

Study of Assessment Use in Colorado Districts

Table 3.1 (cont.)
When Assessment Results are Available to Key Audiences
Most Frequent Response(s)

	District Staff	School staff	Teachers	Families/ Students
Local Assessments				
School Readiness	Under two weeks, Immediately	Under two weeks, Immediately	Immediately	Under two weeks, 2-4 weeks
Early Literacy	Immediately, Under two weeks	Immediately, Under two weeks	Immediately	Under two weeks, 2-4 weeks
Interim	Immediately, Under two weeks	Immediately, Under two weeks	Immediately, Under two weeks	Under two weeks, 2-4 weeks
PWR	1-3 months, 2-4 weeks	1-3 months, 2-4 weeks	1-3 months, 2-4 weeks	1-3 months, 2-4 weeks

When results from assessments were available (as measured from when the assessment was administered to when results were received) varied by assessment and by audiences. School readiness assessments and early literacy assessments provided the most immediate results to teachers since they directly administer, enter, and score these assessments. School and district staff received these results or have access to them in less than two weeks if not the same day. When families received these results varied from under two weeks (when identified as a local assessment), to around a month. Through interviews it was noted that these results are often shared during parent teacher conferences instead of a report sent home. Similarly, local interim assessments provided results to teachers, school administrators and district administrators almost immediately, with families receiving results in a number of weeks. Again, during follow up interviews it was noted that these results are often shared during parent teacher conferences instead of a report sent home.

Overall, local assessment results were available long before results of most state required assessments. There seemed to be no significant delays in passing assessment results from district to school to teacher. Aside from the results that are held for delivery at parent teacher conferences, parents and students tended to receive assessment results very soon after results were available to district and school staff.

Teacher and Student Time Spent on Assessments

This section of the survey asked respondents to estimate the time that teachers and students spend preparing for, administering, and taking assessments. It is important to note that estimates do not include content instruction that will be tested by the assessment, such as learning a math concept that will be covered by the TCAP assessment. These estimates include only preparation for the mechanics of the assessments, such as using the testing technology, completing testing forms, or understanding specific question formats. As such, these estimates provide a view of the time spent by teachers and students on non-instructional issues as a result of these assessments.

In the second part of this section, we present aggregates of time estimates for students, determining total time preparing for and taking assessments for students by grade level. These time estimates represent the impact of the state and local assessment systems on available instructional time.

For both teacher and student time estimates, respondents were asked about actual experience preparing for and administering the TCAP assessment and were not asked about the PARCC assessment.

Overall, time estimates varied significantly across teacher role, student type, and assessment. Notably, time estimates also varied across respondent role, without clear trends. For some assessments, teachers reported higher time estimates than district and school administrators, while for other assessments, district and school respondents indicated higher time estimates than teachers. Surprisingly, time estimates for specialist teachers were not significantly higher than estimates for general education teachers. Similarly, time estimates for special education and English Language Learner (ELL) students were not significantly higher than those for general education students. While the variation in time estimates indicates there is not a standard amount of time to prepare for, administer, or take assessments, it also suggests variations in what activities and tasks were included in estimates by respondents.

Teachers

Respondents were asked if they could estimate the total number of hours teachers spent to prepare for and administer assessments. They were asked separately about time for teachers in key categories: teachers of the tested subject(s), teachers in untested subject(s), and specialist teachers, such as ELL teachers and Special Education teachers. The following definitions for “preparing for” and “administering” an assessment were provided:

1. **Teachers preparing for assessment:** preparing for assessment includes training in the mechanics of the assessments. It does not include instruction on content covered by the test.
2. **Teachers administering an assessment:** administering the assessment includes giving or proctoring the assessment, set up time, distributing and collecting materials, scoring and entering score data, and reporting time.

Tables 4.1-4.3 present figures for time spent for teachers to prepare for assessments. Tables 4.4- 4.6 then present results for the amount of time spent by teachers to administer assessments.

