

EVIDENCE REQUIRED FOR PEER REVIEWS  
OF ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS  
UNDER TITLE I OF THE  
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT



**United States Department of Education**  
**NCLB Assessment System Review of the District of Columbia**

**April 2010**

## OVERVIEW OF OSSEWIDE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

**Critical Element 3.1.** In the chart below indicate your State’s current assessment system in reading /language arts and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and for the 10-12 grade range using the abbreviations to show what type of assessments OSSE’s assessment system is composed of: (a) criterion-referenced assessments (**CRT**); or (b) augmented norm-referenced assessments (**ANRT**) (augmented as necessary to measure accurately the depth and breadth of OSSE’s academic content standards and yield criterion-referenced scores); or (c) a combination of both across grade levels and/or content areas. Also indicate your current assessment system in science<sup>1</sup> that is aligned with OSSE’s challenging academic content and achievement standards at least once in each of the grade spans 3-5, 6-9, and 10-12. A State may have assessments in reading or language arts depending on the alignment to OSSE’s content standards; both are not required. Please indicate, using the abbreviations shown, the grades and subject areas with availability of native language assessment (**NLA**) or various alternate assessments (**AA-GLAS** for an alternate assessment for students with disabilities based on grade-level standards; **AA-LEP** for an alternate assessment for students with limited English proficiency based on grade-level standards, **AA-MAS** for an alternate assessment for eligible students with disabilities based on modified academic achievement standards; and/or **AA-AAS** for an alternate assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities based on alternate achievement standards).

**Chart of State Assessment System Aligned to Content Standards for school year \_\_\_\_\_ by Subject, Grade, and Type of Assessment**

<b>Grades</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Math</b>										
<b>Alternate</b>										
<b>Native Lang.</b>										
<b>Reading</b>										
<b>Alternate</b>										
<b>Native Lang.</b>										
<b>Language arts</b>										
<b>Alternate</b>										
<b>Native Lang.</b>										
<b>Science</b>										
<b>Alternate</b>										
<b>Native Lang.</b>										

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<sup>1</sup> Science assessments were not due until the 2007-08 school year.  
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**SECTION 3: STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM**

Critical Element	Description of State policy and practice (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Questions Regarding State Materials
<p><b>3.3</b> Clarification of the DC CAS test design with appropriate technical documentation of equivalent forms</p>	<p>Pages 14-20 and page 62 of the DC CAS Technical Manual discuss the process to demonstrate equivalent forms for 2009 but not the future.</p>	<p>There is no documentation to demonstrate that the 2009 forms design (including operational and field test items) will be used to ensure equivalent forms within a year in subsequent years. The technical manual is an appropriate place to include this plan.</p>
<p><b>3.6</b> Documentation showing that both the DC CAS and DC CAS-Alternate science assessments include challenging academic content appropriate to the student population tested.</p>	<p>For DC CAS, OSSE is in the process of “re-articulating” its science standards. Drafts and a timeline were submitted in A. i, ii, iii, iv and B.</p>	<p>The latest drafts for science standards for DC CAS have recently been re-articulated. OSSE plans to work with the vendor to document full coverage in fall 2010. OSSE must document board approval of the re-articulated standards. Then OSSE and its TAC must evaluate whether the changes are so significant that the tests based on the new re-articulated standards can be equated with the current test. If they cannot be equated, OSSE must submit the new test for review.</p> <p>Therefore, documentation of Board Approval as well as approval by OSSE and its TAC that the tests based on the new science standards can be equated</p>

	<p>In Section 2 of the DC CAS-Alternate Technical Manual the issue of challenging academic content in science for students with significant cognitive challenges is addressed. The Flowers/Browder alignment used as described in the Alternate Technical Manual shows high content centrality and high performance centrality, and that there was a wide range of depth of knowledge. The process was confirmed in GSEG results. The performance level descriptors (appendix A of the technical manual) also demonstrate the expanded complexity of content over grade levels.</p>	<p>with the current tests must be submitted for Peer Review.</p> <p>Little information is available about how the DC CAS science assessment field test items are developed and selected in order to ensure that the items are assessing a range of challenging content. This information should also be included in the technical manual.</p>
<p><b>SECTION 3: STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM</b>  <b>Summary statement</b></p>		
<p>Evidence of Board Approval as well as approval by OSSE and its TAC that the tests based on the new science standards can be equated with the current tests must be submitted for review.</p>		

