in America and Alaska use testing to further an agenda more often than they use it for smart instructional purposes. I'm afraid that won't change anytime soon. Our other issue is our short attention span. In the minds of most, tests are interchangeable, results close enough that who cares what we do or use. The AMP test needed five plus years to run its course and be the adaptive test everyone wanted, and by stopping the performance tasks and other developmental parts of that five year process we have only assured the critics that they are right. This will one day be viewed as a 25 million dollar mistake, and that is why EED is exploring breaking the contract to limit that loss.

The online format was a great upgrade - saving our district thousands in air charter and man hour costs. We have to quit switching just to switch, MAP is only a good idea for those districts already implementing this assessment. AMP will work just fine as a summative assessment, with a few tweaks to provide more diagnostic info for teachers. We need to pick an assessment and stick with it.

We have way too many assessments already-- CPAA preK, early literacy, LEP, workkeys, MAP, AMP to name a few. We need to stop measuring and teach.

The AMP test doesn't provide essential information.

The consortium has more influence, resources and expertise than AMP. They are further along with developing questions and formative assessments.

AMP must tie in more directly with standards, and should provide more instructional information.

We need a test selected for meeting student instructional needs. We do not need a test selected solely to meet federal requirements, satisfy political concerns, and clouded by threat of litigation. At true nationally comparative test that sets a high rigorous expectations with enough information to inform school-wide instructional decisions.

The District is one of the 37 districts utilizing MAP for the past several years.

Since we only have a year to year contract, I do not see the down side of reviewing our assessment to determine if there is something that better meets our needs both test and dollar wise in light of new federal laws.

I don't know that the state needs to bid on a new assessment if NWEA MAP meets the new federal requirements and provides districts with information they can use to guide instruction. There seems to be a great deal of support for use of an existing instrument, such as MAP.

Get rid of this dreadful assessment.
We need a statewide assessment that provides summative information about our student's growth with the Alaska Math and English/language arts standards. We also need a statewide assessment that provides detailed individual student information that can be utilized to influence classroom instructional practices.
Most districts already have something that works, why continue with the burden of the AMP test!
The MAP test is an easier test for teachers to administer and prepare students to take.
The AMP is not working in our state and the loss of confidence from stakeholders surrounding last years AMP debacle is not fixable.
The amount of time preparing DTC's, staff, and students for an assessment that is only a one-shot look is disconcerting to say the least. If we need to put in this much time then it should provide us with useful information that helps us to improve instruction. If it is meant as just a quick shot at where our students are at one point in the year then we need to make it a simple testing day without a lot of time spent preparing or taking the assessment.
I am willing to share MSBSD work in regard to AMP and assessment in general.
The multi-year implementation of AMP does not make the weaknesses in the assessment itself tolerable, and rather it only exasperated everything. The technology alone was very outdated for an online assessment, and the fact that in today's world there was no connection to instruction calls into question the foundations that went into developing the AMP assessment. When a tool is used to assess an educator's effectiveness, then we need to make sure that there is confidence that the tool is an accurate measure of an educator's effectiveness, which AMP is not. The reports were beyond appalling and nailed the coffin shut on AMP for our district.
With so many valid tests out there, why spend the \$\$ just to be different!!
While not perfect, the AMP seems to provide a more realistic measure of student academic achievement that is comparable to the SAT and ACT. For years, we've had parents complain that their children are performing at grade level and are proficient on the SBAs, but then when they take the ACT or SAT, they fall short. I fully expect the AMP will be scrapped either this year or next year because of the overwhelming opposition to it, especially in Mat Su and Anchorage. Further, I do not believe that there will be the financial resources available that will be needed to have a vendor develop another statewide assessment. While not perfect, I believe that the AMP could have potential as a statewide assessment if it is appropriately modified.
The AMP test is not the best the State of Alaska can do for our kids. We need to temporarily fix it while we work to find a better assessment that can inform instruction.
The DEED needs to be given the opportunity to make this assessment work. While there may be issues with the reporting, we need to give it a fair shot. It makes no sense to throw the baby out with the bath water.
The intentions of AMP are good, but I would have thought the State would have had this better outlined on its expectations before entering into a contract.
Let's not throw out the baby with the bathwater.
Reports from AMP did not provide meaningful data for improving instruction and student achievement and I would like to have a state assessment that does.
MAP should be explored as a higher quality, more cost effective and more efficient assessment.