Table 4.1
Time Spent by Teachers who Teach Tested Subject(s) Preparing for Assessments
Per Administration, Shown in Hours

	District Administrator			School Administrator			Teacher		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
State Assessments									
School Readiness	15.5	16.9	40	10.8	23.0	71	15.3	25.8	54
READ Act	14.1	27.7	46	7.8	19.3	90	4.8	11.2	304
TCAP	29.1	80.4	53	15.4	28.1	164	32.2	80.7	616
CMAS	28.7	82.3	50	16.7	42.6	153	24.8	67.1	436
ACT	18.5	46.8	40	26.9	58.1	50	14.5	27.9	169
ACCESS	7.6	12.0	38	12.4	31.7	134	6.9	17.4	103
Local Assessments									
School Readiness	7.1	8.4	11	3.8	3.4	5	-	-	-
Early Literacy	3.5	3.8	38	5.1	10.2	56	-	-	-
Interim	1.9	2.4	50	4.6	8.7	122	15.1	44.7	412
PWR	2.0	4.5	31	1.2	1.6	34	8.1	24.2	99

Time estimates varied widely for certain assessments (as shown by large standard deviations), particularly TCAP and CMAS. Overall, time requirements per administration were highest for TCAP and CMAS. However, other assessments such as school readiness, early literacy and interim are generally administered more than once a year. Total figures that take into account the frequency of administrations are presented later in this report. Looking at variance in responses by role, responses from district administrators and teachers tended to be more similar while school administrators responded with lower time estimates.

Table 4.2
Time Spent by Teachers in Untested Subject(s) Preparing for Assessments
Per Administration, Shown in Hours

	District Administrator			School Administrator			Teacher		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
State Assessments									
School Readiness	4.2	6.8	16	2.5	6.9	62	5.8	8.6	16
READ Act	2.8	5.5	20	4.3	12.2	75	3.1	5.6	51
TCAP	16.4	45.9	29	7.6	14.2	155	11.1	26.8	318
CMAS	10.9	24.7	26	6.5	13.1	142	3.6	10.7	197
ACT	8.0	21.9	21	17.5	43.8	47	3.5	5.8	77
ACCESS	1.9	2.6	18	6.1	18.2	126	3.1	9.1	74
Local Assessments									
School Readiness	3.0	4.3	9	0.3	0.6	3	-	-	-
Early Literacy	1.3	1.8	31	3.3	9.2	40	-	-	-
Interim	1.1	2.2	41	2.2	6.0	103	3.7	7.9	57
PWR	0.4	0.7	29	1.4	3.5	35	1.2	3.2	52

Teachers who teach untested subject(s) are often still involved in assessments, so while time estimates are lower than the estimates for teachers in the tested subject(s), there is still some time involved, as demonstrated in the table above.

Table 4.3
Time Spent by Specialist Teachers Preparing for Assessments
Per Administration Shown in Hours

	District Administrator			School Administrator			Teacher		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
State Assessments									
School Readiness	7.1	7.8	15	4.7	10.3	62	18.6	41.4	24
READ Act	4.8	5.8	23	5.6	7.7	81	4.2	8.1	120
TCAP	6.7	7.7	26	15.8	47.2	162	12.5	34.5	270
CMAS	5.1	4.9	23	9.5	23.2	147	9.2	22.5	180
ACT	4.5	7.6	17	19.8	46.6	49	4.8	9.2	41
ACCESS	7.5	6.4	21	11.0	27.1	135	9.7	21.9	97
Local Assessments									
School Readiness	5.8	5.5	9	2.5	3.7	4	-	-	-
Early Literacy	2.8	3.3	33	3.9	7.7	50	-	-	-
Interim	1.9	2.6	42	4.4	9.2	111	4.7	8.5	132
PWR	1.0	1.4	28	1.5	2.2	34	1.5	3.1	22

Estimates for preparation time for specialist teachers were similar to estimates for teachers who teach untested subject(s). Estimates by school administrators and teachers were more similar and higher than estimates by district administrators.

Overall, there is significant variation in time estimates for the time teachers spend preparing for assessment, depending on the teacher's role and the specific assessment. In general, teachers spend the most time preparing for TCAP. In some areas, estimates of time were similar across district, school, and teacher respondents, while in others, estimates were different at the district, school, and teacher levels. There were no clear trends of which level had generally higher or lower estimates than others.

Tables 4.4- 4.6 consider time spent by teachers to administer assessments.

For time spent by teachers who teach the tested subject(s), shown in Table 4.4 below, time estimates across responder roles were consistent in most areas, though teachers on average indicated that the time needed for the READ ACT assessments, CMAS and ACCESS were lower than the estimates of administrators at both the district and school level. Time needed to administer the school readiness assessment was highest, which is compounded by the fact that in most cases, districts are conducting the school readiness assessment observations more than once a year. READ Act/Early Literacy assessments are also time intensive, as they are often one-on-one assessments.

