Assessment Task Force 3.0

Meeting #5: May 16, 2018

Welcome

Goals

- Make recommendations for further improvements, including a review of 11th grade testing
- Review of the first full year (2016-17) of grades 3-8 and EOC TNReady exams, including timeline and results
- Review of the first year of the optional grade 2 TNReady exam
- Review of current year testing and progress
- Review of district formative assessment and alignment to standards and TNReady expectations

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Norms

- Be present
- Speak in facts as much as possible
- Listen and value the ideas and feedback of others
- Contribute, but monitor air time
- Seek to understand, not just to be understood
- Be solutions oriented
- Ask questions
- Do your homework

Reminders: Meetings are recorded and media will be present

Agenda

Time	Agenda
10:00	2017-18 testing administration and planned improvements for 2018-19
10:45	Online Transition Plan
11:15	Break and Small Group Discussion
11:45	Whole group debrief
12:00	2018 Accountability Guidance
12:30	Pick up lunch
12:45	TNReady Ambassadors
1:15	Wrap up and Next Steps
1:30	Adjourn

Context and timeline of TNReady

Our Goals for TNReady

- TNReady is an improved TCAP test designed to provide **better information** about what students know and understand.

- It is **aligned** to the full depth and breadth of our academic standards, and it has multiple types of questions.

- It is a **Tennessee-specifi**c test that can grow with us.

- It cannot be gamed, and the **best test prep is strong instruction** everyday.

- It will help all of us know whether students are **on track for the next step** in their academic journey, leading toward college and career readiness.

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Transition to a new assessment

- In 2007 the U.S. Chamber of Commerce rated TN as an "F" for *Truth in Advertising* on our ***students' proficiency*** and an "F" on our ***students' readiness for the workforce.***

- This started Tennessee on the path of raising the bar: ***higher standards, aligned assessment***, and strong ***accountability***.

- Tennessee, along with 18 other states, joined the PARCC consortium in 2011. The PARCC assessment was designed to focus on problem solving and analytical thinking skills and to provide students, families, and educators better information about students readiness.

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2015-16 TNReady Administration

- In 2014, six months before PARCC testing was set to begin, the Tennessee General Assembly passed **legislation prohibiting Tennessee's participation in the PARCC consortium**.

- As a result, the department was required to competitively procure a new contract to develop the new assessment, TNReady, to be operational for the 2015-16 school year. **This RFP was issued on an extremely short timeline.**

- The RFP was awarded to **Measurement Inc.** and the new test was designed with two parts and intended to be fully online.

- TNReady testing began in the fall of 2015.

- However, spring 2016 presented several challenges with our vendor and testing in **grades 3-8 had to be suspended**.

- In April 2016, the contract with **Measurement Inc. was terminated**.

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Questar

- In July 2016, the department executed a contract with **Questar** to develop, administer, and score the TNReady assessment.

- With the new vendor, the department worked to make several improvements to the testing program.
  - Testing time was reduced by about 30 percent.
  - TNReady was restructured to be a shorter test, given in only one part during a shorter testing window at the end of the school year, and with shorter subparts that fit more easily into the school schedule.

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Online Transition Plan

- The department developed a plan to **phase into online assessment**:

Year	Online	Paper-Pencil
2016-17	EOC optional	3-8 required
2017-18	EOC required 5-8 optional	3-4 required
2018-19	EOC required 5-8 required 3-4 optional	3-4 optional

Outcomes of Phase-In

- In 2016-17, 24 districts opted-in and successfully completed online EOC testing

- In 2017-18 fall block, **266 high schools across 97 districts successfully completed TNReady fall block end-of-course testing completely online**.

  - Nearly 120,000 TNReady EOC tests, which included more than 300,000 subparts, were taken on the Nextera platform.

  - With our new improvements in data flow and optimization, **students' raw scores were returned the first week of January**, as promised.

- Over the course of the fall, more than 160,000 practice sessions were completed on Nextera.

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Where are we now?

The spring testing window ended last Wednesday.

