District of Columbia
Office of the State Superintendent of Education

SCHOOL YEAR 2020-21 OSSE LOCAL ASSESSMENT COLLECTION REPORT

November 2021

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Executive Summary

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) believes in collecting and reporting high-quality data on student performance. Standardized statewide assessments are the best tools for measuring student learning on the academic standards for English language arts/literacy (ELA), mathematics, science, and English language proficiency across schools, local education agencies (LEAs), the state, and student groups. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact on our ability to obtain accurate and reliable data, OSSE suspended statewide assessments with the approval from the US Department of Education (USED), in 2020 and 2021. As a result, the District was unable to measure student academic performance across schools, LEAs, the state, and specific groups of students for two years. These data are essential to informing programmatic decision making, policy making, strategic investments, research, accountability, and public discourse. Yet, without these critical statewide summative assessment data, OSSE sought to obtain some sense of student learning over the past academic year with available tools in order to understand the landscape of measuring student learning during remote and hybrid instruction. As per a requirement of the District's waiver with USED and our commitment to understanding the landscape of local assessments, OSSE asked for and received local assessment collection summaries from every school in the District.

Across the over 60 LEAs in the District, there is not one common local assessment tool. LEAs develop local assessment plans that are unique to their needs. Local assessments are valuable tools at the school and LEA levels that inform and drive instruction, but they do not provide a citywide comparative measure of student learning. There is no statutory requirement that guides the administration and selection of local assessments, so the landscape across LEAs is varied. The 2020-21 school year presented significant operational challenges for school and LEA leaders; difficult decisions regarding instruction and assessment needed to be made. According to self-reported data from schools, only around 42 percent of tested students met their LEA-established goals in ELA, and 37 percent of tested students met LEA-established goals in math. Due to the variation in assessments, goals set, tested population, and participation rate, making broad claims about these data proves to be challenging. Whether these goals were set too high or student performance lagged, or both, schools will need to use data from their local assessments to target instruction and to adjust programmatic decisions for the 2021-22 school year. Based on the information we received, while schools consistently assessed in ELA and mathematics, there seemed to be gaps in assessing in science and English language proficiency. In addition, the available data from LEAs provided limited information as to how students with the most significant cognitive disabilities participated in content assessments. Based on the findings from the Local Assessment Collection, OSSE will be leveraging ESSER funding to support LEAs with broad assessment literacy, conducting local assessment audits, evaluating the quality of existing tools, and building capacity to develop tools in critical gap areas.

Purpose of this Report

This report synthesizes the high-level findings from OSSE after reviewing the school year 2020-21 Local Assessment portion of the school-level Continuous Education Plans (CEPs). The report will explain local context for both administration and reporting of assessments, OSSE's key findings from the plans and the next steps for programmatic support. In this report, we highlight how schools approached assessing students and how OSSE can continue to support LEAs in assessing student mastery and progress. In addition, OSSE is also posting publicly the self-reported data from schools on local assessment participation and the number of students who met individual school and LEA assessment goals. Our hope with this report is that those who read it will further their understanding of the landscape, approaches, and trends in local assessments in the District to inform their own strategic planning.

Background

OSSE is deeply committed to understanding the academic performance of all students and using statewide assessment data to drive academic performance. High-quality statewide summative assessments are the best tools we have to measure the academic performance of all students in the District across schools, LEAs, the state and across specific groups of students. Starting in 2014, the District began its shift to its next generation assessment system. Since the 2014-15 school year, OSSE has administered the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and Multi-State Alternate Assessments (MSAA) statewide assessments in English language arts/literacy (ELA) and math in grades 3-8 and high school. The stability of these assessments has allowed us to measure performance across years and highlight the increases in performance over time. Beginning in the 2018-19 school year, OSSE began administering its newly designed DC Science statewide assessment and the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) science alternate assessment in grades 5, 8 and high school biology, which measure the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). These assessments have been vital to planning at the state, sector, LEA, and school levels as well as providing parents and families with a key measure of their student's learning in key subjects. Statewide assessment data are used for critical purposes in the District: to direct resources to students who need them most, to create research on academic outcomes that drive programmatic change and to inform families and their decision-making.

