State Testing Review Committee

Agenda

December 6, 2012
10:00 to 4:00

Illinois State Board of Education
100 North First Street
1 South A Conference Room
Springfield, IL 62777

I. Welcome.................................................................Jennifer DeFranco and Daniel Brown

II. Special Education.................................................................Jessica Dare

III. PSAE..............................................................................Megan Forness

IV. ISAT.............................................................................Jim Palmer and Andy Metcalf, Ph.D.
   a. Common Core Items
   b. Equating

V. PARCC update........................................................................Mary O’Brien, Ed.D.

VI. Lunch Discussion.................................................................Jennifer DeFranco and Daniel Brown

VII. NAEP, Plan and Explore, Locating Information......................Andy Metcalf, Ph.D.

VIII. English Language Learners.............................................Barry Pederson, Ph.D. and Boon Lee, Ph.D.

IX. Discussion.........................................................................Jennifer DeFranco and Daniel Brown
THE ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT CONSORTIA:
DYNAMIC LEARNING MAPS (DLM)

- **MEMBERSHIP:** 13 states (Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin) serving approximately 60,000 students who require an alternate assessment

- **GOVERNANCE:** Two representatives from each member state (one assessment and one special education representative), Neal Kingston of the Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation (CETE), and four external members: Brian Gong of the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment; Jim Pellegrino of the University of Illinois at Chicago; Ed Roeber of Michigan State University; and Jim Ysseldyke of the University of Minnesota

- **PROJECT MANAGEMENT PARTNER:** CETE at the University of Kansas serves as the host, fiscal agent, and project management lead in partnership with member states and three additional partner organizations: the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill on professional development and support materials; Edvianta, Inc., on alternate standards definitions and project evaluation; and The Arc on the reporting system and dissemination

- **AWARD:** $22 million from the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education

This information is accurate as of January 6, 2012.

The following summary of the DLM assessment system has been approved by the DLM.

**SYSTEM COMPONENTS**

**SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY**

A unique proposed aspect of the DLM system, which will be implemented only if upcoming research supports it, is that states will be given two options for the administration of the summative assessments.

- The first option utilizes the DLM items and tasks that will be given to all alternate assessment students as part of their day-to-day instructional activities so that teachers can use the results to tailor instruction to meet student needs. Under this option, 100 or more items or tasks will be given to a student over the course of the school year and the results will be used to make summative decisions.¹

- The second option is a stand-alone summative assessment that will branch or adapt based on mastery of concepts in the learning map and will be given in the spring of the school year.

¹ IEP, mandated by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, is a written plan for a student with disabilities that describes how the student learns, how the student best demonstrates that learning, and the services, supports, and special instruction that the student requires to learn more effectively.

² Research will be conducted to determine the technical feasibility of using assessment data collected through the year as the basis for summative decisions and use in state accountability systems.
Both options are based on the DLM learning maps, described below, and will provide many options for customizing the assessment to the individual abilities and needs of students. In addition, both will be designed to provide teachers, students, and parents detailed information to guide and support learning.

**Common Core Essential Elements (CCEE) and Learning Maps:** DLM began its development work by defining links to the grade-level Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts and mathematics through statements of essential elements and achievement descriptors for students who take the alternate assessment. Simultaneously, learning map development has been proceeding for about a year. DLM describes a learning map as being similar to a superhighway with multiple pathways to common destinations. In the DLM maps, the "destination" for all students will be based on the CCEE.

A fundamental feature of learning maps is that they do not assume a single, linear route for all students, but seek to allow and provide support for multiple pathways.

Another important aspect of learning maps is that they not only include the definitions of the subject-specific skills that students will acquire — such as being able to add a series of three-digit numbers or define a vocabulary word — but also provide useful delineation of the:

- precursor academic skills needed to master the tested skill;
- communication skills required to communicate answers through speech, pointing, or other means; and
- attention skills needed to focus on the task or item.

As the skills in the learning maps are defined, universal design principles will be used to ensure that the description of the skill does not disadvantage some populations. Each skill will be written so it can be accessed through multiple cognitive pathways, where appropriate, and measured appropriately.

Throughout the school year, as a student completes instructionally embedded tasks and the responses are entered into the DLM system, the student's learning will be mapped and the teacher will be given diagnostic feedback and instructional guidance.