- Nearly 2.5 million online subtests were submitted.
- Five unique events caused log-in and submission challenges in the testing platform to varying degrees across the state –
  1. Unanticipated negative interaction between platform and Classroom Assessment Builder (CAB)
  2. External event consistent with a cyber attack
  3. An unscheduled maintenance event executed by Questar employee
  4. A fiber optic cable outage
  5. Text-to-speech feature caching issue

Lessons Learned

- Online testing has expected risks, and TDOE will improve training and preparation for the future.

- Unanticipated negative interaction between platform and Classroom Assessment Builder (CAB).
  - This conflict has been fully resolved.

- External event consistent with a DOS/cyber attack.
  - Vendor performed appropriately to protect TN student data. It is not possible to protect against DOS attacks without shutting down the source. No other data center in the country would have behaved differently. Contributing factors that <u>potentially</u> worsened the duration of the event have been addressed.

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Lessons Learned

- An unscheduled maintenance event executed by Questar employee.
  - Contract prohibited this. Questar introduced new change controls to prevent a repeat and dismissed the offending employee.
- A fiber optic cable outage.
  - There is no way to mitigate this. Contributing factors that potentially worsened the duration of the event have been addressed.
- Text-to-speech feature caching issue.
  - This feature was eliminated and replaced with read aloud for the balance of spring testing. This feature is under review for future administrations.

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Improvements for the future

Overview of Improvements

- We are **gathering detailed feedback** from our districts and other stakeholders.

- We are making specific **assessment program changes** as we look at the 2018-19 school year.

- We will **significantly improve customer service** for our district leaders, teachers, and testing coordinators.

We are gathering detailed feedback from our districts and other stakeholders.

- We have given a survey to our directors of schools that asks for input from local assessment coordinators and technology directors.
  - Topic include:
    - The online transition plan
    - Customer service
    - Areas for improvements

We are gathering detailed feedback from our districts and other stakeholders.

- This summer, there will be feedback sessions with school directors in regional meetings across the state.
- We will continue to talk with groups like our Assessment Task Force for specific input on the transition to online testing and other components.
  - The Assessment Logistics Advisory Council composed of district testing coordinators representing districts of a variety of sizes and geographic locations will meet with TDOE and Questar this summer to provide feedback on the testing experience and suggestions for improvement.
- We will conduct focus groups with teachers, parents, and students this summer.

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We are making specific assessment program changes as we look at the 2018-19 school year.

- We will transition to ETS for all test development and design. ETS has been an excellent partner with us and currently designs our social studies and science tests.

- This transition moves all Tennessee's content tests including math and ELA to one partner.

- This allows Questar to focus solely on test delivery and reporting.

- Test design is complex and sophisticated and we believe the expertise and years of experience ETS brings is more suited to our needs in Tennessee.

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We are making specific assessment program changes as we look at the 2018-19 school year.

- There will be no stand-alone field tests for the next two years.

- We are continuing to reduce tests and time where we can.

  – Eliminated two end-of-course assessments for next year: Chemistry and English III

  – Reduced test time in third and fourth grades, specifically in ELA

  – Planned reduction in time for grades 5-8 science in 2018-19

    • All science tests in grades 5-8 will decrease from 95 minutes to 75 minutes

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We are making specific assessment program changes as we look at the 2018-19 school year.

- For online assessments we are requiring the engagement of a **credible third party expert** who will conduct an architectural review of all applicable Questar technology systems and operating practices.

- The department will evaluate the findings and recommendations of this third party along with its own observations for technology improvements and work with the vendor to implement appropriate changes. These will part of the contract amendment.

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We are making specific assessment program changes as we look at the 2018-19 school year.

- We will coordinate a **multi-state stress test** to verify that Questar has the capacity to support multiple customers simultaneously.
  - Questar serves as the assessment vendor in eight states, and several states test during the same timeframe as Tennessee.
  - Based on the outcome of this stress test, the TDOE may require immediate modifications to components that are in common with other Questar customers.

We are making specific assessment program changes as we look at the 2018-19 school year.

- We will continue to review our requirements for an online **text-to-speech** capability.
  - This review includes a policy analysis of the use of text-to-speech as an accessibility feature.
  - Text-to-speech feature is technically complex and contributed to at least one of the reported problems.
  - We will work with experts to determine how to best provide accommodation to students who need it.

We are making specific assessment program changes as we look at the 2018-19 school year.