In March 2020, schools shifted to a distance learning posture just weeks before the annual statewide assessment windows opened. Due to the public health emergency, there were no students in buildings and schools were focused on the unprecedented shift to remote learning. In 2020, USED provided states with the opportunity to waive assessment requirements, and OSSE, along with all other states, had these waiver requests granted. To provide the public with information about operations in our schools, at the end of the 2019-20 school year, OSSE asked for, collected, approved and published Continuous Education and School Recovery Plans for every LEA. These plans included narrative about LEA plans for local assessments but did not collect assessment data. In addition, the DC School Report Card remained an avenue for reporting key information about schools.

For the 2020-21 school year, OSSE began preparations for how to best administer state assessments during a global health pandemic. OSSE worked diligently to determine if a hybrid model of in-person and remote testing could be feasible given that the District's summative assessments are administered online and that the technology could logistically be made available in students' homes. Throughout the year, OSSE partnered with LEAs, leading local experts, national experts, and vendor partners to investigate options and create plans to administer its assessments remotely. However, for statewide assessments to produce reliable, comparable and meaningful results, that stakeholders can trust and confidently use to make important educational decisions, schools must follow strict protocols that allow for standardization of the student testing experience and test security. As the 2020-21 school year progressed, despite the great efforts by the city to expand technology access and provide reliable internet access to students who needed it, OSSE did not believe that these high standards for test administration and security could be met considering the majority of students was still learning remotely as the testing window approached. For example, a student sharing a workspace with a sibling during the assessment would not have the same testing experience as a student with a room for themselves. This also presents an issue of equity. As another example, during administration of the statewide summative assessments, students have controlled and secure environments in their schools with all of the educational material on classroom walls must be covered. However, students testing in their homes could have access to textbooks, websites, other individuals, or cellphones to look up answers. These differences in testing environments threaten the validity of our results and would likely affect student performance, but it would be impossible to know precisely how students were impacted from looking at the data alone.

Given the persistent concerns about test security, participation, and equitable and standardized testing conditions, OSSE did not believe that our summative assessments could yield reliable and comparable data. Moving forward with statewide assessments under these conditions would not only lead to inappropriate interpretation of results, which are used for many critical public applications, but would also undermine our stakeholders' confidence in future uses of the results from our statewide assessments. No other tool can take the place of statewide summative assessments in providing comparable data on student performance and growth, and for that reason, protecting the long-term viability of statewide assessments is a top priority. Ultimately, OSSE decided that risking the long-term integrity of the assessments for what could be questionable assessment data was not worth the immense effort from schools, students and their families. The city made its case in its waiver request to USED, which was granted, and OSSE suspended statewide assessments for the second year in a row.

Due to the impact of the pandemic, we were unable to measure student learning across the city for two years. While understanding that these data could not be replaced, education leaders wanted to collect as much information as possible in order to build out the District's recovery strategies. Schools administer local assessments to measure student performance and progress through their curriculum. LEAs in the District of Columbia have a great deal of autonomy with respect to the identification and implementation of curriculum and local assessments. OSSE believes that decisions about local assessments should be made as close to the student level as possible. LEAs and schools in the District decide which local assessments they use, which of their students take them and how they use these data to measure student learning and progress. Per the commitments OSSE made to the USED in our waiver request and in partnership with the Deputy Mayor of Education (DME), OSSE moved to collect Continuous Education Plans (CEP) from every LEA in the District, which included a new 2020-21 School Year Assessment Data Collection. OSSE was not required to conduct

this collection, but we felt responsible to use the resources at our disposal to gather as much information as possible that could inform the District's academic recovery from the pandemic.

In this report, we will provide a brief landscape analysis, OSSE's key high-level findings from the 2020-21 school year local assessment collection portion of the Continuous Education Plans and the next steps for both assessments and programmatic support.

Common Terms and Definitions

Educational assessments take on many different forms, each with their own unique purpose, structure, and claims. It is important to clearly define assessment terminology up front to help set the foundation for understanding how schools approached local assessments in the 2020-21 school year. Students take many assessments throughout the school year, from pop quizzes to term finals, so this section will make clear what "local assessments" mean in the context of the CEP collection and this report.

Assessment is one part of a larger learning system and is aligned to content standards (key skills for the subject and grade level), instructional practices (how the school teaches these skills), and curricula (instructional plans and materials). Different types of assessments have different purposes and the results from those assessments have distinct uses and audiences.