For more information about DLM, visit [www.dynamiclearningmaps.org](http://www.dynamiclearningmaps.org)  

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View the linked standards and achievement level descriptors at [www.dynamiclearningmaps.org](http://www.dynamiclearningmaps.org).
Dynamic Adaptive Delivery: The DLM system will utilize dynamic delivery, which is a variant of adaptive delivery. Under traditional, item-by-item adaptive delivery, items are selected based on their difficulty. A correct response results in the selection of a more difficult item to follow and an incorrect response leads to a less difficult item. In contrast, dynamic delivery relies on several pieces of information — the student’s level of success with the previous item/task and the position in the learning map of the skills tapped by the task (and thus the amount of support or prompting required) — to select the next item. In addition, it provides immediate corrective feedback to the student, when needed. Dynamic delivery, therefore, integrates assessment and instruction. Dynamic delivery will be used for both the instructionally embedded items and the end-of-year assessment. All students using the DLM assessments will utilize these tasks throughout the school year and, pending the results of a research activity, states may opt to use the results from these embedded tasks for summative and accountability purposes.

Types of Items and Tasks: A variety of item types will be utilized, all of which will adhere to universal design and evidence-centered design principles to ensure the assessments are accessible to the broadest range of students and produce valid results.

Items will be designed to be instructionally relevant. For each grade and subject slated to be assessed, the Consortium will convene a panel of master teachers which will review the extended content standards and develop activities that teachers could use to teach the skills. Task developers will use these activities to guide the development of items and tasks. For each item or task in the assessment system, lists of materials or manipulatives needed, and allowed and prohibited accommodations, levels of scaffolding will be provided. Multiple tasks will be developed for each skill being assessed to allow for differentiation based on student needs and disabilities. Most tasks are expected to require 1–5 minutes for a student to complete.

Presentation of Items and Tasks: The presentation of items will vary based on the abilities and needs of the student and the skill being assessed. Students who can complete the assessments on a computer, with or without the use of assistive technologies, will be allowed to do so. The system will be designed to be accessible to students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, or have low vision, along with those with neuromuscular, orthopedic, or other motor disabilities. Students will be able to enter responses through keyboards, switch systems, a computer mouse, or touch-screen technology when available. The system also will be compatible with a variety of common assistive technologies and allow for varying levels of teacher assistance. For students unable to use computers without assistance, teachers will administer items offline and enter responses into the system.

Scoring: The majority of items and tasks, representing varying types, will be designed to be scored via computer. In some cases, the teacher may observe the student performing a task and then enter a score based on a rubric that defines levels of accuracy and quality of student performance. In both cases, the system will be able to identify missing precursor skills that interfere with student learning and to propose the next task in the learning map.

Measuring Growth: In order to provide consistency between the comprehensive assessment systems being developed by the Partnership for Assessment Readiness for College and Careers, the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium, and DLM, the growth modeling methods used by those Consortia will be studied to determine compatible adaptations appropriate for both the embedded and end-of-year summative assessments. Measures of growth unique to a learning map-based system also will be studied.

Accountability: Subject to research and technical approval of both delivery options for use as the summative assessment (see footnote 2 on page 1), states will be able to choose between using an end-of-year stand-alone assessment for accountability purposes or using the data from the embedded items and tasks given throughout the school year.

Reporting: The reporting system will produce online as well as printable student and group-level results. A combination of existing best practices in reporting and an iterative series of focus groups will be used to ensure clear, useful reports for each major audience (teachers, students, parents). These reports and accompanying interpretive guides will be designed to communicate each student's current performance position, as well as growth within the learning maps. Each audience will be provided information that can be readily used to make better decisions that support the academic needs and progress of the student. In addition, the online versions for teachers will include links to professional development that will help teachers interpret the score reports in order to adjust instruction.

For more information about DLM, visit www.dynamiclearningmaps.org
RESOURCES, TOOLS, AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Professional Development Resources: The Center for Literacy and Disability Studies of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill will lead professional development activities for the DLM. Representatives of member states will identify the range of topics, modes of delivery, and types of support most important for their states.

Professional development modules will be developed and offered through the Consortium’s digital library for at least three modes of delivery: independent study, train-the-trainers, and online training. The DLM online system will allow educators to view online materials, download written materials, register for professional development classes that states or districts might offer, and access online professional development.

