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Assessment Renaissance
By Peter Hill and Michael Barber
This paper is an abbreviated version of the author’s 2014 book Preparing for the coming assessment renaissance, Pearson, London. CSE thanks Pearson for permission to publish this version. The authors argue we are on the verge of a ‘rebirth’ of the core purposes of assessment in school education. They identify key ‘game-changers’ leading to an education revolution; explain how and why assessment should be transformed as part of the ongoing process of teaching and learning; discuss the challenge for awarding bodies; propose a framework for action; and conclude that governments, systems, schools and those within them all have critical roles to play in putting assessment more fully in the service of the curriculum and of learning and teaching.

How does PISA shape education policy making? Why how we measure learning determines what counts in education
By Simon Breakspear
The author, CEO of LearnLabs, outlines PISA’s inception, design and growth; identifies emerging tensions about its purpose and use; and explores key implications for system leaders in policy making. He argues that if the educational narrative is dominated by the performance of 15-year-olds in PISA, other important educational goals such as social and emotional development, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, civics, health and wellbeing, as well as the progression to further work and employment, will be held at the margins of the debate. Looking to the future he suggests the OECD might educate policy makers on the limits of indicators, and conduct research that delves into country context and culture in order to understand differential system performance.

The future of the teaching profession: A new scenario set
By David Istance and Anthony Mackay
The authors have been closely involved in the use of scenarios for futures thinking work in education, notably those around the CERI/OECD ‘Schooling for Tomorrow’ project. Here they give their personal view of how four new scenarios, building on what has been learned from the original set’s successful use internationally, can be powerful tools for exploring new pathways in practical educational reform. They discuss the new set of scenarios – teachers in educational monopolies; specialist professional hubs in schools; a system of licenced flexible expertise; and an open market – and explore key themes and questions arising. They conclude that stakeholders in different countries and contexts can use these scenarios to help identify their own desired futures for the teacher profession.