- For the **paper test**, we are reducing the number of forms and exploring test booklet changes, which will streamline and simplify logistics for schools.
  - Beginning next year, every school will receive only one test form-version for each grade/content area.
  - We are exploring the possibility of providing multiple content areas in one test booklet to reduce testing materials for schools.

We will significantly improve customer service.

- We will have a position at the department focused solely on the **customer and user experience** with assessments.
  - This position will spend time in schools working to train and respond to user feedback.
  - This position will provide additional support before, during, and after test administration.

We will significantly improve customer service.

- We are establishing new training protocols for assessment coordinators and launching the **TNReady Ambassador Program.**
  - Training modules will be available for building level test coordinators and proctors.
  - Professional development points will be available for completion of these training modules.

Online Transition

Dual modality testing presents many risks.

- Requires logistical and technical solutions to account for provisioning each school and grade correctly.
- Presents challenges for test design and field testing because it is hard to estimate opt-in rates.
- Requires additional analysis to ensure comparability in scoring and reporting across schools that opt in.
- Limits item types when some students in the grade/content area test online and others on paper.

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Option 1: Conduct all testing on paper

- Increases the time needed to score all tests and provide reporting to parents, schools, and districts
- Increases the effort of district and school staff to prepare for test administration
- Typically lessens statewide delivery risk for assessment
- Requires a change in testing mode for high school students and teachers who have been online for at least one year
- Decreases focus on technological investments
- Increases complexity of embedding field test items
- Reduces the types of items available to align to standards
- Allows for a shorter testing window as paper testing does not require the logistical concerns of limited computers
- Approximately $11 million increase to print and ship all test materials

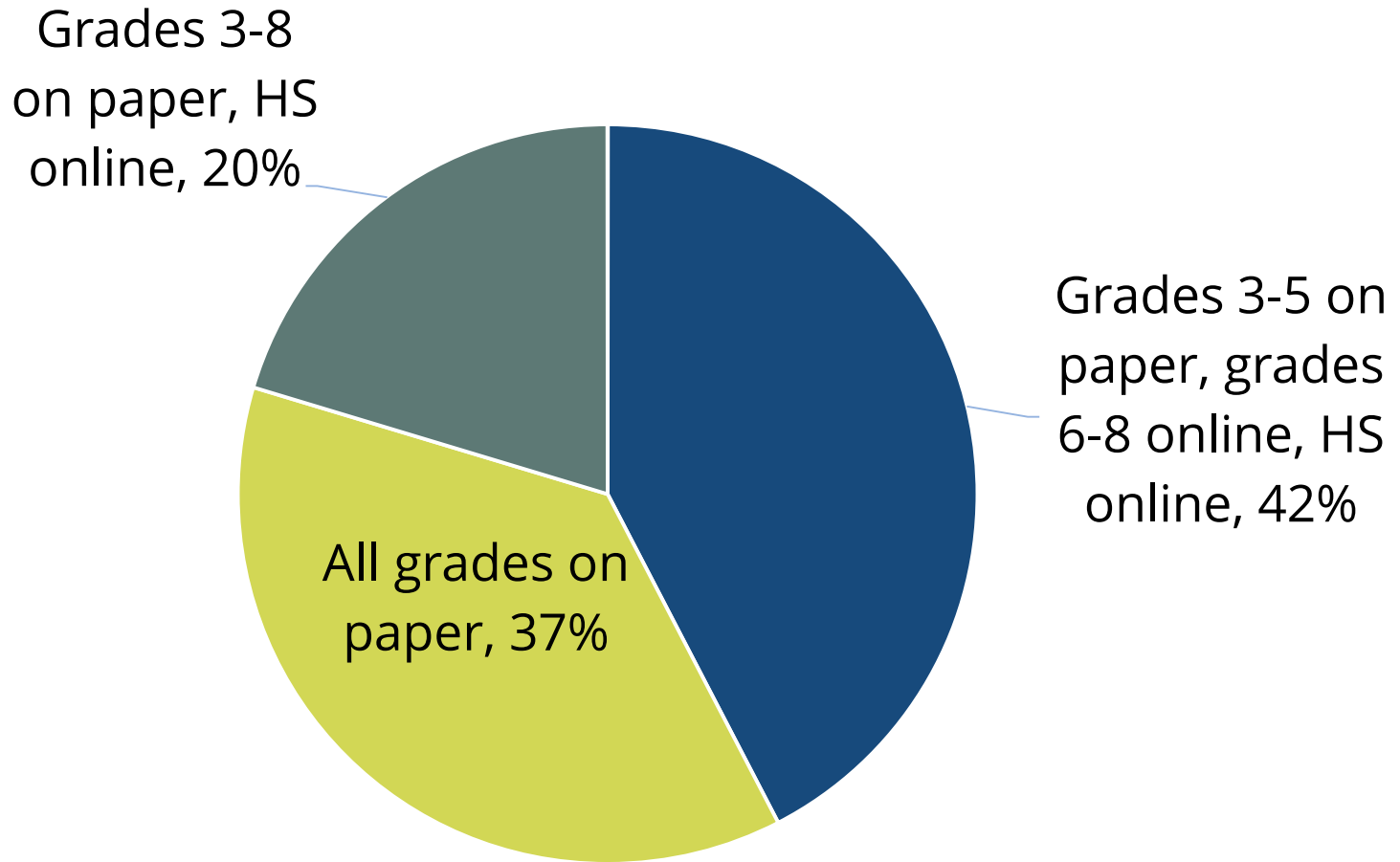# Option 2: Conduct EOC online; grades 3-8 on paper