In order to support teachers’ efforts to meet the wide range of needs in this student population, DLM will utilize a research-based framework, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), during the development of professional development resources. This approach includes and exceeds the factors considered under universal design and leads to flexible instructional materials, techniques, and strategies that help teachers differentiate instruction to meet students’ varied needs. The UDL methodology does this by incorporating options for: a) the presentation of information and content; b) the types of responses students can give to express what they know; and c) the engagement of students.

The professional development modules will incorporate materials and work samples. The content of the modules will be guided by the Consortium members, but it will likely include:

- Implementation of the CCEE identified by DLM;
- explanation of how the standards, learning maps, and assessments were developed;
- UDL and its use;
- how the standards, assessments, and instruction are integrated; and
- goal setting, IEP development, and selection of students to participate in the alternate assessment.

To download this document or for more information about the Consortium, visit www.k12center.org

For more information about DLM, visit www.dynamiclearningmaps.org

TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January/February 2012</td>
<td>Essential elements based on the CCSS developed</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Achievement-level descriptors developed</td>
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<td>March 2012</td>
<td>Test blueprints developed</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Development of tasks for learning maps begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 2012</td>
<td>Pilot testing begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2012</td>
<td>Learning maps delivered</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012–13</td>
<td>Field test professional development modules and make revisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013–2014</td>
<td>Professional development modules ready for use</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014–15 school year</td>
<td>Test delivery software ready for use</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The DLM Alternate Assessment System is operational (operational field test)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructionally embedded tasks and stand-alone summative test available for use and field tested</td>
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<tr>
<td>August/September 2015</td>
<td>Professional development program validated</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Assessment system evaluated</td>
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TECHNOLOGY

DLM plans to utilize proven open-source technology platforms to ensure that the system is affordable and can accommodate additional state partners over time. The system will include four major components: Content Builder, Test Delivery, Management and Reporting, and Learning Map Software. These systems provide for task development, local management of administration options, professional development resource delivery, test/task administration including support for various assistive technologies, a reporting suite, and learning map software.

* Visit www.cast.org for more information about UDL.

Created by Educational Testing Service (ETS) to forward a larger social mission, the Center for K–12 Assessment & Performance Management at ETS has been given the directive to serve as a catalyst and resource for the improvement of measurement and data systems to enhance student achievement. 18758
What's New

- ISBE provision of WorkKeys Locating Information
- All Day 2 administrative forms to be returned to ACT in polypamqer
- User ID and Password for PSAE TestSites Online sent in January to Test Supervisor (for Day 2 orders)
- Day 1 and Day 2 materials pick-up on same day
- State-Allowed orders submitted on ACT website
- Off-site Requests submitted on ACT website

Practic State Achievement Examination (PSAE)

What's New

- LEP testing accommodations
- Phase out of cassettes
  - Cassettes no longer available starting spring 2014
- ID requirement
  - Recent published photo (e.g. yearbook) and transcript with photo no longer accepted
- Must confirm observers by calling ACT

Practic State Achievement Examination (PSAE)

What's New

- Email address collected on PSAE Day 1 (ACT) answer document

E-MAIL ADDRESS (Optional)

If you or your school have a relationship with ACT, you may give your email address here. If you choose to provide an email address, ACT may communicate with you in connection with your ACT account or contest. You may indicate whether ACT may communicate with you in connection with your ACT account or contest. You may withdraw this authorization at any time by going to the ACT website or by calling ACT. By providing your email address, you agree to the collection, storage, use, and disclosure of your email address and other information accessed when you access ACT websites and email to provide 1. Printed and online products and services, and updates of the above.

Practic State Achievement Examination (PSAE)
2013 Announcements for Grade 11 Testing

Please share the following information concerning the ACT® National Career Readiness Certificate and the status of Grade 11 Writing with all testing staff and students.

Opportunity to Receive the ACT® National Career Readiness Certificate

WorkKeys® Locating Information completes the battery of three WorkKeys assessments required for students to be eligible to receive a National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC). Since its first administration in spring 2001, PSAE Day 2 has included the other two WorkKeys assessments required for eligibility – WorkKeys Applied Mathematics and WorkKeys Reading for Information.

The third WorkKeys assessment, Locating Information, will be administered to all eligible grade 11 students immediately after the PSAE Day 2 tests, unless accommodations allow testing on a later day. Data from the WorkKeys Locating Information will be reported separately and will not be part of any PSAE reporting. Grade 11 students for whom the Illinois Alternate Assessment (IAA) is the appropriate state assessment are not required to participate in the administration of WorkKeys Locating Information.