I believe a better use of funds would be to take part of the funds to support district's use of Star, MAPs, new assessment used is Vancouver etc and part of the funds to cover the state ESEA compliance piece. I don't believe AMP can adjust to the teachers/school needs. Further I am very uncomfortable with a group that didn't get reporting correct sub-contracting. The bar combo whiskey graphs were very poor psychometric choices

These questions are not yes/no questions. If we are going to have some state assessment, then we should continue to work to make it useable for districts. Question 2 can be a combination answer. Whether or not you have a single state assessment is the real question. Everyone does not use MAP, AimsWeb, etc. There are always going to be problems with any single test. In any format, there should not be a test that requires passing in order to graduate. I am in favor of still allowing districts to set their own graduation requirements, If a test needs to be taken, then there should be options for districts to select the one of their choice. Again, it should not be a graduation requirement. There is no correlation between the desires of the students and families in BSSD definition of success and a state test.

AMP need to go away. This test is not giving us any information or support in improving the instruction and success of our students. The stress of this ineffective assessment adds to the pressure placed upon educators and students. This pressure makes academic progress even more difficult.

We need a test that is useful. Something that is aligned with our standards. Results need to be useful so teachers can use them to drive instruction. This is what was pitched when they came out. It is NOT what we received. A lot of resources have been put into AMP and unless it can be fixed so it's useful, I think putting more resources into this test is a mistake and a poor use of valuable and dwindling state resources.

AMP is probably too damaged in the minds of districts and community to continue, but before getting rid of it we need to know what the plan would be to continue or replace. It may be the best assessment we could have in the long run.

I think we should use AMP this spring, 2016, then take a "pause year", 2017, to issue an RFP, vet vendors, develop a new assessment that meets the requirements of ESSA, is aligned to the standards, and has extremely detailed reporting. I also think superintendents and assessment coordinators should be part of the group vetting vendors and assisting in designing the assessment and reports.

I do not feel that it is feasible to throw out the AMP this year and adequately replace it. I do feel we should develop and put out to bid a new test. The legislature needs to make a final yes or no on standards so the new test can be aligned to the standards tested.

If AMP were to go away this year, I feel that as a district we should still be expected to provide some sort of standardized performance information to the public.

More information needs to be gathered from our stakeholders before moving forward. We need to slow down and ensure the assessment is completely developed and not needing more revisions. We need to make sure the students we are asking to take the assessment have been given the opportunity to learn the material. They have not. We need to make sure the data we are collecting has value for student learning and instruction. Alaskans are disappointed in the outcome of the implementation of AMP. While we might have had students take the assessment it wasn't because they saw any value. It was because they were being compliant and it met the federal and state requirements.



**Dr. Susan McCauley**  
*Interim Commissioner*  
P.O. Box 110500  
Juneau, AK 99811-0500  
education.alaska.gov

**Eric Fry**  
*Information Officer*  
907.465.2851  
cell: 907.321.5564  
eric.fry@alaska.gov

## Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**March 31, 2016**

### **Student Testing Suspended**

JUNEAU – The Alaska Department of Education & Early Development has suspended computer-based testing of students in the Alaska Measures of Progress and other assessments because of continuing online connection problems between test-takers and the assessment system.

On Tuesday, at 10:30 a.m. Alaska time, construction workers at the University of Kansas severed a fiber optic cable, shutting down Internet service at the university, including online student testing hosted by the Achievement & Assessment Institute at the university.

The Achievement & Assessment Institute informed the department that school districts could resume testing today. After the system then crashed several times this morning, the department notified districts to suspend testing.

“The disruption to the learning environment of our students is unacceptable,” said Interim Commissioner Susan McCauley. “We will not resume the assessments unless the vendor can guarantee that the testing system is fully functional.”

Tuesday was the first day in which students in grades 3 to 10 were to take computer-based assessments in English language arts and mathematics, and science assessments in grades 4, 8 and 10.

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