Statewide summative assessments are administered to all public-school students in the District in tested grades and courses near the end of each academic year. Statewide summative assessments are required by federal and local law and are managed by the state education agency (OSSE). These assessments evaluate student learning on the grade-level or course-level content standards that were adopted by the State Board of Education (SBOE). The statewide assessments were developed by educational experts from across the country as well as with close collaboration with our local educators. All test items are reviewed and thoroughly reviewed for standards alignment, quality, difficulty, bias, sensitivity and accessibility. They undergo rigorous psychometric development and analysis for reliability, validity and comparability. Due to the rigor of the development, administration and collection processes, statewide summative assessments produce results that can be reliably aggregated at the state, LEA, and school levels, as well as across specific groups of students in the District. Summative assessments inform educator and policy maker decisions at the classroom, school, LEA and state levels because they provide a standardized set of data to make comparisons across groups and over time. They also provide students, caregivers and other stakeholders with an overview of yearly performance. OSSE collects performance data on statewide assessments and reports the results publicly. As noted previously, OSSE did not administer statewide summative assessments in the 2019-20 or 2020-21 school years.

Local summative assessments are created by schools and/or LEAs, or their curriculum providers, and are typically given at the end of a grade, course, or unit of study. These assessments measure student performance against a specific set of standards and learning targets. In LEAs, schools, and classrooms, local summative assessments often take the form of unit tests or end-of-year exams that measure student performance relative to their school/LEA's local curriculum. OSSE only collected information about local summative assessments in 2020-21 if they were administered school- and/or LEA-wide.

Interim or benchmark assessments are administered at touch points in the curriculum to give teachers and school leaders data related to a specific subset of goals or standards. Interim or benchmark assessments can be used by educators to inform instructional decisions (e.g., reteach specific knowledge/skills, identify students in need of additional support) and by schools/LEAs/networks to track performance and progress toward goals. As mentioned above, instructional models vary, as do local assessment models. As OSSE does not prescribe curriculum to LEAs, it does not require, develop, or oversee the administration of interim/benchmark assessments. OSSE only collected information about local interim assessments in 2020-21 if they were administered school- and/or LEA-wide.

Formative assessments are used by educators as part of the instructional cycle to improve teaching and learning. These assessments are used frequently, often daily, during regular classroom instruction to measure student progress and achievement of intended instructional outcomes. OSSE did not require schools to provide data or narrative on their formative assessment or progress monitoring plans as these assessments are hyper-local and designed for use at the building or individual classroom level.

Local assessments are important tools that educators, schools, and LEAs use to understand and inform instruction. There is no statutory requirement that guides the administration and selection of local assessments, so the landscape across LEAs is varied.

OSSE asked for school- and/or LEA-wide interim, benchmark and/or local summative assessment data and analysis. For the ease of the reader, this report will refer to these as "local assessments" unless otherwise specified.

Considerations

Prior to discussing high-level findings and sharing school-level data, OSSE is providing the following interpretation considerations:

- **Decisions about curriculum and assessment should be made as close to the student as possible, and as such, local assessment plans are highly specific to the school and LEA**. Local assessments should be student-focused, and educators on the ground are best poised to use this information to make instructional decisions. There are many ways to successfully build a local assessment plan that provides timely information for educators to support student learning. Some schools may choose to administer a very robust set of assessments, including but not limited to formative, diagnostic, screener, interim, end-of-year, and end-of-course assessments. Others may have a more streamlined or limited scope. In this report, OSSE is agnostic about the value of different local assessments, as OSSE's role is not to require or evaluate the quality of local assessments.

- **The 2020-21 school year was immensely difficult from a school administration perspective, requiring shifts in priorities and procedures across the board**. The purpose of this collection is to better understand the landscape, approaches and trends in school and LEA assessments in the 2020-21 school year. LEAs and schools had to make very difficult decisions about both instruction and assessments in the 2020-21 school year due to the myriad of impacts of the pandemic and the shift

to and from distance learning. The information provided by schools reflects a specific moment in time.

- **It is challenging to administer local assessments remotely in a manner that will produce reliable results, even with advance planning time**. Testing environments, particularly remote, varied wildly depending on the student. Schools worked hard to provide standard testing environments, but there were many barriers outside of their control. Testing irregularities and non-standard test environments make interpretations of specific data points very difficult.

- **Reduced participation in local assessments impacts the generalizability of results for the school.** The greater the participation rate in an assessment, the more confidence we can have that the results are truly representative of student achievement and overall school performance. Multiple schools and LEAs were upfront and honest when they reported that they were unable to assess all students.