For more information about ACT’s NCRC, please visit www.act.org/certificate/about.html. Staff at established PSAE test sites will receive detailed information about logistics and administration details via the 2013 PSAE Administration Training Webcast and the PSAE Day 2 Supervisor’s Manual of Instruction. The webcast and Day 2 Manual will both be available on the PSAE website www.isbe.net/assessment/psae.htm.

Please see page 2 for additional information about the addition of Locating Information in spring 2013.

Grade 11 Writing

As announced by State Superintendent Koch in his July 11, 2011, Weekly Message, the grade 11 writing component has been eliminated from state assessment. This remains true for spring 2013 for both PSAE and IAA.

Many districts inquired as to whether the ACT Writing, which had been part of the PSAE, could be optionally self-funded, and ACT indicated that this is not a feasible option.

PSAE Day 1 will consist of the battery of four multiple-choice ACT tests to enable students to receive the bonus of a college-reportable ACT score, as long as PSAE Day 1 is administered under standard-time conditions or with ACT-Approved accommodations.

Students taking the PSAE this year will not receive an ACT Writing score, and, therefore, students who are seeking admission to universities and colleges that require a writing score on a national examination must take either the ACT or SAT on a national test date and independently from the PSAE that is being administered this spring.
Additional Information: Addition of Locating Information in Spring 2013

Why is ISBE providing the Locating Information test?
The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has adopted an educational agenda that supports college and career readiness for every student. As you are aware, the ACT® is included in the PSAE at grade 11 and provides information to students, parents, and educators relative to college ready indicators. To provide additional information about college and career readiness, ISBE will be providing a no cost opportunity for all students to participate in the 3rd available WorkKeys® assessment, Locating Information, and to earn ACT’s National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC™). This career readiness information will also be included in the newly redesigned School Report Card and the Multiple Measures Index: High Schools included in the NCLB Waiver application (online at www.isbe.net/nclb_waivers/pdf/multiple-measures-index.pdf).

Must Schools Administer the Locating Information test?
ISBE strongly encourages all schools established as a PSAE test site to administer Locating Information in spring 2013. All established schools are scheduled to automatically receive Locating Information test materials based on their PSAE Day 2 orders. However, administering Locating Information is not a requirement in spring 2013. Home School Districts may choose not to participate in this opportunity. If this is the decision, these home districts are expected to communicate this to all schools established as a PSAE test site that plan to test their grade 11 students, including serving schools, and also to all stakeholders. Schools must return used and unused Locating Information test materials to ACT as directed.

How long will it take to administer the Locating Information test?
The standard administration time for the 38-item Locating Information test is 45 minutes. Additional time is allowed for accommodations administrations, but the test may not be split over more than one day. Approximately 15 minutes should be allowed for the mechanics of distributing and collecting test materials and for students to complete a small amount of demographic information prior to testing.

What and How Will Locating Information and NCRC Data be Shared?
ACT will mail a hard copy® of the Locating Information score data to the high school principal of the school where the student tested. NCRC certificates are scheduled to be available for printing through ISBE’s secure Student Information System. If students would like employers to see their results, then they must register themselves in ACT’s National Registry to activate their information using information provided on the back of the NCRC. There is no registration fee for students to do this.

Online Resources
1WorkKeys Locating Information test: www.act.org/workkeys/assess/locate/
2Eligible Scores for NCRC: www.act.org/certificate/about.html

Contacts
Please direct any questions concerning state assessment to the ISBE Division of Student Assessment at 866/317-6034 and any questions about Locating Information or ACT’s NCRC to ACT at 800/967-5539.

Updated 11/01/12
In recognition of verified skills essential to workplace success and career advancement.

A Platinum National Career Readiness Certificate is awarded to

[Signature]

[Name]

[Date]
NATIONAL CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE

Congratulations on earning a Platinum National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC™). The NCRC is a portable, evidence-based credential that certifies essential workplace skills that are important for workplace success. This credential is based on ACT’s world-renowned WorkKeys® assessments—which measure job skills associated with workplace success. Knowledge and skills related to job tasks are strong predictors of work performance. By earning the NCRC, you have demonstrated the following skills at the Platinum level:

» Problem solving
» Critical thinking
» Reading and using work-related text
» Applying information from workplace documents to solve problems
» Applying mathematical reasoning to work-related problems
» Setting up and performing work-related mathematical calculations
» Locating, synthesizing, and applying information that is presented graphically
» Comparing, summarizing, and analyzing information presented in multiple, related graphics

This credential is registered with ACT and may be verified by employers at NationalCareerReadiness.org.

