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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Race to the Top Assessment

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Public Meeting on State and

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Local Technology Infrastructure

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8:30 a.m.

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Friday, April 15, 2011

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Potomac Plaza

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550 12th Street, SW

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12th Floor

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Washington, D.C.

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MS. ANN WHALEN: Great! Good morning,
3 everybody. Welcome to the Race to the Top Assessment
4 Program Technical Assistance Public Meeting. Today's
5 public meeting is going to be on the technology
6 infrastructure needs in states, districts and schools.
7 If you're not here for this meeting, this is a great
8 time to step out of the room. My name is Ann Whalen,
9 and I am Deputy Director in the Implementation and
10 Support Unit with the U.S. Department of Education.

11 I'm going to quickly walk through the morning
12 agenda in the day and kind of set some goals for the
13 day. First, this is one in a series of public meetings
14 we're going to host on the Race to the Top Assessment
15 Program. We plan to have a series of meetings, both in
16 D.C. but also across the nation, so your next event if
17 you choose to participate, may not be at the beautiful
18 PCP Building with high-level security. Thank you all
19 for your patience in going through that. This is able
20 to happen due to a generous gift from the Hewlett
21 Foundation. We are very thankful for their generosity
22 in allowing us to host these public meetings in order

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1 to provide technical assistance in the port to both
2 PARCC and SMARTER Balanced Consortia to develop these
3 new assessment systems, but to also expand the
4 knowledge and expertise of the Department and the
5 public on these key assessment issues.

6 We also think this is a wonderful opportunity
7 for the public to be able to learn about these
8 assessment consortia in more detail, as well as give
9 some input on the consortia and how we should be
10 thinking about some of these sticky questions that
11 we're all encountering.

12 The Race to the Top Program was designed to
13 support states in delivering a system of more effective
14 and instructionally useful assessments. These
15 assessments are to be able to provide accurate
16 information on what students know and are able to do,
17 reflect and support good instructional practices,
18 include all students, including English language
19 learners and students with disabilities from the
20 beginning, and provide usable information that both
21 inform teaching and learning, help determine school
22 effectiveness, determine teacher and principal

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1 effectiveness for the purpose of evaluation, as well as
2 for the purpose of support, and also to provide
3 individual students with indicators of their college
4 and career readiness.

5 As part of the program, we built in a couple
6 of additional requirements through these assessment
7 systems -- and I do want to continue to stress the term
8 "systems" -- must include one or more summative
9 assessment components that are fully implemented by
10 every state in each consortia by school year 2014-15
11 and are administered at least once during the academic
12 year, at a minimum in reading and language arts and in
13 mathematics, in grades 3 through 8 and high school.
14 These assessment systems need to be valid, fair and
15 reliable, cover the full range of college and career-
16 ready content, elicit complex demonstrations of
17 knowledge and abilities, and accurately measure high
18 and low-achieving students.

19 The Department of September 2010 made two
20 grant awards, one to the Partnership for Assessment and
21 Readiness of College and Career, or the PARCC
22 Consortia; another to the SMARTER Balanced Assessment

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1 Consortia. Together, these two consortia represent 45
2 states plus the District of Columbia, and as part of
3 the competition, states actually partnered with and
4 signed MOUs with institutions of higher education with
5 their states, and in the PARCC Consortia, 90 percent of
6 the students who matriculate to these higher ed
7 students, to these higher ed institutions, are covered
8 in these MOUs, and almost two-thirds of the students
9 who matriculate to these higher ed institutions are
10 covered in SMARTER Balance.

11 We are here today to really dive deep on the
12 technology infrastructure, but first wanted to
13 highlight a few of the requirements we, the Department
14 actually, put in the notice for these assessments
15 systems. The first is that we wanted to maximize
16 interoperability of assessments across technology
17 platforms, so developing all assessment items to an
18 industry recognized open- licensed out of
19 interoperability standards, and produce all student-
20 level data in a manner consistent with an industry-
21 recognized open-licensed interoperability standard.

22 Additionally, these consortia must use

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1 technology to the maximum extent to develop,
2 administer, score and report on these assessments and
3 the assessment results. And we're just going to take a
4 brief commercial break to talk about the
5 interoperability standards for a quick second. In
6 December, the Department issued a request for
7 information, so an RFI, related to the assessment
8 technology standards for interoperability. We received
9 over 22 responses from organizations across the nation.
10 These responses are currently posted at our Web site at
11 this address, if people are interested in looking at
12 this. We are currently finalizing a summary of these
13 comments, as well as kind of the Department's response
14 and kind of the next steps we plan to achieve as part
15 of this effort, and well have that publicly available
16 very soon. We actually tried to get it ready for this
17 meeting, but I'm afraid we just missed it by a second.

18 So for the purposes of today's conversation,
19 we're actually going to ask that we not focus too much
20 on the interoperability standards, because this will be
21 handled during separate meetings, as well as
22 discourses over the next few weeks.

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1 When we are thinking about and supporting the
2 Race to the Top Assessment Consortia, we see a number
3 of opportunities as we look at kind of this great new
4 world of assessment systems. The first is that the
5 states working together really have the opportunity to
6 scale and leverage their resources as a collective. So
7 instead of working individually, trying to re-invent
8 the wheel, coming together, pooling their resources,
9 pooling their expertise, really offer huge
10 opportunities for both the states but also for the
11 students and the teachers and the nation to really get
12 the next generation of assessments.

13 Additionally, it really presents this great
14 moment in time where we can push the envelope, where we
15 can take advantage of these resources and this point in
16 time to really build on some innovation and really
17 think differently about how we test students and
18 measure their knowledge and skills, as well as improve
19 the timeliness of assessment results, how we report
20 that information to students, teachers, schools,
21 parents and the community, and really support and
22 explore this notion of continuous improvement in

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1 assessment systems, so that we're going to constantly
2 look at what we build and have an opportunity to
3 improve on it once we begin scaling it.

4 We also think this is a moment where there
5 are also great potential challenges, that we can work
6 together as a community to help all of us kind of
7 transition and move through. The first is, we know
8 that the transition to standards and assessments, these
9 new standards and assessments, are going to require
10 significant professional development and support
11 throughout all states and throughout the system. This
12 is a wonderful chance for all of us to work together
13 and really think differently about how we support our
14 educators in this endeavor, and it's also presenting
15 challenges, which is why we're here today, on the state
16 and local technology needs to support these new
17 systems.

18 We have this beautiful map of Broadband
19 Availability. The good news is that 98 percent of
20 schools have some sort of Internet access, Broadband
21 Availability and speed vary significantly, but if you
22 look where kind of the green, red, yellows are, you can

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1 see that there are still kind of a lot of places where
2 we have some work to do in terms of providing this
3 access.

4 States, districts and schools, in order to
5 operate these new assessment systems, must have the
6 capacity to administer the test and report the results
7 by the school year 2014-15. PARCC and SMARTER Balance
8 will each conduct a technology readiness assessment to
9 determine existing state and district capacity,
10 identify gaps and plan for how to close these gaps.
11 We're going to learn more about these tools later
12 today. And then the Consortia are also taking
13 advantage of the fact that there are two consortia, and
14 they're really focusing on how they can collaborate and
15 leverage their pooled resources to think about this
16 readiness tool.

17 So expectations for the meeting. We have
18 invited a broad range of leaders within the field to
19 join us for this conversation and to share their
20 knowledge and experience with the Consortia members,
21 with the public as well as with the Department, on kind
22 of what is the current status of today, as well as what

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1 could be. We really want to not anchor just the
2 conversation in 2011, but also want to think about what
3 this will look like in 2014-2015, but also as Tony
4 mentioned last night, 2025, which actually kind of
5 blows my mind to think that far ahead. The morning
6 will focus on general issues around technology
7 infrastructure. The afternoon will focus on specific
8 next steps for the Consortia in conducting their
9 technology readiness assessments.

10 Here's a list of invited experts. We're
11 actually going to take a moment right after this and
12 introduce everybody around the room. We have two short
13 windows for public comment. We do want to hear from as
14 many people as possible during these windows of time,
15 so we actually have put together a little bit of a
16 process and a protocol. We have built into the agenda
17 a time at 11:45 and time at 2:30. Each individual who
18 signs up for public comment may do so during the
19 morning break, so we've built in the schedule at 10:15,
20 15-minute break. During that time, you may go and sign
21 up at the registration desk. If you would like to do
22 public comment, additionally you may sign up during

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1 lunch for the afternoon public comment. We do ask that
2 you keep your conversation or question to the point at
3 hand for today's conversation, so really adding to the
4 conversation at the experts and the Consortia at the
5 table, or posing questions that we should be thinking
6 about. We are limiting this to three minutes, so
7 there's not going to be an opportunity for question and
8 answer. It's really just an opportunity to give us your
9 kind of ideas or reflections on how we should be
10 thinking about this opportunity.

11 If we are for some reason unable to
12 accommodate everybody who wishes to give public comment
13 during these brief windows of time, there is an ongoing
14 opportunity for people to continue to give us public
15 comment and/or questions through our Web site, and that
16 is something we look at -- yes, to an e-mail box,
17 excuse me -- at racetothetopassessment@ed.gov. And we
18 look at this e-mail box daily, so please always feel
19 free to give us input through that means.

20 So this is the agenda at a high level.
21 Again, we are doing the welcome and setting agenda. We
22 have a fishbowl discussion for the large portion of the

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1 morning. We are halfway through that fishbowl
2 discussion, going to take a 15-minute break. We have
3 lunch at 12:15 to 1:00. Lunch is on your own. At the
4 registration desk, if you have not received one
5 already, there's a map of local restaurants or places
6 people can go and get a quick bite to eat. We will be
7 taking public comment at 11:45 to 12:15 and at 12:30 to
8 12:45, and we plan to wrap up by 3 o'clock. We are
9 going to be extreme taskmasters, or I should say
10 Robin's going to be an extreme taskmaster with us, to
11 keep us to this schedule, because it's a beautiful
12 Friday.

13 Just a quick reminder and housekeeping for
14 the meeting. Please place your cell phones on vibrate
15 or turn them off -- also your BlackBerrys. There are a
16 lot of resources on the Race to the Top Assessment
17 Program. If you haven't had the opportunity to look at
18 these, if you go on our Web site, we do have full
19 copies of the application, of the regulations, the
20 Consortia's response, their proposals. We have FAQ
21 documents, and we will continue to post transcripts
22 from these meetings and invitations to future public

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1 meetings.

2 This is my General Counsel remark. As a
3 reminder, the purposes of this meeting is to probe a
4 full discussion and hear a wide range of viewpoints on
5 local and state technology infrastructure needs for
6 computer- administered assessments, as well as the
7 challenges and opportunities afforded by their Race to
8 the Top Assessment Program. Through this meeting, the
9 U.S. Department of Education is not seeking to promote
10 and/or endorse any particular program, project,
11 methodology, or approach to this work.

12 And with that, I am going to turn it over to
13 Robin Taylor, who has generously agreed to serve as a
14 facilitator for today's conversation. Robin brings a
15 wealth of experience on today's topic, having been a
16 junior high school math teacher, district
17 administrator, and state official in Delaware. So I'm
18 going to turn it over to Robin.

19 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you, Ann, and
20 welcome, to everyone here today and especially to our
21 experts and PARCC and SMARTER Balance folks.

22 I'd like to start with some introductions,

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1 and I'm going to start by asking each Consortia to
2 introduce themselves. So I'm going to turn to you,
3 John, or yeah, you John and Steve, just to introduce
4 yourselves. So would you just say who you are and what
5 state?

6 MR. STEVE GARTON: Absolutely. I'm Steve
7 Garton from the State of Maine with SMARTER Balance.
8 With me is John Jesse from Utah, Tony Alpert from
9 Oregon, and in the back we've got Jim from West
10 Virginia, Jim Harrington, John Miller from --

11 MR. JOHN MILLER: Jim Harrington's from Oregon.

12 MR. STEVE GARTON: Sorry, Jim Harrigan's from
13 Oregon; John Miller's from West Virginia. We speak a
14 lot, but we never see each other in person, so we never
15 know what's going on -- and then Jeff Eng from West Ed.
16 He's from California.

17 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you. PARCC? Scott?

18 MR. SCOTT NORTON: Hi, I'm Scott Norton from
19 the Louisiana Department of Education. I'm on the
20 PARCC Leadership Team. Joining me from the PARCC
21 Leadership Team, Wes Bruce from Indiana, Dan Long from
22 Tennessee, Tamara Reavis from Washington, D.C., and

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1 there are a couple of other PARCC Technology folks
2 here; if they would introduce themselves, that would be
3 great.

4 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Ken?

5 MR. KEN WAGNER: Sure. Ken Wagner from New
6 York.

7 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: And back at the table?

8 MS. CATHY POPLIN: Cathy Poplin from Arizona.

9 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: David?

10 MR. DAVID STOKES: David Stokes from Florida.

11 MS. JESSICA PEREZ-ROSSELLO: Jessica Perez-
12 Rossello from Massachusetts.

13 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Okay, thank you. We also
14 have around the table some invited experts. So as I
15 call your name, you can kind of just say who you are,
16 because my list is alphabetical, and you're not sitting
17 in alphabetical order, which has already messed me up -
18 - Randy Bennett with Educational Testing Service;
19 Rebecca Kopriva with the Wisconsin Center for Education
20 Research; Shelley Loving-Ryder with the Virginia
21 Department of Ed; Rick Rozzelle with CELT; Mike Russell
22 with Measured Progress; Sarah Susbury with the Virginia

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1 Department of

2 Ed: Mary Wills with Fauquier County Public
3 Schools in Virginia; and Denny Way with Pearson.

4 We have some other participants at the table
5 who represent organizations who work very closely
6 linked to the Consortia, including we have
7 representatives from two of the departments -- General
8 Education Supervisory grants, the GSEG grants, that are
9 also working with Consortia states on assessments for
10 children with significant cognitive disabilities. We
11 have Neal Kingston from one group, and Rachel Quenemoen
12 from the other.

13 Doug, we have Doug Levin -- there he is --
14 Executive Director of the State Education Technology
15 Directors Association, and then we have several
16 representatives from the U.S. Department of Ed who are
17 here to help support today's discussions. Pat? Patrick
18 Rooney. Where else? Karen? There's Karen. Suzanne
19 Triplet from NAEP, and I've got -- I'm missing one
20 person.

21 MR. KWASI ASARE: Kwasi.

22 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Kwasi? And Steve, okay.

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1 After lunch we'll be joined by Cara Voth from the
2 Federal Communications Commission, who can help with
3 any questions regarding e-rate. She will join us at
4 lunchtime. With that, I'm going to turn to SMARTER
5 Balance Consortia to have them give us a brief overview
6 of that Consortia's assessment.

7 MR. STEVE GARTON: Thank you. Ann. And we
8 will try to be very brief. We realize that there's not
9 enough time this morning to go into any detail, but all
10 the details are out there if you want to find them, or
11 by all means, there will be time for questions.

12 MR. JOHN JESSE: So SMARTER Balance began as
13 a separate consortium that came together of basically
14 a consortium that was founded on the principle of
15 computer Dashboard assessment, teacher involvement.
16 There was a formative-driven consortium, and then the
17 idea that we would integrate a consortium that is
18 driven with respect to going beyond a multiple choice
19 assessment and looking at performance tests. Our three
20 groups came together around the common cause of
21 developing and producing actionable data that can
22 actually be utilized in a timely and efficient fashion

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1 to change what students are able to know and able to
2 do.

3 MR. STEVE GARTON: SMARTER Balance consists
4 of 31 member states. The ones in green are governing
5 states, and then the ones in blue are advisory states.
6 Between SMARTER Balance and PARCC, I think we have most
7 of the country there, but those are the ones that you
8 can check and see.

9 MR. JOHN JESSE: So, the assessment system
10 components encompass what was required by the Race to
11 the Top. We want teachers to have access to formative
12 processes and tools to improve instruction, not just
13 the summative data, an autopsical view, but data that's
14 actionable throughout the school year to make decisions
15 in a powerful fashion; in addition to have summative
16 assessments that benchmark the college and career
17 readiness. And the concept is that as students are
18 able to move through a more powerful, efficient system
19 that we can help them prepare to be more prepared for
20 college and career opportunities.

21 MR. STEVE GARTON: The first RFP that's going
22 to come out is for the IT readiness tool. Realizing

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1 that this is going to be one of the challenges for
2 everyone to find out if they are ready and what they
3 need, this tool will be available to help people, to be
4 able to assess where they are, what they need to do.
5 And I'm excited to announce that the first RFP will be
6 released jointly between SMARTER Balance and PARCC to
7 go forth so that we'll be developing one common tool
8 that we'll have this put out there.

9 The timeline should be very soon. We're now
10 just really working on the details to finish this and
11 putting these things out, and we're very excited about
12 this tool being available. It should be a multi-level
13 thing that will really help people to assess where they
14 really are, where they need to be, and what needs to
15 happen to have that developed going forward.

16 MR. JOHN JESSE: Yes, so one of the greatest
17 challenges in the Consortium work is the greatest
18 challenge facing a teacher who faces a classroom of
19 students at varied levels of abilities and motivations
20 and support. That's a significant challenge for
21 teachers each day in our system. And it's a similar
22 type of challenge for the Consortium, where you have

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1 states which have no experience, or at this point with
2 online assessment in states who've been doing it for
3 several years at 100 percent, the readiness tool will
4 help us identify those needs and help as teachers do,
5 adjust and monitor and differentiate our tools as we
6 move those forward.

7 MR. STEVE GARTON: In addition to the many
8 different platforms and even ways that people have of
9 looking at technology in their state, so while this
10 will be a challenge, it should be an exciting time for
11 us to move forward.

12 MR. JOHN JESSE: So we all have visions of
13 this great big beautiful building that we're going to
14 building, both consortiums, and have described those
15 articulately for the federal government. And now the
16 time is to try to develop a blueprint, so that we can
17 go out and hire contractors to build the plumbing and
18 the electrical and such. The architecture is the
19 creation development of that blueprint, which brings to
20 specificity our great visions of grandeur.

21 It needs to facilitate a paradigm shift. As
22 states in the past have entered into online assessment,

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1 it's been a one-step process normally. I'm not aware
2 of anyone who architect the system independently of
3 requesting the system or building the system, but
4 because of the magnitude and the scope of our vision,
5 which is more than just a platform delivery system or a
6 reporting system or an interface for parents, but a
7 complete assessment system, assessment system meaning
8 not just students taking assessments or giving reports
9 back but tying those to resources and making that
10 available for parents, for students, for teachers, for
11 policymakers.

12 It's a great vision, but it's -- the
13 magnitude is significant, and we feel compelled to
14 begin with an architecture, a blueprint, a design for
15 all components and how they will fit together. We take
16 seriously the concept of interoperability and open
17 source and an ability to facilitate continued
18 collaboration and innovation as not just as the system
19 is created, but as it is continued to be improved and
20 adjusted throughout the years to 2025 and beyond.

21 So we feel this is a key step for us, to get
22 this architecture right, to get this blueprint right.

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1 We could still have subcontractors building things not
2 quite to spec, but we know that if we don't have a good
3 blueprint to begin with, even if they build it
4 correctly, it won't work properly together, won't be
5 efficient.

6 So you will see an Architecture RFP from our
7 Consortium, requesting this work to be done, and we're
8 excited about moving that forward, knowing that that
9 will provide the blueprint for our work after that.

10 MR. STEVE GARTON: Thank you, John.

11 MR. JOHN JESSE: We're doing our part; we're
12 giving you a couple extra minutes.

13 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you. PARCC, Scott?

14 MR. SCOTT NORTON: Thank you, and thanks for
15 the minutes. I'm Scott Norton, as I mentioned, and I'm
16 here because I'm on the leadership team for PARCC and
17 I'm glad to present it. A very brief overview, want to
18 talk just a little bit about the states, how we're
19 organized, a very little bit about the test itself, and
20 then a few words about technology.

21 PARCC has 25 states. You see the list of the
22 governing states. Of the 25 states, 15 are currently

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1 governing states; that leaves ten that are
2 participating. If you are a participating state, you
3 still can be in both consortia; if you're a governing
4 state, you have to commit to one consortia only.
5 Louisiana is a governing state. Our governing board
6 chair is Commissioner Mitchell Chester from
7 Massachusetts. Our fiscal agent is Florida. They take
8 care of all the money, budgets, procurement and so
9 forth. And our project management partner is Achieve.
10 There are a number of Achieve folks here in the
11 audience today, and they've done a great job of helping
12 us get organized.

13 And there's a map. The two maps look kind of
14 different. You can draw your own conclusions about
15 that, but there are some regional things going on. The
16 dark blue are governing -- I'll leave it at that. The
17 dark blue are governing and the light blue are the
18 participating.

19 The PARCC vision, I'll just briefly mention -
20 - of course, for the whole common core effort along
21 with the assessments is to build a pathway to college
22 and career readiness for all students, to create high-

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1 quality assessments that measure more sophisticated,
2 authentic student performances. Those of us who've
3 worked in assessment for awhile, that's what we've
4 always tried to do. It's time for the next generation
5 of that.

6 We want to support educators in the
7 classroom. You heard some words already about, this is
8 more than just a test, and we're going to echo that;
9 make better use of technology and assessments, why
10 we're here today; we'll talk about that; and advance
11 accountability at all levels. The PARCC states are
12 committed to accountability. A number of states have
13 many, many layers of accountability back in their
14 states. Louisiana does and some of the others do as
15 well, and we need to make sure the next generation of
16 assessments support all levels of accountability.

17 I'll spend just a minute on this slide. Many
18 of you have probably seen it, but if you haven't, it
19 talks about the through-course assessment design that
20 we envision in PARCC, that during the school year,
21 after 25 percent, 50 percent, and 75 percent of the
22 year has gone by, there will be a portion of the

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1 summative tests that would be given in English and in
2 math, and then at the end of the year, the final end-
3 of-year exam would be given. One distinction between
4 the two consortia is that in PARCC, all of those pieces
5 would then add up to the final end-of-year summative
6 score and some percentage to be negotiated. Each
7 through-course would count in some part.

8 You see kind of hiding down there on the
9 bottom right of that line, Through-Course 4. That
10 represents speaking and listening. At this moment,
11 we've envisioned that as part of the assessment program
12 but a non-counting part. Not everyone is in total
13 agreement about the non- counting, so we're still under
14 discussion about that, so we'll keep you posted.

15 But you can see that these assessments have
16 pieces and parts and that they add up to the end of the
17 year. The idea is that there would be information
18 along the way for teachers that would be beneficial to
19 them. It also gives us some chance to spread the test
20 out and have some time to use a little bit more time in
21 the assessment instead of kind of jamming everything up
22 right at the end of the year.

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1 Technology, just as you heard with SMARTER
2 Balance, technology is central to the work of PARCC.
3 We imagine that it will be important all the way
4 through, through item development, test development,
5 field testing, scoring reporting, professional
6 development and so forth. We think it's going to play
7 a role throughout. In PARCC, as in SMARTER Balance, the
8 assessments are delivered online. We're envisioning
9 grades 6-8 plus high school, completely online.
10 The other big idea on this slide is that by being
11 online we think we'll have the chance to administer
12 more innovative and maybe different kind of item.
13 We're trying to figure out what those are right now,
14 but we think there's a great opportunity. Also, in the
15 area of accommodations, we think technology allows us
16 some great opportunities.

17 In the area of scoring, you probably know
18 this already but I'll mention a couple of things. We
19 think there may be a great chance here to use automated
20 scoring in a much more widely used and advanced way
21 than is currently done. We know there's some
22 beginnings of that out there. We in our state do a

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1 little bit of that, but we think there's a good
2 opportunity and a lot of resources. Hopefully some
3 economies of scale can come into play. Also, for the
4 human scoring, the distributed scoring model may be in
5 order that the scores go out or scored by teachers or
6 other trained professionals in the field and then come
7 back, and we know that is done in some places now.

8 Just a couple of words about two resources
9 that we plan to develop. We want to have a data
10 management and reporting, interactive data tool. It's
11 really kind of a data warehouse where we could all
12 house our information. We know that that needs to work
13 seamlessly with our current state data infrastructure,
14 so 50 states have 50 things, but we need those to
15 interact with the one or two things that we'll be
16 developing in the Consortia. We also plan a content
17 management, a partnership resource center, which would
18 be, think of professional development resources,
19 release test items, rubrics, student responses.
20 Technology can give us a really good opportunity to do
21 a lot of things there.

22 Just going to say a couple of words here

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1 about some challenges. The platform. I think the
2 platform is what we're all about right now, and if we
3 can imagine that we could all use a single platform
4 someday, single platform across two groups, what would
5 that do for us? How good could that be? It may not be
6 the reality today, but it's something that I think
7 everybody's interested in discussing. You already
8 heard, there's a common needs assessment that we plan
9 to give. I think that's a good step in that direction.
10 The other big idea on this slide is about the
11 transition planning, so we're going to spend a lot of
12 time talking about what it's going to be in a few
13 years, but equally important is how do we get from here
14 to there, so every state is in a little bit different
15 place so the transition has to happen back home.

16 Automated scoring, I'll just say another word
17 about that. That's an area of interest to the states,
18 and again it's something that we have to talk about and
19 learn more about, and finally, just one more word about
20 innovative item types. We think there's a great
21 opportunity through the Consortia, through the
22 resources that have been made available and through the

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1 power of the group, to develop some innovative item
2 types that can get us to a better place and assessment.

3 The timeline, I'm not going to go into this
4 in any detail. You see the box on the far right,
5 that's D- Day, so we're all trying to get in line to
6 get there, and you see a number of field tests and so
7 forth, getting us up to that. And there's a Web site
8 or two that you can see where our information is
9 housed, and I think that is my last slide.

10 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you. Thank you,
11 John and Steve and Scott. We're going to start our
12 discussion this morning by having the Virginia
13 Department of Education share some lessons learned.
14 They've been busy doing some online assessments over
15 the past several years, many years, and we're going to
16 turn the floor over to them. They're going to give us
17 a brief presentation for about ten minutes, and then
18 we're going to ask the Consortia members to ask
19 questions or comments or share ideas, and then we'll
20 open it up to the experts. Okay?

21 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: Thank you very much. I'm
22 Sarah Susbury with the Virginia Department of

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1 Education, and I have Shelly Loving-Ryder, and also we
2 have a representative from one of our local school
3 districts here, Mary Wills, so thank you very much for
4 inviting us to share our story.

5 I think we have really been on quite a
6 journey of our own, really since 2000, with online
7 testing in the State of Virginia. We moved to online
8 testing at the time where we wanted to gradually do it,
9 and we were able to have the luxury of phasing things
10 in; whereas I know the Assessment Consortia are having
11 to sort of do all or nothing at once, it seems like.
12 So what we'd like to do is just give you a little bit
13 of a snapshot or a picture of how we do things over a
14 period of time, and some of the lessons that we've
15 learned that hopefully will provide some guidance to
16 others, to the others as you're doing this.

17 Just so you have a picture of what Virginia
18 is, I've provided you a few demographics the size of
19 our testing program. And again, this was a state-
20 required program that we had implemented in 1998. And
21 then this got interesting as we started our online
22 testing implementation in 2000, really, and in the

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1 middle of that, there was an initiative, a federal
2 initiative that you may be familiar with, No Child Left
3 Behind, that came into the middle of things and gave us
4 a little bit more challenge along the way.

5 I'm not going to go through all of these
6 milestones in terms of this timeframe, but there are a
7 few pieces that we would like to pull out of this. We
8 did start with the request for proposals that involved
9 a demonstration phase, or really a proof of concept, in
10 that in 2000 we needed to make sure that this was
11 really going to work before we committed to that. So
12 we did make an investment initially in awarding a
13 contract to multiple vendors that could actually show
14 this implemented in the Virginia schools. We ended up
15 doing that with three separate vendors and selected a
16 set of school divisions, small, medium and large
17 divisions, with I will say small, medium, and large
18 technology capacity. And we did that intentionally to
19 try to challenge all of the groups involved to see what
20 we could come up with.