- **Local assessment data are best used by the specific school and LEA, as they are equipped to contextualize the data and supplement with other information**. Schools self-submitted their data using their own protocols and processes for review and validation. In addition, assessments are designed for different purposes and have different results interpretation rules. Local summative and interim assessments are not designed to be valid and comparable for the types of aggregations that the statewide summative assessments support. Readers of this report should not attempt to make comparisons between assessments, schools, or between the CEP collection assessment results and statewide summative assessment results.

OSSE is reporting a snapshot of the local assessment landscape and how these data are informing current school planning. School administrators performed admirably, particularly given the circumstances of the last two school years. Assessment administration is highly structured by design and schools had to be flexible just for day-to-day operations. We appreciate all the hard work that went into both administering these assessments and reporting them to OSSE.

The Local Assessment CEP Collection

When planning for the 2021 CEP collection, we felt strongly that schools should have opportunities to collect student assessment data even in the absence of the statewide summative assessment. We wanted to know the extent to which schools are administering local assessments, which assessment tools they are using, how they are setting goals for students and how students were performing relative to those goals.

OSSE determined that school-submitted narratives and self-reported data about student performance would help contextualize summative assessment performance in the 2021-22 school year. These submissions would also provide information specific to schools as well as narrative trend information that could be used to direct funding and supports. OSSE designed the new local assessment CEP template to collect information that could both inform the city's approach to supports and provide important context for the way in which schools

assessed students' learning in the 2020-21 school year. Therefore, the template asked for summaries of local assessment results as well as additional questions about how these data are being used by the schools.

This CEP collection is the first time that OSSE has required LEAs to self-report local assessment data. As noted above, local assessment data do not have the strict psychometric requirements for reliability and comparability required to aggregate and report results at the state level. In addition, schools administering their assessments remotely adds several concerns for OSSE about test and data security. It would be irresponsible for the state education agency to aggregate and report local assessment results of students who may be in the same grade but are attending different schools, taking different assessments that measure different things, under different testing conditions and at different points in the school year. In addition, collecting individual student assessment records would be incredibly burdensome for schools. The intent of this collection was to respect the diversity in approaches and plans for local assessments at the school and LEA level.

The 2020-21 Local Assessment Collection Continuous Education Plans will be publicly available on OSSE's website alongside the larger CEPs for school years 2021-22 and 2020-21.

What the Data Tell Us

Overall Takeaways

The Assessment Landscape is Diverse

Across the District, there is not one common tool for assessing students in various content areas on interim, benchmark and/or end-of-course assessments. Schools have unique assessment plans that are customized to their needs. School and LEA plans are likely to differ because assessments are matched to specific purposes and are often aligned to the school's philosophy, curriculum and data needs. While there are many different assessment tools used by schools in the District, there are a few commonly used, vendor-created assessments, the most common of which is NWEA's MAP assessment. Other commonly used tools include iReady, Achievement Network (ANet), Renaissance Learning and Reading Inventory. Schools may use the same local assessments but at different points during the school year, as well.

There are Gaps in Local Assessments in Science, English Language Proficiency, and for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

While most schools indicated that they had administered local assessments in ELA and mathematics in school year 2020-21, few schools indicated that they assessed in science or English language proficiency. In addition, limited information was shared as to how students with the most significant cognitive abilities participated in content assessments in ELA, math and/or science. OSSE sees this as an opportunity to provide support to schools and LEAs in evaluating and implementing local assessments in these content areas. Starting in school year 2021-22, ESSR funding investments will be made to support LEAs in determining what constitutes high-

quality interim and benchmark assessments in these areas and to support LEAs in the development of these tools.

Statewide Assessments Provide Critical Information on Student Performance that Cannot Be Obtained by Local Assessments

The biggest takeaway is one that is repeated throughout this report; the sheer number of variables surrounding local assessments conducted by over 60 separate LEAs makes a strong case for the value of research-backed and reliable statewide summative assessments. It is tempting to compare local assessment results, particularly when there is so much concern about our students and their learning during the pandemic, but we can only responsibly compare school plans overall in the CEP collection and not the results. Local assessments are designed with different purposes, measurement expectations, test administration and security requirements, accommodations and psychometric parameters. These assessments are not designed to be valid for aggregations at the state level. Statewide summative assessments are the only tools we have available to accurately measure student performance across all schools, LEAs and specific groups of students in the District. The strict psychometric, security and administration requirements for statewide summative assessments ensure that these data are valid for critical policy and program-level decision-making. We look forward to returning to the implementation of our statewide summative assessments in spring of 2022.