ACCESS YOUR ONLINE ACCOUNT

The NCRC is registered with ACT. In order to enable employers to verify your Certificate, you must activate your account at NationalCareerReadiness.org. Once you activate your account, you must follow the steps to give permission for employers to verify your Certificate level. Only people to whom you give your Certificate number can access your information.

» User ID: JSampleP
» Temporary Password: 123JSP

For account security, change your password when first signing in.

Account activation instructions are available at act.org/certificate/access_account.html.
The ACT Research Study That Refutes the Validity of the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks

What are the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks? The 2005 ACT study that created the benchmarks tied college classroom success to ACT subject area test scores. By examining the percentage of students earning a certain grade at a certain ACT test score level, the study established a minimum ACT score at which a student would be considered college-ready. According to ACT, the benchmarks are set at a score of 18 on the ACT English test, a 22 on the math test, a 21 on reading, and a 24 on science. A student must meet or exceed all four benchmarks to be considered college-ready.

On the basis of these benchmarks, ACT claims that “only 25% of the nation’s Class of 2012 graduating seniors are ready for college,” largely due to the fact that only 31% met the science benchmark.

However, ACT’s labeling of a student as not being college ready is not supported by an examination of subsequent student performance in college. There are several studies and reports which refute the validity of the benchmarks, but, ironically, a most compelling refutation of the benchmarks can be found in a study conducted by ACT itself. A second 2005 study intended to support the benchmarks (http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/2005-2.pdf) summarized its findings in a graph reproduced and simplified below. The first bar in their graph showed that 65%, almost 2/3, of the public four-year college students who met NONE of the benchmarks, the lowest testing students of all, persisted to their second year of college with a C+ average. If meeting the benchmarks was critical, how could so many do so badly on the test and still succeed (certainly not excel, but at least succeed) in college?

Percentage of Students Persisting to a Second Year in College by the # of ACT College Readiness Benchmarks Met
(GPA in Parentheses)

The next few bars in the graph show that, most of the time, the more benchmarks a student meets, the higher their likelihood of persisting in college and the higher their GPA. Since we would expect that higher test scores would translate to greater levels of college success, this is not surprising. However, according to later press releases by ACT, none of the persisting students included in the first seven bars, 72% of the students in the study, would be considered college-ready, since they did not meet all four benchmarks. Even students meeting only the English and math benchmarks, of whom 80% persisted with a B average, would be labeled as not ready for college.

So only 28% of the sample met the three benchmarks. But what happened to the fourth benchmark, reading? The case against the validity of the benchmarks is strengthened by the fact that the study report totally omits any mention of the reading benchmark. From a research standpoint, the apparent explanation for this omission is that meeting the reading benchmark was found to have no value in predicting college success; its inclusion would have made no difference in, or even reduced, the college success prediction level. Since the ACT reading test is central to
the assessment systems in multiple states, such a finding sounds almost beyond belief. But recent research has supported this finding and confirmed the apparent reason behind ACT’s omission of the reading test from its reporting. In fact, Jon Erickson, president of the ACT’s education division, dismissed a 2011 Bureau of Economic Research study’s findings that the ACT reading test had little or no use in predicting college performance, stating that “the ACT is an achievement-based test that is used for multiple goals and purposes beyond just admissions or predicting overall student success, such as college GPA or retention” (http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/college_bound/2011/06/new_study_questions_validity_of_two_parts_of_act.html?utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=twitter) This statement seems to confirm the reason that this ACT study omitted the reading benchmark: this purported college entrance exam does not predict college GPA or retention.

So ACT itself has dismissed one of its benchmarks as having no predictive value. It also has found that for students meeting none or only some of the three benchmarks, 72.4% succeed in their first year in college with a B to C+ average. Such success refutes the validity of the benchmarks; it is illogical to declare that none of these students were ready for college. Their persistence level was only 10.6 percentage points lower than the 83% figure for those who met all three benchmarks. In fact, this ACT research study report makes no attempt to declare them unready for college, simply and accurately stating that “In general, the more benchmarks students met, the more likely they were to return for a second year and the higher their first-year college GPAs tended to be”. The annual declarations of college-readiness were a product of later public relations statements by ACT Corp., declarations which have been followed by a series of communications to schools marketing ACT products and services supposedly designed to improve student performance.