21 Our assessments in Virginia at that time were
22 all multiple choice, and we essentially took the

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1 multiple choice assessments and put them into an
2 electronic format. At that time we did not do our
3 direct writing test online. We're moving to that
4 direction now, you can see, as we get down towards the
5 more current and future parts of our timeframe.

6 Another piece that we were able to do through
7 this that I'd like to pull out of this timeline is that
8 we started at our high school or end-of-course
9 assessments. So we didn't do 3 through 12 or 3 through
10 8 and end-of-course all at the same time. So we had
11 the luxury of implementing over time, and we also
12 picked certain subjects to start with. We didn't put
13 all of our tests online at once, so we were able to
14 again, use that ability to phase things in and learn as
15 we were going.

16 In the spring 2011 timeframe, which is coming
17 up quickly, you can see that we'll be field testing
18 some technology-enhanced items, and that seems to be
19 where the Race to the Top is headed, and we're pleased
20 that we're headed in the same direction. We feel that
21 we have a pretty strong foundation in place with the
22 infrastructure that we've been able to implement over

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1 time. We've learned a lot. Technology has moved
2 quickly, so we're hoping that we can share some of that
3 with you.

4 This just gives you a picture of again, that
5 phased approach and the volume of tests that we're
6 administering. In our spring administration last year,
7 we're almost at two million online tests, between the
8 April to June timeframe. And then you can see our
9 percentage of online tests, seventy-eight percent of
10 all of the Virginia tests. And we are online at this
11 time. We administer in the ballpark of two point six
12 million tests in a year.

13 Some recommendations for success, and we sat
14 down and have gone through, what are the things that
15 were really important to us in order to make this work?
16 I will say that I feel we've been successful, but I
17 will say that there have been plenty of speed bumps
18 along the way. And we've learned a lot from successful
19 times and also probably learned more from the
20 challenges that we've had along the way.

21 I think the first key element that we wanted
22 to really stress is the piece of partnerships. And we

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1 tried to put this into a graphic that would indicate
2 that really the entities that we're dealing with at
3 least, are the local education agencies, the state
4 education agencies, and the contractors; that we cannot
5 overemphasize the need for good communication and good
6 collaboration among the three groups. And it really
7 does hit all points at different times.

8 And then the other element of that is that
9 you cannot separate assessment and technology. If
10 you're going to have a technology issue, you're going
11 to end up with an assessment issue as you go through
12 this. So those are critical. They had to be tied
13 together from the very beginning, and that was
14 something that fortunately leadership at our agency
15 realized that and implemented it, the project plan that
16 way.

17 You have to have those players at the table,
18 and they also need to be -- this may be understood, but
19 I'll say it -- they need to be knowledgeable players,
20 as in knowledgeable of assessment so that you're
21 following the standards of a psychometric environment
22 of a true environment, but also the technical piece.

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1 It needs to be people that understand educational
2 technology; what are the specifics that are in the
3 schools. You have very different environments in
4 school systems as you do, as compared to a corporate
5 environment. A technology integrator that is good at
6 implementing something for a business may not have the
7 skills that they need in order to operate in a school
8 environment, where you have eight- year-olds, 15-year-
9 olds, et cetera that are, every single one of them is
10 challenging the system and trying to break it daily.
11 So again, we cannot emphasize enough the importance of
12 the partnerships in all people working together
13 throughout the process.

14 I think this slide pretty much tells what
15 I've just said. I'm going to pass it to Mary Wills
16 just for a moment, to talk about, to give her
17 perspective on partnerships from the local education
18 agency perspective.

19 MS. MARY WILLS: As a local school district,
20 it's very, very important. We're working in our own
21 entities, but all of a sudden we're asked to do this
22 adventure on online, and you have to understand that we

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1 couldn't do it without the support of our state,
2 because they gave us guidelines all the way and gave us
3 an opportunity to build that trust and to talk and to
4 meet and to have these moments when we could ask the
5 unquestionable questions, no matter how silly they
6 might seem. And as you grow that partnership, you have
7 to include that technology people.

8 And in our division, the technology folks at
9 first were very much confused as to why they were even
10 a part of this. They were running the infrastructure
11 for what? It was earlier in years. And so we had to
12 really build that relationship and educate them as to
13 what the assessments were, and what they meant to the
14 students and what they meant to our community, and sort
15 of bring them into that understanding and into our
16 relationship.

17 I'm happy to say now that through the
18 journey, it's sometimes hard to remember who's what in
19 our division, because it's back and forth constantly.
20 But at the beginning, it wasn't that way at all, and so
21 we had to work hard. And we had to make sure that we
22 were learning a new language. The educational

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1 language, the technology language, are not all the
2 same. And then you turn into assessment language, so
3 making sure to communicate what it was we were really
4 talking about, what it looked like, and how important
5 it was for all of us.

6 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: Okay, thanks, Mary. Some
7 of the pieces about the technical requirements,
8 communication is critical. And getting that
9 information established and communicated to all, among
10 all the partners, is important. It's not something
11 that is a point in time; it has to be continuously
12 reviewed and monitored. And then the other piece is
13 that it has to be specific to the types of items that
14 you're delivering, the types of test accommodations you
15 have, and then also the type of infrastructure that's
16 in place. But I think part of it is you need to make
17 sure you're aware of what the test delivery solution is
18 so that you can adjust your measurement of capacity and
19 your configurations.

20 Desktop security during test administration,
21 again obvious in a K-12 environment. E-mailing,
22 texting, all of those things can't be available. You

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1 have to have strong security in a high-stakes
2 environment. Administrative access, there are teachers,
3 professionals, unfortunately that don't always make
4 good choices about what they need to do. We found that
5 the online testing environment does provide us a much
6 higher level of security and audit capability among the
7 field.

8 Student test access, obviously another piece.
9 We do require IDs, passwords, and specific test codes,
10 so some strong authentication is critical if you're
11 going to have some high-stakes accountability
12 associated with these assessments. And then of course,
13 the secure transmission of content and student data is
14 very critical. As I'm sure all of you know, you've got
15 a significant investment in intellectual property as
16 far as your assessment, your item bank, and having a
17 breach of that would be significant. Opening it up to
18 the Internet is a terrific thing in terms of being able
19 to administer efficiently perhaps, but also it brings
20 that concern of, we're opening it up to the Internet.
21 Encryption is critical and security is critical.

22 The test delivery solution. What we've

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1 learned over time, again, that you need some fault
2 tolerance. You need some redundancy at every level.
3 There are contractor responsibilities for this, state
4 responsibilities, and also LEA responsibilities for
5 that. Does the contractor provide hosting backups,
6 database backups, limited to no downtime. And I know
7 in most cases that sounds nearly impossible. It needs
8 to be like the banking industry or better, in terms of
9 security and being available. When there's a time to
10 test, it needs to be ready to go at that time.

11 At the district and school location, what
12 will happen for that day when there's a backhoe that's
13 doing construction out front and it breaks the fiber?
14 We learned that within the first month, what will
15 happen, and we developed a plan based on that one.
16 Will student responses be saved when the power goes
17 out, when you have that connectivity failure, when the
18 individual server goes down in a building, or maybe
19 just my workstation. I'm at the end of that test that I
20 need to pass to get my diploma, uh, the computer went
21 down; what do I have remaining in that? Those are all
22 things that need to be considered through this.

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1 The other part of this slide talks about a
2 single point of access, a single web-based application
3 where you can do everything. And I know that
4 consortiums have talked about this, that you don't want
5 to have to go to multiple locations for, whether it's
6 entering your data, viewing your data, then
7 administering an assessment, being able to set it up so
8 the students are ready to go, and then the students
9 have to do something else, and then oh, what about our
10 score reports? How do we get our score reports, and
11 can I disaggregate them? And having a single point to
12 be able to do this is critical to the efficiencies, and
13 also your training issues. If you can train all in one
14 piece, we have definitely learned over time that it is
15 efficient that way.

16 Another element that is critical is the
17 training and support. When our initiative went into
18 place in Virginia, our governor gave us the mantra that
19 failure is not an option. And we took that to heart,
20 and we spent a lot of time with training and support.
21 There were many miles that were put on state vehicles
22 at that point, hand-holding folks. This was at a time

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1 where technology isn't -- this was in 2000. We had
2 just finished Y2K. I think that while technology is
3 more prevalent and more useful today, more available
4 today, I think that -- well, I know, we still have
5 issues with adults that are not ready to do this. We
6 have turnover in staff, and we're back to that, I don't
7 know what to do. So you've got to have a plan in place
8 for handling that. One or two people needing to be
9 trained each year is very much different than the
10 entire state needing to be trained all at once, so you
11 had to have a plan for that.

12 Again, training is critical at all levels,
13 and among our partners as we were talking about, you
14 have to have a help desk at the contractor's location
15 that knows what is happening, that is able to address a
16 technology issue, is able to realize that that's an
17 assessment issue, and I don't have the ability to
18 answer that. That's a policy issue that I need to refer
19 back to the state. All of those training elements are
20 critical. They hit assessment-related topics and
21 technology-related topics. So it's boxes and wires and
22 configurations and how do I manage bandwidth, but it's

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1 also testing issues. Train the trainer formats and
2 provide materials to the districts and then multiple
3 modes are critical.

4 Again, the support models have to be adapted
5 to online testing. Providing support to computer-based
6 testing is very different than paper-pencil testing.
7 Paper-pencil, you have the materials and you can test;
8 it's not going to stop you if you have an issue. The
9 other piece here is the financial support, as far as
10 technology is constantly changing and you're constantly
11 having things that need to be updated and revised, so I
12 can't tell you enough that the financial support in an
13 ongoing process is critical. This is not a one-time
14 investment.

15 And then training opportunities for students
16 is critical. They have to be ready to go, and the
17 providing information for other stakeholders so you
18 have that buy- in, so you can have a successful program
19 throughout. And then the last slide, policies and
20 procedures. Make sure they are established and well-
21 communicated. Anticipate problems and prepare plans.
22 This system status page has been immensely useful to

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1 us, and we rely on it a lot in that it's a way to
2 quickly get information out to our schools to have a
3 consistent message to the schools, and it's our
4 message; it's not our contractor's message. We take
5 the information from the contractor and adapt it into
6 our message, and it's available to our schools. Again,
7 communication is critical.

8 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you very much,
9 Virginia. Now, we're going to turn this over to our
10 two Consortia and ask for questions or comments, any
11 discussion that you would like to have with Virginia.
12 Who wants to go first? Okay, Wes?

13 MR. WES BRUCE: This is Wes Bruce from
14 Indiana. We've all watched Virginia, and many of us
15 have envied your, the way that you've -- the support
16 you've had and the way that you've been able to roll
17 out. So I think I have two questions. One is, so now
18 you know that most of us are faced with the very
19 different way of implementation, so what's your advice
20 about how to try to do it almost all at once, or at
21 least all by 1415, or maybe all by 1314, or maybe 1213.

22 And second, knowing that you are an early

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1 adopter at a time when, while technology was changing
2 quickly, it wasn't changing anywhere nearly as quickly
3 as it is now, how have you dealt with the changes in
4 devices and the move to much less wire and those kinds
5 of things?

6 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Virginia?

7 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: Thanks, Wes, and this is
8 Sarah again. As far as the implementation process, I
9 think -- I have to go back to that diagram where it
10 talks about partnerships. I think that's critical.
11 Granted, you are going to do a much more broad
12 implementation than we did. I think you have to have
13 the things in place that communicate policies; you have
14 to provide that training. I think as much standardized
15 information that you can provide at one time is
16 important.

17 I think we had the luxury of sort of
18 developing it as we go, but I think I would say there
19 has to be a plan and very firm information upfront.

20 MS. SHELLEY LOVING: Shelly Loving-Ryder,
21 Virginia. You may want to think about using your field
22 test years as ways to begin to implement online. I

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1 think in Virginia, we did find that we were much more
2 successful because we did not have to do it all at
3 once, and we realize you have a much shorter timeline,
4 but perhaps you could use those field opportunities to
5 implement and discover some of the issues you may have.

6 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Tony?

7 MR. TONY ALPERT: Tony Alpert from Oregon.
8 Sorry, I have a cold, so it sounds a little bit odd. I
9 believe you do online writing as well. Is that? Not
10 yet? So can you talk about your plans your
11 conversations about (inaudible).

12 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: This is Shelley
13 Loving-Ryder, Shelley from Virginia. We are planning
14 to implement online writing. We will be field testing
15 next year in the spring. We have been doing all paper
16 pencil writing, so we will be doing a census field test
17 next spring.

18 In Virginia we have both multiple choice and
19 a response to a prompt, so in preparing for that this
20 summer, which will be summer of 2011, we will provide
21 an interface to our school divisions that will look
22 just like the writing interface that they will use when

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1 they respond to the prompt. Tony, is that getting at
2 your questions?

3 MR. TONY ALPERT: And what grades are you
4 planning?

5 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: 5, 8 and high
6 school.

7 MR. TONY ALPERT: So can you talk a little
8 bit about the teacher response about fifth graders?

9 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: Yes. We've had a
10 lot of pushback from our elementary teachers. They are
11 concerned about implementing -- implementing writing at
12 the fifth grade. That's one of the reasons why we are
13 putting out the interface for them to use to practice
14 before we even field test. We're also going to provide
15 some training this summer hopefully on how to teach
16 keyboarding in the elementary schools.

17 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Scott?

18 MR. SCOTT NORTON: Scott Norton, Louisiana.
19 Shelley or Sarah, just a couple of quick questions. Do
20 you offer a paper backup? In other words, is it the
21 District's option whether to be online or paper if
22 they're not ready, or is it you have to be ready at a

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1 certain test at a certain grade by a certain time?

2 And secondly, I heard the writing, but do you
3 have any constructed response items online and any
4 automated scoring or official intelligence at this
5 time?

6 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: Initially -- this
7 is Shelley -- initially we did offer paper as an
8 option. In fact, we are still doing that at the lower
9 grades. Currently, our legislation says that we will be
10 all online by 2013, including writing, except for
11 students who have a documented need for paper. These
12 may be students who have seizure disorders, and those
13 seizures are triggered by looking at a screen. It
14 could be blind students who need Braille. So we will
15 continue to offer paper for those students, but in the
16 beginning, we did provide paper, and we transitioned to
17 online. So at this point we are still offering paper,
18 but we're phasing into just online.

19 In terms of item types, we do not have any
20 constructed response beyond the response to the prompt.
21 We are implementing technology-enhanced items, but they
22 will still be computer scored. We're doing that

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1 beginning with mathematics, and then we'll move to
2 science and reading and writing.

3 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Sarah, I believe you have
4 a comment?

5 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: I just wanted go back to
6 Wes's second question about, how do we handle or how
7 are we handling changes in technology and changes in
8 devices? And as we were going forward, we always I
9 think lean towards the devices -- new technology will
10 be used in instruction first, most likely, is how it
11 goes forward, and we are much more cautious about how
12 quickly we implement that into the assessment
13 environment.

14 For example, we know that our divisions are
15 wanting to buy and are buying iPads and Tablet
16 computers, the touchables, if you want to call them,
17 touch devices. And we are planning a pilot for that
18 this fall, to be able to try that right -- at this
19 point we're saying no in terms of implementing it for
20 assessment, so we are having to hold some lines in
21 terms of what's used in instruction might not always be
22 readily available in assessment.

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1 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Wes?

2 MR. WES BRUCE: I'd like to follow up on
3 Shelley's brief reference to the papers and
4 accommodation. I think that's one of the things that
5 our current accommodation policies, or most of us who
6 are in the paper world, don't directly address, the
7 transition to online, or we certainly haven't
8 thoughtfully addressed that. So could you talk a
9 little bit more about how specific are those
10 requirements in terms of what it takes to document the
11 need for paper?

12 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: This is the first
13 year that we are going to only allowing paper for
14 students who have a documented need for end-of-course.
15 And so it's not necessarily students who have an
16 accommodation, because there are some students with
17 seizure disorders who may not have an IEP or a 504.

18 At this point we are being fairly loose about
19 what we allow as in documentation, and then we are
20 collecting that information, and we'll hopefully over
21 time be able to come up with stricter requirements.
22 But right now, they are fairly loose.

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1 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Other members of either
2 Consortia? Jessica?

3 MS. JESSICA PEREZ-ROSSELLO: This is Jessica
4 from Massachusetts. We pilot last year with our
5 vendors some online testing, and some of it that I
6 heard was study was not only the versions of the
7 computers, but it was also the setup in the classroom,
8 or the space may have been limited of where they did
9 the assessment, library, how the desks were set up.

10 How do you -- how did you accomplish going
11 through that change in the schools? What type of
12 guideline did you provide to try to get them trained,
13 because it was not only the technology people; the
14 principals were struggling, the teachers were
15 struggling because we didn't have as much guideline I
16 think as we could have, is one of the lessons learned
17 we had. So how did you approach that?

18 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: This is Sarah again.
19 Again, it comes back to trying to determine what the
20 questions are from the localities and then addressing
21 them with potentially a plan. I believe that we had
22 some requirements in place for paper and then adapting

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1 that to the online environment, and that security is a
2 -- in a specific testing area, is a responsibility of
3 the proctor and examiner. So look at the online
4 environment, and then adapt, how is the computer
5 configuration different?

6 We even -- and I'm gonna toss this to Mary
7 here in a minute so she can give you some specific
8 examples of how they dealt with it in a school -- but
9 from a state perspective, it was a requirement that
10 they look at their facilities and come up with a secure
11 way to deliver tests.

12 MS. MARY WILLS: We learned right off the bat
13 that a teaching lab is not a testing lab, and there was
14 a lot of pods and areas where there was great for
15 technology but not for testing. And so we used the
16 state's guidance for what is standardization and what
17 would be the best, and then we actually just walked
18 around. As a division director, I went to all the
19 schools and we met together and we walked through their
20 labs, and we simulated what it would look like, what it
21 would feel like.

22 The state gave us some great practice items,

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1 practice testing, practice training where we had
2 training tests we could go into. And we took the
3 adults through that first, so they could see it and
4 feel it. And then we would bring children in and let
5 the adults watch the children. And when the students
6 would get excited about it and be able to handle it
7 really well, then some of the adults were worried,
8 backed off. But we actually simulated the labs, using
9 the training ideas that the state would give us and did
10 a lot of walking around.

11 And we do that every year. I just finished
12 doing that. We're getting ready to test after spring
13 break, and I have just completed that in our division,
14 going to the schools, meeting with everybody and
15 looking through, checking the labs; sitting down, is
16 this one high enough, low enough, for the size of
17 student, even that, to make sure they're comfortable,
18 they have a workspace, and it's quiet and conducive to
19 testing.

20 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Okay. We've got Jim and
21 then Tony?

22 MR. JIM HARRINGTON: Jim Harrington from

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1 Oregon. One of the challenges as we've moved in Oregon
2 to completely online assessment is access to the
3 technology for instruction. And so curious about how
4 Virginia -- how you've handled that in terms of
5 maintaining that balance and working with districts to
6 keep the instruction side going, because the technology
7 that we have in our schools, so much of the time is
8 being occupied by actual use for assessment. And what
9 have you seen in Virginia in terms of maintaining that
10 balance to the instructional side?

11 MS. MARY WILLS: Mary Wills. And what we did
12 in our division was we have people that again the
13 state's helped us provide, called ITRT, Instructional
14 Support Teachers. And their job is to work with
15 teachers to continue to innovate using technology so
16 that it is not forgotten, and sharing of the labs. So
17 we plan ahead. These are our testing windows, these are
18 our training windows for testing, and these are our
19 instructional times. So we actually lay it out, look
20 at the school year calendar and make sure that
21 everything is planned so that we are not as assessment
22 hogging everything.

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1 And we have to do a relationship with our
2 business in the high schools, with our business
3 departments to share some of their technology at
4 certain times, and they do other events, but we can use
5 their labs. But it's a real planned-out activity, so
6 that we don't overexceed.

7 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Sarah, you want to add
8 something?

9 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: Yeah, I think one of the
10 things that Virginia has benefitted from is that this
11 requirement for online testing has actually increased
12 the amount of technology available in the schools. We
13 required high bandwidth to be available for testing,
14 and then that's available the rest of the time. And
15 that was a big success point for us, as far as when
16 this initiative went forward it was both instruction-
17 based and assessment-based. So I think again, it's
18 that partnership; both sides have benefitted from it.

19 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Tony?

20 MR. TONY ALPERT: Could you talk a little bit
21 about how moving to online testing changed your
22 relationship with your districts in terms of advisory

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1 committees and interactions and notification that's
2 necessary beyond what was typically needed with a
3 paper- based system?

4 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: It has increased our
5 amount of communication. The support is very much
6 real-time that we provide now. But I think that even
7 before online testing, we had a very strong
8 relationship with our school districts, and we've
9 identified a point of contact that we work with, and we
10 increased that to a point of contact in technology as
11 well. So we have key people that we can go to in each
12 division.

13 We have some key players identified in the
14 state that sort of serve as really, an informal
15 advisory council to us. When the question was, how did
16 we get the labs configured, how did we convey that
17 information, a big part of what we have done through
18 this process is, we have to get folks on the phone and
19 talk about their perspective and our perspective and
20 then come up with something that's going to meet both
21 groups' needs. And I think that relying on -- the
22 school people know what it's like in the school. We

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1 know what we have to limit things to or provide from a
2 state perspective, and the amount of communication is
3 critical.

4 As far as making that information available,
5 we have provided an archive location that is secure in
6 that there are passwords for those points of contacts
7 in the divisions where we can archive all of our
8 testing memos, all of our policy documents. Even our
9 e-mails that we send are archived there so they can go
10 back to see all of that information at any point.

11 It's also critical when you have turnover in
12 the school division, or the school district. There's
13 usually one person, as Mary is the person that's
14 the director of testing. When they leave, there is
15 nobody there to hand things over, so we have taken the
16 responsibility from the state perspective of sort of
17 being a filing archive for all of our policies and
18 guidance documents.

19 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Tony?

20 MR. TONY ALPERT: Could you talk a little bit
21 about your help desk services and technical support
22 that's required as well?

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1 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: Yeah, that's a great
2 question. The help desk services, I can tell you that
3 we have help desk services through our contractor, and
4 then at times when testing -- when a lot of testing is
5 going on, we feel like we are all help desk staff. It
6 is all- hands-on-deck. Even Shelley answers the phone
7 and takes calls about, what do we do in this situation?
8 And that is a change from the paper-pencil environment
9 that our staff was used to. And it was a change in
10 terms of the skill set needed, and then also the
11 scheduling. You have to have people in the office on
12 the phones during peak testing times.

13 I do want to say that as far as a contractor
14 help desk, we spend a lot of time monitoring the
15 responses that our contractors help desk provides. We
16 review tickets, if you will. The tickets that have an
17 assigned number; we review them weekly, and we have a
18 conference call where we address that, we're happy with
19 that response; did you think about you could have
20 provided this? And they're trying to get their agents
21 to be Virginia-like, if you will. And that's really a
22 significant part and I think it has improved the

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1 responses and it saves a lot of time when you know that
2 the responses coming from the help desk are critical.

3 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Okay, Jim?

4 MR. JIM HARRINGTON: Could you talk a little
5 bit about your methodologies and practices for getting
6 data back to stakeholders, so district schools,
7 teachers in the classroom, parents?

8 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: This is Shelley.
9 Sarah mentioned that we have a single point of access
10 for our testing program, and that web-based access
11 point also includes reporting for teachers and
12 students. Within that single point of access, school
13 districts can download extracts, files that they can
14 use to manipulate. They can also download PDF files of
15 reports.

16 So those are available electronically. And
17 then at one point during each test administration, they
18 can also order whatever printed reports they want.
19 It's up to them to decide whether they want printed
20 reports or whether they want to just use what's
21 available electronically.

22 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Cathy?

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1 MS. CATHY POPLIN: What I'd like to know is
2 if you started in 2000, what has been your recycle,
3 refresh cycle, how often? And then the second, is what
4 is the length of your testing windows when the computer
5 labs would not be available for instruction?

6 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: When you say recycle, you
7 mean the technology replacement?

8 Yeah, the refresh rate. We didn't put a firm
9 refresh cycle requirement in for the school divisions.
10 We basically published the basic, the minimum
11 requirements needed for technology, and they work
12 within that.

13 Again, depending on the delivery method that
14 you need and the level of processor, speed, memory,
15 those types of things, that will vary as to what type
16 of refresh rate you need. Three to four years is sort
17 of a number that schools use, but I wouldn't say that's
18 in all cases.

19 As far as our testing window, the school
20 districts -- and I keep saying divisions. In Virginia
21 we call them divisions, so you can substitute divisions
22 and districts. The districts, we ask them to identify

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1 a three-week window to administer their tests,
2 realizing that some may still be administering paper.
3 In our high schools, for example, we ask that they
4 complete all of their end-of-course assessments in a
5 three-week period for the initial set of tests that
6 they're taking.

7 And Shelley, do you want to comment on
8 testing windows?

9 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: Yes, we do have
10 fairly wide testing windows in Virginia, but it's
11 important to note that those existed before online
12 testing. So we did not have a situation in the paper-
13 pencil environment where we were testing in a very
14 short window. So having a fairly wide window is
15 necessary to have successful online testing, because
16 you do need to have access for the students to get to
17 the computers.

18 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Scott?

19 MR. SCOTT NORTON: Scott Norton. The
20 question I think is for Mary. In Louisiana, we have
21 some online testing. We're a couple years behind you,
22 but we do quite a bit of high school. And one thing we

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1 found was, as we worked with the districts, we worked
2 with what we would call a district test coordinator and
3 then with the district technology staff. And we found
4 that those parties didn't interact quite as much as we
5 expected, that we had to really kind of help that
6 along.

7 Can you say a little bit about, is your
8 experience the same, and what did the state do to help
9 that, and maybe just some comments around that idea, if
10 you would? I'd be curious.

11 MS. MARY WILLS: I joined this type of -- I
12 was a classroom teacher and staff developer, so I
13 actually joined the testing realm in 2002 and was there
14 to start with the piloting of online. The online
15 actually intrigued me to step into this, because I saw
16 students with technology. And at that moment when I
17 went to the division, like they mentioned earlier, the
18 person before me was gone, and so there was nothing for
19 me to stick my teeth into.

20 So I became very quickly close friends with
21 the state, because I was given a great responsibility.
22 I took it very seriously, and they were right there for

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1 me. So that was a great help. And then they worked
2 with mentoring, and so I've been able to mentor other
3 DDOTs, we call ours, and work with that.

4 I think we also -- I do a regional meeting
5 like five times a year where people from DDOTs and
6 support people with testing can come together, and I
7 host it, where we can talk. And then we send
8 information of concerns and questions to the state, and
9 they respond back.

10 And so I think that necessity brought it on,
11 and I think that we are a very tight group, the DDOTs.
12 We really realize our responsibility, and we want to do
13 it right. And with the technology piece into it, it's
14 broadened our base. And we have alternative
15 assessments for our special needs students, and so
16 that's even broadened the base larger. So I don't
17 think it was a problem with buy-in, because the stakes
18 were so high.

19 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Tony's got the last
20 question from the Consortium, then we're going to open
21 it up to the rest of the group.

22 MR. TONY ALPERT: So, as you are moving to --

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1 when a state gets to 100 percent online testing, you
2 discover some nooks and crannies that perhaps you
3 didn't know about. So can you talk about your juvenile
4 detention facilities and long-term care and treatment
5 facilities, and how, those conversations that you've
6 had about online testing?

7 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: This is Shelley.
8 We talked about students with documented needs for
9 paper, and in fact one of those documented needs is
10 students who are in facilities where there is not
11 access to the online tests.

12 With that said, we have worked with some of
13 our facilities so that we do have some pilot sites that
14 we are offering online testing in. These are special
15 education private facilities that we are providing
16 online testing in. So Tony, we primarily are treating
17 those students as those with documented needs and
18 providing paper, but working towards figuring out how
19 we can best provide online testing to them.