- Continues focus on technological investment and digital literacy for high school
- Requires a longer testing window to accommodate EOC
- Allows for additional item types for EOC
- Reduces per student test cost for EOC
- Provides an additional year to improve online experience prior to transitioning grades 3-8
- Allows for continuity in high school test experience for returning students and teachers

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Option 3: Conduct EOC and grades 6-8 online; grades 3-5 on paper

- Continues with transition for EOC and 6-8 online
- Continues focus on technological investment and digital literacy for middle and high school
- Allows for additional item types for EOC
- Reduces overall cost of testing program
- Requires a longer testing window to accommodate EOC

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District Survey Responses on Modality

Grades 3-8 on paper, HS online, 20%

Grades 3-5 on paper, grades 6-8 online, HS online, 42%

All grades on paper, 37%

Discussion Questions

- Any feedback on these initial improvements to the testing program?

- Are there other improvements do you suggest?

- What recommendations, if any, do you have for altering our transition plan to online?
  - Which grades should test online in 2018-19?

Small Group Discussion

Commissioner McQueen/ H. Knudson	Dr. Ailshie/ C. Haugner-Wrenn	Dr. Kirk/ S. Gast (room 109)	Dr. Shelton/M. Batiwalla (room 109)
Sen. Gresham	Rep. Forgety	Rep. Brooks	Rep. White
Wayne Blair	Audrey Shores	Sharon Roberts	Barbara Gray
Dale Lynch	Sara Morrison	Gini Pupo-Walker	Lisa Wiltshire
Trey Duke	Shawn Kimble	Mike Winstead	Jennifer Cothron
Lara Charbonnet	Michael Hubbard	LaToya Pugh	Bill Harlin
Jolinea Pegues	Kevin Cline	Tim Childers	Kim Herring
Cicely Woodard	Stacey Travis	Josh Rutherford	Virginia Babb
		Jennifer Frazier	

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Accountability Guidance and Implications

The General Assembly passed two bills addressing the use of data generated from the 2017-2018 TNReady assessment.

- Permits each local board of education to choose a percentage between zero percent (0%) to fifteen percent (15%) that a score from the 2017-2018 TNReady assessments shall count on a **student's final grade** for the spring semester.

- Prohibits data from the 2017-2018 TNReady assessments from being used to assign an **A-F letter grade to a school**.

- Prohibits student data from the 2017-2018 TNReady assessments from being used to identify a school as a **priority school** or to assign a school to the **achievement school district**.

The General Assembly passed two bills addressing the use of data generated from the 2017-2018 TNReady assessment.

- Prohibits LEAs from basing **employment termination and compensation** decisions for teachers during the 2017-2018 school year on data generated by the 2017-2018 statewide assessments.

- Prohibits **"adverse action"** from being taken "against any student, teacher, school, or LEA based, in whole or in part, on student achievement data generated from the 2017-2018 TNReady assessments."

School Accountability

- No school will receive an overall summative grade.