Dismissing the benchmarks does not mean that ACT scores are not important. We know that, in general, the better you do on ACT tests, the better you do in college. The scores can be very useful as a piece of the puzzle in evaluating student and school performance. We also know that some students who “succeed” in college are not necessarily college-ready; remediation, additional support, and other factors may compensate for serious academic limitations.

And we know that when it comes to education, schools, parents, and students can do a better job. Schools need to challenge all students with a coherent and engaging curriculum. We need far more students who are strong in mathematics and science. Expectations should rise.

But what is clear from real-world persistence and success levels is that even the best of the standardized tests only predict a small amount of the variance in college performance, a vital consideration that was totally ignored in the design of the original study. When a specific test is used to predict a specific course, the prediction percentage may drop into the single digits.

Many students succeed in high school and college despite not being able to score at a high level on such tests. And many students succeed in college despite having areas of academic weakness. They enroll in courses and colleges that align with their abilities and interests. They play to their strengths. Labeling students who demonstrate lower test performance in one subject area as not being ready for college makes little sense - it may have nothing to do with their future success in college or in their chosen careers. There is little evidence in the real world supporting the validity of the benchmarks.

Flamboyant declarations of crises that have little basis in reality do not advance student learning. This concerted effort at libeling all schools, including well-performing and/or significantly improving schools, can only hurt them and their students, students who are told that they are not ready for college even when they are. ACT has far overstepped the bounds of legitimate educational research in its efforts to market itself. In doing so, ACT is guilty of grossly misleading the American public and betraying its trust in them.

A video presentation of the complete benchmark study, “The ACT College Readiness Benchmarks and the Fabrication of a Crisis” can be found at the District 214 website: www.d214.org/research. The presentation examines the flaws in the original benchmark study design that led to its erroneous conclusions, references a variety of studies that refute the validity of the benchmarks, and discussed the marketing efforts connected with the promotion of the benchmark findings.
Dan,

The new EPAS schedule is a very hot item here in the suburbs (since it will put the EXPLORE testing at least a year behind the schedule used by 70% of the students in schools in a recent survey (see attached).

As a testing committee, I also would like to see us discuss the issue of the ACT reading test. ACT's own research has demonstrated that the test has little or no predictive power for college classroom performance or for persistence (http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/2005-2.pdf). In 2011, EdWeek reported that, in an e-mail reacting to the 2011 Bureau of Economic Research study which found that the ACT reading and science have little predictive power, Jon Erickson, now president of ACT's education division, said that "the ACT is an achievement-based test that is used for multiple goals and purposes beyond just admissions or predicting overall student success, such as college GPA or retention." I realize that ISBE is in deep with ACT and intends to stay that way, but with so much recent research now questioning the value of the reading test (my own, the Illinois Education Research Council, and others), we should discuss the issue.

Thanks,
Steve
Using the EXPLORE and PLAN in Illinois State Testing: Executive Summary

The Illinois State Board of Education has submitted a proposal to administer the ACT EPAS tests as part of a NCLB waiver application. The proposal, which calls for administering the EXPLORE at the end of both 8th and 9th grade and the PLAN at the end of 10th grade, would have a severe negative impact that it would have on school assessment systems in the Chicago metropolitan area. Most of these schools already administer the EXPLORE and PLAN, and many have done so for years. The longitudinal data provided by such testing has been integral to school improvement efforts.

To determine the impact of this proposed change, I surveyed suburban schools to identify the time frames for their final EXPLORE and PLAN administration (many administer the tests more than once). Eighty-nine of the 110 schools surveyed responded, representing 200,324 (65.8%) of all collar county non-Chicago Public School public high school enrollments, and 31.9% of all Illinois public high school enrollments.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Percent of Students Currently Taking Final EXPLORE by Grade and Month</th>
<th>Percent of Students Currently Taking Final PLAN by Grade and Month</th>
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As shown in the graph above left, changes proposed under the waiver will mean that for the EXPLORE 85.0% (163,438) of the students in our sample schools will take the test at least five to six months (out of a nine/ten month school year), and 70.5% of the students in the sample will be taking the test 16 to 18 months, after the time frame originally designated as being optimal for the students and schools. For the PLAN (graph above right), it means that 81.5% (163,355) of the students in our sample schools will take the test at least five to six months (out of a nine/ten month school year), and 41.3% of the students in the sample will take the test a full year, after the time frame originally designated as being optimal.