20 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Okay, thank you. Experts?
21 Randy?

22 MR. RANDY BENNETT: One of the things I think

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1 you have done really well is tend to what I'll call
2 first rule of innovation, which is to plan to fail
3 early, often, small and gracefully. I think the
4 alternative is not very pretty, and there've been very
5 few instances that I know of in which you've had larger
6 visible failures.

7 And I think the reason is because you spent
8 the time upfront doing a lot of small things,
9 especially in that initial RFP with the three vendors.
10 And what I'm struggling with from the point of view of
11 the Race to the Top Assessments Consortia, is that they
12 have a much more compressed timeline, and they're going
13 to have much larger volumes. I think the Race to the
14 Top Assessments Program, each consortium will have the
15 largest online test in the world. I can't think of one
16 that could be greater in terms of volume.

17 So I'm wondering if you have any advice for
18 them about how to fail early, often, small and
19 gracefully, given the compressed timeline and the huge
20 volumes that they're going to have to deal with?

21 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: This is Shelley.
22 I'll start and then I'll turn it to Sarah.

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1 I think that it is important to spend time
2 trying to think of all the things that could possibly
3 go wrong. And I think the Consortia will have the
4 benefit of the Virginia experience, and also Oregon and
5 other states that have pursued online testing. So you
6 will have some history of things that can go wrong, and
7 plans to address them.

8 In addition to thinking about what you will
9 do if this happens, you also have to be certain that
10 you are communicating that to all parties, so that the
11 school districts know exactly what the plan is, if you
12 have bad weather, if you have a fire drill, what's
13 going to happen if you lose connectivity. You also
14 have to have a plan for what you're going to do if
15 something happens that you did not anticipate. And
16 that's probably the key.

17 Sarah mentioned the status page that we have,
18 and that is so important, because if the system does go
19 down, our school districts know that that is where they
20 are to go for information. Because obviously, we
21 cannot handle phone calls coming in from every school
22 district in Virginia.

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1 As I said earlier, I would also encourage you
2 to try to use the years you have of field testing to
3 think about the plans that you might need to put into
4 place, and maybe even push the envelope a little bit so
5 if you're going to have a failure, you have it then
6 rather than in live testing.

7 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: I think Shelly hit the
8 key points. I wanted on the -- the significance of the
9 status page to us, I want to make sure that you
10 understand that this is a Virginia Department of
11 Education hosted status page. So it's not like the
12 red, yellow, green light that goes up and down whether
13 the servers are up and down. We do have red, yellow,
14 green lights on this page, but we set the lights and we
15 set the custom message.

16 I know that contractors have their own status
17 pages, but it's very generic information. So I think
18 the key to our success with this has been that it is
19 our message that we generate. It can be assessment-
20 related technology, technology-related, both.

21 MS. MARY WILLS: With that, they post it, but
22 many times I felt like the canary in the coal mine, and

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1 I will say, this isn't working. I call the vendor,
2 and, yeah, maybe, maybe. That's when I call the state
3 and say, are you aware that, and I'll call some of my
4 coworkers, some of my regional buddies, and say, watch
5 out at what's happening. Because it's one thing if
6 your technology doesn't work; it's another thing if the
7 vendor's technology doesn't work. You have to be ready
8 for both.

9 And that's why that status page is really
10 very, very helpful and they sort of trained us. It
11 grew out of a need, but frequently it's divisions that
12 actually alert people to what's happening, because
13 we're starting it and it doesn't work right.

14 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: And that could be very
15 early in the morning, very early. That's a staffing
16 issue as well.

17 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Mike?

18 MR. MIKE RUSSELL: Mike Russell. Wes, your
19 questions, I think your first question, and Sarah, some
20 of your early comments, were about really getting at
21 the difference between technologies that are using a
22 learning context versus an assessment context. And I

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1 think it's really critical to recognize that
2 difference, that assessment is a very controlled, well-
3 crafted, carefully crafted experience designed to
4 measure specific skills and knowledge.

5 And the tolerance for disruption and the
6 tolerance for changes and how that experience occurs is
7 very different than in a classroom learning experience.
8 So I'm curious, you mentioned a little bit about
9 inquires or pressure to use iPads. I'm just curious if
10 you have other stories about how over the last five,
11 seven years, schools have made requests about using
12 learning technologies in an assessment context and how
13 you've reacted and thought about that.

14 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: To reflect back, and I
15 don't know if this is a specific learning technology,
16 it's a concept. It's an idea of how we dealt with a
17 concept. We have read-aloud assessments where we
18 require that administration be tape-recorded, because
19 there is an examiner there reading the test. The
20 school districts asked, can we use digital recorders to
21 record that? And it's like wow, now we're putting a
22 copy of this onto a file that is really a copy of the

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1 test. It's an audio version of the test, and so that
2 was a case where we had to develop guidelines for chain
3 of custody for those files. Don't put them this place;
4 encrypt them here, that type of thing. So again, it's
5 sort of adapting quickly on the fly to what the
6 requests are.

7 I think the other -- I'm not sure that really
8 hits your question, Mike, but it's to use caution --
9 when configurations are made to that instructional
10 technology, and then that technology has to then be
11 turned around and used for testing, you have to be
12 aware of what it is, installed on those computers at
13 the time of testing.

14 There might be some really great remote
15 monitoring applications available. I know there are
16 things for writing instruction where the administrator
17 at the front of the room can see what everyone's doing.
18 That's not such a great idea to have that availability
19 somewhere on a network when everyone is taking a test,
20 and I can look in and see their computers. So I would
21 just say that one thing is just to exercise caution
22 with implementing cool technologies.

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1 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: This is Shelley.
2 Another example would be, several years ago we were
3 asked about the ability to use texts to speech. And in
4 that particular situation, the software that was
5 requested actually copied the test items onto the
6 computer that was being used.

7 So one strategy we have is that if anyone
8 wants to request an accommodation that we have not
9 previously approved, they have to request that in
10 writing, and then we respond to them in writing. And
11 of course, one of the things we look at very carefully
12 is to ensure that it's not breaching the security of
13 the test items in any way.

14 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Neal?

15 MR. NEAL KINGSTON: A comment and a question.
16 The comment is, in Kansas, where we have over ninety-
17 nine and a half percent of the tests online, in
18 addition to the status page we do gang e-mails if
19 there's any issue at all.

20 The question is, do you have any
21 accommodations built into your computerized system, and
22 if so, how are they working?

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1 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: We do have audio test
2 delivery at this point, and those have been very
3 successful in terms of providing a standardized
4 opportunity for the test.

5 AS I talked about earlier, we do have a read-
6 aloud accommodation, where an examiner is reading the
7 test. There is an element of that involved in the
8 online system in that we didn't want the examiners
9 looking over the shoulder of the students to read the
10 tests. So we wanted a separate authorization ticket so
11 they could have their own copy of the test, but have it
12 not be a scored test, that's one example, I guess.

13 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: This is Shelley.
14 Another example is we are developing a test for the two
15 percent population, and we know that those may not go
16 forward, but within that test, there are supports and
17 implications that are added to those items, and some of
18 those are technology-based.

19 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Rachel?

20 MS. RACHEL QUENEMOEN: This is Rachel
21 Quenemoen. Can you talk about whether and how your
22 students in the one percent make use of an online

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1 environment, and some of the decisions or discussion
2 you've had about that?

3 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: This is Shelley.
4 Currently our students in the one percent population do
5 not use the online environment. They submit work
6 samples that are based on our line standards of
7 learning. Those are our content standards in Virginia.
8 Those are hand- scored, and then those scores are
9 entered into the single point of access that Sarah
10 talked about, and the scores that are at the
11 proficiency levels are then calculated there.

12 So while they are not using online from an
13 administrative perspective, the system does allow the
14 scorers to enter the scores in that system and for
15 reports to be accessed.

16 MS. MARY WILLS: This is Mary. We do a lot
17 with using technology to help gather the information
18 that would go into the portfolio, and the state allows
19 us to put in all sorts of evidences that can be
20 captured through either special occupational therapy or
21 different devices students are using. And so the
22 students can take mini-tests throughout the year using

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1 technology, and that becomes part of that portfolio
2 that are scored.

3 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Yes?

4 MS. RACHEL QUENEMOEN: So, the single point
5 of access is the same for that group of students; the
6 reporting generation is the same for that group of
7 students. You talked about the local committees, the
8 assessment and technology folks. Are those advisors
9 also the same go-to people when there are problems with
10 the system? So you're essentially -- they're in the
11 system; is that correct?

12 MS. MARY WILLS: Yes.

13 MS. RACHEL QUENEMOEN: Great, thank you.

14 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Ann?

15 MS. ANN WHALEN: So you talked a little bit
16 about districts, or people come to you and say, we want
17 to try to do X or we want to try to do Y. Can you talk
18 a little bit about the governance or how decisions are
19 made, both in terms of -- I'm assuming individual
20 districts make decisions on what infrastructure they
21 want to buy, but then also if people want to say, I
22 want to use an iPad or I want to use a tablet, who's

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1 involved in the actual decision-making of how you guys
2 say yea or nay.

3 And then I would also love for you guys to
4 talk about, so I'm sure you put the assessments online,
5 because the governor, and that's where you guys wanted
6 to go. But also, if you could just talk for a little
7 bit about like how this actually changed how people
8 thought about assessments and kind of what have been
9 kind of the opportunities that has brought you guys
10 from just going from paper and pencil.

11 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: I'll start by addressing
12 the requests for additional technologies or new
13 technologies. It's very much a shared decision-making
14 process -- well, a shared information-gathering
15 process, in that we have to talk to the districts to
16 find out what it is they're trying to do. We involve
17 our contractor to find out how that will interact with
18 the system. Is it going to call security into
19 question? Will it work with the system?

20 We keep a pretty standard set of minimum
21 specifications, and anything beyond that, we are slow
22 to move forward on until we have tested it and actually

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1 tried it; again, working with those three partners
2 again to find out what the information is around those.

3 As far as how has the online piece changed
4 the perception, I think it's -- some of the initial
5 stories from the students were that, wow, it's about
6 time we do it this way. It was the adults that were
7 concerned about, I think this is going to impact our
8 scores; this is -- I'm really worried. I don't know
9 that an elementary student is going to be able to do
10 this.

11 I think it's -- as you saw that curve of how
12 the implementation went for us, and I think that's sort
13 of the word of mouth as it started on that exponential
14 upward curve, that it really has made it -- it reduces
15 the workload. You don't have pallets of materials
16 coming into your district that have to then be counted
17 and accounted for and then returned. I think it's --
18 from a staffing perspective, it has helped. I won't
19 say it's reduced staffing. It's changed it, made it
20 more efficient perhaps.

21 MS. MARY WILLS: This is Mary. There's a lot
22 more work upfront, where the paper world was

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1 afterwards. And the training and the communicating is
2 so critical that it's ongoing, even though we've been
3 doing it for a long time. All of our elementary
4 schools started -- we started with one content, let's
5 try it, and when the teachers saw the students do it,
6 it just took off. And when they got their scores back
7 earlier, that was like a bonus, and they could start
8 planning for the summer. They could start planning for
9 an invention. It changed the whole culture of how we
10 think.

11 And I believe from what I'm seeing, it has
12 truly brought technology into instruction more, because
13 the comfort level of teachers has greatly improved, and
14 the trust with administrators of what's going to happen
15 with materials has been greatly improved.

16 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Dan?

17 MR. DAN LONG: Hi, Dan Long, Tennessee, and
18 thank you, Mary, Ann, Sarah, and Shelly, for taking the
19 time to share this information with us. One of the
20 keys that we're beginning to see in Tennessee is the
21 fact that a lot more students are taking content
22 online. So it's not just about what's happening during

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1 the regular day; it's outside that day as well. In
2 some cases, a considerable amount of not all of their
3 content is taken online with an online teacher.

4 Have you had any of those kind of
5 opportunities in Virginia, and if so, how do you deal
6 with online testing with that population?

7 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: This is Shelley.
8 Yes, Dan, we had a bill in our legislature last year to
9 encourage the use of online providers within our school
10 districts. And so we are now facing how we manage
11 testing when those students maybe not physically within
12 a school division, but receiving most of their
13 instruction online. Currently, our policy is that the
14 school districts where those students are enrolled, are
15 responsible for testing them. And they must test them
16 in a secure environment.

17 So sometimes that means that they are
18 bringing the student back into the home district for
19 testing. In other cases, they are arranging to have
20 that student tested within another school district.
21 But at this point, we have not permitted students to be
22 tested, for example, at home if that's where they are

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1 receiving their instruction. We have required that it
2 continue to be a secure environment.

3 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Ann?

4 MS. ANN WHALEN: So, both of these consortia
5 have assessment systems, so they had not just a
6 summative assessment, but they also have formative
7 assessments or in-term assessments built in as part of
8 their vision for what this will look like. And I don't
9 know if this is a question for Virginia or Oregon or
10 anybody else who's dabbling in this.

11 But how have you thought about the
12 infrastructure and the different governing and
13 organizational checks if you have two separate
14 components of the system, both online? So if you're
15 trying to manage both a formative online assessment
16 system as well as a summative online assessment system,
17 you sound as if you have pretty strong policies and
18 procedures around the summative; how do you guys think
19 about what the formative and managing those two
20 different things?

21 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: This is Shelley.
22 Virginia currently does not have a formative assessment

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1 from the state perspective. There are school districts
2 that have local formative assessments, but we do not
3 have one within our state assessment system.

4 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: From a data management
5 perspective, I would say that we have implemented
6 during this process what we call a state testing
7 identifier, and it is a number that is unique to each
8 student that travels with them wherever they go in
9 Virginia. And I would think that I know that our
10 school districts use that as a piece to maintain the
11 integrity of the data. So you've got one dataset that
12 gets shared among the different assessments.

13 MR. TONY ALPERT: So right now, Oregon has a
14 project called the Data Project, which is a pretty
15 substantial statewide approach to assessment literacy
16 and data literacy, which is more consistent with the
17 approach to formative assessment that SMARTER Balance
18 is going to take. Rather than making a series of tests
19 available for that system, it's going to be a series of
20 professional development materials, and videos and
21 supports that are optional for districts to use.

22 For Oregon, since we have three opportunities

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1 on the summative test, that's taken up quite a bit of
2 infrastructure, so it's used up more of the computer
3 lab time than would otherwise typically be used for a
4 summative test. And so that's some of the constraints
5 that Jim is referring to as the struggle to keep the
6 resources available for instruction that would
7 otherwise be taken up by the summative assessment.

8 So for SMARTER Balance in our assessment,
9 which will also be optional, we are looking to have it
10 to link and directly predict the outcome of the
11 summative assessment, be flexible enough to hone in on
12 specific sets of skills, but we would be open to the
13 option of having multiple different flavors of that, as
14 long as it met specific criteria, but as an optional
15 component. So I guess we need to figure out the
16 interoperability constraints and how to make it look
17 like a seamless system, even if in the back it isn't, I
18 think is the goal.

19 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Rick, did you?

20 MR. RICK ROZZELLE: Rock Rozzelle from CELT.
21 Often your districts I'm sure have their own formative
22 assessment tools and engines that are different, have

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1 different displays, different formats and features and
2 whatnot from your summative. Have you found that to be
3 an issue with any of the students that the delivery is
4 different and it looks different and moves about the
5 page differently, or do they adapt to that, as most
6 children do pretty readily?

7 MS. MARY WILLIS: We've tried a variety of
8 different products in Fauquier, and the students are
9 very resilient, because there's so much instructional
10 technology going on and there's so many different ways
11 of receiving it. That's why we have to make sure that
12 we practice before the test with a short -- we call
13 them epath, the state provides us, just to make sure
14 they remember how to drive the SOL test, how to
15 navigate the tools, because there's so many ways.

16 We were lucky enough to find a vendor that
17 simulates a lot of things similar to the SOLs, and
18 that's what our division has gone with for quarterly
19 tests, and it's been very helpful. But students are
20 very resilient.

21 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Neal?

22 MR. NEAL KINGSTON: Back on the issue of the

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1 formative assessments and consistency of systems,
2 Kansas last year administered 2.8 million formatives,
3 and it's the same system, but until last year, had
4 different log- on procedures, and I thought that might
5 be pertinent to this, in that we had previously used a
6 ticketing system for the summative assessment to
7 maintain security and to be absolutely positive we've
8 got the right kit identified in the right place; but
9 that that procedure was a little bit cumbersome for
10 frequent use of a formative assessment. So they just
11 had to point to a URL.

12 The problem there was that you couldn't
13 combine the records of students, because you couldn't
14 track them. We since have come up with a system where
15 all year long except for the summative test, there was
16 an ID that each student has in addition to their
17 student ID, a simpler ID, where they can log on with
18 that anytime of the year to the formative system, so it
19 allows a tracking with the summative.

20 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Rebecca?

21 MS. REBECCA KOPRIVA: Yeah. I have a
22 questions about innovative item types. And this

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1 question is for anybody, so I know Kansas is doing
2 online, Oregon, certainly Virginia, Louisiana, anybody
3 else here. But what kinds of innovative item types are
4 you including online at this point, since that's part
5 of this whole thing?

6 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: This is Shelley
7 from Virginia. At this point Virginia is just
8 beginning to introduce technology-enhanced items, and
9 we're beginning with mathematics. We are using only
10 items that can be computer scored, so we're using drag
11 and drop, hot spot, short free response, and graphing
12 items. In Virginia, it is very important to our
13 stakeholders that scores be returned almost immediately
14 once equating has occurred, so this is the primary
15 reason that we have not moved into a situation where we
16 would have constructed response items.

17 We will be implementing technology-enhanced
18 items again, only those that can be computer scored, in
19 reading, writing and science beginning in the '12-'13
20 school year.

21 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Louisiana, did you want to
22 respond to that same question?

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1 MR. SCOTT NORTON: I can briefly. We do have
2 some, as I mentioned some tests online, high school
3 end- of-course exams for four subjects, and we're
4 trying to do more than just move the multiple choice
5 tests onto the computer. So there are some
6 opportunities there, and we do have some constructed
7 response, and I'll just parse that into two parts.
8 Those that do have to be scored by human goes off to
9 someplace and gets scored and sent back. But then
10 there's some opportunity for computer scoring -- I'm
11 gonna parse it out a little bit -- other than
12 artificial intelligence -- list-based scoring and some
13 things where you can use some efficiencies. So we're
14 trying to get there. We're trying to be more clever
15 about what we're doing, but I think we're in the early
16 stage of that.

17 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Oregon, did you want to
18 respond to that question?

19 MR. TONY ALPERT: Yeah. Oregon has the two
20 flavors of innovative item types. Our entire English
21 language proficiency assessment is currently online, so
22 we actually take writing and speech samples online,

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1 real- time, and then those are scored principally by
2 humans. And then in our other content areas, math and
3 reading and science, we're adding additional item types
4 that include much of the breadth that Shelley was
5 talking about, manipulation of objects, drawing crafts,
6 and figures and geometric shapes, and those are
7 entirely computer scored.

8 In Oregon, two days is a long time to wait
9 for the results, so the results are actually presented
10 to the student immediately upon completion, and then
11 within 15 minutes they appear in the individual student
12 score on the online reporting system with aggregate
13 school district and state results.

14 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Utah, and then Randy?

15 MR. JOHN JESSE: So we are in final pilot
16 stage of technology-enhanced items with our science
17 tests that will be deployed in an operational
18 assessments next year and in the process, developing
19 language arts and math.

20 This is the issue that I've seen, though,
21 that I'd be interested in feedback from with
22 technology- enhanced times. Ours are very engaging.

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1 We did a Think Aloud with students this year in middle
2 schools, and it was very interesting to hear them talk
3 about how they're moving the mouse. It was amazing.
4 Students were just engaged to a degree that you'd never
5 see with an assessment.

6 But the question that I've asked repeatedly
7 and haven't really been satisfied with answers yet is
8 very engaging items. Students, they work, but what are
9 we able to specifically learn from this item that we
10 couldn't from a similar multiple choice or a series of
11 multiple choice questions, and haven't got real good
12 answers? They're highly engaging, it's exciting,
13 teachers love them. The feedback is just, oh, wow,
14 this is so much better than our old assessment. But in
15 the end, are we really learning anything that we
16 couldn't learn otherwise? And it seems that we really
17 haven't broken out of that, haven't found the
18 technology to meet that type of, that answer
19 adequately, and I'm interested in how we move and
20 address that issue, and if others have experienced that
21 same phenomenon. And maybe it's enough just that it's
22 so engaging and everyone loves it to warrant all the

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1 hundreds times more costs of those items, but I don't
2 know.

3 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Randy and then Denny?

4 MR. RANDY BENNETT: Two comments. One in
5 response to the question you just asked, John. Even if
6 we learn nothing additional, if we have more positive
7 impact on what teachers and students do in the
8 classroom, then I would argue that it would be worth
9 it. So one question I would ask is, what's happening
10 in the classroom that's different now because of the
11 kinds of questions that are appearing on the test? Are
12 teachers changing their classroom practice, and are
13 students changing what it is they're focusing on? Are
14 they for example, attending more to processes,
15 strategies, knowledge, habits of mind that they
16 wouldn't otherwise have been attending to had they been
17 tested only in a multiple choice fashion?

18 The second comment is that with respect to
19 potential differences between formative and summative
20 systems, to the extent that the Race to the Top
21 Assessments begin to include tasks that are more
22 complex in terms of their response requirements,

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1 performance tests in particular, it becomes extremely
2 important that the formative system and the summative
3 system operate in similar fashion, so that students
4 learn how to negotiate those kinds of tasks and deal
5 with those kinds of response requirements. Practice
6 opportunities in terms of practice tests, but also
7 formative assessments, so that they can begin to -- so
8 that those response requirements become more routine
9 and not a surprise.

10 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Shelley, did you want to
11 respond?

12 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: Yes, I'd like to
13 follow up on Randy's comment about the impacts of the
14 technology-enhanced items on instruction. Of course,
15 we're just beginning this, but one of the comments
16 we've heard from our teachers is for example, we have a
17 technology-enhanced item type where the student draws a
18 graph. And what we've heard is that that's going to
19 have a positive impact on instruction because that's
20 the way teachers want to teach graphing. In the past,
21 because we were testing in a multiple choice format and
22 they were choosing the correct bar graph, that's the

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1 way teachers were teaching.

2 Another example is moving to online writing.
3 While our fifth grade teachers are having some concerns
4 about assessing in that way, we believe that ultimately
5 will have a positive impact on instruction because
6 students will learn to compose on the computer; whereas
7 now, they're learning to compose paper, pencil in the
8 elementary schools and then be re-taught to compose
9 online in the middle schools.

10 So I agree with Randy. I think that the
11 impact that these technology-enhanced items can
12 potentially have on instruction is great. As
13 assessment professional, it's always our duty to try to
14 think of ways that we can support instruction to the
15 extent that we can.

16 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Denny?

17 MR. DENNY WAY: Just to sort of add to the
18 dialog about innovative items. Couple of states that
19 Pearson is working with have implemented technology-
20 enhanced science assessments with scenario-based items,
21 and some of them involve student writing. And we've
22 actually gotten to the point where we're using

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1 automated scoring as a check, like a second score, on
2 some of those responses. So that's one thing that's
3 going on. There's a lot of consideration with that,
4 because not all the short-answer questions that are
5 developed can be necessarily scored. In fact, we got
6 to categorizing them into the good, the bad and the
7 ugly.

8 The other comment is to add to, John, your
9 comment, about cognitive labs. We did similar
10 cognitive labs with innovative items recently, and what
11 we found was the kids were very engaged. They were
12 more engaged at the lower grades than the higher
13 grades. At the higher grades, they're like, why should
14 we have to go through all this rigmarole? We want a
15 multiple choice question. But the engagement actually
16 was distracting, in that they spent a lot more time
17 actually getting around to really engaging in the
18 content because they were so distracted by sort of all
19 the things that they could do in the environment.

20 So that's one of the challenges I think that
21 we're going to have to work through, is in order to get
22 the efficiency out of these items, we're going to have

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1 to either give the kids enough exposure to them so that
2 they're not so novel, which might be the solution, or
3 really think about how the presentation, the
4 presentation of those tasks occur.

5 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Rebecca?

6 MS. REBECCA KOPRIVA: Two things. One is to
7 address John's point. I actually think that -- I think
8 using some of these others, at least trying them out
9 and then asking perhaps within the Think Alouds -- I
10 think part of what's happening is you're actually
11 opening up how students are conveying meaning back to
12 you. And I think that not all people convey their
13 knowledge best bubbling in something. So I actually
14 think this is a big issue.

15 The other is that I think it opens up ways
16 for us to be able to convey meaning to the students to
17 begin with, about what it is we're really trying to
18 ask, outside of hopefully just using text. The other
19 thing is that what Randy had mentioned, is there does
20 seem to be a link between complex questions and opening
21 up the response mechanisms that would best be suited to
22 responding to complex questions, or working within the

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1 world of more complex stimuli, things like drawing and
2 building and modeling and completing activities where
3 there's actually interactions among screening elements
4 that go beyond a simple drag and drop.

5 And so I guess I wonder how that's all going
6 to work, and as we go on and talk in terms of the
7 standards and so on, I'd be interested to understand
8 peoples' plans.

9 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Last question before we
10 break. Rachel?

11 MS. RACHEL QUENEMOEN: Rachel Quenemoen. A
12 lot of the issues that came up in response to the
13 interesting item format and what we're really getting,
14 are testable assumptions. And I think it just raises a
15 flag that the Consortia really need to nail down what
16 you expect and then see what happens in a variety of
17 ways, posing, we believe this will happen; we want to
18 control for this not to happen and gather data.

19 I know at an EAG recently with Kentucky, they
20 found that students with disabilities who took the
21 online test reported that it was better and that they
22 did better, but in fact they didn't. So it requires

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1 more than asking how they feel about it. The other
2 question I just flag is, I'm not sure that Randy meant
3 that the formative options should mirror the summative
4 options so that they have practice. I don't think
5 that's quite what you meant, right, but no, okay.

6 All right. So defining what you really want,
7 purposes and uses of various components of your
8 systems, and then how these items react under those
9 circumstances with follow-up use is really important.
10 In other words, you can write this stuff down and
11 generate data as you move forward, so that you're sure
12 you're getting what you want and that the students that
13 report to you, actually you're getting some data that
14 suggest that they understand what's going on, even for
15 themselves.

16 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you, all, very much,
17 for the discussion, and Virginia, for your
18 presentation. Thank you very much for sharing many of
19 your lessons learned.

20 We're going to take a break, but I'd like to
21 remind you to sign up if you want to speak during the
22 public comment period before lunch, so please make sure

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1 you sign up in the hall during this break. We will
2 start promptly at 10:30.

3 (Whereupon, the hearing was concluded
4 at 10:03 a.m.)

5 MR. ROBIN TAYLOR: Okay, thank you. We are
6 ready to start the next portion of our day, and we are
7 going to have some thoughts from the experts. We're
8 going to start with Mike Russell, who is going to speak
9 on the topic of emerging infrastructure equipment and
10 solutions. The way this will work is each expert will
11 speak for about five minutes, and then the Consortia
12 and the experts will have a discussion with the expert
13 for about 15 minutes. So we will spend about 20
14 minutes on a topic. Okay? Thank you. Mike?

15 MR. MICHAEL RUSSELL: Okay, I just want to
16 make a couple opening comments about how I've been
17 thinking about this. I was asked to talk about
18 infrastructure and emerging technologies in light of
19 the Race to the Top Assessment Programs. And at first
20 when I first thought about what I was going to talk
21 about, I thought, well, what are some of the new things
22 that are out there, and how can we capitalize on them?

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1 But then I got to thinking about the program
2 itself and what it's trying to do and where the
3 innovation actually lies. And from my perspective, and
4 as I understand it, the innovation really is in
5 measurement assessment and feedback to educational
6 systems. So I really -- my comments here are not going
7 to be so much about new innovations in terms of
8 technology solutions, but really thinking about, what
9 do we need to put in place in terms of a foundation
10 that's going to allow these programs to do the
11 innovation that we're really trying to do. Because
12 this is not a technology program. It's not technology
13 innovation. It's assessment measurement reporting,
14 feedback innovation that we're talking about.