Individual Question Takeaways

Question 1 – Approach to Assessing Student Learning

In this question, we were seeking information about the decision-making process for local assessments, including the LEA's approach to assessing students remotely and/or in-person. Many schools and LEAs spent time reevaluating their local assessment plans in SY2020-21 to determine which assessments were most targeted to their needs and intended uses. LEAs were thoughtful about reducing the time spent testing and leveraging assessments that would provide more immediate impact. Many schools chose to continue using nationally known vendor-created assessments that their students and educators were familiar with and had experience interpreting and using the resulting data (e.g., NWEA MAP, iReady, ANet). There were some schools, however, that chose to abandon more formal vendor assessments in favor of smaller scale assessments. Intentional decisions around assessment offerings needed to be made based on the impact of the pandemic on capacity and time. Several schools chose not to administer specific vendor-developed assessments (e.g., NWEA MAP Growth) out of concern of the data being compromised or not producing data that could inform immediate instructional planning.

Unfortunately, very few LEAs referenced local science or English language proficiency assessments. This finding is consistent with what we learned while developing the DC Science assessment. The pandemic and the ensuing assessment waivers came after just a single administration of DC Science, meaning that schools did not have much time to change their curricular scope and assessment strategies for science. However, we hope that LEAs continue to prioritize science during recovery efforts.

Question 2 – Assessed Content Areas

This question asked which local assessments for ELA, math and science the LEA administered in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years. As expected, LEAs had more success administering local assessments in the 2020-21 school year. While almost all schools reported that they had assessed students in ELA and mathematics in the 2020-21 school year, fewer schools reported that they had local assessments in science and English language proficiency. Furthermore, in later questions, there was limited information provided on local assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in ELA, math, or science.

	Percent of Schools Reported to have Administered Local Spring Assessments Each Year	
Content Area	SY2019-20	SY2020-21
ELA	77%	94%
Math	75%	94%
Science	29%	35%
English Language Proficiency	40%	30%

- *This table includes the percentage of schools with tested grades who reported in question 2 that they administered local assessments in SY2019-20 and SY2020-21.*
- *If a school did not administer a local assessment, it does not mean that there was a failure to report or a compliance issue. There are no statutory requirements guiding the administration or selection of local assessments. LEAs and schools create their own annual local assessment plans.*

Question 3 – Assessment Goals

This question asked if schools set goals for students around assessments, and 87 percent of schools (191) reported included goals for the school year. The majority used targets to measure both student proficiency and growth. For our schools in the District, assessments are a critical tool for designing and measuring student learning.

Question 4 – Strategies for Equitable Assessment

This question asked about how schools were approaching equitable assessment practices. Most schools answered from the technology side of assessments, answering that students were provided with tablets or laptops to complete their local assessments. Many students were given the option to take the assessments virtually or in person in small groups. While some schools did note that student accessibility features and accommodations were provided, there was limited specific information shared.

OSSE was concerned to see the lack of responses around specific student needs. Many schools did not address in their responses how they served students who require accommodations. In most applications, information on assessments or approaches for English learners with disabilities was not provided. In other cases, the school was unable to identify assessments administered to students with accommodations during the two school years. OSSE understands that some assessment accommodations are exceedingly difficult to provide in a distance learning setting – for example, an aide could not enter a student's home out of COVID-19 concerns – but indicate that students in these groups may have additional challenges as they return to in-person instruction because gaps in academic learning may not have been properly identified in the 2019-20

or 2020-21 school years. Furthermore, most schools failed to address how they assessed students with significant cognitive disabilities or name the types of assessments administered to said population of students. OSSE understands not all schools serve students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, however very limited information was shared overall. A sufficient response would have been one that addressed how the school assessed students with disabilities and English learners and noted if they did not serve a specific subgroup named in the question.

Question 5 – Curriculum Strategies

This question asked about changes to curriculum strategies and scope and sequence during the 2020-21 school year. Most schools have curriculum providers, meaning that they purchase frameworks and materials from a vendor, and reported that they focused on "priority standards" provided by these vendors. In addition, some schools indicated that they revised their instructional plans to focus on Student Achievement Partners' (SAP) Priority Instructional Content in ELA and math. These priority standards refer to the most critical content and skills for the subject and grade level, as determined by the curriculum, SAP and/or local school or LEA decision-making. Focusing on priority standards will set schools up for additional support going forward if the key academic building blocks are in place. Local assessments on the priority standards were mostly administered remotely. Schools reported shifting to more individualized pedagogical practices, but overall did not provide specific examples of changes to the curricular scope other than focusing more on the priority standards. Schools did not provide much information about science instruction. When information was provided, it indicated that schools did not make changes to their approach to science instruction.