We also checked on the EXPLORE and PLAN testing schedule for the Chicago Public Schools, whose 114,970 students representing another 18.3% of all public high school students in the state. These students will take both the EXPLORE and PLAN seven months (out of a nine/ten month school year) later than currently administered. This demonstrates that this issue of reducing assessment rigor is not simply a problem for suburban and/or high-performing districts.
For the schools in this study that use earlier testing for either the EXPLORE or PLAN assessment, ACT composite score growth levels over the past nine years have been four times higher than those for the rest of the state (1.2 versus .3). While the assessment schedule is only a small part of any school improvement effort, the schedules of its most improved schools should be the logical choice of models for any state system.

Additionally, the administration dates proposed in the waiver would be at the very latest (hence least rigorous) point in time that ACT recognizes for these tests. Since the Illinois average ACT composite score is 20.9 and the ACT national average is 21.1 (even though the former is a 99% universal testing average and the latter is a 49% college-bound only average), we can consider Illinois performance to be fairly comparable to the national norm. More importantly, the growth in Illinois performance for the last 9 years has been 2 2/3 times the growth at the national level. Illinois students composite score levels are on target to pass the national levels within the next few years. So when planning for the near future, such a trend would suggest that we probably should be aiming for higher than the national average for assessment rigor in terms of the EXPLORE and PLAN scheduling rather than lower, as would be enacted under the proposed waiver.

There is no credible reason to disrupt the rigor of the current testing for what may be the majority (and possibly most) of the schools using the EXPLORE and PLAN in Illinois for as little as two years, since new assessments may be in effect within an additional two years. Such action would constitute a serious “dumbing down” of assessment in Illinois schools at a time when we need to increase rigor. ISBE needs to have a conversation with the schools on what would constitute the best timing for assessments. Ideally, schools should be allowed to keep their current EXPLORE, PLAN, and retired ACT administration schedules for the next two years, possibly by allowing waivers for districts wanting to continue their current schedules. But if such flexibility is not feasible, then the state should use the test administration schedules that are most prevalent, practiced by the most improved schools, and most likely to increase assessment rigor.
PARCC Assessment Design

To address the priority purposes, PARCC states are developing an assessment system comprised of four components. Each component will be computer-delivered and will leverage technology to incorporate innovations.

Two summative, required assessment components designed to
• Make “college- and career-readiness” and “on-track” determinations
• Measure the full range of standards and full performance continuum
• Provide data for accountability uses, including measures of growth

Two interim, optional assessment components designed to
• Generate timely information for informing instruction, interventions, and professional development during the school year
• In English language arts/literacy, an additional required, non-summative component will assess students’ speaking and listening skills
PARCC Assessment Design
English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics, Grades 3-11

Optional Assessments/Flexible Administration

Diagnostic Assessment
- Early indicator of student knowledge and skills in important content areas, and PD
Mid-Year Assessment
- Performance-based
- Item types: design, presentation, writing tasks
- Students complete
- Nationally summative

Performance-based Assessment (PBAT)
- Standards-based
- Applications of concepts and skills

End-of-Year Assessment
- Multiple-choice, extended-response, and performance tasks

EIA - Speaking and Listening Assessment
- Speaking
- Non-summative, required

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PARCC Assessment Design
English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics, Grades K-8

Optional Assessments/Flexible Administration

Draft Design Update

Grades K-8
Diagnostic Assessment
- Computer Adaptive
- Early indicator of student knowledge and skills to inform instruction, supports, and PD
- Non-summative

Grades K-5
Formative Assessment
- Computer Based
- Emphasis on instructional shifts
- Non-summative
Timeline Through First PARCC Administration in 2014-2015

PARCC Assessment Implementation

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Item and task prototypes

http://www.parcconline.org/samples/item-task-prototypes

Math Prototype Project (New Items Release in December)
http://www.ccsstoolbox.com/parcc/PARCCPrototype_main.html

PARCC
Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers
Standard-Setting/ Validation Studies

The following statements will inform standard-setting (determining cut scores for PARCC performance levels) and to conduct future studies to validate the efficacy of the CCR Determinations.