15 Some of what I'm going to say is obvious, but
16 when it's obvious, we often overlook the obvious, so
17 that's why I'm going to say it; that one of the biggest
18 problems with computer-based testing is the final mile.
19 It's not so much in the back-end systems. It's not so
20 much in the devices that the student's actually using;
21 it's what happens between when information gets to the
22 school and then moves to the student.

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1 And we hear a lot of discussion about
2 bandwidth issues. Well, bandwidth into schools isn't
3 necessarily the solution. It's what happens once that
4 bandwidth hits the school that often creates the
5 problems. There's references to wireless devices
6 earlier today. Well, you can have great bandwidth into
7 the school; you can have great bandwidth to that
8 wireless router, but if that wireless router isn't able
9 to handle the 50, 60, 70 computers that's feeding it,
10 you're gonna run into a problem right there.

11 So we need to think very carefully about
12 bandwidth, all the way from wherever our servers are
13 that are feeding the systems all the way to the device
14 that the student's using. And as we all know, schools
15 vary widely in their own capacities within their own
16 schools. And we also have to think about competition
17 for bandwidth in schools. Just because on the day that
18 you're doing a practice test after school without kids
19 there everything works well, it's very different when
20 kids are there. And it's very different when the
21 social studies teacher is trying to stream a video
22 while you're also trying to test. So there's a lot of

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1 competing issues around bandwidth.

2 Opportunities. Well, there's a number of
3 different ways in which people can try to address
4 reducing drags on bandwidth. There's local caching,
5 precaching, peer-to-peer networking, or using the
6 cloud. And one of the challenges with this is each of
7 these has their advantages; each has their
8 disadvantage, and we have to weigh those advantages and
9 disadvantages in light of all the variation that occurs
10 in our schools. So again, you got to think broadly
11 across all your schools in which, if any of these
12 solutions in terms of moving information and storing
13 information at the local level is going to be useful.

14 We hear a lot about Smartphones, tablets,
15 netbooks -- not so much about laptops anymore, because
16 they've become somewhat standard, but if you go back
17 five or six years, laptops were the big thing. And
18 there seems to be an assumption that all these things
19 have devices and all of them deal with or present
20 information and you interact with that information, and
21 so therefore they're the same. And I don't think
22 that's a good assumption. I don't think that's

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1 necessarily true. And again, if you come back to my
2 earlier comment around assessment as being a very
3 carefully crafted and controlled experience, the device
4 that you're using, just because it has a screen,
5 doesn't mean you're going to be creating that same
6 experience. So we need to think carefully about which
7 devices we're actually targeting.

8 And on top of that, we also have to think
9 about adoption rates, which I think may be my next
10 slide. Oh, well, it's next, but the adoption rate of
11 new technologies varies widely across schools. So we
12 may want to do an iPad or a tablet type of delivery,
13 but if we're going to be doing this in three years, are
14 we going to be able to do it?

15 Quick mention of assistive technologies.
16 There's a number of different types of assistive
17 technologies that are used, sometimes to manipulate
18 cursors or information on the screen, sometimes to
19 input information, sometimes to get information out.
20 Sometimes these devices do a combination of these
21 things. We have to think carefully about how we're
22 going to allow these devices to be used in an

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1 assessment context, and there's a number of different
2 ways of doing that. We can allow this to happen at a
3 system level; that is, the operating system can allow
4 these devices to communicate, or we can try to do it
5 within the application level, or sometimes we can do it
6 both. There's advantages and disadvantages to each of
7 those methods, particularly if you're trying to do it
8 at the application level, well, these devices are going
9 to evolve over time. And so that can create a more
10 stable experience, but also more drag on your system
11 over time because you've got to do many more patches
12 and updates.

13 And my last comment is really around adoption
14 rates. About ten years ago I was involved in a five-
15 year study looking at technology use across a large
16 number of districts in Massachusetts. And anyone who's
17 been in more than five schools knows that no school is
18 the same, particularly when it comes to technology.
19 Their distribution, what's there, and the speed at
20 which they're able to change the practices varies
21 dramatically. There's a desire to be on the leading
22 edge, but again, when we're thinking about assessment,

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1 I think it's very useful to think about infrastructure
2 and devices in terms of tried and true. I don't think
3 we want to be pushing on the devices and the
4 infrastructure that we're using; I think we want to be
5 pushing on the measurement methods, reporting and other
6 types of aspects of assessment. That's where the
7 innovation should be, and therefore we should be
8 thinking about infrastructure and devices as
9 foundations for those types of innovations.

10 I'll close with a quick analogy, that if you
11 think about construction, construction of building and
12 housing, the way in which we build foundations hasn't
13 really changed dramatically, even though the innovation
14 in the actual construction, everything that occurs
15 above that foundation, has evolved much more rapidly.
16 And I think we're talking about what we're going to see
17 above the ground, above the foundation, and therefore
18 these decisions that we make, I would encourage people
19 to think about tried and true as opposed to what might
20 be available or what might be useful in three years.

21 MS. ROBIN TYALOR: Thank you, Mike. PARCC or
22 SMARTER Balance? Tony?

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1 MR. TONY ALPERT: Mike, given the short
2 timeline that the Consortia have to develop these
3 assessment systems, can you help us think about the
4 policies related to accommodations in access while
5 we're simultaneously trying to establish the
6 infrastructure and hardware requirements to deliver and
7 make available those and enact those policies?

8 MR. MICHAEL RUSSELL: This is Mike. Well, I
9 think that's an opportunity where we can look at the
10 tried and true. There's been a fair amount of work
11 over the last ten years around accommodations,
12 sometimes in a computer-based environment, sometimes
13 not, and I think there's opportunities to capitalize on
14 what has been done and build on those. Now, the
15 challenge is -- I'm not sure if this is your exact
16 question, Tony, but in terms of the actual policies,
17 the first challenge is every state has their own
18 policies, and you're now talking about a system that's
19 going to cross states. And so the first challenge is
20 try to get states within the Consortia on the same page
21 in terms of the policies.

22 MR. TONY ALPERT: 2014-2015.

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1 MR. MICHAEL RUSSELL: Right, I know. Well,
2 that's a huge challenge right? But however, again,
3 there are tools out there, particularly depending on
4 how you think about interoperability, that can help
5 inform those decisions around policies. So depending
6 on the interoperability standard that you use, that may
7 have influence then on some of these policy decisions
8 around accommodations. So there's different tools that
9 are out there, I think, that you can draw on to help
10 inform. I'm not sure if that answers your question.

11 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: John?

12 MR. JOHN JESSE: So we have all these not
13 just five schools, but imagine now all these states,
14 and you had all these districts and schools-- it's
15 mindboggling to think that the level of technology that
16 will be available in 2014, the varied levels.

17 So do you think it is possible or even
18 desirous to try to design an assessment system that
19 would not disadvantage the lowest of those, yet still
20 be able to utilize and advantage those with the
21 technology infrastructure in place and reward that? Is
22 it possible to design a varied system that doesn't

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1 disadvantage yet still enables. Is that possible, and
2 is that desirable, or do you design it at that lowest
3 level or medium level? Can you speak to that issue?

4 MR. MICHAEL RUSSELL: Sure, and I think other
5 people on the expert panel can comment on these, right?
6 So it's not like I'm under fire, here, right? Thank
7 you.

8 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Yeah, you're on the hot
9 seat.

10 MR. MICHAEL RUSSELL: I mean, there's an
11 interesting tension there, because what you build has
12 to work at the lowest minimal threshold, whatever that
13 is. But I think you need to define that. I mean,
14 Virginia, clearly, you guys defined that when you began
15 and you may have evolved that over time. So you need
16 to make sure it's going to work at that minimum
17 threshold. But at the same time what I'm hearing you
18 ask is, you don't want to not take advantage of some
19 emerging opportunities.

20 And I guess the question I would ask is, as
21 you take advantage of these emerging opportunities,
22 what does it do to your measurement? Is it changing

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1 your measurement? So for example, if you're -- let's
2 say hypothetically that one of the emerging
3 opportunities is Smartphone technology. Well, when you
4 do an interactive item on a Smartphone, is that really
5 -- can the student really demonstrate his or her
6 knowledge in that small environment as well as they
7 could on a larger environment? And if the answer's no,
8 then I would say you don't want to take advantage of
9 that. If the answer's yes, well, maybe then it is okay
10 to do that. But it really goes back to a measurement
11 issue.

12 And I think -- the best example, there was
13 some discussion around writing earlier. I mean, this
14 writing research goes back 15 years now, that the mode
15 in which you're assessing students matters, and it
16 matters based on their prior experience. And there's
17 two ways of doing that. We can say, well, not everyone
18 has a computer, so therefore everyone has to be on
19 paper. Doing that is going to create a disadvantage;
20 it's a measurement problem. Giving people an option,
21 as Rebecca was -- or I guess Rachel was referring to --
22 people don't always make good options and they don't

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1 always have good assessments of the effects of their
2 options.

3 So you may advantage some kids there, but
4 then also disadvantage. Having everyone on computer,
5 we can say that's great in terms of impact on
6 instruction, because we may say, we want everyone to be
7 able to write on computers, and so that's going to
8 force kids; but at the same time we may create a
9 measurement problem. So I think you just need to
10 really think carefully about what the pros and cons
11 are, identify those tensions and then make informed
12 decisions.

13 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Wes?

14 MR. WES BRUCE: So Mike, I want to push on
15 the - - not push, but probe a little bit on the tried
16 and true, because as we've ventured into the online
17 world and tried to deal with just the changes in
18 technology that have occurred in the last couple of
19 years versus what's going to happen by '14-'15, I'm
20 becoming more of a proponent of a device agnostic
21 platform, that I think that might be where I'd want the
22 sort of tried and true piece; what's the security

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1 that's required around that; what's the minimum form
2 factor, screen size, to talk about your issue. I think
3 that has its own risks, but could you comment a little
4 bit on that in terms of your tried and true analogy
5 here?

6 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Yeah, anybody else can
7 respond if they would like.

8 MR. MICHAEL RUSSEL: I'll comment real
9 quickly, but Randy and Denny, I know you guys are gonna
10 mention these things later on, I think, based on your
11 notes.

12 One of the issues is these devices are
13 designed for specific purposes, right, and so while I
14 think it's useful to be device agnostic when you're
15 thinking about assessment, it's also problematic,
16 because you got to make sure that the device is going
17 to be able to support what you want the student to do.
18 I mean, we text using our phones, but what we convey
19 using those text messages is very different than when,
20 or at least when I use my laptop. Right? Not only do
21 I write differently, but the types of writing I do is
22 very different. And so to think that, okay, I'm device

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1 agnostic, so therefore I can deliver my writing
2 assessment on a Smartphone -- I'm not sure you're going
3 to be getting the same type of performance from kids.
4 So you guys?

5 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Rebec -- okay, I'm sorry;
6 Denny, you want to?

7 MR. DENNY WAY: Well, I mean, I guess I'm
8 prepared to speak about security issues, and obviously
9 when you start thinking about these devices, one of the
10 big differences is, they're going to be designed for
11 multiple purposes. So if students want to be
12 instructed in those they're going to take them home,
13 they're their own personal device. And so that opens
14 up a another host of security issues that you'd have to
15 think through, and now isn't going to be when you'd use
16 them. But they're not really set up for the kinds of
17 security protections that a PC has that somebody can
18 kind of lock down the PC. That's definitely going to be
19 one of the considerations about being able to go there
20 -- notwithstanding the validity issues.

21 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Randy, did you have a
22 comment, too?

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1 MR. RANDY BENNETT: Only to agree with
2 Michael's point, that, which I think was that the
3 technology platform may be device agnostic, but the
4 measurement result may not be device agnostic.

5 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Rebecca, I think you had a
6 question?

7 MS. REBECCA KOPRIVA: Yeah. Okay, now, I'm
8 thinking of my other hat. So I'm wondering about the
9 policies, so accommodation policies and technological
10 implications for kids who by definition, don't have all
11 the language. So whether you're dealing with English
12 learners, and particularly kids who have lisps,
13 language proficiency; whether you're dealing with
14 students who have learning disabilities in reading;
15 whether you're dealing with struggling readers -- I'm
16 just wondering, as things appear to be moving, I'm
17 wondering what, what kinds of things are there for
18 those kids? We talk about keyboard entry, but all
19 that's doing is narrowing or constraining their ability
20 of how to explain themselves. We talk about using
21 universal design or simplifying language, but I think
22 many people are aware that that works for basic

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1 knowledge and skills. But yet we are charged with
2 addressing challenging knowledge and skills.

3 So I'm just -- I guess I would, I'm more
4 putting out there, and somebody may comment. You can
5 comment now or not, but I guess I want us to think
6 about what those kinds -- we can't forget these kids
7 that by definition have text as their issue. Thank
8 you.

9 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Ann?

10 MS. ANN WHALEN: So I guess what I'm
11 struggling with is, what's tried and true for 2015 and
12 then building for 2020? So, I think part of this is
13 how do we not build for today and base everything on
14 today, or how do we develop today to allow for
15 innovation moving forward? So what are some things or
16 advice that you can give to the Consortia as they're
17 kind of putting together their policy and requirements,
18 to think about those, that conundrum?

19 MR. RICK ROZZELLE: I'll take a shot at it,
20 Mike, give you a respite there. This is Rick Rozzelle
21 with CELT Corporation. Clearly, as you're rolling
22 these things out, you have to target the population and

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1 the infrastructure that's in place, so you can't exceed
2 that. And if you want to see how risky some of this
3 stuff is, take a visit to a few of your schools in your
4 state and go visit the wiring closet in the school, and
5 you will come away with a renewed faith in the risk
6 that is involved here; am I wrong? And there's so many
7 things that can go wrong in a school to cause problems.

8 But my point being, before the high stakes
9 stuff, you've got to recognize that their ability to be
10 innovative across the board is limited. The area that
11 perhaps push the envelope is in the formative side, and
12 allow some additional creativity there, to push to new
13 devices, try new devices, and new interfaces, and those
14 types of things in that venue as opposed to the high
15 stakes and being to push goals and rewards goals with
16 that kind of innovative technology on that end,
17 recognizing the limitations on the high stakes end.

18 And I do want to say that one of the things
19 as you get to that last mile, that last hundred yards
20 within the school, so many of the problems you're going
21 to encounter are going to be there, and the perception
22 which is reality, is that it's the state's problem.

00111

1 And it's the bandwidth or it's the server, or --
2 managing that perception becomes a huge issue, and you
3 got to be ready for that, which is not a technology
4 problem. That engages the chief. So that's just
5 something I wanted to follow up on, a comment that Mike
6 made earlier.

7 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Hang on; Sarah's got a
8 comment?

9 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: Just quickly, realizing
10 that Virginia, we started our testing in 2001, and
11 we're still online testing now. We didn't build a
12 system at the time trying to look forward to hit, what
13 will it look like in 2005 or 2011; we built the tried
14 and true, what we knew worked, and then I think it's
15 part of that, maintaining a carefully created
16 environment for assessment and gradually changing it as
17 things go forward.

18 And just because it's a new technology
19 doesn't mean we have to adopt it right away for
20 assessment, for this type of assessment. I appreciate
21 that try it and formative, and see how it goes.

22 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Randy?

00112

1 MR. RANDY BENNETT: There are at least two
2 impediments to change in educational assessment that
3 are I think unique to that as an activity, that make it
4 distinct from virtually every other application of
5 technology, like, for example, online banking. One
6 impediment to change is that we value constancy, we
7 value constancy across time. You guys are interested
8 in trend. You guys are interested in measuring growth.
9 If we change the technology, we may well change the
10 measurement and impair our ability to detect growth, to
11 detect change, to make judgments about teachers through
12 value- added modeling, and all of those other things
13 that we want to be able to detect change over time for.

14 The second need for constancy is across kids.
15 If one set of schools is using an innovation, they've
16 upgraded their technology, and that changes the
17 measurement, and that set of schools is associated with
18 socioeconomic status, for example; we now have a group
19 inequity, and not only an inequity at the individual
20 student level. So constancy across kids is very
21 important, and that's another reason why it's going to
22 be difficult to integrate new technologies in a rapid

00113

1 fashion.

2 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Rachel?

3 MS. RACHEL QUENEMOEN: Well, I think I'm kind
4 of piggybacking on Mike's and Rebecca's and Randy's
5 here, in that when you mention the ten years of
6 accommodations research that we can build on and the
7 notion that states have different ones -- at NCO, we've
8 worked with a lot of the states to get them to the
9 point they are today. And there were two threats to
10 validity that we tried to help them with. I don't
11 think it's any different now, but it might affect the
12 kind of technology you make available.

13 First one is, you're all going to be
14 measuring some content that you mutually agreed to, and
15 the content will drive what your accommodations
16 policies are. There are some gray areas, because in
17 some states they have made some decisions about what
18 reading is for someone with vision who is blind, who
19 has learning disabilities, whatever. And that may
20 vary, and that'll take some time, but it still comes
21 down to protecting the content. And that's I think
22 what a lot of the concerns about introducing new

00114

1 technology; are you still measuring the same thing?

2 But the other threat to the validity is that
3 you need to let all kids show you what they know. And
4 in some cases, there may be emerging technologies that
5 allow kids who before, we had to kind of guess what
6 they learned because of the barrier of their
7 disability. Most of the states we've worked with,
8 including Virginia, have been weighing those things for
9 a long time, and I don't see any difference now. But I
10 wouldn't close the door on innovative technology in
11 service of getting a better read on what some kids know
12 and can do, but the primary is, you got to hang on to
13 your tests that tells people what you say it tells.
14 And so it's the balance; same as you've always done.

15 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Jessica?

16 MS. JESSICA PEREZ-ROSSELLO: I think this is
17 an interesting topic. Where I'm going more is from the
18 technology of these devices are already in the schools.
19 And the kids, the smaller kids, know how to use these
20 devices better than the high school kids. And if
21 that's really what they need for the 21st century, and
22 how do we measure the constant value, and also building

00115

1 a platform that will allow us to really grow after the
2 money runs out, or really give some sort of idea to the
3 local schools of how to prioritize their budgets in
4 order to get to the standard that we want for needs of
5 assessment; and also the standard that they might be
6 using these new technologies in the school, because
7 they need to prioritize what they have to buy in order
8 to get ready to get to the 2014 date.

9 So in some instances, I see that we might
10 have an issue with the instructional curriculum type of
11 things that are happening in the iPad, and the teachers
12 and the schools, and what the assessment needs might
13 be, and how do you balance those two to allow for that
14 better instruction in the classroom?

15 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Okay, Neal's got a comment
16 and so does Ken, and I'm going to ask you to hold those
17 for a few minutes. We're going to make a slight
18 adjustment to our schedule. Since we're having such
19 great rich conversations, we're going to move -- Rick,
20 we're going to move the data management reporting piece
21 until right after lunch, which gives us a few more
22 minutes to stay on our topics this morning. Okay?

00116

1 MR. RANDY BENNETT: Thank you.

2 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: You're welcome. Any time.

3 Any time. But we are going to move on to our next

4 topic, which is Security Issues with Online

5 Assessments, and we're going to hear from Denny Way.

6 MR. DENNY WAY: Thank you. Do I have a

7 pointer?

8 Thank you. I'm going to talk about three

9 broad areas of security as related to online

10 assessments: secure-test design, secure-test delivery,

11 and the secure-test environment. But sort of as a

12 springboard to that, I thought I would talk a little

13 bit about our kind of a four-fold table, a way of

14 thinking about sort of security in online testing. And

15 this is something that I actually thought of and wrote

16 about maybe 13 years ago, but I think it's still

17 relevant.

18 If you think about the stakes of the

19 assessment as being one dimension and the control that

20 you have over the test takers as another, those kind of

21 create kind of a grid of where your security concerns

22 might be. And two examples are Higher Ed Admissions

00117

1 Test and Licensure and Certification Testing, where in
2 both cases online testing has been going on for well
3 over about ten years or so.

4 In Higher Ed Admissions Tests, there's really
5 no control over the test takers, because they don't
6 know really who's testing. It's sort of an open
7 testing opportunity. But it's also very, very high
8 stakes for the individuals, because their ability to go
9 to a university in the United States or a graduate
10 school in the United States may depend on their
11 performance. So that's a very, very vulnerable
12 situation, and if you'd followed the testing in the
13 '90s when some of those tests went online, you will see
14 where some of those tensions played out in terms of
15 security concerns.

16 Licensure Certification also is very, very
17 high stakes in the sense that in some cases, folks
18 can't practice until they've gotten their license. But
19 there's a very high degree of control over the test
20 taker, in that the licensing organization knows who
21 they are, and they have the ability to sanction them if
22 some irregularity occurs. And so that creates a very

00118

1 different security situation.

2 Now, thinking about K12, I put -- in both
3 cases there's high control over the test takers. You
4 know who the kids are, as Sarah had talked about. The
5 stakes are sort of in two camps. For students, they're
6 not very high stakes. Students are not all that --
7 there's not that much riding on their performance and
8 their annual assessments. But for the teachers,
9 there's a great deal of stakes, and as the common core
10 assessments are developed, those stakes are probably
11 going to be as great or possibly greater.

12 So a security problem is really kind of,
13 somebody could say, the fox is guarding the hen house.
14 And so that's sort of the place where the vulnerability
15 exists. I mean, I'm not saying that it exists in every
16 school, but that's the vulnerability. So that's
17 something to think about in terms of how you set up the
18 system.

19 Test design, one of the things that I believe
20 would be very useful is to think about the test design
21 in a way that leverages the computer. Adaptive
22 testing, people know a lot about. There's other ways

00119

1 to have the computer dynamically serve up the content
2 in ways that will enhance security, and it makes a
3 great deal of sense to consider those, even if you're
4 not running truly an adaptive test. Also, maximizing
5 the upfront content development so that you have a lot
6 of content when you launch the test. And I know that's
7 a big challenge when you've only got two years to get
8 ready, but I think that to the extent that that can be
9 done, it will leverage the computer, and it also can
10 provide stability across administrations.

11 And also using technology to vary tasks. So
12 if you think about, for example, the PARCC's through-
13 course assessments, there may be ways of using
14 technology to protect security by dues and task
15 templates, where the actual let's say, mathematics
16 problems have different numbers put into them generated
17 on the fly by computer, things like that. There might
18 be some ways that you could actually get enough content
19 to actually publish it, which I think is a possible
20 design. Measurement errors that could occur in that
21 context at the student level would tend to average out
22 at the level where the accountability really is. And

00120

1 so that really -- if you think about where the
2 accountability is and where the stakes are, there might
3 be some ways to thinking about serving up the content
4 in these, especially the through- course assessments,
5 that would open some new doors for how you do it.

6 Test delivery, I think the big thing about
7 test delivery is encryption mechanisms. They're
8 critical to protecting the content and the test data,
9 and they have to be applied end-to-end, so it has to be
10 every -- every part of the path has to be protected.
11 And so because of that, some people have talked about
12 cloud computing as distinct options. There could be
13 some vulnerabilities there if there's not encryption
14 all the way into the cloud and out of the cloud as
15 content is served up.

16 Another issue that will have to be addressed
17 has to do with assistive devices or software that might
18 run on top of the systems; for example, for students
19 with special needs. There needs to be some white --
20 what we call white listing, which is to say that we
21 know that the security of the system can still be
22 maintained with these different devices running. And

00121

1 it's just really a process and a planning issue.

2 Another issue to think about is the ownership
3 of the deliver may impact security. There's a lot of
4 discussion about open source systems. The question is,
5 can open source systems really have the kind of secure
6 encryption that might be needed? And so that's a
7 question. I think I've heard people tell me that it
8 might be possible, but it's definitely a different
9 level of challenge.

10 And then finally, we've started talking a lot
11 about mobile devices, and the point that I think I made
12 earlier is, they don't really have this built-in
13 lockdown capabilities right now. They would have to be
14 developed, and so that's just a consideration. We're
15 pretty good at doing that with PCs right now, but
16 mobile devices present a different problem.

17 Finally, the testing environment, it's pretty
18 well understood I think in, for example, a state like
19 Virginia where they've been doing online testing. The
20 schools control the computer and the associated
21 hardware, so that's an important security
22 consideration. And there's a large set of policies

00122

1 that are designed to thwart breaches, things like
2 camera phones not being allowed, room configurations,
3 the idea of having like a software that sort of watches
4 what the student's doing. Obviously that's verboten in
5 a high-stakes assessment, but it's not necessarily
6 something that the schools would think about offhand,
7 so it has to be sort of introduced to them. That's
8 possibly one of the most important things about
9 security, is the alignment between the state or the
10 consortium down to the local district, and the
11 communication and training that's going to have to
12 occur with respect to security will be very important.

13 And then finally, again, to sort of belabor
14 the point about mobile devices, increasing security
15 challenges. This is where the enterprising young
16 student might get an idea of programming a passive app
17 that will go in and steal the test questions because he
18 just thinks that's a cool idea to do. And so, school
19 policies regarding mobile devices and how they play out
20 in the assessment situation is going to have to be
21 thought about very carefully.

22 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you, Denny. Neal,

00123

1 do you want to -- or do you want to hold your question?

2 MR. NEAL KINGSTON: I'll hold it.

3 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Ken, do you want to?

4 MR. KEN WAGNER: Just a comment. We spent a
5 lot of time thinking about how the assessment system
6 should capitalize upon the availability, what's
7 available by the emerging and dominant technologies.
8 The other option is to think in terms of what
9 technology do we need to meet our assessment
10 requirements. There is a whole possibility that an
11 emerging market could arise in response to this
12 particular central need of assessment, that the
13 assessment technology doesn't have to be -- it doesn't
14 have to wow you, but it has to perform a very, very
15 specific function. And the device that nobody -- what
16 we haven't mentioned yet, but I think offers a lot of
17 promise; there's been a lot of advances in electronic
18 paper. And the Kindle is something that we haven't
19 talked about -- just a very dedicated device to do just
20 a very specific purpose, and the cost just stays very
21 low, and it's virtually disposable as the technologies
22 change.

00124

1 So I would just encourage the group to think
2 not just in terms of how we can adapt to what's out
3 there, but how we might be able to change the market to
4 provide something new -- not necessarily dramatically
5 different, but more of a dumb device that just performs
6 a very specific function.

7 MR. DENNY WAY: I would just say, I believe
8 that in Licensure and Certification, there was sort of
9 a device like. It was developed early on for computer-
10 based assessment. It was sort of like a little table
11 device. And so that idea has been done before.

12 MR. MICHAEL RUSSELL: Around trying to build
13 something that would also address a number of
14 accessibility issues, we've been working on this. And
15 while there's an interesting product that we have, the
16 challenge is, you got to get it out into every single
17 school. And that's what I mean when I was talking
18 about tried and true, and also thinking about how
19 quickly and how realistic is it to get these things out
20 to every single school in a way that it could be used
21 to scale, because you're talking about a massive scale
22 here.

00125

1 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Tony?

2 MR. TONY ALPERT: So Denny, I was curious
3 about one of your initial slides, where I think you
4 were suggesting that item cloning, or some kind of
5 template approach will expedite item writing and could
6 mitigate security risk. So you implied that perhaps a
7 single set of calibrations could encompass all of the
8 clones, and I was wondering what evidence there might
9 be. And I think, Rebecca, you've been working on this,
10 and Randy, you might be able to address it as well.

11 MR. DENNY WAY: Well, I haven't been doing
12 work in that area, although when I was at Educational
13 Testing Service, I was aware of some of the research
14 that was going on there when I was there. I guess my
15 point on that is that if you build the tasks using like
16 an evidence-center design approach, and so you've got
17 sort of a validity argument for the design, you're
18 probably not going to lock down those calibrations.
19 There's going to be variation. But it's tolerable
20 variation, because it's variation at the individual
21 student level; it's not really large variation. And
22 it's variation in a system that has lots of other

00126

1 sources of errors, like context effects, for example,
2 in adaptive testing, that we don't even try to deal
3 with. And it probably cancels out. So when you go to
4 make inferences about teachers and classrooms and
5 schools, it's not going to be a very big source of
6 error. So that was my point.

