

FACT SHEET

About CCSSO

The Council of Chief State School Officers (**CCSSO**) is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on major educational issues. The Council seeks member consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, Congress, and the public.

About SCASS

CCSSO created the State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (**SCASS**) in 1991 to encourage and assist states in working collaboratively on assessment design and development across the curriculum.

About HEAP

The Health Education Assessment Project (**HEAP**) is a project of CCSSO~SCASS. The HEAP works to develop resources to help members align curriculum, instruction, and assessment in health education to improve student health literacy.



**Health
Education
Assessment
Project**

6/18/04

The Advantages of Being a CCSSO~SCASS HEAP Member

In June 2001, the HEAP Steering Committee discussed the advantages of membership in a state collaborative that develops assessment products for health education. The committee identified the following advantages.

On being a member of a state assessment development collaborative:

- Developing assessment items is expensive. We can share costs for an expensive endeavor.
- It allows us access to national expertise on health education and assessment.
- Our participation gives us access to a pool of assessment items that ... can be customized to state needs.
- As members, we can provide input in the development of professional development materials and the types of assessments we need to advance health education assessment in our state. It provides state members with the ability to meet a variety of assessment needs.
- Participation in this project provides access to informal resources—that is, PowerPoint presentations, CDs, and a variety of resources developed by the project.
- The HEAP gives us the opportunity to work with other health and assessment professionals and to share between states. We work together to address common needs and resolve common problems.
- Participation in this project provides a practical way to increase assessment literacy among its members, since we receive ongoing professional development and mentoring.
- We are a part of shaping and directing the national agenda on health education and health education assessment.

On being part of the CCSSO~SCASS:

- SCASS HEAP is one of several CCSSO~SCASS projects. Therefore, we have access to the other SCASS projects' innovations that can be adapted to health education. It gives us access to that brain trust, resources, models, and mentors.
- Having health education as a CCSSO~SCASS project gives health education visibility and credibility in the eyes of other educational disciplines. It helps give health education a voice at the school reform table.
- HEAP members are a part of a larger movement to change the norms and improve the industry standard to help the nation recognize that health and learning are joined. Children need to come to school safe, healthy, and ready to learn!

On program development:

- The HEAP provides a comprehensive systems approach to align curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- As state directors, we can assist local districts with a packaged program for health education assessment at a fair cost. Local district coordinators and teachers appreciate this kind of technical assistance.
- We have the opportunity to involve local teachers with cutting-edge materials that will increase their assessment literacy and change the way they teach.
- The HEAP gives us opportunities to monitor critical skills as a part of program evaluation.

And the most important reason:

- This will improve the lives of our nation's children!

HEAP Mission Statement

The mission of the project is to develop effective health education assessment resources through a collaborative process, and to increase members' capacity to align curriculum, instruction, and assessment to improve student health literacy through improved health education instruction.

**For more information,
contact the HEAP
Project Coordinator at
(202) 336-7008.**

