

Exploratory Seminar: Next-Generation K – 12 Assessment Systems

Purpose: To inform the agendas of the new K – 12 Assessment and Performance Management Center and ETS. This development project will generate provocative and achievable ideas for the next generation of K – 12 assessments.

Background: The U.S. Department of Education (USED) plans to award \$4 billion in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) funds on a competitive basis to states to leverage transformational improvements in public education. The new ETS K – 12 Assessment and Performance Management Center sees this unprecedented investment from the federal government as a critical window of opportunity for both our public schools and the testing industry. The Center will hold a two-day seminar in December 2009 to engage leading external experts with ETS researchers in examining the pressing data needs from the field, and the opportunities and challenges presented by the ARRA/Race to the Top agenda.

Topics: The USED has proposed two new or extended foundational purposes of K – 12 assessment instruments:

- 1. Measuring student growth:** Summative assessments, optionally combined with interim and other assessment data, that provide a measure of individual student learning gains based on challenging college- and career-ready knowledge and skills; and
- 2. Informing instruction:** Formative/interim assessment systems that provide rapid results to teachers and administrators with sufficient detail to inform decisions on current lessons, instruction and related supports.

Format: For each of these assessment purposes, several leading external experts will be asked to share their views on the state of the field, the challenges and the opportunities. After each presentation, there will be a critique by ETS and external experts and a discussion.

Context: All presenters will be asked to accept two assumptions: a) the Common Core State Standards will be adopted by a significant majority of states, creating unprecedented focus on the core skills and knowledge all students must acquire, and b) no more than three multi-state assessment consortia will divide the \$350 million in Race to the Top assessment funding, creating unprecedented opportunity to develop high-quality assessments. The intended audience for each resulting paper, to be finalized by February 2010, is state chief school officers, testing leaders and policymakers, so that this work will catalyze higher quality assessments within Race to the Top applications.

Opening Dinner Presentation: Sunday – December 6, 2009

The ARRA/Race to the Top grants will accelerate work that has been underway in several large districts on integrated data systems for the purpose, as Race to the Top guidance states, “of allowing important questions related to policy or practice to be asked and answered.” Our invited speakers will address the major questions that district and state leaders are now asking and want to be able to answer, and how well the current student achievement data systems serve those needs.

5:30 p.m. Reception and Dinner

7:30 p.m. Presentation: *First-Generation Performance Management Systems in Education: The Questions, Data Systems, and Future Opportunities*

Speakers: Seth Reynolds and Joe McKown, The Parthenon Group

Parthenon has worked with numerous large districts, including those in Chicago, New York City, Austin and Boston, and is currently assisting several states with Race to the Top applications.

Reactor: Drew Gitomer, ETS

K – 12 Assessment and Performance Management Center

Day 1: Measuring Student Growth — Monday, December 7, 2009

Student achievement is clearly the ultimate measure of K – 12 organizational performance, and student learning gains are the primary leading indicator. The assumption within the Race to the Top design is that student gains can be measured with sufficient accuracy to support their use in answering larger questions, such as the effectiveness of various instructional intervention strategies and teacher preparation and development programs. The Race to the Top grants create both the heightened need for and the opportunity to develop next-generation measures of student learning gains that are rigorous, high-quality, defensible and highly useful within such systems.

The definition of student growth within the Race to the Top draft application is:

Student growth means the change in achievement for an individual student between two points in time. Growth may be measured by a variety of approaches, but any approach used must be statistically rigorous and based on student achievement data, and may also include other measures of student learning in order to increase the construct validity and generalizability of the information.

7:30 a.m.	Continental Breakfast
8:30 a.m.	Welcome: Pat Forgione, K – 12 Center, and Ida Lawrence, ETS
8:40 a.m.	Session 1: Measuring Growth: Best Practices, Measurement Issues, and Recommendations for R2T-Funded Assessment Systems Speaker Panel: Robert Linn, University of Colorado, Damian Betebenner, Center for Assessment, and Jim Pellegrino, University of Illinois at Chicago
10:10 a.m.	Break
10:30 a.m.	Reaction Panel: Wendy Yen, ETS, and Michael Kane, ETS
11:10 a.m.	Questions and Answers
12:15 p.m.	Lunch
1:15 p.m.	Session 2: Use of Student Growth Data in Productivity Analyses: Current Challenges, Promising Future Approaches Speaker Panel: Ed Haertel, Stanford University, Henry Braun, Boston College, and Robert Meyer, University of Wisconsin
2:45 p.m.	Break
3:00 p.m.	Reactor: Steve Lazer, ETS
3:20 p.m.	Questions and Answers
4:30 p.m.	Adjourn
6:00 p.m.	Reception
6:30 p.m.	Dinner
7:30 p.m.	Session 3: The Policy Issues Involved in the Measurement and Use of Student Gains Speaker: Dan Koretz, Harvard University
8:00 p.m.	Reaction Panel: Robert Linn, University of Colorado, and Drew Gitomer, ETS
8:30 p.m.	Questions and Answers
9:00 p.m.	Adjourn

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Day 2: Informing Instruction – Tuesday, December 8, 2009

“And we also encourage you to work together to develop benchmark tests so that teachers can understand how their students are doing during the school year and can target instruction accordingly.”

U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan, June 14, 2009

The Race to the Top guidance calls for states and/or LEAs to provide teachers with formative and/or interim assessment systems that provide data that contains sufficient diagnostic detail and is available quickly enough to inform current lessons.

In addition to informing instruction, the data from these systems may also be utilized within the computation of student learning gains for evaluation and accountability purposes.

Each presenter will be asked to describe the strongest current approaches, the challenges or limitations, and their personal view of how the Race to the Top assessment funds can best be utilized to bring about the next generation of improved formative/interim assessment systems.

7:30 a.m.	Continental Breakfast
8:30 a.m.	Welcome: Pat Forgione, K – 12 Center
8:40 a.m.	Session 4: <i>Recommendations for High-Quality Instructional Guidance Assessment Systems and How They Might Articulate with an Accountability System</i> Speaker Panel: Margaret Heritage, CRESST, UCLA, Lauren Resnick, University of Pittsburgh, and Mark Wilson, UC Berkeley
10:10 a.m.	Break (and Checkout)
10:30 a.m.	Reaction Panel: Randy Bennett, ETS, Cheryl Krehbiel, District of Columbia Public Schools, and Ray Pecheone, Stanford University
11:30 a.m.	Questions and Answers
12:30 p.m.	Lunch
1:15 p.m.	Session 5: <i>Summary Discussion on Growth Measurement/Productivity Analysis and Informing Instruction</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the most critical measurement issues and research questions that have arisen from the discussions over the two days.• Generate possible recommendations based on our discussions to be brought forward by the Center to USED related to Race to the Top assessment grants and/or ESEA's assessment provisions.
2:45 p.m.	Closing and Next Steps: Pat Forgione, K – 12 Center, and Ida Lawrence, ETS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• From Measurement to Implementation: Developing a Set of Next-Generation Comprehensive Assessment System Models• Research Informing Assessment Policy: March 8 – 9, 2010, National Conference on Next-Generation Comprehensive Assessment Systems
3:00 p.m.	Adjourn