7 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Randy or Rebecca, do you
8 want to respond to that?

9 MR. NEAL KINGSTON: In terms of research,
10 Susan Albertson's been doing a lot of work in that
11 area. She currently has an IES grant to take that
12 further. Also, Sylvia Tidwell Scheuring(phonetic) has done
13 work in that area. It's not perfect, but as was said,
14 it may be one of several things we can do.

15 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you, Neal. David?

16 MR. DAVID STOKES: Just a couple of quick
17 questions, or notes. As we were talking about security
18 earlier, and the many aspects that we need to be
19 concerned about, the one thing that I've kind of had a
20 hard challenge with over the years is, how do you take
21 the risk of security and manage that and mitigate the
22 risk, and still provide the service? So as we go

00127

1 through this, I think there's a level of risk that we
2 have to decide on of what we're going to accept,
3 because the only way to mitigate total security risk is
4 unplug the Internet and go back to paper. So I think
5 there's as level of risk that we will have to come up
6 and accept.

7 But the other issue that I wanted to just
8 discuss briefly is, as we talked about the various
9 devices and what types of solutions there are out
10 there, and there's discussions out there about, what's
11 the one device that's going to fit it all? I know that
12 many of our states are challenged with computer-based
13 testing, doing digital content, doing the assessments -
14 - various things. And as we talk through this, I'm
15 wondering, are there any solutions for that? Is there
16 that one device that's going to do this, or are we
17 truly talking about multiple devices? So that's the
18 two areas I wanted to ask about.

19 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Comments from someone?
20 Rebecca?

21 MS. RACHEL QUENEMOEN: I actually wanted to
22 go back to Tony's question. Yeah, I think that in

00128

1 terms of the templating --

2 MR. RANDY BENNETT: The BlackBerry is one.

3 MS. RACHEL QUENEKMOEN: It's not me --

4 regarding innovative items types, the idea of
5 templating development pieces, aspects, to me has made
6 a big difference in terms of moving things along
7 quickly and being more -- and understanding more what
8 it is that we're measuring when we use these
9 interchangeable templates.

10 But the other thing is that what has worked
11 for us is actually the interaction of certain kinds of
12 response types with certain types of problems. And so
13 as we think about opening up the response spaces beyond
14 multiple choice and one-step drag and drop, the fact is
15 that there are certain kinds of questions that could be
16 connected to certain kinds of problem-solving
17 mechanisms that would interact with a computer. And by
18 getting a handle on that, I think it can minimize the
19 sources of error that you would get with students, that
20 when the item types aren't really fit to the particular
21 types -- instead of having everything forced to a
22 multiple choice format or a keyboarding format.

00129

1 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Doug?

2 MR. DOUG LEVIN: Thank you. I just wanted to
3 make a quick comment about the conversations about
4 devices, device agnosticism, or a hope, sort of for a -
5 sort of perfect device. And I would encourage the
6 Consortia to not pin a lot of hope on a single device.
7 I think it's probably not a productive path to go down.
8 I don't think it reflects the patterns of adoption use
9 and development that we're seeing within schools, but
10 also outside of schools.

11 And I would also encourage us as we're
12 talking, actually to be a little bit more specific in
13 our language. We're talking about technology in
14 general, and already, there's wide varieties. And so
15 you're talking about laptops, but there's a difference
16 between a Mac and a PC and a Linux machine. The
17 operating system, the device, there's already
18 tremendous variability.

19 So I think there are sort of grays -- there's
20 a lot more gray here than we are giving credit in this
21 conversation, and I would encourage us then to be much,
22 much more specific, because you could have a

00130

1 commonality of a browser that may be different than a
2 screen size which may be different than the input
3 mechanism. This makes it more complicated, but I also
4 think it could make it more simple. So I would just
5 encourage us to actually dig another layer deeper in
6 this conversation.

7 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Ann?

8 MS. ANN WHALEN: So, one of the kind of
9 unique issues associated with this conversation is that
10 we're also dealing with Consortia. So we have a number
11 of different states who are coming together to
12 administer this. As we're sitting at the table, is
13 there advice or questions to pose to these groups about
14 things that they should make sure they hold in common
15 when they're thinking about the security policies and
16 procedures and things they may have variation on? If
17 they're thinking about state, individual states as part
18 of a larger group, or is that just not something one
19 should even consider tickle off to your head. And then
20 also knowing that there are two particular other
21 Consortia that are going to be overlapping and
22 intertwining amongst these two -- just to make this

00131

1 that much more difficult.

2 MR. DENNY WAY: There's one thought that I
3 had from the security standpoint, and it sort of is an
4 idea that has occurred to me, especially with more of
5 the performance-based tasks, and particularly in
6 English language arts, where I think that the standards
7 call out for a certain type of task. And that is, if
8 you could write enough of these tasks, that you could
9 make them publicly available. Basically publish all
10 the assessment artifacts from which a student would be
11 assessed. The assessment would be in some way
12 randomized. I mean, there would be certain
13 specifications that would have to be met in that
14 randomization.

15 But if those were developed, they could be
16 shared by the two Consortia's, because they're already
17 public, and so they could actually make -- and maybe in
18 one consortia they wouldn't be part of the summative
19 assessment; maybe in the other one they would. But
20 they could be used by the teachers and the students,
21 because they're measuring the standards that everyone
22 cares about. So there may be some synergies in

00132

1 development, that if you think about things
2 differently, the sharing of even the summative assets
3 might be possible.

4 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: John?

5 MR. JOHN JESSE: I want to ask you if you
6 think this may be an issue we should attend to. As we
7 increase the ability to use the technology to be more
8 secure -- as Virginia mentioned, the online's more
9 secure than the paper was -- do we run a risk? Is
10 there -- does our ability to create security through
11 technology exceed our need for security?

12 And it's been my experience that as you
13 increase the level of security through technology,
14 there is significant cost associated. It becomes more
15 complex for development and more complex for
16 implementation. And you see that just clearly. Do we
17 have an ability to make something more technologically
18 secure than is needed, and if so, is that a risk that
19 we run as we put out the architecture, that we may go
20 overboard and use resources that should not be used?

21 MR. DENNY WAY: I guess I'm trying to
22 understand the -- are you saying that the costs of

00133

1 using technology to ensure security would get to some
2 point that it would be too high to maintain?

3 MR. JOHN JESSE: No, that is not desirable.
4 Kiosk mode is expensive. We all assume that's a given;
5 that you got to have kiosk mode. But beyond that, and
6 --

7 MR. DENNY WAY: And that's where I keep
8 harkening back. I guess sort of -- and this is not an
9 engender shared by anybody, perhaps myself, is this
10 idea that one way to overcome the security concerns in
11 online assessment is to have enough assessment
12 artifacts that it doesn't have to be secure; that if a
13 student is able to do all the work that's out there
14 from which you could choose to give them an example of,
15 then they deserve to pass, they deserve to get a good
16 score.

17 And this has really been an idea that's been
18 talked about for a long time, harkening back -- when I
19 talked about the GRE days and some of the concerns
20 about the things, that there was this idea that maybe
21 we could come up with a large enough item pool that it
22 wouldn't matter, because they could study the whole

00134

1 item pool, and if they could do the whole item pool,
2 then -- and there were reasons that they could not do
3 that with a GRE, but I think this might be a situation
4 where you could do it. And part of it has to do with
5 those stakes that I mentioned. The stakes for the
6 student aren't that high.

7 MR. JOHN JESSE: (Off mic.) See, that's an
8 item issue, but student cheating -- how much -- how
9 many resources do you devote to eliminate student
10 cheating through technology, and might we go too
11 overboard?

12 MR. DENNY WAY: I think you could, because
13 again, students have to be incented to cheat, and
14 what's their incentive to cheat? And when they're
15 taking -- there could be graduation tests, or at some
16 point the common core assessments could be used as part
17 of admissions decisions to higher education. Now, the
18 stakes are much higher for the individual student. But
19 when they're not so high for the individual student,
20 the only reason to cheat is because it's fun or it's a
21 challenge for them. It's a different level of
22 incentive.

00135

1 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Okay. Steve and then
2 Neal?

3 MR. STEVE MIDGLEY: So I'd like to support
4 that concept. It's an interesting application of
5 security through obscurity, where the obscurity is a
6 vast number of items, and so you actually do achieve a
7 useful security through that type of security of the
8 single item. You run a test against a vast number of
9 similar items that you could test.

10 I wanted to specifically address a point you
11 raised about open v. closed in terms of security, and
12 just ask the question that, in my understanding -- if
13 I'm understanding your frame right, the modern security
14 professional community has really moved past the
15 question of whether open is more or less secure than
16 closed, recognizing that both systems are inherently
17 insecure, that that is always a fact of security, and
18 that things like vigilance, defense and depth, auditing
19 and review, open security against processes that are
20 used to employ the security in these systems, are
21 actually the places where security becomes tangible,
22 and that the notion that a system could be secure,

00136

1 insecure because it's open or closed is really not a
2 productive line of inquiry in terms of trying to
3 control for your security in the overall process. I
4 wonder if you would be willing to address what you're
5 intending to communicate with that question?

6 MR. DENNY WAY: Yeah. I think my only point
7 was that if you talk about algorithms to actually do
8 encryption, well, those need to be closed to some
9 extent, and that was my only point there.

10 MR. STEVE MIDGLEY: Oh, I would -- just as a
11 personal piece of input, I would sort of significantly
12 disagree with that. In the security processes that the
13 Defense Department runs, for example, the algorithms
14 they use for encryption must be open in order for them
15 to accept them as encryption strategies, that you
16 cannot submit an encryption protocol without it being
17 open, meaning that the understanding of how the
18 algorithm functions is a critical component to
19 security.

20 MR. DENNY WAY: Because the encryption is
21 independent of the algorithm itself.

22 MR. STEVE MIDGLEY: Correct, yeah.

00137

1 MR. DENNY WAY: Yeah.

2 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: I'm gonna give Neal the
3 last common on this, and Wes and Mike, I'll get you
4 next? Okay.

5 MR. NEAL KINGSTON: There are a number of
6 implications of all of these discussions that we've
7 been having about the system development process. And
8 as we're talking about new platforms, new this, new
9 that, and trying to nail down system specifications,
10 make sure you do it in a way that is flexible enough so
11 that you don't have to build a system to what you've
12 already learned is not the right way to go.

13 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Okay, thank you. Thank
14 you, all. Our next topic is validity issues with
15 online assessments. Randy?

16 MR. RANDY BENNETT: I'm gonna talk about
17 three categories of validity issue, which are really
18 very general. They apply to any test, any testing
19 population, but I'm gonna talk about them in the
20 context of technology-based assessment. I'll identify
21 some of the test components that might contribute to
22 each issue, and then illustrate each issue, using the

00138

1 voice of the examinee. I'll conclude by noting that
2 each issue can be addressed more or less effectively
3 through thoughtful design.

4 I'm not going to directly address validity
5 concerns related to students with disabilities or those
6 who are English language learners, because there are
7 others on the panel who I know can comment on that a
8 lot more knowledgeably than I, so I'll save that for
9 the discussion.

10 The first category is what I'll call skill
11 underrepresentation. Validity problems of this type
12 can occur when, due to the technology implementation,
13 the test fails to measure one or more important aspects
14 of the common core state standards. For example, for
15 most current online math tests, the interface design
16 limits what the test can measure. So I could imagine a
17 student commenting, "I could have answered those show
18 you were questions correctly if the test would have
19 allowed me to draw tables and figures. It only allowed
20 me to enter in symbols, numbers and words. There's
21 more than one way to solve a math problem correctly."

22 I can imagine a second student commenting

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1 with respect to automated scoring: "I knew that the
2 automated essay graded doesn't really understand what I
3 write, so this time I just used lots of hard words and
4 made my essay really long, and I got a higher score."
5 So the student in this case capitalized on the fact
6 that our current automated essay scoring programs don't
7 directly evaluate argument structure, critical
8 thinking, a voice, rhetorical style -- higher level
9 features of writing. They tend to concentrate on lower
10 level features. The student knew that and manipulated
11 those, because he knew that those were the ones that
12 were used to predict mastery of the higher level
13 features.

14 The second category of validity issue I'll
15 comment on is irrelevant skills. Validity problems in
16 this category can occur when due to the technology
17 implementation, the test calls upon extraneous skills;
18 that is, skills that are not central to the common core
19 state standards. Interface design plays a key role
20 here, too. For a writing test, I can imagine a student
21 saying,

22 "I write on the computer a lot, but my word

00140

1 processor works very differently from the one in the
2 test, so I couldn't correct and revise as easily as I
3 do at school or when I'm writing at home." I can
4 imagine another student saying, with respect to a math
5 test, that: "Entering math equations was not easy. It
6 took me a long time to correct my mistakes, and I got
7 very confused by the equation editor."

8 So in both of these cases, the test requires
9 two types of skills to respond correctly. It requires
10 the presumably irrelevant skills of using the
11 interface, the mechanical aspects of the interface, and
12 then it requires skill in either writing or
13 mathematics, as the case may be, the skills that the
14 test was really intending to measure.

15 The last category of issue I'll mention is
16 comparability. Comparability issues occur when the
17 test operates differently from one machine to the next,
18 or between paper and computer, affecting student
19 performance or population group performance
20 idiosyncratically. Technology infrastructure can play a
21 role here, so I could imagine a student saying, "There
22 was a long wait between test items on my machine, which

00141

1 was very frustrating and made it hard for me to focus.
2 Students using the newer machines didn't have that
3 problem." I can imagine a student saying, "My screen
4 was much smaller than the ones used by some of the
5 other kids, so because I had a netbook, I had more
6 trouble reading. And the keyboard was smaller, too, so
7 I made more typing errors and had to spend more time
8 correcting them."

9 And then last, I can imagine a student
10 saying, "I never handwrite anything. How could I do my
11 best on a paper test when the kids in the other middle
12 school get to take their writing test on computer?"
13 And that last situation, of course, is different from
14 the first two, because it pertains to a situation of
15 transition from paper to computer, where not all
16 schools yet have the infrastructure to offer the new
17 online assessment.

18 So what's the take-home message? The take-
19 home message is that in computer-based testing,
20 validity doesn't just happen; it's caused. And it's
21 caused by thoughtful attention in design to the various
22 components of the computer-based test, and especially

00142

1 to their interaction. I focused in my comments a lot
2 on the interaction between interface and technology
3 infrastructure and the task design and the common core
4 state standards. But other interactions are important,
5 too. The tutorial, for example, is very important
6 because that's one mechanism for familiarizing students
7 with the interface so that some of the problems that I
8 mentioned don't occur.

9 The design goal for each testing component
10 and for the components as a whole, is to measure the
11 depth and breadth of the common core state standards
12 for each individual equally well and for each
13 population group equally well, minimizing the effect of
14 irrelevant skills and of differences in deliver. I
15 want to suggest that all questions for me go to
16 Michael, because --

17 MR. MICHAEL RUSSELL: Can I take a pass?

18 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you, Randy. Wes?

19 MR. WES BRUCE: Yeah, so I wanna back up on
20 where Denny had us in terms of the giant item pool, and
21 I just want to make sure that we're thoughtful about
22 the possible impact on instruction with the world's

00143

1 largest item pool. Because I have had a school
2 district administer for four and a half weeks, every
3 essay the state ever released at every grade level to
4 their high school students so that they were prepared
5 for the state's test. And that's such a crime against
6 kids, but maybe it would only happen in Indiana. I
7 worry about the potential misuse of really large item
8 pools, but maybe if it really is that large, it'll go
9 away.

10 But also Randy's -- I'm gonna direct my
11 question at you. I'm very concerned about this issue
12 of irrelevant skill, and how as we try to innovate very
13 quickly, how we watch for that. How do we guard
14 ourselves from going down the road -- and I'm gonna
15 date myself, but since the Hewlett Foundation is
16 sponsoring this -- the HP10, okay, in reverse Polish
17 notation. I was not an engineering guy, but all these
18 guys who suddenly didn't have to have their slide rules
19 anymore, but you had to know a whole new language in
20 order to use it. And that's sort of the ultimate -- or
21 not the ultimate -- that's one of those examples, and
22 the issue is, how do we as we're trying to move so

00144

1 fast, not fall into that trap? What's your guidance
2 for us?

3 MR. RANDY BENNETT: Well, irrelevant skills
4 only become problematic when there's variation in the
5 student population on them. So the typical strategy
6 has been to reduce variation by teaching everyone those
7 irrelevant skills. So the test tutorial, the practice
8 test, the formative assessments, should all give
9 students an opportunity to learn, for example, the
10 interface conventions that they're going to be faced
11 with when they engage the summative assessment. So I
12 think that's primary strategy.

13 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Rebecca?

14 MS. RACHEL QUENEMOEN: Randy, I have a
15 question for you. Actually this was about three talks
16 ago. I don't remember who with -- you said something
17 at some point to somebody, all right, there you go.

18 MR. RANDY BENNETT: That's context.

19 MS. RACHEL QUENEMOEN: All right. You talked
20 about two impediments to change, and one was the
21 constancy over time, the other was constancy over
22 students. And I wanted to ask you, when you talk about

00145

1 constancy over students, are you actually talking about
2 the -- that you want the inferences to remain constant,
3 the validity of the inferences?

4 MR. RANDY BENNETT: Yes.

5 MS. RACHEL QUENEMOEN: Because that's an
6 important distinction between necessarily the same
7 conditions.

8 MR. RANDY BENNETT: That's right. I want the
9 validity of the inferences to remain constant. And
10 there may be conditions -- it may be possible to vary
11 some conditions and maintain validity of inference.

12 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Okay, thank you. Shelly?

13 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: I wanted to follow
14 up on Randy's comment in terms of using the practice
15 items to reduce the irrelevant skills. As we've
16 implemented technology-enhanced items in Virginia, we
17 have found that, including a guide for teachers to use
18 as they guide those students through, using the
19 technology-enhanced items has been very useful. So
20 you're not just having the students practice with the
21 new item types; you're also having a teacher guide them
22 through those items and pointing out the functionality

00146

1 to them as you go along.

2 Another thing we've learned is earlier is
3 better, so to the extent that you can let your
4 stakeholders know very early what the expectations are
5 and provide those practice/tutorials very early, you
6 will be well served. Right now we are offering these
7 practice guides before field testing occurs, and as we
8 move towards implementing science and English
9 technology- enhanced items, we will provide those
10 practice guides even earlier in the year, even earlier
11 in the field test year.

12 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Do you want to comment on
13 that, Denny?

14 MR. DENNY WAY: Not at that. I want to
15 follow up on Wes's earlier comment.

16 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Hold on to that thought
17 for a minute. Scott?

18 MR. SCOTT NORTON: I could yield my time.
19 It's okay. For Randy, you did really a beautiful job
20 of kind of giving some real life, or maybe they're made
21 up, I don't know -- either way.

22 MR. RANDY BENNETT: They were made up.

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1 MR. SCOTT NORTON: Okay, made up examples,
2 that's good, too -- of this interaction between kids
3 and computers and the variability and that kind of
4 threat to validity. I get all that. Examples make it
5 real-life. But I have kind of a comment and then a
6 question. So if there weren't any computers in testing
7 and it's only paper and pencil, we got that now.
8 Despite the best efforts of Tamara and Dan and Wes and
9 Shelley and myself, the lights are on in one room and
10 off in another, and teachers read fast in one and slow
11 in another. That happens already. So I guess my
12 question -- it happens in a different way, but it does
13 happen, so we deal with that the best we can.

14 And my question is -- I don't want to sound
15 blunt, but what's the point? What are you saying; we
16 shouldn't do it, or we should manage it best we can?
17 What's your message to us state people who have to go
18 do this?

19 MR. RANDY BENNETT: The take-home message is
20 that validity happens -- that validity is caused, it
21 doesn't just happen. So the point is, to design our
22 computer-based assessments with these interactions in

00148

1 mind so that we minimize to the greatest extent
2 possible the effects of these irrelevant skills,
3 differences in comparability, and underrepresentation
4 of skills.

5 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Tony?

6 MR. TONY ALPERT: I have to go back to
7 something that Denny said. I think there's actually
8 two elements of the Race to the Top Assessment
9 proposals, in which high school students will perceive
10 a personal benefit. And the first is that we have to
11 build our assessments with the assumption that a state
12 may need to use it as part of their graduation exit
13 process. It's likely impossible that states would be
14 able to support the Race -- the common assessments, and
15 an individual assessment system, that was independent
16 of a graduation exit policy if they had it.

17 The other potential perceived benefit is this
18 relationship with higher education that is built into
19 the application itself, and that we're building these
20 assessments with the assumption, with the premise that
21 those cut scores will be indicative of that remediation
22 isn't required in college. So I think we just need to

00149

1 keep that in context, especially around high school,
2 that we are moving into the high stakes area, if not
3 high stakes.

4 MR. DENNY WAY: Well, I didn't mean to sound
5 so flip in my comments about security in that regard.
6 I think you're right. And you might want to think
7 about high school assessment a little differently from
8 say 3 to 8. But in general, this idea of sort of the
9 disclosed item pool, it may make more sense in some
10 components of the assessment system than others. So I
11 think I'd probably be mostly advocating this if it was
12 possible in the through-course assessments that PARCC
13 has conceptualized, in part because there's a
14 tremendous benefit in teaching and learning associated
15 with those things being kind of disclosed, because it
16 really makes it possible for students and teachers to
17 talk about what the student did in a very open way.
18 And it could almost allow a lot of formative assessment
19 with the summative assets.

20 And I think that it might be worthwhile if
21 every school in Indiana drove those students on some of
22 the through-course assessment tasks that are being

00150

1 conceptualized. It's just something to think about. I
2 didn't want to make it sound like I thought that was
3 the answer.

4 MR. RANDY BENNETT: It gets a little more
5 complicated, too, in an adaptive test, because the only
6 items you have to steal are the difficult ones. The
7 average student can get the average items and the easy
8 items correct on his or her own.

9 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: I've got Mike, Rachel,
10 Neal, and then --

11 MR. MICHAEL RUSSELL: I just want to follow
12 up on Scott's questions of Randy, that I think one of
13 the powers of computers -- again, as you think about
14 testing as a controlled experience, is that you can
15 actually control that experience. There's going to be
16 variability sometimes in the devices and equipment and
17 setups and so forth in the rooms. We can't do anything
18 about that, probably, but we can control those
19 interactions that Randy's talking about, and even more
20 so, we can control that for individuals, so that when
21 we think about standardization, we don't have to think
22 about standardization as being identical for everybody.

00151

1 That is, the way in which kids are interacting doesn't
2 have to be exactly the same. So the questions around
3 accessibility, students with language needs, the
4 computer allows us to present information in different
5 ways, based on who those kids are. The computer allows
6 us to have kids interact with content in different
7 ways, and we can control those experiences, which
8 hopefully will eliminate some of the validity concerns
9 that Randy's raising that we might not -- we may
10 introduce new validity concerns, but we can consciously
11 address some at the same time.

12 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Rachel?

13 MS. RACHEL QUENEMOEN: Well, I'm gonna take
14 the back end of that, Rachel Quenemoen again, in
15 response to Scott's. On the one hand, yes, you can be
16 thoughtful and systematic about ensuring kids have
17 access and are able to show what they know, but you
18 also have an obligation to ensure validity for each
19 subgroup, and you could predict possibly that some
20 subgroups will be more affected by these kinds of
21 issues because of the nature of poverty; where they're
22 taught, who they're taught by, all of those things.

00152

1 And you do have an obligation to think of those upfront
2 and remove any systematic threats to validity that may
3 affect some subgroups more than others. That's a
4 slightly different issue than what Mike raised.

5 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Neal?

6 MR. NEAL KINGSTON: Not disagreeing at all
7 with what Randy said about just needing the difficult
8 items of what you're after, is that cheating. Howard
9 Wainer wrote a good article on that at one point in
10 time. One of the initiatives that we're taking within
11 the dynamic learning methods and assessment, is the
12 development of instructionally relevant item types,
13 which fits into the question of, why are you developing
14 these innovative item types? What's the purpose?

15 Our purpose is to be models of good
16 instruction. And if we really succeed in this, or if
17 any of us succeed in this, then having Wes's concern
18 about their sitting there practicing these items, then
19 dissipates as an issue, we hope.

20 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Jim?

21 MR. JIM HARRINGTON: Jim Harrington. I just
22 want to get back to Randy's comment about comparability

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1 and also Rick's comment awhile back about messy wiring
2 closets, because there are a lot of those in K-12. But
3 there are also a lot of places that have really good IT
4 practices and latest equipment, but it doesn't always
5 ensure that there isn't going to be latency in delivery
6 and that the devices are going to be properly
7 configured so that they work effectively.

8 And so I want to just make sure that as the
9 groups move forward, that they're also thinking about
10 building the IT capacity within the states, so that as
11 they're moving forward with the design and building
12 these systems out, that they're doing it in the right
13 way so that the validity is protected, because the
14 systems are working properly. It's fine if a video
15 takes fine to load, but if we're having those same
16 problems with delivery of items, then we're going to
17 end up with trouble on the backside.

18 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Sarah, did you have a
19 comment?

20 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: I just needed to shake my
21 head and say amen for the comment, because you are very
22 correct. It could be a very highly skilled group and

00154

1 it still is not configured properly. Thank you.

2 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Rebecca?

3 MS. REBECCA KOPRIVA: Yeah. Controlling for
4 language concerns. I think it's easy for people to
5 say, we'll just do oral language. The way kids who
6 have language issues learn in classrooms goes way
7 beyond just an oral of text. They actually -- meaning
8 gets conveyed to them through multi-semiotic ways, to
9 all kinds of different representations, and
10 importantly, they interact with that meaning and the
11 meaning goes back to the teacher. Their understanding
12 goes back to the teacher in lots of different ways, not
13 just at best, through oral. And that's at best when you
14 go back to the test taker, or go back to the test.

15 So I think that all of us overeducated adults
16 think we get this, but I'm not so sure we do when it
17 comes to the implications for some of these kids as we
18 move to constraining on computers, how these students
19 are going to interact; particularly when we have the
20 opportunity to open it up.

21 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Any other comments? Ken?

22 MR. KEN WAGNER: Just a very quick comment,

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1 back to the point about IT capacity. If we're talking
2 three years from now, districts need a goal. We really
3 need it as soon as possible, just to set the goal, and
4 I know that you have to set your requirements before
5 you can set the goal. But even if the goal is by a
6 relatively short way away from what eventually will
7 become the requirements, if we start those planning
8 now, we have a shot of meeting that goal three years
9 from now. If we wait a year to set the goal, our
10 chances drop dramatically.

11 So I'm hoping that we can sooner rather than
12 later, get to the very concrete about what district IT
13 people should be thinking about as people plan their
14 budgets. People don't plan their budgets year by year;
15 you plan it particularly with technology, three years
16 out, five years out. So we have to get to that level
17 of specificity sooner.

18 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Karen?

19 MS. KAREN CATOR: Yeah. This is maybe by way
20 of summary comments, and then I have a question. So I
21 think it's very clear from the conversation that we're
22 sort of -- we are in this transition point between a

00156

1 print-based classroom and a digital learning
2 environment, both on the instruction and content side
3 and on the assessment side.

4 So I think Denny's comment about the vast
5 depth of items that you can have is key, because that's
6 the same thing on the instruction side. We've been
7 bounded by half ton paper and number of pages with
8 textbooks, for example. We won't have that. As we
9 transition to a digital learning environment, we can
10 have a vast amount of content as well. Stretch the
11 binding and put all these other things in, it can be a
12 mile high, kind of quote, unquote, "textbook."