**SECTION 4: TECHNICAL QUALITY**

Critical Element	Description of State policy and practice (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Questions Regarding State Materials
<p><b>4.1</b> DC CAS and DC CAS-Alt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A plan and timeline to examine consequential validity (4.1g)</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correlations of test and item data with external variables such as demographics (4.1e)</li> </ul> <p>DC CAS A detailed description of the item and test forms development procedure that includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A long-term test development plan that specifies field-test design, item development/acquisition procedures, and equating plan to support the development of test forms that are comparable.</li> </ol>	<p>With regard to the DC CAS, only a brief paper by CTB/McGraw-Hill is presented as evidence (C.iii). There is no commitment by OSSE to conduct such a study.</p> <p>There is a validity evaluation plan for DC's Alternate Assessment. DC is one of five states in a three-year grant funded by OSEP to identify and evaluate the validity argument for the interpretation and use of scores from the alternate assessment. OSSE did not specifically address the issue of consequential validity.</p> <p>OSSE provided DIF analysis which is satisfactory.</p> <p>The DC CAS Technical Report (Spring 2009 Administration, pages 15-20 item maps) provides test blueprints for one year for reading, math and science; however, it does not include a long-term test development plan that specifies field-test design and item development/acquisition procedures to support the development of test forms that are comparable.</p>	<p>OSSE must provide evidence such as a contract that includes target dates and specific activities that will be conducted.</p> <p>In Cii OSSE has provided information regarding collection and analysis of data through teacher surveys and observations that could be used to evaluate consequential validity. OSSE should provide a clear framework for data analysis over multiple years to provide evidence of consequential validity.</p> <p>OSSE must provide a long-term test development plan that specifies field-test design and item development/acquisition procedures to support the development of test forms that are comparable over time. Reviewers are concerned about the lack of information regarding the items that comprise the test, and OSSE's responsibility for test development including item selection.</p>

<p>2. Detailed test blueprints for grades 5 and 8 and for high school Biology that support the development of test forms that are comparable over time and that sample all of the relevant science standards. (4.1)</p>	<p>Pages 89-90, 92 &amp; 95 of this DC CAS Technical Report discuss science field test development. In tab H, OSSE provides blueprints for the operational items only. OSSE did not provide a clear representation of the distribution of operational and field test items within each of the two forms.</p>	<p>While the test blueprints are provided in tab H, there is no indication how these blueprints are used to inform the long-term test development process. The plan must include complete test blueprints for each form in science for grades five, eight and Biology that show item specifications for both operational and field test items.</p> <p>If items are obtained from a vendor's item bank, how are OSSE's content staff involved to ensure that the items match state standards?</p> <p>There is little evidence of OSSE's role in ongoing quality control and overall coordination. The Peer Reviewers suggest that OSSE consider using the CCSSO quality control checklists at:  <a href="http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/ItemandTestDevQCChklst.pdf">www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/ItemandTestDevQCChklst.pdf</a>  <a href="http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/scorereportQCchklst.pdf">www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/scorereportQCchklst.pdf</a></p>
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<p><b>4.2</b> DC CAS Subgroup reliabilities (4.2a)</p> <p>DC CAS-Alt Results from the planned decision consistency study (4.2)</p>	<p>Subgroup reliabilities are presented in the DC CAS 2009 Technical Report p. 31-35 and Appendix E, pages 117-132 and Appendix F pages 120-132</p> <p>Chapter 9 in the DC CAS-ALT Technical Manual describes the history of reliability i.e., the measure of scoring accuracy and consistency from 2001 through 2009. Most of the results have been low until last year when the portfolios were scored at ILSSA, the Alternate Assessment Scoring Center in KY.</p>	<p>The Peer Reviewers recommend that OSSE direct its TAC to evaluate the acceptability of the .80 standard for inter-rater reliability used for the DC CAS-ALT.</p>
<p><b>4.4</b> DC CAS-Alt Documentation confirming that OSSE has implemented procedures (such as the ones listed in the Alternate Technical Manual on page 88) to ensure the consistency of scores over time</p>	<p>The DC CAS-Alt Technical Manual (Pages 71-91) describes a process that OSSE has implemented that is likely to ensure consistency of scores over time.</p>	<p>Reviewers recommend that OSSE include check sets of previous year's portfolios in order to monitor for score drift over time.</p>
<p><b>4.5</b> DC CAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The scoring rubrics for science constructed-response items, state standards and procedures to ensure reliable scoring.</li> <li>• Documentation of actions taken to date that show the implementation of the DC improvement plan (document 52) and the results of that implementation</li> </ul>	<p>The DC CAS 2009 Technical Report (p. 49-57) lays out the process used to score constructed response items as well as inter-rater agreement levels. Sample items with “rubric for 2-point constructed response items” from grades 5, 8 and high school Biology are shown in tab D.</p> <p>Appendix A, tab Z in the evidence log from March 2, 2010 provides a one-year progress report relating to document 52.</p>	