Table 4.4
Time Spent by Teachers who Teach Tested Subject(s) Administering Assessments
Per Administration Shown in Hours

	District Administrator			School Administrator			Teacher		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
State Assessments									
School Readiness	36.7	60.3	49	23.6	30.6	72	20.9	29.2	54
READ Act	23.4	41.7	60	18.1	23.4	89	10.0	37.9	310
TCAP	16.9	16.6	66	14.7	17.6	175	14.5	23.5	635
CMAS	12.8	17.2	65	10.3	12.7	160	7.4	13.9	437
ACT	4.6	3.7	50	4.9	4.1	53	4.5	4.2	166
ACCESS	10.1	15.2	43	10.1	14.1	131	4.9	6.8	107
Local Assessments									
School Readiness	7.6	9.3	12	12.2	12.5	5			
Early Literacy	14.5	30.3	39	18.1	29.4	59			
Interim	5.6	9.5	59	7.7	11.7	132	7.3	15.2	441
PWR	3.3	4.8	33	3.6	3.9	35	3.6	3.0	101

Table 4.5
Time Spent by Teachers who Teach Untested Subject(s) Administering Assessments
Per Administration Shown in Hours

	District Administrator			School Administrator			Teacher		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
State Assessments									
School Readiness	3.0	4.8	21	3.8	7.5	58	10.0	16.7	16
READ Act	2.7	4.0	26	3.9	6.6	71	5.1	13.0	50
TCAP	10.4	8.3	39	12.1	10.6	165	13.2	9.7	342
CMAS	6.8	6.7	34	8.0	9.6	144	6.2	10.0	210
ACT	3.1	2.6	27	4.2	4.1	52	3.9	3.9	85
ACCESS	6.9	13.7	22	4.3	7.7	86	3.1	7.2	77
Local Assessments									
School Readiness	1.6	2.0	9	5.3	8.4	3			
Early Literacy	2.6	6.5	31	4.6	10.7	40			
Interim	2.5	4.7	46	3.4	6.9	106	5.0	9.8	58
PWR	1.3	2.4	29	2.9	3.4	37	4.5	5.9	57

Estimates for the time spent by teachers who teach untested subject(s) to administer assessments were also lower, but still reflect the “all hands on deck” approach schools and districts often take to ensure all students can be assessed during a given window. Teacher respondents also report more time administering the school readiness assessment than district or school respondents.

Table 4.6
Time Spent by Specialist Teachers Administering Assessments
Per Administration, Shown in Hours

	District Administrator			School Administrator			Teacher		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
State Assessments									
School Readiness	21.0	52.0	23	4.4	6.4	56	20.7	24.9	24
READ Act	10.7	13.6	32	16.0	31.1	77	11.0	15.9	121
TCAP	16.6	14.1	39	16.6	19.0	162	20.1	29.7	278
CMAS	11.0	11.8	36	10.5	13.0	145	11.3	22.9	181
ACT	4.1	4.9	26	5.5	4.5	50	5.6	5.5	42
ACCESS	24.1	30.3	29	14.7	18.2	98	23.7	40.8	98
Local Assessments									
School Readiness	8.3	9.8	9	6.3	6.7	4			
Early Literacy	8.1	12.7	32	12.9	18.5	50			
Interim	5.6	10.1	47	7.5	14.4	117	9.6	16.8	139
PWR	2.5	3.0	28	3.1	3.2	36	4.7	8.9	21

Estimates for the time spent by specialist teachers were higher for the ACCESS assessment, but otherwise similar to time spent by graded subject teachers and higher than teachers who do not teach tested subjects.

Again, time estimates for teachers administering assessments varied significantly based on the role of the teacher and the specific assessment being administered, with specialist teachers spending slightly more time on administration than teachers of untested subjects and similar time to teachers of tested subjects. Estimates by respondents at the district, school, and teacher level tended to be similar, with no clear trends of one group of respondents giving higher estimates than the others.

Students

Survey respondents were asked to estimate the time spent by students—general education, ELL, and Special Education—to prepare for and take assessments. Again, the intent of the survey was to distinguish time spent specifically on assessment and not on content instruction. To that end, the following definitions were provided to survey participants:

1. **Students preparing for assessment:** preparing for assessment includes training in the mechanics of the assessments. It does not include instruction on content covered by the test.
2. **Students taking the assessment:** taking the assessment includes all time after instruction stops, including moving to a computer lab or room for testing, receiving instructions, taking the assessment, and waiting for the assessment time period to conclude.

Table 4.7 considers time spent by all students to prepare for each administration of an assessment. Tables 4.8 -4.10 then present the time spent by students to take assessments, disaggregated by time spent by general education students, ELL students and Special Education students.

Results shown are for each administration of an assessment; later in this section we will present estimates for the total time students spend to prepare for and take all administrations of assessments.