13 So I think that's actually incredibly key.
14 It also follows onto the comment of having a goal in
15 mind. I think in the next, I don't know, two years,
16 whatever, we are transitioning to a digital learning
17 environment where all students will have their own
18 device. Take everything out of the backpack; put the
19 device in. That is actually where we're going and
20 where we need to get to. And the devices coming down
21 in price and up in power is a leading edge of this,
22 right. So the quality and quantity of digital content,

00157

1 the lower cost of devices, the opportunity to, as Mike
2 said, assess students in a variety of ways, every
3 student not necessarily having to interact in exactly
4 the same way because students have differences,
5 language differences, abilities, disabilities, all
6 sorts of things like that.

7 We are actually on the cusp of an
8 unbelievably exciting opportunity. If we don't bound
9 ourselves with the thinking of paper and the
10 traditional thinking of comparability -- which leads me
11 to my question. In this last conversation, Randy, I
12 didn't hear any sort of thinking about growth. So if
13 we're trying to compare students against the kid in
14 Indiana, is all we care about is how they're doing vis-
15 the kid in Alaska, for example; that's one way of
16 thinking about it. But if we really want students
17 personally and their teachers and their parents and the
18 system to understand the growth pattern, what does that
19 mean? And if we laser focus on growth, is that going
20 to help us with some of these things that are
21 worrisome?

22 MR. RANDY BENNETT: No, I don't think so.

00158

1 And further, it's not going to help us in assessing
2 students vis-the common core state standards. We're
3 not going to be able to compare them to anything if we
4 don't have some measurement that has common meaning.

5 MS. KAREN CATOR: Right. No, I'm not
6 suggesting that it doesn't have common meaning. So if
7 we have the common core state standards and every
8 student is assessing against those standards, what are
9 the flexibilities, and again, what are -- so I guess
10 I'm asking kind of the same thing, like if so what?
11 How should we think about this going forward, and so
12 what is the -- what are some of the things, either from
13 the basic research or other places that have promise?

14 MR. RANDY BENNETT: We should think about it
15 going forward, trying to create measures that, to the
16 extent possible, cover the full breadth and depth of
17 the standards, number one, and number two, number two,
18 don't introduce irrelevant skills, especially
19 irrelevant skills that affect individuals or population
20 groups differentially, and number three, that are
21 comparable so that we can make judgments vis-student
22 standing with respect to the standards.

00159

1 (Pause.)

2 MR. RANDY BENNETT: Okay, now the question.

3 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Try that.

4 MR. RANDY BENNETT: Okay, so what should we
5 do? We should create assessments that measure the full
6 depth and breadth of the standards, number one, so that
7 we're not reporting and comparing kids to one another
8 or comparing kids to some subset of the standards.
9 Number two, we should minimize to the extent possible
10 the effect on those measurements of irrelevant skills,
11 because those irrelevant skills will either have the
12 impact of distorting the measurement for everyone, or
13 will distort the measurement for some individuals and
14 some groups, creating unfairness.

15 And number three, we should try to make those
16 measures as comparable as possible, because we want to
17 be able to make statements about individuals and groups
18 that cannot only allow us to compare individuals and
19 groups and their growth, but also compare those
20 individuals and groups to the standards. We're not
21 going to be able to do that in a meaningful way if we
22 don't attend to those design considerations.

00160

1 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Shelly, did you have a
2 comment?

3 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: I wanted to follow
4 up on Ken's comment about the need for an expectation
5 in the next couple of years. And I think we've talked
6 a lot about the need for partnerships, and this isn't
7 just a technology initiative; it's not just an
8 assessment initiative. And so it's not too early for
9 the expectation to be set from the top level, that
10 assessment and technology will have to work together.

11 If your states are anything like Virginia was
12 in the beginning, it's not common for assessment people
13 and technology people to even talk to each other, much
14 less work together. And in order for this to work,
15 that has to be the case, and at least in Virginia, it
16 helped to have that expectation set from the very top.
17 In Virginia it was the governor, so I don't know what
18 you could do in your states, but it is important that
19 that expectation beset. Also, the need for school
20 districts, schools, the state, the Consortia and the
21 vendors to work together.

22 When something goes wrong, there's a tendency

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1 to want to blame someone, and even when it is someone's
2 fault, when you're dealing with a situation like this,
3 the focus needs to be on solving the problem, not
4 deciding who is at fault. And there needs to be a
5 determination upfront that that is the way people will
6 interact. You can worry about whose fault it was later
7 and take care of it at that point.

8 In terms of expectations, it will also be
9 important as soon as you can, to know what those
10 minimum requirements will be for technology, because
11 you're absolutely right; people do not buy computers on
12 an annual basis. They need to be planning ahead, so I
13 think it's important to have specifications that are as
14 flexible as possible but you are going to need to know
15 those fairly soon so that people will know what kinds
16 of hardware and software that they will need.

17 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Mike, did you have a
18 comment?

19 MR. MICHAEL RUSSELL: I was just gonna
20 comment on that, the comment about growth. And I think
21 it's important when you're talking about growth, growth
22 towards what and what do you mean by that? That's not

00162

1 a topic of today's conversation, but I think that term,
2 like the term technology, is used in many different
3 ways by many different people. And as Doug was saying,
4 I'd encourage people to be a little more precise in our
5 language so that we are all talking about the same
6 thing.

7 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Yes? You can have --
8 Randy, you've got the last word.

9 MR. RANDY BENNETT: Yeah, okay, so let's just
10 take a simple example, growth in my writing skill. And
11 let's imagine that assessment time one, I take my
12 writing test on a netbook. And I do a lousy job
13 because I hate that keyboard. It's just too small and
14 I'm constantly making typing errors and correcting them
15 and I'm running out of time. Assessment time two. I
16 take my writing test on a full-size keyboard, and I do
17 much, much better. Did I grow? There's no way to know.

18 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: That's a great thought to
19 kind of end on. All right. We are going -- with that
20 thought, we're gonna transition to the public comment
21 period. We have two people signed up to comment. I'm
22 going to remind everyone of the purpose of this. The

00163

1 purpose of the public comment period is to hear from
2 the public on key considerations that have been brought
3 up this morning related to the state and local
4 infrastructure needs. There's a three-minute time
5 limit, and just a reminder that if the comments include
6 questions, those questions will not be addressed today
7 at this meeting.

8 So the first person, Barry? Would you please
9 introduce yourself?

10 MR. BARRY TOPOL: No accommodation needed for
11 this, thanks. I'm Barry Topol, Managing Partner of
12 Assessment Solutions Group, and I'd like to highlight a
13 few thoughts from our white paper on online assessment
14 platform development recommendations.

15 The Consortia have a tremendous opportunity
16 to create the next generation assessment system.
17 Development of the next generation platform for
18 delivering assessments, if managed well, should result
19 in a transformative change in the way assessment is
20 thought about and delivered. Testing of a student's
21 critical thinking skills, use of innovative item types,
22 creating linkages to education communities of interest,

00164

1 and a host of other new features and functionality are
2 all enabled by a new platform. Building such a system
3 for the near and foreseeable future will be an
4 extremely complex undertaking.

5 The Consortia will need to develop
6 comprehensive, flexible next-generation assessment
7 platforms that are reliable and affordable for their
8 member states. Additionally, the Consortia will need
9 to help transition their member states to the new
10 processes and technologies envisioned from the new
11 system. This is easier said than done. Roughly fifty
12 percent of all software projects fail. We've heard
13 talk in the past, and we'll likely hear it over the
14 coming weeks, about open standards, open systems, open
15 source code, software as a service architecture, device
16 independence, and propriety code, to name just a few.
17 Each of these technologies carries its own risks and
18 return profile.

19 For example, the Consortia should not be tied
20 to any single vendor, but should also not develop a
21 platform based on a hundred percent new code. Building
22 the next generation platform needs to be professionally

00165

1 managed, balancing the promise of new technologies and
2 capabilities with the absolute requirement that the
3 Consortia have fully functioning, fully tested
4 functioning systems ready for the 2014-15 school year.
5 The system must be road tested for year one, while
6 being capable of evolving into the testing platform of
7 the future. Properly balancing these requirements and
8 their inherent technology risks is to us the crux of
9 the management challenge.

10 As mentioned earlier, fifty percent of all
11 software projects fail. The majority of these failures
12 can be tied back to a lack of planning at the outset of
13 the project and/or a lack of stakeholder alignment
14 around objectives and expectations. To be successful,
15 a significant and focused effort around planning,
16 stakeholder alignment, system design, technology risk
17 evaluation and implementation is required. Development
18 of the next generation assessment platform cannot be
19 approached in a business-as-usual manner. Too much
20 depends on it. Thank you.

21 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you, Barry. Mark?

22 MR. MARK SCHNEIDERMAN: Hi, good afternoon.

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1 Thanks for the opportunity to be here. My name's Mark
2 Schneiderman. I'm Senior Director of Education Policy
3 with the Software and Industry Association. We
4 represent a wide cross-section of the industry,
5 including a lot of companies in this room and at the
6 table, including Measured Progress, Pearson, Apple,
7 Blackboard, Wireless Generation, testing content
8 platform, hardware. So we come with strong support for
9 this effort. We think it's critical to moving our
10 educational system forward to reflect the world we live
11 in and ensure our students are prepared. Life is not a
12 multiple choice paper problem, and it's important that
13 our assessments reflect what it is, which is the
14 opposite.

15 I want to make just a couple of points. One
16 is to encourage us to think of this holistically. This
17 has been alluded to in different ways, but we're not
18 going to be able to change -- the tests will not be
19 valid. The budgeting will not happen. This cannot
20 move forward unless we think of this effort as part of
21 a broader change in our entire educational system. And
22 I think it's important that we couch all of this in

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1 that terms. We're probably going to need to double our
2 investment in technology and digital content and
3 applications to make this happen. It doesn't mean that
4 has to be new money on top of what we're spending. The
5 supplemental paradigm isn't what this is about. This
6 is about changing the paradigm of education and
7 shifting from print to digital, and so repurposing our
8 funding in that way.

9 Second point I wanted to make was regarding
10 standardization versus innovation, and a lot of that
11 was alluded to, really encouraging you to look at
12 minimal building, minimal specifications and relying as
13 much as possible on interoperability, importability to
14 make this happen. There are a lot of technologies out
15 there. Our states and our school systems and our
16 schools have huge investments already in technologies.
17 They're not going to be able to restart to make this
18 happen; we're going to need to fit that within what is
19 already happening.

20 So concluding thought is as I referenced
21 before, we represent a wide cross-section of the
22 industry. We know there are conflict of interest

00168

1 challenges in working with the vendors, so we offer
2 SIIA as a forum for allowing for some of this dialog to
3 take place to work through some of these issues
4 further. So thank you.

5 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you. Two
6 housekeeping details before lunch. First, if you're
7 leaving the building for lunch and returning after
8 lunch, make sure you keep your sticker badge;
9 otherwise, you've got to go back through the sign-in
10 procedures. So keep your sticker badge if you're going
11 out of the building and coming back. The second
12 detail, if you want to speak in the second comment
13 period this afternoon, please make sure that you sign
14 up at lunchtime, out in the hallway on the table.
15 Okay? With that, we will adjourn for lunch, and we
16 will start promptly at 1 o'clock. Thank you, all.

17 (Whereupon, a lunch recess was had at
18 12:01 p.m.)

19 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: So we're back in business.
20 Just to give you a sense of how the afternoon is going
21 to play out, we're gonna start -- we're gonna pick up
22 with presentation that we move from this morning's

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1 session to this afternoon's session on data management.
2 We're going to do that first. We are going to hear
3 from Virginia with some ideas about the next steps.
4 We're going to hear from the Consortia. We're going to
5 have a discussion, about a 45 to a 50-minute
6 discussion. We'll close out with some comments from
7 the public, and Patrick will end the day for us
8 somewhere before 2:45 and 3 o'clock.

9 So with that, we're going to open with the
10 session on data management and reporting
11 considerations, and Rick Rozzelle.

12 MR. RICK ROZZELLE: Robin, thanks again for
13 letting me go after lunch, not the last thing before
14 lunch, but now I have the challenge of not putting
15 everybody to sleep in the seven minutes that I have, so
16 we'll try not to do that.

17 Data management and reporting is a topic that
18 I could speak to you and talk about ad nauseam for the
19 rest of the afternoon, but I won't. But I want to hit
20 two particular items of discussion, and one is at a
21 high level and one is at a very low level, both of
22 which are related to efforts that we just recently

00170

1 completed or are in the middle of completing, with the
2 Gates Foundation, having to do with instructional
3 information and instructional improvement system, or
4 IIS and the functional requirements for that that we
5 worked with Ohio and Florida on to construct those with
6 Gates monies, and also a teacher-student data link
7 piece of work that we are still working on that defined
8 the practices for how to effectively connect teachers
9 and students, which is absolutely central to some of
10 what you all are working on relative to making this
11 data available.

12 But I was encouraged earlier when John and
13 Steve were talking about architectures, and the
14 importance of having a technology architecture. I want
15 to expand that to think about an information
16 architecture, if you will, an information architecture
17 that takes into consideration not just the systems that
18 you need, but thinks about processes, data, and systems
19 holistically to come up with a comprehensive model or
20 architecture for how these systems ought to plug and
21 play together. One of the things that we see as we
22 travel the states and the school districts is there is

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1 a real dearth of understanding of the importance of
2 having an overarching architecture, information
3 architecture, and as a consequence, things, systems and
4 data are built and managed in silos. And the effect to
5 an overall organization achieving its goals is very
6 restrictive.

7 We have, in looking at the instructional
8 information system, one of the things that we realize,
9 that this is a -- it's a continuous process. It
10 includes not just the assessment component, but it's
11 important in particular at the district level and the
12 school level to think comprehensively and holistically
13 in terms of the curriculum that you're to deliver
14 that's aligned to those standards, the delivery of that
15 instruction in the classroom and the management of that
16 instruction, the management of the testing, all aspects
17 of testing, managing getting that information derived
18 from the testing and instruction in front of the
19 teacher in a timely manner to make changes to
20 instruction, and then factoring that into changing the
21 instruction and professional development and all those
22 kinds of things -- it's a cycle. And if the teacher

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1 doesn't see it as a cycle, the principal doesn't see it
2 as a cycle, and if the systems don't support it in a
3 way that it appears to be comprehensive to the
4 teachers, its utility to the organization becomes
5 diminished.

6 And that's the challenge, I think, is to
7 understand first and foremost, architectures in the
8 construction world are very important to construction.
9 They define -- they take function and turn it into form
10 so that the form follows the function. And I would
11 maintain that the information architectures in the
12 information world have a similar function, or similar
13 role. Understanding the uses to which the information
14 is going to be applied and then constructing an
15 architecture that follows that form, that follows that
16 function, and then guides the construction of these
17 systems.

18 And the LMS operational model, or you can
19 call it an IIS if you want, whatever the server that
20 you put to it, it's a process, it's cyclical. At the
21 district level, it's addressing all aspects of the
22 learning environment or should address all aspects of

00173

1 the learning environment to include the curriculum, the
2 learner, the assessment and then knowing how well the
3 learning is occurring, who's doing the delivery and
4 what the instructional content looks like and the
5 practices look like. And all of that's tied to
6 operational systems and dashboards and should be
7 delivered through, at the top of the diagram there,
8 some sort of a learning or longitudinal data system,
9 and also through a portal that is easy to navigate on
10 the teacher's part.

11 So at the local level, thinking through all
12 the interfaces, the way the information moves back and
13 forth, is important, but the challenge that I want to
14 offer to states and even to the Consortium is to think
15 about your systems that you're getting ready to develop
16 and deliver, not as siloed systems for assessment but
17 as part of an overarching process. And the opportunity
18 for states is having a dialog with school districts to
19 talk about their environment and how it ties and syncs
20 and relates to the state environment, so that you have
21 one information architecture model or framework, that
22 defines the role of state, the state systems, how they

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1 move information to and from the district systems and
2 the schools, and where those systems might reside and
3 the responsibilities for support.

4 That would be an information architecture and
5 it would begin to chip away at some of the issues
6 relative to what's the role of the state and what's the
7 role of the district. It's a particularly vexing
8 question when you come to the longitudinal data system,
9 and where does that reside. Most states are putting
10 that in place, but they're doing it for reporting for
11 district use. District needs in that area require
12 timely information on a daily basis, and states aren't
13 necessarily set up to handle that, but it's a conundrum
14 that ought to be addressed head-on instead of letting
15 it lapse over time.

16 High-level architectures, now I want to drill
17 down to the nitty-gritty and talking about data and
18 reporting and some of the issues that may be faced.
19 One of the things when we were asked by the Gates
20 Foundation to look at the teacher-student connection
21 and what the issues were there -- on the surface I knew
22 there were issues, but I thought, how difficult can

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1 this be? They're learning that I had there, was that it
2 can be extraordinarily difficult. And at the district
3 level, and the surprise that I had was that, new
4 states, states had difficulty connecting teachers and
5 students. What I didn't realize is that schools had
6 that difficulty. And in some schools they do a good
7 job of it; other schools, they do a lousy job of it.
8 And all the data that's collected with assessments is
9 of no value to the school if they can't begin to
10 connect the teachers and the students and understanding
11 what the practices are that are working.

12 But right now, the best way it's done is
13 through the core section, and students are enrolled and
14 connected to courses and teachers are connected to
15 courses, and that's the way the link occurs. If the
16 schedule isn't maintained, that connection is broken.
17 If you don't have good unique student identifiers or
18 teacher identifiers, the connection can be broken. So
19 this connection can be broken in many ways. It's of
20 poor quality in most states now. It's improving, but
21 it's a bigger issue than it's of poor quality in the
22 districts and the schools.

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1 For the future, thinking down the road, we
2 ought to be more nuanced instead of just connecting a
3 student to a teacher through a course, but connecting
4 students to multiple educators and who may have
5 multiple roles in the educational process, and making
6 sure that not only do we know the course, but what
7 standards were a part of that and what assessments were
8 tied to those standards, and also through the use of
9 instructional information systems, knowing, or
10 instructional improvement systems, knowing the
11 instructional practice and the resources that were
12 actually used so that you begin to use this test
13 information to assess instructional practice and
14 instructional resources and continue that improvement
15 cycle around the delivery of instruction and
16 curriculum.

17 So that's the challenge for the future, is
18 getting the data systems, the data definitions, the
19 teacher of record definitions nuanced enough to be able
20 to connect information in this manner. But again,
21 thinking holistically, testing is an important part of
22 -- data is an important part of the big picture, but it

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1 needs to fit seamlessly with the rest of the picture.

2 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you, Rick.

3 Questions? Comments? Tony?

4 MR. TONY ALPERT: So one of the challenges we
5 face is trying to get specifications and requirements
6 from our state members, and that's a significant
7 challenge, to get buy-in from the entire education
8 agency from each state. But we haven't even broached
9 the subject of how do we get buy-in from the districts
10 and the schools through the specifications process. So
11 I was wondering if you could talk about how we might
12 think about requirements gathering and specification
13 that's inclusive?

14 MR. RICK ROZZELLE: That's a great point, and
15 it is so important that the districts are engaged.
16 This stuff doesn't light up and doesn't work until they
17 are.

18 We did use a process in Ohio and in Florida
19 where we used focus group settings, and we would go to
20 different parts of the state, and we've divided each
21 state up into four or five different sections, and then
22 we invited participants in all the different categories

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1 of jobs -- teachers, principals, administrators. We
2 had some parents and students represented and board
3 members in each of the focus groups, and we went
4 through and talked about, what is an instructional
5 information system. In your case, that conversation
6 could be a little more narrow, but we did use those
7 focus settings, broadcast them, collected the
8 information, consolidated that and then used that to
9 help to build a functional set of requirements for what
10 an IIS might look like for a state.

11 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Wes?

12 MR. WES BRUCE: Sure. It seems funny, Rick -
13 - this is Wes -- since I'm sitting next to you, to be
14 using the microphone to ask you this question, but it's
15 okay.

16 So this idea -- I like the idea of
17 information, the information architecture. And so
18 there's I think two -- I've got two questions around
19 it. One, how do we convince -- okay, first, I want to
20 make sure I'm clear that this is a design and not a
21 thing that the state's providing. Of greater concern
22 is, talk to us about how you sell this to the locals

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1 who already know how to do it, or do what they want to
2 do with the system that they have in place?

3 MR. RICK ROZZELLE: As always, Wes, you've
4 asked a very good question, but the locals -- there are
5 some things that might incent them to come to the
6 table. There are certain things that they're all
7 struggling with right now that cost a lot of money.
8 And if they go off and have to purchase these things on
9 their own, they're going to spend a lot of money that
10 many of them don't have. Things that come to mind are
11 things like an LEA- level longitudinal data system, or
12 the LEA-level curriculum management systems, or
13 instructional management systems or professional
14 development systems, or those kinds of things.

15 To move into the world of the future, those
16 things are really going to be important to be able to
17 take apart instruction and know what's going on. With
18 a state-level architecture, you can begin to offer
19 minimum requirements for what those might look like.
20 You can begin to offer consortium-level buying, so that
21 you can take advantage of volume purchases, or you can
22 pre-select a couple of different options for them that

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1 they can choose from, and again, drive down the
2 pricing. So it's not so much to say -- and this is a
3 real important point -- I'm not building a case where
4 the states should provide these systems for a district,
5 because we all know that won't always play out there in
6 the districts; but rather what I'm saying is have the
7 dialog around what role the state plays relative to the
8 districts. And in a lot of cases that's going to be
9 different between the large urbans, as you know, and
10 the small districts. The smaller ones are going to
11 want to stay to play a larger role, and the larger ones
12 are going to want to stay to play no role or a lesser
13 role.

14 So but having the dialog, pounding that out,
15 and coming to some consensus, and then building an
16 architecture around that, is a better way to move
17 forward into the future than ignoring the question
18 entirely.

19 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Jessica?

20 MS. JESSICA PEREZ-ROSSELLO: Jessica Perez.
21 I want to ask more on the interoperability. When we're
22 looking at these scenario or idea, which we are very

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1 interested as part of the Race to the Top, one of the
2 struggles is yes, the distinct have different tools in
3 place for the curriculum, for the interim assessments,
4 for the different areas, that they might be using,
5 liking, they don't want to replace, another state's
6 coming with a solution that we want it to be more
7 integrated. And what type of interoperability should
8 there be if they're different systems, given the
9 functionality versus maybe just one interim assessment
10 system that the state hosts, and how would that work?

11 MR. RICK ROZZELLE: One thing to stress is
12 that when you do this exercise, you want to establish a
13 current state information architecture and a future
14 state information architecture. Whatever the current
15 state is is probably not what you want to be in three
16 to five years, so acknowledging that there may be
17 different systems today, but maybe you want to move to
18 more common systems; maybe you don't. But that's the
19 first thing to establish.

20 But as regards to the interoperability
21 question, I don't have the answer for what
22 interoperability would be. It's not a pat answer. It

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1 depends on what you select. If you select each
2 district to have their own set of assessment engines
3 for formative, then maybe the interoperability point is
4 that you provide them the opportunity to move those
5 assessment results into a longitudinal data system that
6 you provide for them, or one that you modeled for them
7 to adopt. It could be that you build a state-level
8 repository from which or into which and from which they
9 can draw these kinds of information. And there's all
10 kinds of interoperability standards that you can draw
11 from, from SIF to SOA to Canonical data models and
12 those kinds of things that are emerging. So that's the
13 dialog that has to take place, to talk about where do
14 you want to be in the future and then what are your
15 options for interoperability.

16 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Other questions, comments?

17 MS. ANN WHALEN: I just have a quick
18 question. So, a lot of what you've been talking about
19 is kind of the state district relationship. What about
20 the cross- state relationship? So as we're thinking
21 about this as an opportunity for many states to work
22 together, how should they be thinking about both kind

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1 of designing something that has all of these possible
2 features but also, what needs to be or what should be
3 in common across all of them, if anything at all; or is
4 it better to think of it as one data pool, or should
5 people be keeping theirs separate, or just how -- the
6 Consortia's a different kind of nut to crack than we're
7 currently looking at.

8 MR. RICK ROZZELLE: It is. Several nuts like
9 like Wes there are a part of it. Sorry, I couldn't
10 resist it -- I'm sorry.

11 MR. WES BRUCE: I deserve it. I resemble that
12 remark.

13 MR. RICK ROZZELLE: And I know I'm gonna get
14 payback from that; I just know it. Now I've forgotten
15 your question.

16 The opportunity that's in front of us, I
17 believe, is for the states to set a bar that raises the
18 standards, if you will, for functionality for these
19 systems, and to come to some agreement as they work
20 together for functional requirements, specifications,
21 interoperability, and those kinds of things, to put out
22 in the RFPs that are going to be released; to challenge

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1 the vendor community, to raise the bar on the
2 applications that are available in the K-12 market; and
3 I think that would be a good thing. But that
4 collaboration through these consortiums that have been
5 constructed, I think, is really very important.

6 But cross-state, one of the things that we
7 did with the IIS project, we did focus groups in two
8 states and we mapped the two together to see where
9 there was commonality. So we used the work to come up
10 with standards, with functional requirements that
11 crossed multiple states, and then we had some that were
12 more nuanced for a particular state that were just for
13 that state. But that kind of construction of
14 functional requirements using the cross-state
15 collaborative would be a good way to go.

16 MS. ANN WHALEN: And just for my knowledge,
17 how much variance from your perspective, exists right
18 now across states?

19 MR. RICK ROZZELLE: In the test -- what we
20 did with the ISS, there was a lot of commonality, of
21 what people wanted; less so in terms of where they are
22 today. So the future state, I think we can perhaps

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1 create a future state architecture across these states
2 and between states and LEAs that are more common than
3 where they are today.

4 MS. ANN WHALEN: Ask one last question?

5 MR. RICK ROZZELLE: Please, yeah.

6 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: And as you're thinking
7 about this kind of between now and kind of where they
8 can be, besides just -- what do you think are the
9 biggest risks in that potential transition, if people
10 want to move to this notion of common expectations of
11 these systems?

12 MR. RICK ROZZELLE: The risk is largely
13 around buy-in at the LEA level and across states, and I
14 think too, as you begin to push the envelope on what
15 systems can do and perform. The value, though, in such
16 a future state architecture to an organization, is, a
17 lot of the K-12 agencies right now are in a difficult
18 place. They don't have systems that serve the needs of
19 the schools or the leadership. They're siloed, they're
20 fractured, and they don't know how to get out of that
21 conundrum. Such an architecture vision, coupled with a
22 governance process, a rigorous information governance

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1 process, or data governance process, can be a way for
2 organizations to begin to chip away at where they are
3 today and move to a place that's better in the future.

4 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Ken?

5 MR. KEN WAGNER: Some questions before about
6 the values of an integrated architecture versus what
7 local LEAs are doing, Rick mentioned the issue of
8 assessments. Student management system vendors don't
9 typically do a great job about presenting even standard
10 align assessment data, and if you're looking vendor to
11 vendor, then of course you have different systems, and
12 you have to kind of have people go different places to
13 see the assessment information.

14 Now, of course, if we go to a PARCC or
15 SMARTER Balance type assessment program, where the
16 local assessments go away and it becomes standardized
17 and that problem kind of goes away, but even in a PARCC
18 or SMARTER Balance situation, you're going to have
19 systems where students move from system to system. And
20 that information is lost. If a student moves from
21 district to district, the assessments are essentially
22 trapped in the prior district unless you have an

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1 integration. And a state-wide architecture is one way
2 to present the integrated information, whether it be
3 enrollment history or assessment history and so on. So
4 that I think speaks toward the value of a state-wide
5 system.

6 Data integration is a huge barrier for
7 additional applications to come in and provide value in
8 the educational sector. Every time a vendor comes in
9 and wants to provide information, you literally have
10 teachers that are pulling out Excel spreadsheets on
11 thumb drives or CDs to provide data integration. Until
12 you have an integrated solution at a state-wide level
13 or wherever, we're shooting ourselves in the foot in
14 terms of getting additional value out of the vendor
15 community.