Question 6 – Assessment Tools, Goals and Results

This question asked for a table of local assessments administered in spring 2021, the goals set for each assessment, and results disaggregated by grade and student group. This proved to be the most challenging question for schools to answer; OSSE returned many of the templates with additional guidance about expectations around reporting and disaggregation.

Assessment tools and their corresponding goals varied quite widely from LEA to LEA. For example, some schools expected students to meet specific growth targets based on the vendor-created assessments they use, while others expected students to reach a certain percentile. Despite this variation, one trend is clear from the responses; large numbers of students are not meeting the goals that schools set for them. According to self-reported data from schools, only around 42 percent of tested students met their goals in ELA, with a slightly lower figure having met goals in math (37 percent). Whether these goals were set too high or student performance lagged – or both – schools will need to adjust their instruction based on the local assessment results to focus on areas where students need the most support.

Again, we cannot make a District-wide diagnosis about where students are in their learning without tools that are comparable across students and schools such as statewide assessments. Schools and LEAs are analyzing their data points in combination with other data to help inform immediate instructional decisions and local programmatic decision-making. OSSE is building out its supports under the assumption that students will have gaps in their learning academically, socially and emotionally due to the pandemic; the responses to Question 6, as expected, give additional support to this approach.

Question 6 also provided clarity about the wide variety of local assessments that schools are using. While there were many assessments referenced, there are several commonly used tools. Of the 90 percent of schools that submitted data on the spring assessments they provided:

- 33 percent of schools provided data for ANet
- 15 percent of schools provided data for NWEA MAP
- 20 percent of schools provided data for Reading Inventory
- 19 percent of schools provided data for iReady

Schools provided participation rates for each of the assessments they shared in question 6. Due to the challenges presented by the pandemic and the shift to distance learning, we expected that participation rates in local assessments would be lower than in traditional years. In addition, given that not all schools were able to provide data in every content area, participation rates should be interpreted with caution. For example, the science participation rate is technically the highest, but only 8 percent of schools provided science assessment data. Across reporting schools, participation rates per content area are as follows:

- ELA: 76 percent
- Math: 72 percent
- Science 77 percent*
  - *Since only 8 percent of schools provided information on science assessment participation and goal attainment, the participation rate should be interpreted with caution.*

While the majority of students participated in a hybrid testing (88 percent), there were 12 percent of students who were coded as participating in remote testing and <1 percent of students who participated in in-person testing. Participation rates differed slightly based on whether the test was administered remotely, in-person, or in a hybrid setting. As such, there are issues with the representativeness of the data.

- For students that tested in a remote setting, the participation rate was 83 percent
- For students that tested in a hybrid setting, the participation rate was 71 percent
- For students that tested in an in-person setting, the participation rate was 71 percent

These participation rates are low. It is important to note that for statewide summative assessments, schools are required by federal law to meet 95 percent participation rate, so this testing pool is far smaller than what OSSE traditionally reports for assessment. Data have been suppressed where needed to ensure student privacy.

Question 7 – Takeaways and Caveats

This question asked about what schools learned from the experience of administering local assessments remotely or in a hybrid model. In short, schools are still wrestling with the takeaways from their local assessments, particularly from the spring. We did learn from how schools used remote proctoring - in essence a test proctor leading an assessment over Zoom or Microsoft Teams – and their network data teams conducted item-level analyses to examine the response patterns to ensure that the test security was intact. Many LEAs cited that test and data integrity were their biggest concerns with remote administration of assessments because if we cannot assume that students experienced standardized testing conditions, the data cannot be used to draw reliable conclusions about student performance. It is difficult to draw broad

conclusions from LEA responses to this question, which were often short and lacking specifics, but the overall commitment to assessment security and strong administration practices was encouraging to see.