Table 4.7
Time Spent by All Students Preparing for Assessments
Per Administration, Shown in Hours

	District Administrator			School Administrator			Teacher		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
State Assessments									
READ Act		-	-	3.7	10.2	77	2.1	5.7	377
TCAP	35.1	98.9	35	24.0	67.5	162	16.2	46.8	917
CMAS	31.2	97.2	35	15.4	36.9	152	9.3	24.3	539
ACT	13.0	26.9	30	38.0	107.3	51	11.7	25.7	207
ACCESS	4.8	10.3	25	8.2	22.7	126	4.2	10.8	239
Local Assessments									
School Readiness	5.9	9.1	9	4.8	7.4	5	-	-	-
Early Literacy	2.8	5.0	36	2.4	4.2	60	-	-	-
Interim	1.4	2.5	45	1.8	3.2	120	3.4	9.6	504
PWR	2.0	3.0	27	2.3	3.6	34	2.6	6.9	129

Since the school readiness assessment is observational in nature, there is no time spent by students to “prepare for” the assessment. Time estimates were highest for the TCAP, CMAS and ACT. Here, estimates from district respondents are higher than estimates from school administrators and teachers.

First, Table 4.8 below considers time spent by general education students to take assessments. TCAP was estimated to take the most time of the state assessments. Interim assessments, which are often given more than once a year, would also be a large time requirement. Table 4.9 then shows estimates for the time needed for ELL students to take assessments were similar to general education students with the addition of time for the ACCESS assessment.

Table 4.8
Time Spent by General Education Students Taking Assessments
Per Administration, Shown in Hours

	District Administrator			School Administrator			Teacher		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
State Assessments									
READ Act	7.8	14.4	48	4.0	9.0	83	2.8	7.6	389
TCAP	13.9	16.2	56	12.7	16.0	168	11.3	17.3	965
CMAS	9.3	16.4	55	8.4	9.6	156	7.3	21.0	621
ACT	4.6	2.5	46	4.4	2.7	52	6.0	14.4	208
Local Assessments									
School Readiness	5.9	9.1	9	4.8	7.4	5	-	-	-
Early Literacy	2.8	5.0	36	2.4	4.2	60	-	-	-
Interim	7.1	14.8	54	5.2	6.2	130	5.4	11.1	518
PWR	4.0	3.0	29	4.9	2.7	35	4.0	4.1	140

Table 4.9
Time Spent by ELL Students Taking Assessments
Per Administration, Shown in Hours

	District Administrator			School Administrator			Teacher		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
State Assessments									
READ Act	7.4	10.6	32	4.4	9.9	74	3.5	9.7	322
TCAP	15.1	9.6	38	12.2	7.4	144	13.4	23.7	681
CMAS	9.5	8.5	36	9.2	11.0	133	7.7	21.7	451
ACT	5.5	2.9	30	4.5	3.1	44	7.4	17.7	111
ACCESS	5.9	5.1	31	4.5	3.6	121	4.5	5.6	228
Local Assessments									
School Readiness	5.9	8.9	10	2.0	1.4	2	-	-	-
Early Literacy	3.6	6.1	33	3.2	5.1	52	-	-	-
Interim	7.8	15.6	49	5.5	6.7	120	6.3	14.4	383
PWR	4.1	3.1	27	5.0	2.8	29	4.0	2.8	77

Table 4.10
Time Spent by Special Education Students Taking Assessments
Per Administration, Shown in Hours

	District Administrator			School Administrator			Teacher		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
State Assessments									
READ Act	8.6	11.9	45	4.5	9.6	85	3.2	8.8	373
TCAP	16.0	9.5	50	13.9	10.5	172	13.1	20.3	860
CMAS	10.0	8.2	49	10.2	13.0	157	7.6	19.8	572
ACT	5.5	3.3	43	5.2	2.9	53	7.2	15.7	140
Local Assessments									
School Readiness	5.5	8.5	11	10.5	17.0	4	-	-	-
Early Literacy	3.9	7.5	39	3.1	5.0	57	-	-	-
Interim	7.4	14.5	57	6.2	7.2	129	6.6	15.6	470
PWR	4.2	3.0	30	5.3	2.6	32	4.2	2.7	91

Time estimates for Special Education students were somewhat longer in key areas like the TCAP.

Again, time estimates vary depending on the type of student and the specific assessment being taken. Surprisingly, the time for special education and ELL students to take assessments was not significantly higher than that for general education students. However, it is important to note that, as indicated during cost interviews, time for special education and ELL students is likely more resource intensive, as those students can require one-on-one aides or staff time for accommodations. As with other time estimates, there were no clear trends across respondent groups.