<p><b>4.6</b> DC CAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The results of the analyses planned for 2009 to evaluate the use of accommodations for limited English proficient (LEP) students. (4.6d)</li>   <li>• A plan and a timeline for how DC will use the results of the data collected during monitoring to assure that appropriate accommodations are delivered during testing for students with disabilities (SWD) and LEP students. (4.6 a, 4.6c)</li> </ul>	<p>Page 50 of the testing Accommodations Manual has clarified that oral reading of the DC CAS in English is not allowed for the reading test, but is allowed for math, science and writing.</p> <p>On page 12 (tab 4) of the paper “Examining ELL Accommodations on the 2008 DC CAS” seven recommendations are provided.</p> <p>Eii includes a review of the Accommodations Manual for ELL, with task force timelines focusing on refinement beginning in September 2009. Policy dissemination was to be conducted in the spring of 2010.</p> <p>The two RIA studies provided by OSSE provide evidence that OSSE has considered the issues related to use of accommodations for SWD and ELL. However, there is no evidence that OSSE has acted upon the recommendations.</p>	<p>The policy report is an important part of the work by the ELL task force; however as part of its work, OSSE must empirically evaluate the impact of the accommodations used on the ELL students’ test scores. A first step would be a review of the literature in preparation for the design of an empirical study.</p> <p>Monitoring procedures in tab 5a of the evidence log indicate that few staff from special education are involved in observing test administration.</p> <p>The OSSE assessment office may not be aware that the monitoring process in special education could be useful here. As part of IDEA 2004, monitoring of the use of accommodations for SWD is required and that information must be provided as part of the required OSSE performance plan reporting to OSEP. OSSE could provide this information as evidence.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of OSSE through IDEA 2004 to assure that the LEAs implement the policies for use of accommodations. The</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plan and timeline for a study to confirm that use of accommodations on the science test yields meaningful scores for SWD and LEP students. (4.6b, 4.6d)</li> </ul>	<p>No empirical data and no review of the literature are provided.</p>	<p>October 2009 Accommodations Manual provides a description of what “should” be done by IEP teams to ascertain if appropriate accommodations are selected and provided on test day, but no evidence is provided to confirm that the process is consistently implemented.</p> <p>OSSE must provide an action plan and timelines to provide appropriate evidence for a study to confirm that use of accommodations on the science test yields meaningful scores for SWD and LEP students.</p>
<p><b>SECTION 4: TECHNICAL QUALITY</b> <b>Summary statement</b></p>		
<p>OSSE must provide the following evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a contract that includes target dates and specific activities that will be conducted to examine consequential validity for DC CAS and DC CAS-ALT.</li> <li>• a long-term test development plan that specifies field-test design and item development/acquisition procedures for the DC CAS, including complete test blueprints for each form in science for grades five, eight and Biology that show item specifications for both operational and field test items.</li> <li>• an empirical evaluation to confirm that use of accommodations on the DC CAS reading, math and science tests yield meaningful scores for SWD and LEP students</li> </ul>		