- Students who earn a College- and Career-Ready Determination by performing at level 4 in ELA/literacy and enroll in College English Composition, Literature, and technical courses requiring college-level reading and writing have approximately a 0.75 probability of earning college credit by attaining at least a grade of C or its equivalent in those courses.

- Students who earn a PARCC College- and Career-Ready Determination by performing at level 4 in mathematics and enroll in College Algebra, Introductory College Statistics, and technical courses requiring an equivalent level of mathematics have approximately a 0.75 probability of earning college credit by attaining at least a grade of C or its equivalent in those courses.

Draft Policy-Level Performance Level Descriptors

- PARCC states proposing 5 achievement levels for grades 3-8 and HS in ELA/literacy and mathematics
  - Level 4 pitched to rigor of NAEP’s proficient level
  - Level 4 proposed as threshold for earning the College-Ready Determination on the designated high school assessments

- Each of the proposed performance levels includes:
  - Policy claims, which describe educational implications for students at a particular performance level.
  - General content claims, which describe the academic knowledge and skills students performing at a given performance level are able to demonstrate at each grade level.
Draft Policy-Level Performance Level Descriptors

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- Each of the proposed performance levels includes:
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For State Testing Review Committee

ISAT: Common Core items are to be included for the 2013 and 2014 administrations. The equating process will need to be modified slightly to accommodate these items.

NAEP: The 2013 NAEP reading and mathematics are going to be assessed in grades 4, 8, and 12 during the last week of January through the first week of March. Results are reported for large cities including Chicago, states, and the national public. A Technology, Engineering Literacy (TEL) pilot assessment will also be assessed at the same time for eighth graders. This is a computer based assessment. In 2014 the TEL will be assessed.

2009 and 2011 NAEP vocabulary scores for the states and national public will be released December 6, 2012 at 11:00 Eastern Standard Time for grades 4, 8, and 12. The vocabulary scores were assessed as part of the reading assessments.

EXPLORE and PLAN: We just completed the voluntary statewide administration in November. There were approximately 100,000 students assessed for each test. Districts will receive results soon.
Dan:

Here is an update.

WIDA has created another instrument for ELLs with significant cognitive disabilities called the Alternate ACCESS. Some WIDA states participated in the spring 2012 field test. Illinois did not, but is making it available for the upcoming ACCESS assessment cycle to students who are unable to participate meaningfully on the standard ACCESS assessment. The Illinois participation policy and a eligibility process have been communicated to ELL directors and posted online. Illinois participation eligibility differs somewhat from WIDA eligibility by focusing on the students' ability to interact with test items on the standard ACCESS instead of broader IEP categories and definitions.

Illinois is considering modifying the LEP transition threshold ACCESS scores. They will probably stay the same or be raised, not lowered.

The ASSETS consortium, of which Illinois is a member, has organized and begun meeting. Illinois has a seat on the ASSETS Steering Committee for the life of the ASSETS grant (until September 2015). The purpose of ASSETS is to work with WIDA in the development of the next generation ACCESS assessment. It will be a computer-adaptive instrument delivered online. Illinois has representatives on the Reporting, ELL definition, Reporting, and Technology subcommittees.

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From: BROWN DANIEL
Sent: Monday, November 26, 2012 11:27 AM
To: PEDERSEN BARRY
Subject: RE: STRC 12/6/12

OK. Send me some information to present. Basics about ACCESS and ASSESSTs changes.

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From: PEDERSEN BARRY
Sent: Monday, November 26, 2012 10:03 AM
To: BROWN DANIEL
Subject: RE: STRC 12/6/12

I'll be attending the annual bilingual conference in Oak Brook. Boon will still be on vacation.
Future Plans for Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

2017-2018
Alternate ACCESS 2.0
Operational
Fall 2017

2016-2017
Alternate ACCESS 2.0
Field Test
Fall 2016

2015-2016
Alternate ACCESS 2.0
Pilot
Fall 2015

2014-2015
Form 103
Operational
Fall 2014

2013-2014
Form 102
Operational
Fall 2013

2012-2013
Form 101
Operational
Fall 2012

*will include Kindergarten and Language of Social Studies

Spring 2013

Revised AMPs
Fall 2013