Question 8 – Communication with Families

All schools reported that they shared results from assessments with families, ranging from simply mailing the results home to discussing them one-on-one during parent teacher conferences. We recommend sharing assessment results as part of the goal-setting and progress-checking processes between teachers, students and their families. Proper context is key. Teachers who have a deep understanding of the purposes and uses of assessments are able to communicate with families directly and in an engaging way about assessment results, which can build a common understanding of student progress and strengthen the collaborative relationship between teacher and family. Quality assessments when implemented well provide critical check-in points on a student's learning trajectory. The responses to this question will inform OSSE's engagement with LEAs in our effort to further support parent engagement in the future, particularly as we re-introduce statewide assessments during the 2021-22 school year.

Question 9 – Use of Results, Future Instruction and Enrichment

As noted throughout this report, LEAs and schools took individualized approaches to local assessment that reflect the needs and priorities of their students. For that reason, decisions about the use of results were specific to each LEA, and often different across schools within an LEA. Many LEAs reported using results of local assessments given throughout the 2020-21 school year to make in-the-moment adjustments to instructional practices and curricular scope and sequence, and to inform planning and priorities for summer 2021 learning programs. Some LEAs also planned to use 2020-21 local assessment results to help set a baseline to plan for instruction and interventions in the 2021-22 school year.

Next Steps

Returning to Statewide Summative Assessments

OSSE's statewide summative assessments are reliable and consistent measures of student performance on the content standards for ELA, math, science and English language proficiency standards. These peer-reviewed assessments produce data that are valid for aggregations of student performance at the state, LEA, school and student group levels, unlike other local assessments. The District's PARCC and MSAA assessments met the highest level of expectations for USED's stringent peer review process. The test security and administration protocols have proven to be highly effective throughout the years of test administrations in hundreds of schools, thousands of classrooms and hundreds of thousands of students. These data are critical to our ability to measure and communicate information on student performance across the District.

In the 2021-22 school year, OSSE looks forward to resuming the administration of state summative assessments. When we collect these comparable assessment data, we will be able to better contextualize and analyze Local Assessment CEP plans from the 2020-21 school year.

OSSE Programmatic Response

OSSE is operating under the understanding that students will need additional support not just academically, but socially and emotionally as well. For the purposes of this report on assessments, we are focusing on the academic needs of students and how we can partner with schools and LEAs to support those needs. Based on our analysis of the landscape of local assessments, LEAs are currently using a wide range of non-summative tools to inform instruction and programmatic decision-making, in ELA and math, but there are gaps in other areas – science, English language proficiency and across all content areas for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Additionally, several LEAs noted that they did not administer certain local assessments in 2021 because they would not provide information that could be immediately used to guide instructional choices.

As part of a multi-year effort and strategic investment of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds, OSSE intends to work with LEAs and other partners to build local capacity in evaluating, building and implementing high-quality interim and local assessments. This work will include the evaluation and auditing of current systems of assessments. In addition, OSSE will work with a vendor partner to provide support in identifying and implementing high-quality local assessments in critical gap areas such as science, English language proficiency and content assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Part of this effort will also include comprehensive professional learning in assessment literacy for educators, instructional coaches and school leaders so that schools and LEAs in the District of Columbia can ensure they are using the right tools for the right purposes to drive improvement for all students. OSSE is committed to supporting LEAs in the identification of implementation of high-quality tools aimed at understanding student performance and supporting targeted instructional and programmatic decision-making.

Appendix A: Data Collection Questions

Question 1

Please describe your approach to assessing student learning in the past school year (2020-21), including:
   a. Information on the school's strategy and approach to assessing student learning given the school's specific operating status throughout the 2020-21 school year;
   b. Whether assessments were delivered remotely or in-person; and
   c. Highlighting any changes to your original assessment plans due to the impact of the pandemic.

Question 2

Please identify the content areas for which your school-administered non-state summative spring assessments (interim, benchmark, end-of-course, or end-of-year) in both 2019-20 and 2020-21.
   a. Please limit your responses to those assessments administered as common assessments at the school or LEA level as opposed to those developed and used solely by individual teachers. (check boxes with columns for 2019 and 2020)
        i. ELA
        ii. Math
        iii. Science
        iv. English language proficiency

Question 3

Did you set assessment-specific goals, benchmarks, or targets for performance on assessments administered in the 2020-21 school year?
   a. Select: Yes/No
        a. If yes, are these goals/targets set by:
             i. Assessment provider (e.g., NWEA)
             ii. The LEA or school (e.g., charter organization, school, or teacher)
        b. If yes, are the goals/targets meant to measure (select one)
             i. Student proficiency
             ii. Student growth
             iii. Both