- Schools will receive numeric scores for indicator performance.

- The numeric scores will be based on the methodology in TNSucceeds.

- Tennessee will name Reward schools based on 2017-18 data.

- Priority schools will be based on prior year data, so 2017-18 data will not be used to name Priority schools.

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Teacher Evaluation

- All teachers and principals will still receive an overall evaluation score this year.

- For teachers that have an individual growth score, TNReady data from 2017-2018 will count for 10% of a teacher's overall evaluation score.

- However, teachers and principals who have 2017-2018 TNReady data included in their LOE (school-wide TVAAS, individual TVAAS, or achievement measure) **may choose to nullify their LOE for the 2017-2018 school year** at their discretion.

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Discussion

Discussion Question

- What other questions do you have related to 2017-18 accountability guidance or implications?

TNReady Ambassador Program

The department is hiring a new TNReady customer experience position.

- We did not believe Questar provided the highest quality of customer service and training support that our schools deserve.

- TDOE position focused solely on the customer/user experience that will provide additional support before, during, after test administration.

The department is creating a TNReady Ambassador Program.

- The department will select 6 district test coordinators to serve as **testing coordinator TNReady Ambassadors**.
  - Variety of districts, representing diverse district sizes and geographic locations
- The department will select approximately 30 teachers or content specialists to serve as the **content expert TNReady Ambassadors**.
- Applications will be posted at the end of May.
- Ambassadors will be notified of selection at the end of June.
- A launch meeting will occur in late July/early August.

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The testing coordinator TNReady Ambassadors will work to improve the test administration experience.

- Act as **thought partners** for the department's Assessment Team in order to continuously improve the assessment experience through on-the-ground perspective and stakeholder feedback.
  - Provide feedback through defined mechanisms
  - Participate in **daily phone calls during the testing window**
- Serve as an ambassador for TNReady to **build awareness of TNReady** purpose and processes.
  - Provide expertise on the program to surrounding schools and districts
  - Act as resource for local area DTCs

The testing coordinator TNReady Ambassadors will work to improve the test administration experience.

- Participate in **training**
- **Provide local training** for Building Test Coordinators.
- Consult with department on assessment process, planning, & procedures via **webinars, calls,** and at least **two in-person planning meetings** with testing vendors.
- Consult with department on test preparation materials, including, but not limited to:
  - Test Administration Manuals (TAMs)
  - Test Administrator/Proctor Scripts (TAPS) design
  - Nextera user guides
  - Accessibility guide
  - User Acceptance Testing (UAT) for Nextera and Classroom Assessment Builder (CAB)
- Participate in **regional assessment meetings**, **monthly DTC webinars**, and **LEAD Conference**

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The content expert TNReady Ambassadors will work to make TNReady the best test possible for students.