**SECTION 5: ALIGNMENT**

Critical Element	Description of State policy and practice (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Questions Regarding State Materials
<p><b>5.1</b> <b>DC CAS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plan and timeline for ensuring complete alignment of the science assessments and the content and achievement standards.</li>   <li>• Item specifications used to guide item writing (item content, format and scoring criteria).</li>   <li>• Procedures and rationale for item selection.</li> </ul>	<p>Plan and timeline presented. In Section K.1 OSSE claims that the DC Target Blueprint will ensure full coverage of science standards in grades 5, 8, and high school biology for 2011.</p> <p>No evidence provided.</p> <p>Section L discusses CTB item selection and test forms assembly, criteria for retaining a sample of operational items to be used as forms equating anchors and criteria for replacing other operational items. Pages 12-15 of the Technical Manual supply additional information.</p>	<p>OSSE must provide a test design that shows coverage of all science standards over a three year period on the DC CAS. Peer Reviewers suggest the use of tab K.i as the basis for an expanded matrix that will show in the left hand column all standards and at the right, sections for each of the next three years. The test design must indicate for each of the years 2011-2013 exactly which science standards will be assessed each year.</p> <p>OSSE must provide the item specifications used to guide item writing (item content, format and scoring criteria) for reading, math and science.</p> <p>Item selection appears to be solely a product of the CTB software and excludes the role of educators regarding content coverage and the review of items for potential bias. Such reviews would contribute to greater buy-in by teachers and possibly reduce construct irrelevant variance based on unfamiliar examples, language and other cultural factors.</p>
<p><b>5.2</b> <b>DC CAS-Alt:</b></p>	<p>Chapter 7 of the DC-ALT technical manual describes the selection process for</p>	<p>This portfolio development is a complex process to understand</p>

<p>A clearly defined policy for teacher selection of prioritized skills for the DC CAS-Alt so that there is assurance that students do not repeat the same skills over time.</p>	<p>prioritized skills based on cognitive demand and Learning Standards. The materials provided by OSSE indicate a more rigorous process for portfolio development and scoring than reviewed in the past. The current scoring procedures require a targeted skill clearly linked to the grade level learning standard and are designed to prevent use of activities on which the student can demonstrate partial mastery prior to instruction.</p>	<p>and implement consistently as designed. Extensive professional development would be required in order to assure successful administration. There was no evidence that teachers received training and materials particularly for the selection of targeted skills. Additionally OSSE should conduct ongoing evaluation that provides information about the results of the administration/training in order to refine the process over future years.</p>
<p><b>SECTION 5: ALIGNMENT</b> <b>Summary statement</b></p>		
<p>OSSE must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a test design that shows coverage of all science standards over a three year period on the DC CAS and indicates for each of the years 2011-2013 exactly which science standards will be assessed each year.</li> <li>• item specifications used to guide item writing (item content, format and scoring criteria) for reading, math and science.</li> </ul>		

**SECTION 6: INCLUSION**

Critical Element	Description of State policy and practice (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Questions Regarding State Materials
<p><b>6.1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data confirming participation of all high school students in the Biology test (DC CAS or DC CAS-Alt) at some point in their high school career.</li> <li>Documentation that DC reports separately the number and percent of students with disabilities assessed on the regular assessment without accommodations, on the regular assessment with accommodations, and on the alternate assessment against alternate academic achievement standards. (6.1.2)</li> </ul>	<p>The DC State Board of Education adopted a Resolution on July 15, 2009 requiring Biology as a requirement for graduation (Sections P and Q). There is no evidence to show that this policy has been communicated to administrators, parents or students. For example, course catalogs, student handbooks could be referenced.</p> <p>The evidence provided does not confirm that all High School students take the Biology test or related alternate. The DC CAS Technical Report p. 23 provides data that shows a very small number (1221) taking the science test at grade 10 compared to 4165 in reading, 4146 in math and 4637 in composition at 10<sup>th</sup> grade. No data are provided for the DC CAS-ALT.</p> <p>Tab O provides participation data (table 6 2008-09) for the IDEA performance plan for math and reading, however the report does not include science at any grade level.</p>	<p>There are marked discrepancies in the number of students taking the biology assessments as compared to other high school assessments. The numbers indicate that not every student takes the biology test as required by law. These issues have been raised as early as 2007/08. OSSE must provide data confirming participation of all high school students in the Biology test (DC CAS or DC CAS-Alt) at some point in their high school career.</p> <p>OSSE must provide documentation that it reports separately the number and percent of students with disabilities assessed on the regular science assessment without accommodations, on the regular science assessment with accommodations, and on the alternate science assessment against alternate academic achievement standards. (6.1.2)</p>

