

Giselle Martin-Kniep, Learner-Centered Initiatives, Ltd

When teachers have the opportunity to explicitly align the Common Core Standards to their classroom assessments they can internalize the meaning of the standards and their demands. They can also incorporate the standards into their curriculum and instructional practices in ways that attend to the specific content and skills of the different standards.

Incorporating the standards into teachers' ongoing assessment practice is necessary if we want a balanced and diversified assessment system that measures all the outcomes we value. The statewide tests, which preoccupy and focus too much attention from educators, schools and the public, due to their high stakes nature, do not capture the richness of the standards. Currently, there has been such a tight coupling between the standards and the state tests that we are in danger of destroying a significant and worthy multi-year effort to have common standards focus and guide teachers' instruction across classrooms, schools, districts and states.

In the 2015-2016 school year, Learner-Centered Initiatives, Ltd. (LCI) was one of the main organizations supporting districts with the NYS Teaching is the Core Grant, providing direct technical support to 21 of the 31 awarded contracts. Through the TiTC work, teachers have realized that the standards are rich, complex and multi-faceted that are worthy of substantive and coherent learning and assessment experiences. This is an opportunity that all teachers deserve. We need educational policy that supports a diversified and balanced assessment system and that is respectful of what it takes to truly understand and uphold the standards and outcomes we value.