

Accountability challenges: Guidance from the National Early Childhood Accountability Task Force ^[1]

Author: Schultz, Tom

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AVAILABILITY

- Report in pdf ^[2]

Description:

Leading a movement to promote PK-3 units and practices requires states to reconcile divergent accountability and assessment policies for early education programs and for K-3 schooling. Until now, states have promulgated separate systems of standards, assessments, data, and supports for improving pre-k programs and K-3 education. These systems loom large in guiding the work of pre-k and K-3 teachers and program managers because they generate feedback on how well programs are performing, and guide important policy decisions. Accordingly, these divergent policies and mechanisms are a substantial barrier to efforts to create a more coherent and effective continuum of PK-3 teaching and learning, as well as closer collaboration between pre-k, kindergarten, and primary grade educators. Creating a common PK-3 assessment and accountability framework won't be easy—but it is a crucial task if the goal is to enable widespread implementation of a PK-3 approach. Moreover, if done well, this work provides an opportunity for state policymakers to create a new "best of both worlds" accountability approach that capitalizes on the best ideas from the realms of early childhood and public education.

Based on the work of the recently completed National Early Childhood Accountability Task Force, this article reviews the current policy landscape in assessment and accountability for pre-k programs and for K-3 schooling; and presents three crucial action steps states can take to move towards a more unified, powerful, and effective approach to PK-3 assessment and accountability.

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Tags: pre-school ^[3]

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