<p><b>6.2</b> <b>DC CAS-Alt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation that parents are informed that their child’s achievement will be based on alternate academic achievement standards and of any possible consequences resulting from local educational agency (LEA) or State policy (<i>e.g.</i>, ineligibility for a regular high school diploma)]. (6.2.2(d))</li> <li>• Evidence of clarification to the field that students may not participate in the DC CAS-Alt on the basis of a 504 plan.</li> </ul>	<p>Tab N, appendix A, Step 3 of the participation guidelines details parent acknowledgement with required notification &amp; signatures. No further evidence required.</p> <p>The 2009-2010 Assessment Decision-Making Process (tab N) provides evidence that the selection process to participate in the Alternate Assessment does not include students who have a 504 plan. However, the flow chart on page 2 is not clear.</p>	<p>OSSE needs to correct this inconsistency in their documents.</p>
<p><b>SECTION 6: INCLUSION</b> <b>Summary statement</b></p>		
<p>OSSE must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data confirming participation of all high school students in the Biology test (DC CAS or DC CAS-Alt) at some point in their high school career.</li> <li>• documentation that it reports separately the number and percent of students with disabilities assessed on the regular science assessment without accommodations, on the regular science assessment with accommodations, and on the alternate science assessment against alternate academic achievement standards. (6.1.2)</li> </ul>		

**SECTION 7: ASSESSMENT REPORTS**

Critical Element	Description of State policy and practice (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Questions Regarding State Materials
<p><b>7.1</b> Actual reports that address all requirements in this section, including an individual student report that includes results expressed as achievement levels with appropriate explanation of the meaning of the achievement levels accompanied by a detailed interpretive guide for parents in a language that is understandable to them; (7.1, 7.3)</p>	<p>Student reports show the student’s percent correct by strand but does not provide a total percent correct nor show how these strand numbers translate into the adjacent scale score.</p> <p>An individual report for the DC-ALT is presented for ELA and math.</p> <p>Definitions of the reporting categories, such as Performance Dimension, are provided in the letter from the superintendent about 2009 results; however, language used to communicate the results to parents for both the DC CAS and the DC CAS-ALT is not user-friendly (eg “analysis of Bloom’s taxonomy”).</p>	<p>OSSE must provide an individual student level report on the DC CAS and CAS-Alt that includes Performance Level Descriptors in science that are content and grade specific.</p> <p>Peer Reviewers are concerned that the interpretive information provided for parents may not be understandable. Peer Reviewers suggest that OSSE meet with parents to evaluate the clarity of the test results that are provided to parents.</p>
<p><b>7.2</b> School, district and state summary reports that include results for all required reporting subgroups as well as the number enrolled and the number tested/not tested;</p>	<p>Section R.i contains OSSE level report cards in reading, math and science for all subgroups. R.ii contains district, LEA and school level information.</p> <p>Section T.ii includes a letter to parents that references a web site that parents can access to find out the results of their child’s school.</p>	
<p><b>7.3</b> Evidence that test results will be delivered to parents and educators as soon as possible after the assessment is completed</p>	<p>Tab T.ii shows the letter sent to schools which details that results must be delivered to parents no later than the first day of the “proceeding” school year.</p>	

<p><b>7.4</b> Evidence that DC ensures that student-level assessment data are maintained securely to protect student confidentiality.</p>	<p>Tabs V &amp; W include evidence showing that OSSE securely ensures student confidentiality. No further evidence is required.</p>	
<p><b>7.5</b> Itemized score analyses by sub-domain or standards that provide useful instructional information to educators.</p>	<p>Sample content strands summary reports are provided in tab U.</p>	<p>The item analysis submitted (tab U) would provide limited information to instructional personnel. Do teachers receive training in how to use Item Analysis? Has information been solicited from principals and teachers as to how the information presented in this report can be used to improve student learning? Peer Reviewers suggest that OSSE meet with teachers and administrators to evaluate the instructional usefulness of the content strands summary reports and the item analysis reports.</p>
<p><b>SECTION 7: ASSESSMENT REPORTS</b> <b>Summary statement</b></p>		
<p>OSSE must provide an individual student level report on the DC CAS and CAS-Alt that includes Performance Level Descriptors in science that are content and grade specific.</p>		