16 And then finally, the issue of student
17 linkages, whether it be P20 -- so we're all with or
18 LDSs, trying to link between state agencies. In a lot
19 of ways, separate from the policy issues of privacy,
20 that becomes a student linkage issue. How do you know
21 that this student in this database is the same as this
22 student in the other database? If we can crack that in

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1 a systematic way, which is only going to happen at a
2 state-wide level, then you've solved the problem for
3 multi-state collaborations as well. Again, you're
4 going to have your policy issues, you're going to have
5 your privacy issues. That's one set of problems, but
6 the technology of how to find out without the value of
7 a social security number, how to find out if the same
8 student across places.

9 First problem is district to district, and
10 that's the good student identifier. The second problem
11 is agency to agency within the state. And then the
12 third problem is multi-state. And again, if we had
13 these common assessments, we're going to want the
14 assessments to travel with the students, but they're
15 only going to travel with the students if you know it's
16 the same student from school to school, agency to
17 agency or state to state.

18 So in New York, at least -- and we have a
19 highly regionalized system, but upon that regionalized
20 system, we have what's emerging as a stronger and
21 stronger state-wide system. And the LEAs see it.
22 They don't want to pay for it, but they see the value.

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1 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Jessica?

2 MS. JESSICA PEREZ-ROSSELLO: I agree with Ken
3 on the value. The struggle is the local education
4 controlling Massachusetts and the state-wide rules we
5 put in the data to make it what I call gold standard.
6 And sometimes it conflicts with what I call local data,
7 that they would need for instruction. So what a
8 teacher needs is real-time data, and what the state
9 wants, where my state hat is, I want gold standard
10 because I'm going to put it there up for the public, so
11 I cannot have any mistakes. So we're going through the
12 process of identifying what's a right data model in
13 order to meet both new requirements, and how do we
14 build a systems with that capability of handling both.

15 One thing that I see, because we have so many
16 projects, not having the data model or the standards or
17 agreement on the standards between the different
18 consortiums and the different projects we have, that in
19 some cases we might be losing the opportunity of really
20 get that interoperability working. So if PARCC doesn't
21 give me the data in the same format that I have from
22 Measured Progress, I'll have to redo how I import into

00190

1 our data warehouse or get the information in to report
2 it out, so I have a new project to restructure. If
3 CCSSO doesn't give me the common standard, I'm typing
4 there all the common standards, because we're not
5 really leveraging all this information that we're
6 collaborate, and we haven't agreed on the concept of
7 the file format that I can accept and any state can
8 accept it, and maybe we can reuse what other states are
9 doing.

10 So we work in collaboration but we're missing
11 I think some interoperability standards to allow us to
12 move quicker when we have this persistence, and we may
13 all end up with some dispersed systems.

14 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Dan, you have the last
15 word.

16 MR. DAN LONG: That's a scary notion, to say
17 the least. Dan Long, Tennessee. Rick, thank you for
18 your comments, and one of the considerations always is
19 that we would like to be able to describe how we'd like
20 to work together and an outcome for that. So I can see
21 where states would certainly agree with what they'd
22 like to see this interoperability to look like.

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1 I think one of the nice points of this
2 consortium work is that the two consortiums also can
3 work together through some of these processes and
4 problems, and also it's a matter of motivation for
5 local districts. We can definitively see it's important
6 that they be motivated to follow the appropriate
7 standards that would be put in place and the
8 governments that would be there. And at the end of the
9 day they'd be able to put information into a system
10 that would be worthy of this new process that we're
11 talking about.

12 And besides that, I think another part of
13 that motivation would simply be that if we don't get it
14 right, we're going to blame Wes and Indiana, and at the
15 end of the day, that as a motivation we can certainly
16 say that if they can do that in Indiana and Wes can do
17 that, certainly we can do that in Tennessee, too.

18 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you. We're going to
19 transition to the Virginia team to give us some
20 thoughts on next steps. Pass the clicker.

21 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: Okay. Assessing
22 readiness, we're going to talk a little bit about what

00192

1 needs to happen in order to ensure that everyone is
2 ready for this, from our perspective in terms of what
3 we did. I know I've shown this diagram before, and I
4 do it again because it's really important. In terms of
5 our success it was.

6 Readiness really is a shared responsibility
7 among these three groups, and of course, it's going to
8 be the consortia in place of -- or really, in addition
9 to. I was going to say in place of the SEA, but really
10 in addition to. And so I think that's the key element,
11 the theme that you'll see throughout this.

12 We had four areas, really. We're going to
13 talk -- we'll emphasize more on the technology piece,
14 because I think that's obviously what we're interested
15 in. But we don't want to leave it out here that
16 readiness is only technology-related. It really is a
17 very broad scope of things that have to be considered.
18 So we'll talk a little bit about these other pieces,
19 and you could ask questions on them as well.

20 But as far as the technology piece, and I
21 know we've said this already, but preliminary
22 information really is better than no information at

00193

1 all, and I think that's what's been presented. I'll
2 give you an idea of what we did prior to and during our
3 proofs of concept. We had done a capacity survey among
4 the divisions, and it really was in the form of a
5 spreadsheet -- this was back in 1999-2000 -- where they
6 gave us details about how many computers they had; what
7 type of bandwidth connections or Internet connections
8 they had; and then even down to the types of proxy
9 servers they had so that we had some idea, at least, of
10 a baseline, of what was in the districts when we were
11 starting.

12 And then at that point, we created the RFP
13 for our online system. We really didn't know what we
14 were going to get for technology responses. We didn't
15 lock that RFP into a particular device or a particular
16 operating system. Palm Pilots were becoming very
17 popular at the time, and for all we knew we were going
18 to get responses back that had us taking the SOL test
19 on Palm Pilots. I think someone mentioned electronic
20 paper. At the time e-paper had just come out with a
21 little wireless transmitter embedded in the document,
22 so it was that, well, you can still take a paper-pencil

00194

1 test, but transmit the results.

2 As we did the RFP and did the proof of
3 concept stage, we found out that it started to narrow
4 it down for us. So we were able to create a
5 preliminary set of architectural guidelines, and
6 getting that out to the divisions I think, is what
7 you're talking about; getting something in the hands of
8 the state so that they know where to head. And then as
9 we continued, we revised that architectural guidelines.
10 And I would encourage you that this field test will be
11 an opportunity to help you revise that, to experience
12 what the system requires, what's needed. Because there
13 will be things that will come up that you're not going
14 to be able to identify, and the vendor won't be able
15 to, either. We have just learned that.

16 The documentation piece, I've got a list here
17 of things that you really need to provide -- printed
18 documentation about, and make it publicly available so
19 everybody has it; stakeholders really, or including
20 even technology vendors, all of the people that are
21 going to be providing services to your constituency
22 really. And then notice that I've got any known

00195

1 hardware or software incompatibilities or concerns, so
2 that publishing those things that it doesn't work on,
3 or that you don't want school districts to use, is just
4 as important as telling them what they need.

5 The infrastructure requirement and
6 guidelines, I know Mike talked about the bandwidth
7 issues to the school and then within the school. I'll
8 give you an example here of -- I've got on this list IP
9 address requirements. Our contractor was making a move
10 to what we considered to be a more robust way to
11 deliver tests -- moving to the cloud. We're going to
12 put it in the cloud; it'll be better balanced;
13 automatic load balancing, you don't have to worry about
14 the load. And in most cases, that's true, except in
15 Virginia, we had been doing enough online testing for
16 awhile that our school divisions, many of them had
17 adapted their own network configurations, so that they
18 had the assessment traffic running out around their
19 content filters and through a single firewall that
20 required a static IP address. So suddenly, by putting
21 in something that was going to be really terrific for
22 everybody, we just disabled a lot of people.

00196

1 So those are the kinds of things that you
2 have to continue that partnership and conversations
3 with. What sounds really terrific and it's the latest
4 thing and it's solving all the problems of the world,
5 you've got to remember what other people have done.
6 Now, we look at that as something that was I guess, a
7 good thing, and that our school districts had adapted
8 over time to, what's the most robust way to be able to
9 continue to have bandwidth dedicated just to testing?
10 But you can see, that's an example of how things --
11 how you need to tell what won't work as well.

12 The bandwidth requirements and guidelines --
13 I talk about bandwidth as money. The more you give
14 people, the more they're going to want and the more
15 they're going to need. And a school will do that with
16 bandwidth. You give them more, and suddenly it's gone.
17 So there has to be a way to be able to tell, what is
18 your saturation during testing times? Your saturation
19 of bandwidth at lunchtime is going to be very different
20 than 8 o'clock in the evening or maybe 6 o'clock in the
21 morning when the technology folks are in there
22 thinking, well, I have time to run that capacity to

00197

1 them now. But they need to know, what is the demand
2 during times where you would actually be testing.

3 Electrical power requirements in the testing
4 areas. If I say the terms, "charge a cow," do you know
5 what I mean? As in charge a computer, a cart of
6 computers on wheels? Well, we were into the small
7 rural district. They charged all their cows overnight.
8 Well, it caused the circuit breakers to flip, and so
9 when everyone came into school the next morning, it was
10 freezing because the heat had gone off. So even
11 electrical power and electrical requirements have to be
12 part of this readiness check -- not just the outlets,
13 but do I have the conditioned electrical power coming
14 through those wires?

15 Appropriate testing areas, printing
16 requirements. Depending on what you were going to do,
17 that was a big issue for us in that we were providing
18 limited printing reports upfront. Improved
19 communications. When you're in a testing room, you
20 have -- and something goes wrong, if you're an examiner
21 by yourself -- I'm sorry -- you have to be able to have
22 a way to communicate with someone, unlike the paper

00198

1 environment. That just doesn't happen the same way in
2 a paper and pencil environment. So we have some
3 examples there, or creative other avenues for
4 communicating during testing.

5 And I think -- this is one of the things I
6 think seems to be of most interest, in that what is
7 that readiness tool? Is there something that we can
8 provide that will sort of serve as the magic bullet to
9 tell us, are we ready for online testing or not? There
10 are some bullets, but I don't know that there's one
11 single magic one. I think the piece that we did with a
12 capacity survey during the proof of concept gave us a
13 baseline of information, and then we did what we called
14 a readiness checklist, where there was a list of things
15 that we knew based on our solution that we had decided
16 on needed to be in place. That included other things
17 besides technology, but it at least gave the basics of
18 what was needed here, the device requirements, the
19 configurations, and then from there, that was a self-
20 reported checklist. What we really needed, to have the
21 rubber hit the road and say, okay, but can you really
22 do this?

00199

1 And so in the early 2000s, we started with
2 what we called load-testing software, and if you can
3 get everyone to hit enter at the same time, and then if
4 you were really good, you had communication across your
5 district, and you could have multiple schools hit enter
6 at the same time, and then you would see if it would
7 work. Well, fortunately we've progressed beyond that,
8 because that was a very painful and time-consuming
9 thing.

10 One of the things we did in the interim,
11 because we had to just kind of bail on the load
12 testing, was, we said well, this should be a
13 mathematics problem, really, in that if the vendor, the
14 contractor can tell us, what's the minimum amount of
15 bandwidth I need for every item, how many computers do
16 I have, what is my bandwidth that's coming in, then I
17 should be able to calculate and come up with that. And
18 then since then, we have progressed to, I need a tool
19 that will actually go out and hit the server with a
20 load that goes through the correct ports. If the
21 vendor says it's going to use port 4083, then that
22 network tool has to send the traffic through port 4083

00200

1 to test it, and it gives immediate feedback to the
2 locality.

3 I'll note this altern -- and I know we're
4 getting probably low on time here -- alternative
5 certification process for technology-challenged
6 districts. We ended up coming up with a contract, a
7 state contract, where technology integrators could come
8 in and really help, from as in, solve the problems. I
9 mean, some of these network tools and some phone
10 assistance will help most places, but there's always
11 going to be somebody that just couldn't. And this was
12 something that the districts were on their own for
13 that. We provided a contract that they could use, but
14 they just didn't have the technology staff in-house to
15 be able to do it.

16 Scheduling and planning, these are critical
17 as far as when it comes down to testing time; how many
18 computers to I have, how many students do I have to
19 test, how many testing sessions can I fit into a day?
20 Can I do morning-afternoon, or can I do just morning?
21 A number of things there. And then, testing
22 accommodations, planning for those. This last bullet

00201

1 on here, simulate live testing, is critical. You do it
2 through your field test, but you also -- we have a
3 training test that is available that requires the
4 students to go through the same log-in process that
5 they would during a live testing situation. It helps to
6 get the students in the room, out of the room. You go
7 through all of the pieces that you have to do during
8 live testing.

9 State-provided training -- we provide it a
10 lot. We continue to provide a lot of training. The
11 district, same thing. It has to funnel all the way
12 down through. And different types of training,
13 different modes of training. And then, this last
14 bullet on here, facilitate sharing of model training
15 resources, as in, we have a very good relationship with
16 our districts. When they have some good PowerPoints,
17 if we can use those and share those among our archived
18 policies and e-mails, it really helps to -- at least we
19 can help you with that piece and reduce that load. I
20 think that's it.

21 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you. Thank you.
22 All right. I'm going to turn to the two Consortia, and

00202

1 ask you for some comments. Wes?

2 MR. WES BRUCE: Yeah, so, I want thank
3 Virginia again for leading the way for eleven years for
4 the rest of us, and especially for this presentation on
5 how to get at the issue of capacity and test it
6 thoroughly.

7 As John said a little earlier, one of the
8 first collaborations between the two Consortia that
9 SMARTER Balance has taken the lead on, but has kindly
10 extended the invitation for PARCC to participate in, is
11 this idea of a set of tools, tools -- some thing that
12 will allow us to assess the capacity in all of these
13 states who are in all kinds of different places. And
14 so, one of the -- as we work through that and try to
15 design something that addressed some of the needs that
16 folks have already articulated; like, we need to know
17 yesterday what are the requirements of these systems,
18 because budgets are -- we're figuring out how to spend
19 the end of this year's money, and by August we've got
20 to have our budget ready for the Board for next year's
21 money, and if we don't know what kinds of systems we're
22 going to make, then we've lost a full year at least,

00203

1 and maybe a year, maybe two years' worth of money to
2 spend toward technology.

3 So I'd like folks to help us as we're trying
4 to design these tools, because our original goal was to
5 have the initial idea of state capacity -- to do
6 something magical with an RFP, get it out in remarkable
7 time, find a vendor or vendors who could build tools
8 quickly, but that we could have some idea of capacity
9 by the end of this calendar year in terms of schools.

10 And as I've been listening, and I don't know
11 about John, but I want to make sure that we're asking
12 the right questions. What do we need to know first?
13 What could wait until later? We've heard what Virginia
14 has looked at. And so I think from my perspective, I'd
15 like to know -- we need that guidance, because we've
16 had a couple of calls, a meeting last night, getting
17 ready to have another call, and we're trying to push
18 the RFP out the door, but we don't want to push the
19 wrong RFP out the door, or one that's going to not get
20 us to the place we need to be.

21 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you. Steve and
22 John?

00204

1 MR. JOHN JESSE: So, highlighting key points
2 that we've heard. It seems to me that we heard a lot
3 around this central issue of present and future,
4 managing the risk and the opportunity for success. And
5 around the present, it's a matter of the tried and true
6 think that Mike had presented but several others had
7 articulated as we do design, that we want to be
8 conservative in the sense that we want to use
9 technology strategies and architecture that is going to
10 work, in the present day and be able to roll out and be
11 successful with respect to all our schools. And yet,
12 at the same time, we need to balance that against
13 future risk, risk of not being able to innovate, not
14 being able to be current, not being able to maximize
15 technology three, five, ten years down.

16 And so as we proceed forward with this
17 initial blueprint architecture stage, it seems to me
18 that it's a matter of balancing those two; success and
19 minimize risk in the present, yet not minimize
20 opportunity and opportunity for future success in the
21 future and its attention that exists. You get too
22 excited and think about the future, and then we're not

00205

1 going to be successful today; as Mike indicated you
2 don't use tried and true. But if you become too
3 conservative and not forward-thinking enough in your
4 design, then we're done in '15-'16. So it's a real key
5 theme that I think we've heard a bit, and we'll have to
6 ruminate on that a bit.

7 MR. STEVEN GARTON: This is Steve from Maine.
8 One of the things that's come up, too, is the question
9 of device agnosticism, future thinking and moving
10 things like this. And I know one of the districts that
11 I worked with was so excited because they had their
12 budget process worked out for the refresh cycle. They
13 could replace half of a grade level every year. So
14 they finally figured out that every -- that was K to
15 12, so every 26 years, they will have their devices
16 replaced. And they said, well, we have a plan -- and
17 I'm afraid that in the school districts, there is that
18 whole wide range, and while I don't think most people
19 are on a 26-year cycle, there's a lot of legacy
20 materials around.

21 So one of the questions we have for us is, as
22 operating systems move, they change quickly, as we're

00206

1 talking about different platforms whether it's PC or
2 Mac or Linux or new devices such as iPads or whatever's
3 coming out, as a Consortium or multiple consortiums,
4 how do we look at what we actually need to design for
5 or look for as they change? So I think that's one of
6 the questions. Where do we cut it off? Do we still
7 need to support for the Macs OS7 and for the PC 3.1? I
8 mean, where do you actually cut it off as it goes
9 forward, and then how do you phrase this in such a way
10 so that the RFPs go out, that people can then decide,
11 okay, here's what I'm going to design for, and it will
12 not only work today, but it will work for future
13 machines, and it won't be dependent on pulling things
14 back. Well, if you upgrade your operating system, you
15 can't use our solution, which also happens when you get
16 things out there.

17 So the question is, how do we do that? And
18 I'm open for answers.

19 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Okay. Shelley?

20 MS. SHELLEY LOVING-RYDER: I think readiness
21 is all about managing change, and readiness doesn't
22 just end with the initial determination of whether or

00207

1 not schools are ready. To respond to Wes's initial
2 question, I think it is really important to do a survey
3 of what your schools have out there now, because you're
4 going to need that information to know what kind of
5 system requirements you can legitimately have, things
6 like what kind of screen resolutions do you have now?
7 That may have an impact on the delivery system you're
8 able to use.

9 And to respond to Steven and John, I think
10 you're also thinking about readiness for change along
11 the years. We've periodically changed what we're
12 doing, and when we do that, we always survey our
13 divisions to see what is out there now to give them a
14 head's up that we're about to make a change and to find
15 out just what kind of impact it's going to have on
16 them. So although the system tools that determine the
17 necessary requirements are really important, what you
18 may want to start with is just a very basic survey to
19 find out what your schools have out there currently.

20 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Okay. Yes, go ahead,
21 Sarah?

22 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: This is Sarah. And

00208

1 Steve, you mentioned even the question about, does it
2 have to run on Mac OS7 or 7.0, whatever. I really
3 caution you that you have to know what that baseline is
4 -- and I'm echoing what Shelley says in that, you don't
5 want to develop something for 2015 that you're going to
6 have so many people that can't -- and I know that's a
7 no-brainer, but having that baseline is critical.

8 I think the other piece that you've got to
9 build into this is that that contract, or that concept
10 that you have, it has to be that it will have change
11 built in, and there has to be R&D going on that is
12 going to change that along the way. I believe that has
13 to be part of the process. You don't want to get in a
14 relationship with someone that's going to provide you a
15 system that is valid today but says that it won't work
16 in 2015. They need to grow with you, with the
17 Consortia, and as new things become available and then
18 they become tried and true, then that's when you make
19 the change to these new things.

20 Just because Windows puts out a new --
21 Microsoft puts out a new Internet Explorer version,
22 don't accept those updates automatically when we're

00209

1 talking about a machine that has to be ready for
2 testing next week. So just, caution and control,
3 again.

4 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Ken?

5 MR. KEN WAGNER: Thank you. I think
6 Virginia's being extremely polite about what the real
7 message they're trying to say to us all is, is that in
8 a lot of ways, the success of this effort has nothing
9 to do with the theoretical or policy level discussions
10 that we're making. It's all about concrete, mundane,
11 boring operational details that we really have to start
12 to pay attention to, or we're going to have a world of
13 hurt.

14 So to wait another six months for the design
15 of a survey and then another six months for the result,
16 I completely agree that those results will be extremely
17 important, but we know that we're in big trouble, and
18 we don't have to wait six months or another year to do
19 that. So the sooner we move away from policy,
20 architecture, theory to truly a project management
21 methodology, which we really have to get to; and
22 waterfall project management is not what this calls

00210

1 for. This is an agile development path that we have to
2 get on, where we're not going to know the end
3 requirements but we have to start, and we need to keep
4 our eyes open and keep the requirements flowing and
5 moving. If we don't shift quickly, we're going to be
6 having the conversation two years from now about why we
7 didn't start earlier and why we have to push back the
8 timelines.

9 So again, what you've been presenting is
10 incredibly helpful, but unless we really take it as a
11 slap in the face, that we need to start thinking about
12 that stuff -- and all of this other stuff is extremely
13 important, but if we don't start thinking about that
14 stuff, about all of the specific details, we're going
15 to regret it.

16 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Randy?

17 MR. RANDY BENNETT: Just a comment on the
18 comment that Wes was making about the building tools to
19 remotely evaluate infrastructure in schools. These
20 tools already exist. Every testing company has one.
21 Most software companies of any size have them, if
22 they're doing remote interactions with users. So

00211

1 that's something I think you could get on very quickly.

2 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Suzanne?

3 MS. SUZANNE TRIPLETT: Sarah, NAEP learned a
4 lot from you and Shelley when we were involved in
5 developing the science ICTs for NAEP.

6 I think one of the things -- and I want to
7 follow up on the point that Ken was making, because
8 what we learned from you that I think really, really
9 helped us early on, but especially as we had to change
10 and go to writing, was that it's not just the test; it
11 is so many pieces and parts, and they're all involved
12 with the technology. And somehow that was -- we didn't
13 plan for everything that we needed to plan for upfront,
14 but in listening -- I can't remember which meeting it
15 was in, but listening to you and listening to Shelley
16 over time, it became really apparent that we were
17 planning for test, but we didn't have all the other
18 things that were absolutely essential to make the test.
19 And so I'm not exactly sure the parallels at the state
20 level that we would have at NAEP, but I think that was
21 one of the things that made us be successful with ICTs,
22 and it just, it was just smooth going into the writing

00212

1 the second time around. And so I think as people begin
2 to plan now, they need to somehow have a notion of what
3 all those pieces and arts are.

4 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Do you have a response,
5 Sarah?

6 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: Just that thank you,
7 Suzanne, you're correct, and Ken, I appreciate that
8 you're noticing that I'm about to jump out of my skin.
9 But it's the slides that I zipped through really
10 quickly that are very important. I know that the
11 concept was technology and technology readiness, but
12 all of these other pieces, it would have just stopped
13 us dead if we hadn't had all of those other pieces
14 there. So I agree; it's the nuts and bolts. It has to
15 work; you don't have an option there, and so you've got
16 to make something that you can support, and then keep
17 the R&D going for new stuff, but you have to have a
18 functioning system.

19 MS. SUZANNE TRIPLET: And the system is much
20 more than just the test.

21 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: Yes, much more. It's the
22 people that have to implement it; it's the training

00213

1 around it. I know Mary can probably give a lot of
2 stories. There are a lot of other pieces than just
3 that test and delivering the items.

4 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Dale?

5 MR. DALE CORNELIUS: (Off mic.) So to really
6 some things that we learned in the last two years. We
7 had not had an online readiness test that gave us any
8 information we needed. And it's not because it was
9 poorly constructed. It was just that we started to
10 realize that people talk about this, the best online
11 readiness test was a practice test. Then we got into
12 some trouble with that, because the practice test was a
13 different environment or different test than the live
14 test.

15 So I just want to throw it out there, because
16 I've been involved in three online readiness tools in
17 the last three years. None of them have been useful,
18 according to the CIOs in my county, and what has been
19 useful is the actual live environment of the test,
20 either through a practice test, and that's not
21 necessarily live and it's not in real-time. So I just
22 wanted to throw that out there because I know people

00214

1 are thinking, well, maybe we should just do a practice
2 test.

3 And the other thing I wanted to say is, one
4 of the biggest things that we learned is that the need
5 for a completely separate testing environment is
6 becoming critical, so the idea that you're going to
7 configure your computers and then to back to however
8 the lab was before that test is a thing of the past.
9 And I know a lot of people have talked about this, but
10 we have now like virtual testing environments where you
11 don't have to disrupt the lab at all. You just go in
12 and you're taking a test and it's hosted on a server,
13 and it's pooled in the district office and there's
14 sufficient redundancy. But it's like, you don't need to
15 worry about configuration across the state because
16 you're just configuring one environment.

17 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Okay, Ann?

18 MS. ANN WHALEN: So I'm going to readily
19 admit this is nowhere near my area of expertise. But I
20 did want to push a little bit and go back to Wes's
21 question and push a little bit on what was -- I
22 believe, Ken, you were saying earlier just kind of the

00215

1 need to act quickly, but also, Wes says, well, what do
2 we need to do right away? Help us think about what the
3 next steps are.

4 So everybody's response is, you need to go
5 out and survey everybody, survey all your districts,
6 survey all your schools and your immediate need so you
7 have this large data source. We're talking about 44
8 states and D.C., so are there other ways to think about
9 this in the immediate term versus long term? Are there
10 ways to extrapolate to get good data to help inform the
11 Consortia to do the technology and design hand-in-hand,
12 knowing that we have a number of other years to then
13 collect and fill in gaps in these other states and
14 districts potentially that you don't hit off the bat.

15 So helping these two groups think kind of
16 more creatively, given the current task underway about
17 where they are and where they need to go, and being
18 really explicit about what information you would advise
19 them to collect right away in order to push Ken's point
20 about, we need to move right now; we need to start
21 planning budgets; we need to start setting our goals to
22 where we're going to be in 2012-2013. So you don't

00216

1 want that to be done in a vacuum, but having this
2 group's help in thinking about what are those three to
3 five things that you would do right away if you were in
4 their shoes, and then how you would tier the next
5 steps, would be extremely helpful.

6 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Okay, I'm gonna go to Doug
7 and Mike.

8 MR. DOUG LEVIN: Thank you. I'm definitely
9 struck by Wes's comments, and this is what I want to
10 react to and in some respects answer -- try to take a
11 stab at answering your question, Ann.

12 So Randy, you had indicated that a lot of the
13 large vendors have readiness tools. I would also point
14 out that in many, many but certainly not all states,
15 through their technology leadership, do census work as
16 well. And I do want to echo another point that's made
17 by our colleagues from Virginia, which is there are
18 also technology leadership within the state agencies.
19 And I think the observation was made that the
20 assessment folks in the SEAs and the technology folks
21 in the SEAs not be in everyday conversations with each
22 other.

00217

1 So I'll just take that statement at face
2 value and suggest that building those conversations
3 today might tap expertise that already exists in your
4 agencies, and much of that expertise in fact is around
5 issues like Wes pointed out, sort of very operational,
6 tactical advice as well as to tap into -- this
7 conversation is happening in the context of other large
8 changes. A dozen-plus states have changed textbook
9 adoption laws in the last 18 to 24 months to allow for
10 more investment in digital content and devices. We've
11 seen an explosion right now of online learning
12 opportunities, including legislatures that are
13 mandating that all students have an online learning
14 experience.

15 So this is a conversation that is happening
16 in a broader frame, and there is expertise that exists
17 within the agencies. So I would just emphasize that
18 point and to say at least as a starting point, there
19 are those conversations. And then of course, Ann, to
20 maybe state somewhat the obvious as well is the U.S.
21 Department of Education, NCES, released the results of
22 a battery of surveys at the district school and teacher

00218

1 level of the availability of technology and
2 connectivity. And at least, if you're talking in a
3 broad national picture, we have information on number
4 of devices, operating systems, age of the machines,
5 presence of technology leadership at the local level.
6 So it's a place to start, and the great statistics,
7 even huge variability within states. And I actually
8 think that the technology directors in the state
9 agencies would be very attuned to those pockets that
10 don't have the broadband that we need, or where the
11 local capacity is not great, because the superintendent
12 is the principal is the bus driver. And the state
13 agency is probably playing a stronger role in providing
14 technical assistance already to those places. So just
15 an admonition in that.