Question 4

Please describe the steps your school took in the 2020-21 school year to assess all students equitably, including but not limited to students with disabilities, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, English learners and English learners with disabilities.
   a. *We acknowledge that schools may be developing individual assessments or tools for certain situations where vendor-created tools are unavailable. Understanding where there may be gaps will help us better understand where supports may be needed.*
   b. If applicable, include information on the specific assessments used to assess different groups of students (content area, grade and type [interim, benchmark, etc.])

c. Provide narration on accessibility and the availability of accommodations and accessibility features.
d. Highlight where there may be gaps or challenges in providing common assessments for all students (e.g., if vendor-created tools are not available at certain grade levels or for certain content areas).

Question 5

Please describe any strategies you implemented to change curricular scope or sequence for ELA, math and science based on the impact of the pandemic on school schedules, distance learning and reopening status. Please share any takeaways or lessons learned.
   a. If applicable, highlight any concrete strategies that adjusted the school's original plans for standards coverage, curriculum and scope and sequence. Examples could include, but are not limited to: implementing Student Achievement Partners' priority standards; adjusting timing or sequencing; acceleration planning; redesigning 2020-21 quarter 1 to focus on content missed in quarter 4 of 2019-20. Include details for all content areas and identify where approaches differed across grades, as appropriate.
   b. Outline how the changes in standards/content coverage impacted the school's plan for non-state summative assessments and ability to measure student learning.

Question 6

Please identify which assessment tools you used for non-state summative spring assessments in ELA, math and science (for tested grades) at your school(s) in the 2020-21 school year, as well as the data on participation numbers, the "goals" identified above and performance toward those "goals."
   a. *Please limit your response to assessments administered in spring as common assessments at school or LEA levels versus assessments developed and used solely by individual teachers.*
   b. *A reminder that tested grades/courses include:*
      i. *ELA, mathematics: grades 3-8; high school (ELA I, ELA II, Algebra I & Geometry)*
      ii. *Science: grades 5, 8 and high school biology*
   c. *If your school sets individual grade-level goals, please provide a row for each grade and student group. If your school sets goals across grade levels, please list the aggregated goals, participation and performance for the grade span and student group.*
   d. *If your schools did not assess locally in science, please describe in your narrative responses why not and how you will address science content.*
   e. *Be sure to identify tools used to assesses specific student groups (e.g., students with disabilities, English learners, etc.).*
   f. *For the purposes of this collection, "goals" are defined as LEA- or school-determined expectations for individual students or student groups. If the LEA or school is using an assessment tool for which they set specific goals for students (e.g., MAP), OSSE expects the LEA or school is using those defined goals for this exercise, but LEAs or schools should note and explain where this is not the case.*
   g. *If you do not have information on the number of students meeting or exceeding a goal, please fill out all the remaining columns. Collecting information on the types of assessments used and the participation in those assessments will help OSSE better understand the non-state summative assessment landscape across LEAs.*

Tool	Type of Tool	Source	Format	Content Area	Grade(s)	Student Group (auto-populated)	# of Eligible Students	# of Eligible Students Assessed	Goal	# of Assessed Students Meeting or Exceeding Goals
Ex: MAP	Interim	Vendor	Remote	ELA, Math	3-5					
Ex: iReady	Diagnostic	Vendor	Remote	Math	6-8					
Ex: EOC		Teacher created	Remote	ELA	6					
Ex: EOC		Teacher created	Remote	ELA	7					
Ex: EOC		Teacher created	Remote	ELA	8					
Ex: EOC		Teacher created	Remote	ELP	3-8					
Ex: EOC		Teacher created	Remote	Science	3-8					

Question 7

What are your school's takeaways from the results of assessments and assessment administration this year, and what caveats would you highlight?
   a. Detail how your school is approaching understanding the results of non-state summative assessments this spring. If there are any high-level takeaways, please share.
   b. Outline any caveats for interpreting the data from spring assessments at the school and/or LEA level. Caveats for interpretation may include information on student participation; opportunity to access standards/instruction; impact of remote administration on results; questions of test security, etc.
   c. Provide context for any missing information in question 6, if appropriate.

Question 8

How did your school communicate the results of 2020-21 school year assessments to individual students and their families?

Question 9

Please describe how your school used or will use the results from 2020-21 school year assessments to improve instruction and student performance, access to summer enrichment and access to instruction and enrichment in the 2021-22 school year.