- Participate in item review, including sensitivity and accessibility reviews
- Review items after item reviews
- Review core forms, field test versions, and passages
- Provide feedback on test directions and test scripts
- Conduct content review focused on alignment of test questions to Tennessee standards
- Conduct scoring read behinds
- Observe human scoring
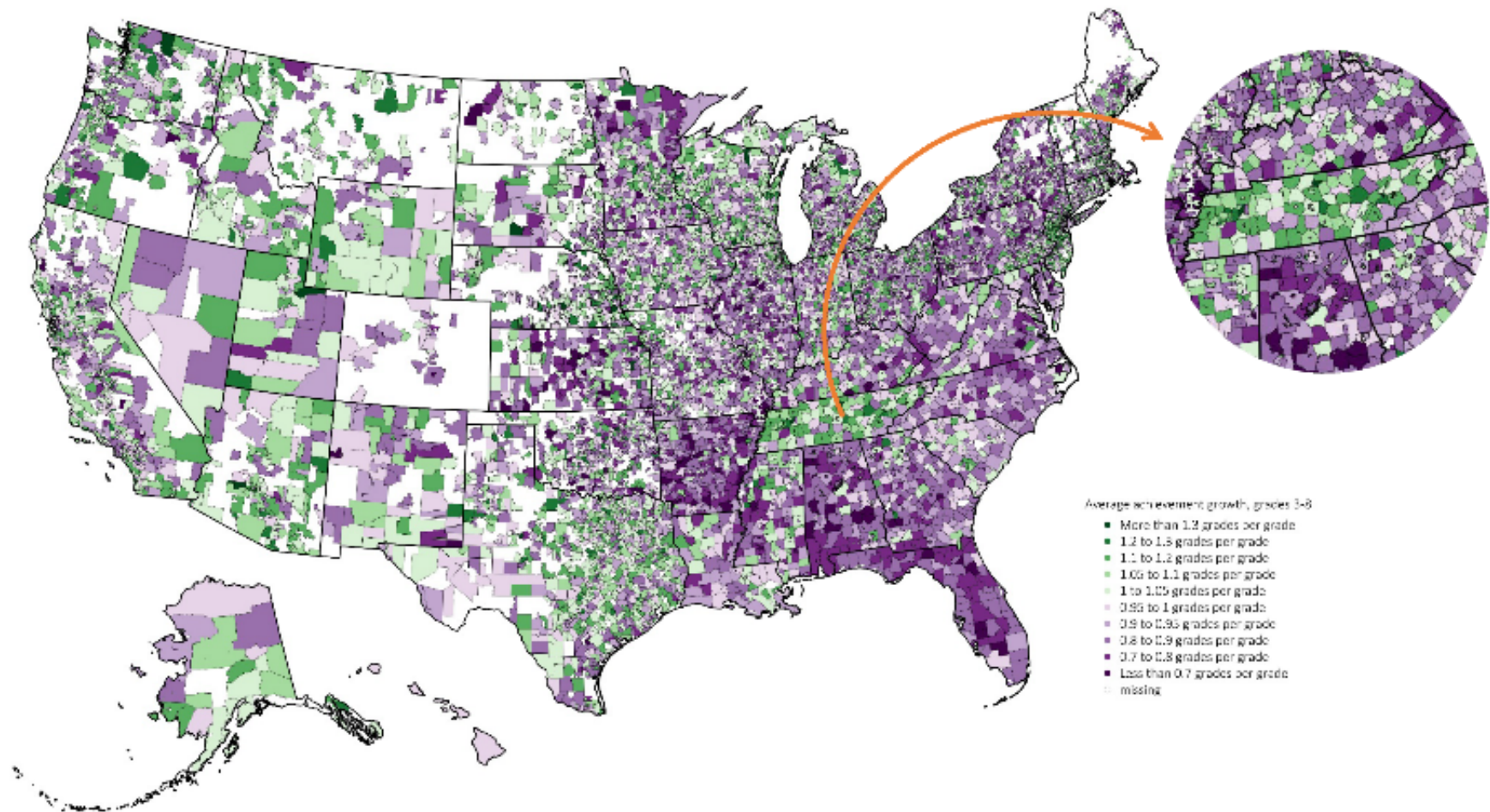- Review test blueprints
- Serve as content experts for other teachers

Wrap Up and Next Steps

We have made incredible progress as a state.

Average Test Score Growth Rates (Math and Reading Averaged), US Public School Districts, 2009-2015

Average achievement growth, grades 3-8
- More than 1.3 grades per grade
- 1.2 to 1.3 grades per grade
- 1.1 to 1.2 grades per grade
- 1.05 to 1.1 grades per grade
- 1 to 1.05 grades per grade
- 0.95 to 1 grades per grade
- 0.9 to 0.95 grades per grade
- 0.8 to 0.9 grades per grade
- 0.7 to 0.8 grades per grade
- Less than 0.7 grades per grade
- missing

We aren't going backward in accountability, and we can't afford to.

- This is the foundation of much of our education success as a state and will continue to be our foundation for progress.

- Education is a long-game, and so is accountability. The decisions we've made have been the hard ones but they're the right ones.

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We are working to get assessment right.

- Creating and implementing a new state assessment is hard work, and it won't always be perfect.

- We are closer to success than not and we must keep moving forward.

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Next Meeting

- July 17 at the First Amendment Center
  - 1207 18th Ave S., Nashville, TN 37212
- 9:00 AM – 1:30 PM

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Districts and schools in Tennessee will exemplify excellence and equity such that all students are equipped with the knowledge and skills to successfully embark on their chosen path in life.

Excellence | Optimism | Judgment | Courage | Teamwork