16 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Mike?

17 MR. MIKE RUSSELL: Yeah, building on that.
18 Again, your question around you're about to release
19 this RFP around assessing readiness. And it seems to
20 me that there's a kind of a chicken and an egg thing
21 here, that you can't assess readiness until you know
22 what you're going to do. But there's also a concern, I

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1 think, or maybe I'm the only one concerned about this,
2 that you're going to try to get ready for something
3 that isn't realistic for schools to actually implement.

4 So what you need to do is get a sense of
5 where schools are at while you're building your
6 specifications, given what you want to try to
7 accomplish. And simultaneously -- it's not really an
8 agile process but effectively is -- be looking at,
9 well, how far off are we; do we think this is
10 realistic? And once you decide those system
11 requirements, that's when you go and do your readiness,
12 it seems to me. And as Doug is saying, there's lots of
13 data available. You don't need to know from every
14 school today what they can do today. You just need a
15 general sense of where schools are at, what the worst-
16 case scenario are.

17 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Okay, Ken?

18 MR. KEN WAGNER: Just to get very concrete
19 about assessing readiness, so my takeaway from here is
20 I need to reach out to my state-wide stakeholders. I'm
21 going to take the slide that Virginia presented before
22 about all of the different specs, and over the next

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1 four months, we have to come up with specs that are a
2 best-guess about how we can make this happen. It's
3 just going to be a best-guess. Districts are going to
4 be building their '12-'13 budgets. They're going to
5 start in November- December. They're going to spec out
6 their budgets.

7 So we need to give them -- in New York, we
8 need to give them, this is what you need to plan for.
9 I'm scheduled for a session June 1st and June 2nd
10 because the state wants me to tell them, what are we
11 shooting for? So I think we have no other choice but to
12 start telling them what to shoot for, and then what's
13 going to happen is if we all start doing that, the
14 field won't react until they have something against
15 which to react. They need to see what they're being
16 told to do, and then we'll find out how crazy that is.

17 I completely agree it's important to get the
18 more abstract requirements gathering, but it's not
19 going to be until I tell them that this is what you
20 have to do and start to budget for it in '12-'13, '13-
21 '14, and be ready to go in '14-'15, then I'm really
22 going to find out how hard. It goes to Dale's point

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1 about running a field test.

2 So what I would just suggest is that -- and I
3 don't know whether other people think that's a good
4 idea or not, but if New York starts going out and
5 telling the field what they need to do, we're either
6 going to be aligned with people or not, but it's going
7 to help to drive some consensus decisions. But if we
8 miss this budget cycle, which literally is November, if
9 we miss November to tell people how to plan, we're
10 going to lose another year of planning if we don't have
11 something by November.

12 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Tony?

13 MR. TONY ALPERT: So I agree that we need to
14 focus on the concrete aspects of readiness, and I
15 absolutely agree with the budget cycle issue. I would
16 also say, though, that readiness is a state of mind.
17 So what our goal is is to help give schools and
18 districts a process by which they can continually
19 evaluate and re- evaluate their own readiness so that
20 it is a continuous improvement process that doesn't end
21 as part of the budget cycle but is ongoing.

22 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Jessica?

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1 MS. JESSICA PEREZ-ROSSSELLO: So I agree we
2 have to do it in parallel at this point, so it's not
3 perfect world, given that we have the chicken and the
4 egg process going. So it will be interesting to see
5 those states that have also piloted online assessment
6 and look at the specs that we may have with the
7 different vendors we have compared to the Virginia One,
8 and see if we can come up with a verbal minimum that
9 maybe the team can agree that is a good first step that
10 we can move forward with, and that way, that will also
11 help us with the planning tool and the readiness tool
12 of putting some sort of concept out there in the first
13 version, because I believe that's a live version that
14 we can make changes to the questions and updates as the
15 planning goes on, so that there's some sort of change
16 control there, and at least we would have some sort of
17 baseline target. So it wouldn't be perfect, but that's
18 one approach that we could consider.

19 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Jim?

20 MR. JIM HARRINGTON: Just some quick thoughts
21 about concrete steps. If your state doesn't really
22 have a really solid group of IT managers where the

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1 districts are meeting on a regular basis, get one
2 together that was just critically instrumental in the
3 work that we did in Oregon. Second, if you don't have
4 IT representation on your state assessment group,
5 that's another thing to consider, so that dialog
6 between the two groups begins. Third, is really
7 beginning to tell the story of the destination and
8 where we're going with this, so that people are
9 beginning to feel the sense of urgency, so that when
10 that readiness tool comes out, they really understand
11 the need from that.

12 From an infrastructure perspective, if we're
13 building an online assessment system, schools are going
14 to get their arms wrapped around the idea of end user
15 devices, the one that's going to be more difficult for
16 them is the network infrastructure to do that, and
17 that's probably a spec and a standard that is much
18 easier for us to produce, because we really kind of
19 know that glide path and what those pieces are. And
20 then from there, the readiness tool allows us to drive
21 what we need for end user capacity, professional
22 development, and those kinds of things.

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1 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Neal?

2 MR. NEAL KINGSTON: Couple of comments. One,
3 I want to reiterate your second point about
4 communication between IT and assessment. In Kansas,
5 we've had posted for over five years the minimum
6 requirements for computers. It's posted both on the
7 State Department Web site and on the assessment Web
8 site. And yet every year, IT folks order computers not
9 meeting the specs and then call us and say, what can we
10 do for assessment. So now the sixth year in a row that
11 we've faced that.

12 Secondly, I almost stood up and applauded,
13 Ken, when you were talking about waterfall versus agile
14 development, but I restrained myself -- almost didn't.
15 I can't stress how important that is in terms of the
16 projects that fail versus succeed. But the other thing
17 that interacts with that is, many states are not used
18 to working in an agile kind of environment. It can be
19 very scary.

20 Many states are used to specifying everything
21 and then developing. That will not work. It has not
22 yet worked. I've worked in five different

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1 organizations that have developed these kinds of
2 systems. Some of them have failed; some of them have
3 succeeded. The costs associated are directly related
4 to the development methodologies also. Tom Peters, the
5 management guru, used to go around saying, ready, fire,
6 aim, because it's faster to re-aim after you fired.
7 And that's what agile development is about, having
8 short two-week sprints and redeveloping. It's a proven
9 way of going about things.

10 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Jessica?

11 MS. JESSICA PEREZ-ROSSELLO: Different
12 question, and I think it's for Sarah. You discuss the
13 issue with the bandwidth and being like a budget and
14 money, which I thought it was very interesting.

15 But I was wondering how you are handling it,
16 because -- or what policies have you put or guidance
17 have you put of when, about bandwidth and when the test
18 period happens?

19 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: We've really left the
20 bandwidth management to the localities, to the LEAs,
21 and primarily because they all have different
22 configurations. We did end up going with a -- we have

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1 network traffic for testing that's coming over what we
2 call standard port 80, so it gets mixed in with all the
3 other Internet traffic.

4 So the big key is that do the school
5 divisions, or the school districts, know what their
6 saturation point is? How big is their pipe? They have
7 to know, and they have to know how much of it they use
8 on a regular basis. And then from there, then they have
9 to make policies around, because we don't have this
10 much left over, then we cannot do X, Y and Z during
11 testing; or because we need this much bandwidth for
12 testing and we have a saturation that's really low,
13 then we can do our distance education lab and our
14 testing at the same time.

15 So it's really a local decision. And I think
16 the key there is communicating the requirements to the
17 locality so those technology folks can make an informed
18 decision about what can occur during testing, or what
19 can't.

20 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Mary?

21 MS. MARY WILLS: I can't emphasize enough the
22 idea of the planning. The state gives us great

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1 guidance. They give us policy. They give us what we
2 must have to make things work, and then we have to make
3 it work in the local division or district.

4 And so you have to sit down from the top down
5 and plan when your windows are -- like I said before,
6 how much is the testing period, how much is the
7 prepping period, and then make sure you safeguard
8 instructional periods. You have to lock it all into
9 your plan, or one will eat the other, and then you make
10 the decision with testing, with the IT, and like I
11 said, that new relationship that has been developed
12 between assessment and IT is to, okay, if this is the
13 plan for the school and for our school division, then
14 what do we need to shut off? The streaming? What
15 can's happen during these hours?

16 And teachers are told, if you're going to do
17 this planning, you do it from here to here; not here to
18 here. So it even gets down to that controlling,
19 perhaps, or planning and monitoring. So our goal in
20 Fauquier is that during that window, which takes a long
21 time to plan for, but during that window, our students
22 have very best environment -- secure and powerful and

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1 ready, and they're trained so that they can celebrate
2 what they have practiced to learn all year. And we
3 have graduation requirements on it, and we try to
4 really help the students to have the very, very best.

5 And so whenever we get into these big
6 discussions, I always try to bring people back to one
7 child, the student, this is their time; how do we make
8 it optimum for them?

9 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Denny?

10 MR. DENNY WAY: Well, this may be just saying
11 the obvious, but it just seems like the tremendous
12 opportunity are the field testing. You'll have two
13 chances before operational administration. So field
14 testing can represent just all of these things, and
15 that might be the idea of ready, fire, aim. Maybe the
16 first field test isn't all that successful or as
17 successful as it could be, and that can lead to the
18 second one, and then by the implementation, a lot of
19 the things will have come out in the wash and been
20 addressed. So I just emphasize the importance of that.

21 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Mike?

22 MR. MIKE RUSSELL: If I was sitting in your

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1 shoes right now, I'd be feeling kind of nervous and
2 overwhelmed. And I think it's important to recognize
3 that what's going on right now -- states like Virginia
4 began this ten years ago. It's creating a new process,
5 and everyone is used to a paper-based process, but we
6 got to remember, if we went back to 1928 when the first
7 large-scale paper-based testing program occurred,
8 they're having the same conversations about, how am I
9 going to get paper, enough of these things printed and
10 out to this place and moved around, and how am I going
11 to get my districts to accept those and be able to
12 process them and all that kind of stuff?

13 And it's the same issue; we've just become
14 really comfortable with it, because we've been doing
15 that for now 80 years. And that's really what we're
16 doing right now, is kind of rethinking the whole
17 process. I predict in 20 years from now, we'll look
18 back, and it's going to be second nature to everybody,
19 but that's what we're in right now.

20 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Dan?

21 MR. DAN LONG: (Off mic.) I'm one of those
22 that feel my roots about this, but it's not so much

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1 nervous about implementation as it is what to say to
2 school districts and schools while we're waiting to
3 make some of these decisions, and to give them
4 appropriate advice about what to do now that would be
5 helpful in waiting until they have a point where they
6 can move forward.

7 So it's really not about a device, or is it
8 about infrastructure? What are those comments? So
9 could the experts that are here today share with us
10 maybe some advice about how can we work with districts
11 to say, okay, we're going to reign this phase, but
12 here's some things that you can begin to think about.

13 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Before I go to you, Dale,
14 do you want to follow up?

15 MR. DALE CORNELIUS: Yeah, just to piggyback
16 on why I'm nervous. I don't know exactly what's going
17 on with the big picture, because I haven't been that
18 involved, so I apologize if I'm asking a question
19 that's already been answered, but it seems to me like
20 right out of the gate, the conversation went in the
21 direction of, we need one application that does this
22 and that and this and that. Even within Maryland, I'd

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1 go out and talk to people in special ed, and they're
2 like, well, it's got to be the same application used
3 for instruction, because these kids can't be learning
4 new applications all the time.

5 And then I was talking to people who are more
6 involved, and it seems to me like I'm lost now. I'm
7 trying to figure out, because we talk about an agnostic
8 platform. We talk about a system that is
9 interoperable, and I understand those words, but I'm
10 trying to figure out if the PARCC or the SMARTER
11 Balance is trying to design a platform from the ground
12 up that everybody's going to use, or if the other model
13 is being considered, where we just make all the vendors
14 make their systems compatible so that we can have
15 competition and choice when we're delivering these
16 systems. I'm sorry if this has already been talked
17 about. Like I said, I just got into this late.

18 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Tony, do you want to
19 respond to that?

20 MR. TONY ALPERT: Yeah, SMARTER has been
21 talking about that quite a bit, and I would say we're
22 going to do both. So given the timeline and our grand

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1 proposal, we're obligated to oversee the production of
2 a particular system that meets the requirements that we
3 established, and we're interested in creating a series
4 of interoperability standards, such that to be included
5 in the SMARTER assessment, you're not limited to the
6 use of that single application.

7 Part of the system architecture and part of
8 our ongoing discussions has to go into what is core;
9 what has to be so similar that only a single set of
10 code can accomplish the objective that we're
11 establishing, and then to what degree can there be
12 variance? What applications or what components can
13 have variability such that different sets of codes or
14 different sets of syntax or application vehicles can
15 provide the functionality that's required?

16 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Sarah, did you want to
17 respond?

18 MS. SARAH SUSBURY: Yeah, a little bit to
19 Dan's question about being able to communicate to
20 school divisions, or school districts at this point.
21 And I guess the question is how are you getting
22 information about what systems are available currently?

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1 I mean, I know you're talking about potentially an RFP
2 to go out to develop a network capacity tool or
3 something along those lines. Do we even know right now
4 what the systems require that could be used, even
5 today, let alone two years from now, to be able to have
6 that, so that you can target in on, this is a minimum
7 set of requirements.

8 I'll give you an example. I was at a
9 district last week, and they had a tablet, and they
10 said, we want to use this for testing. I said, we're
11 not allowing that right now; and said, but look, and he
12 rolls out a silicon keyboard. It had a USB port, and
13 he was able to plug in a mouse, and he stood it up in a
14 stand. And he sort of from a -- took a tablet and
15 manufactured a laptop. And then he showed me that it
16 meets the minimum processor specifications -- because
17 we're going to actually do dual core processing in this
18 thing -- and it meets the minimum memory requirements.
19 It has an operating system that's on your list. And so
20 he said, are you going to tell me I can't use it?

21 I won't answer that here. But the real
22 answer was, it meets the minimum specifications; it

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1 maintains security of the items. So really, this was a
2 very enterprising gentleman that took our minimum
3 requirements, got some really great stuff for
4 instruction that can also be used for testing. And so
5 that minimum information is so critical. And I know
6 that's what Ann was asking about the top five things.
7 And right away, I thought, where is SETDA, and then I
8 realized, they're sitting behind me. So it's that.
9 You need to get with them, because I think there
10 probably are capacity surveys and all of that
11 information out there.

12 And then the project management plan is
13 critical. You've got to look at, where do I need to be
14 able to administer a test? And that I assume is the
15 field test. So there has to be a lot of stuff that
16 happens before then in that -- and just all the other
17 things that Suzanne was talking about, like I've got to
18 train people how to set it up; I've got to get students
19 to use it, let alone the item development and all those
20 pieces. So I know that you want to go for the latest
21 and greatest, but you've got to get something that will
22 work in the timeframe that you've got right now, which

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1 is the balance, yes. Thank you.

2 MR. NEAL KINGSTON: Interoperability is
3 critical, and every one of the Consortia are trying to
4 address interoperability issues, but I don't want to
5 let anyone delude themselves into thinking that it's
6 actually going to make the problems go away. It will
7 only minimize the issues of cross-platform usage.

8 Think of using different browsers to get to
9 different Web sites. They don't all work and they
10 don't all work the same, and yet they've spent a lot
11 more time and effort on interoperability than we've got
12 the time to do.

13 MR. JEFF ENG: Jeff Eng with SMARTER Balance.
14 I just want to go on a theme of looking at the ready,
15 fire and aim, the whole thought and methodology of
16 using agile processing. And when you look at agile
17 processing and when you look at going multiple
18 approaches and multiple phases, you're looking at
19 primarily the most riskiest thing that you should do
20 first, and anything you can look at.

21 And when I look at the problem space of IT
22 readiness, it feels like every component's risky, and I

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1 wanted to kind of ask maybe the experts and maybe
2 Virginia, their concept of what is more risky. And I'm
3 hearing from Mike Russell earlier talking about, if you
4 go wireless and do the final mile, it kind of makes
5 sense, if you need to go the final mile, wireless is
6 more cost effective, much more value-add. But you may
7 make assumptions about your wireless router, and when
8 you make assumptions and those assumption on the one
9 side are riskiest, because you just think, oh, the
10 wireless router's going to handle your free WiFi
11 everywhere; it handles everybody. But you don't think
12 about those things, and what are the riskiest things
13 that we should think about, and I'll like to hear
14 comments from the experts

15 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Randy?

16 MR. RANDY BENNETT: I think we actually have
17 a national infrastructure testing test case. NAEP just
18 gave its 2011 writing assessment on national
19 probability sample, right, on computer. So how did it
20 go? What inferences can we draw from that about that
21 infrastructure?

22 MS. SUZANNE TRIPLETT: Actually, it went

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1 extremely well, but it's because of a lot of what we
2 learned the first time out of the gate with the science
3 interactive. And we tried to use school computers for
4 that particular experience and had to go -- we had to
5 change course in the middle of the stream. But we
6 learned a lot, and I think that's what this group,
7 these two groups have to really wrap their head around.
8 You're going to learn a lot in the next couple of
9 years.

10 With the writing, it worked perfectly. They
11 got so engaged. We hope that they were writing, and
12 we'll know soon if they were writing and really doing
13 what we wanted them to do with assessment, or were they
14 just so engaged with how nice it was and all of that?
15 But we took our own laptops. NAEP has some advantages
16 that states don't, and so it's hard to think about how
17 to say these things will translate to what you're
18 doing.

19 I was going to ask Sarah at some point, how
20 many balls do you juggle at one time, because it's
21 that. It's not just the computer. It's not just
22 what's in the schools. It's all the other things

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1 that'll make or break this. And I'm worried that we're
2 so focused right now on the computers that we're going
3 to be missing all of this other planning. Somebody
4 said that Sarah planned to fail. She had a plan to
5 fail. Well, I think she also had a plan to change, and
6 those things go hand in hand.

7 And so we actually learned a lot from
8 listening to Virginia. You are very lucky to have them
9 with you today, because they helped NAEP a lot in
10 trying to plan how to get out there, how to get across
11 50 states and all of these different configurations.
12 You know, we take airplanes to schools up in Alaska, or
13 helicopters to the bottom of the Grand Canyon to a
14 particular school. And so we deal with all those
15 situations which have to be at least as complicated as
16 what's going on in a particular state.

17 So that would be my thing. You need to
18 juggle a lot of balls. Right now, you can't wait,
19 because all of these things, all of these pieces and
20 parts, take so long to do. We're thinking now about
21 what we're going to be reporting three years from now
22 so that we can develop the right types of items to do

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1 that kind of reporting. So you've got to start now,
2 planning all of those things. And you've got a lot of
3 partners that you have to work with. You've talked
4 about LEAs, but you've got content people, you have
5 your IT people, you have your policymakers, you have
6 the state boards. So you just got to juggle all those
7 balls right now, and it's not just focused on the
8 technology. You can't do that.

9 And you've got great examples. You've got
10 Virginia, you've got Oregon, you've got Kansas. They
11 have a lot of things that you could just pick up and
12 probably use without having to do a whole lot of
13 planning. So I would just encourage you to get on with
14 it.

15 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: And Karen, you've got the
16 last word on this.

17 MS. KAREN CATOR: Well, thank you, yes. So
18 yes, on that let's get on with it topic, so here's
19 where I say we're here to help kind of thing. So a
20 couple things. One is, I am listening to this
21 conversation. I've been in technology my entire
22 career, pretty much, and absolutely understanding the

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1 feeling of oh, my gosh, I have no idea what have this
2 stuff is about, all the way to, I know exactly how to
3 do this, so just let me do it for you kind of thing.
4 We have probably all of that, every level in between in
5 the room. So that's one thing.

6 Second thing is, we absolutely do need to
7 learn together and learn from Virginia, Kansas,
8 whatever, Maine, every state that's been all along this
9 continuum as well. So two things that we're going to
10 be doing that hopefully will help this effort. And by
11 we, so I'm at the Department of Education and I head up
12 the Office of Education Technology, and we're working
13 closely with Patrick and Ann on this project. And
14 we're also working with the State of Tech Directors
15 Association and CoSN the Consortium of School
16 Networking, two of the organizations you should be
17 looking for members out to help you.

18 We're going to be launching a community of
19 practice specially around this topic, so that we can
20 learn together. We can maybe publish some frameworks,
21 publish some policies, some use cases, that should
22 allow us the opportunity to learn together online. So

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1 short of all of us getting a room together and
2 continuing to talk amongst ourselves, we will be
3 building, putting out there in a community of practice
4 the opportunity for people to learn together that's one
5 thing. And SETDA is actually going to lead this
6 effort.

7 So the second thing, as Ann pointed out at
8 the beginning, this whole question of interoperability
9 standards, we got a lot of fantastic information from
10 all of the responses from many people in this room.
11 This is a little bit of a complex topic. We can take
12 it very far down the road. Steve Mitchley (phonetic),
13 who's standing in the back, is leading that effort, and
14 we will in, as Ann said, in a minute, publish kind of
15 sort of the synopsis of what we learned. And that also
16 should help, because we've really been analyzing
17 carefully where standards need to be in place and where
18 to leave room for innovation.

19 Because the best part of the conversation --
20 not the best part -- one part of the conversation today
21 I've been really interested in is where people are
22 saying, we're just going to do what we want to do today

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1 because we can do it today and plan for it; too, where
2 do we leave open the opportunity for the things that we
3 don't know what the innovators around the world are
4 going to be designing and developing for us in the next
5 36 months?

6 So there's a huge opportunity. There's a
7 tremendous opportunity as we do transition to this
8 digital environment, both in testing and instruction
9 and content, and interactions and all of those kinds of
10 things. And I just applaud the work of this entire
11 team and the Consortia for being willing to really
12 grapple with this. Please, please, please, build teams
13 in your states, wrap your arms around the people who
14 you maybe not have wrapped your arms around before. So
15 get your people together, your curriculum to Title I,
16 technology assessment. Build your LEA or learning
17 teams on this as soon as possible.

18 And one last thing. One of the pieces that
19 also has come up is broadband, and the FCC along with
20 the Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture,
21 are hugely invested and interested and working every
22 single day on building out broadband across the

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1 country. So the map that Ann kind of flashed up is
2 also at data.ed.gov, is a map that we've mashed up the
3 broadband information that has been published by the
4 FCC with the school information that we have from NCES.
5 So that's kind of where we're also going to be
6 continuing to keep track of where broadband is and
7 isn't. And again, not perfect data, but one of the
8 things we fully believe is advanced transparency, as
9 much transparency as possible, so we can know where we
10 have data, where the holes are, et cetera.

11 So we are very excited about this, absolutely
12 looking forward to success, and we'll help everywhere
13 we can along the way. Thank you.

14 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Okay, thank you. Suzanne?

15 MS. SUZANNE TRIPLETT: I just want to make
16 one last comment, and it's falling on what Karen said.
17 You don't know what's out there. You can do, you can
18 survey it and do whatever, but I can tell you, from our
19 experience going into schools, we'd go in one week and
20 it was ready. It passed every single test. We'd go
21 in, and on Monday morning with our little teams and our
22 little tests, and they wouldn't work at all, because

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1 somebody had changed something, had updated some
2 software.

3 So I just want to encourage you not to get so
4 focused on the specifics at this stage. I agree that
5 you need to give them some guidance no what's coming,
6 but don't get hung up on the specifics, because no
7 matter how well you survey, it's not going to be true
8 next week.

9 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Well, thank you. With
10 that thought -- yeah, we always do; somehow I get that.

11 MS. SUZANNE TRIPLETT: Well, you told me to
12 be encouraging.

13 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: You were. You were very
14 encouraging. With that, we're going to move to public
15 comment. And again, I'm going to remind you that the
16 purpose is to hear from the public on key
17 considerations related to this issue. So with that,
18 Kate? The floor is yours, three minutes.

19 MS. KATE GILLIGAN: I wouldn't take anywhere
20 near that long. My name is Katie Gilligan, and I'm from
21 Textile Systems, and we're actually an assistive
22 technology partner to many of the people around the

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1 table. And the one thing that -- I was talking to
2 Susan after the first break, and I said, Susan, will
3 they make room for innovation? And I think Karen
4 echoed that a minute ago.

5 So I want to just encourage you, we're not
6 the enemy. The people here that are sitting on this
7 side of the table represent just a tremendous wealth of
8 expertise, investment. We're moving the needle forward
9 as fast as we possibly can as companies to help all
10 kids, and kids who have print disabilities have them
11 for a variety of reasons. And I think Rebecca and
12 Rachel identified many of them; Neal as well. Those
13 kids are going to struggle. They struggle today in
14 print, whether it's in a paper book. They're going to
15 struggle electronically unless you let the technology
16 help.

17 And I did want to say that with our partners,
18 we have a lot of experience delivering secure, in a
19 secure test environment, the types of accommodations
20 that these kids can really use. And then you won't be
21 faced with that gut-wrenching decision anymore, between
22 test security and inclusion. Paper doesn't have to be

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1 your only accommodation anymore, and that's just from a
2 mom and a grand mom, who doesn't want to see any kids
3 scraped off. Every kid needs to get to play. So
4 thanks.

5 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you all for adhering
6 to our ground rules today, and for taking the time to
7 share some wonderful examples with us, some comments,
8 asking some wonderful questions, and being able to
9 share Virginia's, Kansas', Oregon's, and the two
10 Consortia, as they embark upon this next round
11 assessments for our students. So with that, Patrick?
12 Transition time.

13 MR. PATRICK ROONEY: (Off mic.) I just want
14 to thank you all for being here and (inaudible)
15 insights that you brought. I want to thank PARCC,
16 SMARTER Balance, (inaudible) for being here as well.
17 Hopefully this was helpful for you guys as well, got a
18 lot of thoughts percolating in your mind that you can
19 now run home and answer all those questions that came
20 up today.

21 And point out that the transcript from today
22 and all the PowerPoints are going to be posted online.

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1 It will probably be a few days until we actually have
2 the transcript up, but they will be up on our Web site,
3 along with all the other Race to the Top Assessment
4 information and the Web site address is there. If
5 anyone for some reason has thoughts they wanted to
6 share and didn't get a chance to, we definitely would
7 appreciate that Race to the Top and DOT assessment at
8 ed.gov. Anytime you have any questions for the Race to
9 the Top Assessment, that's the place to go, if you have
10 any thoughts or questions. And just a note that this
11 was the first in a series of meetings. We don't have
12 the future meetings planned out yet, but we're very
13 thankful that we have this help and the Hewlett
14 Foundation, and we do plan to conduct more of these in
15 the future. Most likely the next one will not be in
16 D.C. I think we want to acknowledge the fact that
17 we've got almost all the states around the country
18 working on this, and we want to not make everyone come
19 to D.C. all the time, although D.C. in the spring is
20 lovely. We actually had good weather today.

21 So as future meetings are set in terms of the
22 agenda and the experts we invited and the locations,

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1 we'll make that available on our Web site, and we'll
2 send it out to all the interest groups that we send out
3 to this time. I think actually it seemed to do a
4 pretty good job of getting the word out about the
5 meeting, so hopefully that'll continue to be the case.
6 So stay tuned for more information. Once again, thank
7 you, everyone for being here, and have a safe trip.

8 MS. ROBIN TAYLOR: Thank you.

9 (Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned
10 at 2:38 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER

I, NATASHA KORNILOVA, the officer before whom foregoing hearing was taken, do hereby certify that the testimony in the foregoing hearing was taken by me in stenotype and thereafter reduced to typewriting; that said hearing is a true record of the testimony given; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this hearing was taken; and, further, that I am not a relative of employee of any counsel or attorney employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

NATASHA KORNILOVA
COURT REPORTER IN AND FOR
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA