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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RACE TO THE TOP ASSESSMENT

PUBLIC MEETING ON CREATING VALID,
RELIABLE, AND FAIR ASSESSMENTS FOR STUDENTS
WITH DISABILITIES AND ENGLISH LEARNERS

Wednesday, August 10, 2011
9:00 a.m.

U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20202

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2

1	C O N T E N T S	
2	AGENDA ITEM:	PAGE:
3	Introduction and Opening Remarks	4
4	Joseph Conaty and Patrick Rooney	
5	U.S. Department of Education	
6	Deborah Matthews	
7	Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium	
8	Roberta Alley	
9	Partnership for Assessment of Readiness	
10	for College and Careers (PARCC)	
11	Table Discussion - Defining the Populations	27
12	Technology Support for Assessment	71
13	Accessibility	
14	Mike Russell, Measured Progress	
15	Research and Practice on Accommodations	98
16	Jamal Abedi, University of California, Davis	
17	How to Improve Accessibility in Item Design	114
18	and Development	
19	Afternoon Session	
20	Table Discussion (Continued)	145
21	Table Exercise	154
22	Lizanne DeStefano, University of Illinois	
23	Table Exercise	154
24	Rebecca Kopriva, Wisconsin Center for	
25	Educational Research	
26	Concluding Comments	235
27	Public Comment	246
28	Closing Comments	253
29	Joseph Conaty and Patrick Rooney	
30	U.S. Department of Education	

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3

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

2 Introduction and Opening Remarks

3 MR. CONATY:

4 Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the
5 department. On behalf of the Secretary and the Deputy
6 Secretary, I'd like to welcome everyone and thank
7 everyone for participating.

8 My name is Joe Conaty. I am and for some of
9 you have been for quite some time one of the senior
10 managers here in the department. So it's nice to see
11 some familiar faces.

12 Patrick will give you a rundown of the day and
13 what we hope to accomplish and the goals for the
14 meeting.

15 I would just like to say a couple of words.
16 The issues that we're going to address today are among
17 the issues that are most central to effective
18 accountability and assessment systems. We've gathered
19 what I think is a distinguished panel of experts to
20 discuss these issues.

21 I would like the tone of the meeting to be one
22 where information, up-to-date research, comments can

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4

1 take place in an environment of free and open discussion
2 and I hope that everyone in the room, participants, the
3 representatives of the two consortia, as well as others
4 who are around the room, all benefit both in terms of
5 information, research, knowledge, identification of
6 issues, but also to think about it in real-world terms
7 as an issue that needs to be addressed in the day-to-day
8 work of schools and the day-to-day work of districts to
9 benefit all children but particularly children of these
10 two special groups.

11 So thank you all for coming. Patrick is going
12 to walk us through the day and if, at any time, you need
13 something, find myself or Patrick and we'll try and
14 resolve the issue. So if, during a break or something,
15 you want to catch us, that's fine.

16 Thank you very much again for attending.

17 MR. ROONEY: Thanks, Joe. So my name is
18 Patrick Rooney. I'm the, I guess, Program Lead for the
19 Race to the Top Assessment Program, and I'm here just to
20 do a quick overview of the Race to the Top Assessment
21 and then turn it over to hopefully these fine folks
22 around the table to have a very lively conversation.

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5

1 So this is our third RTTA public meeting. We
2 had two previous meetings, one in April on state and
3 local technology infrastructure moving to the online
4 tests that are coming in 2014-15, and then one in June
5 on automated scoring assessments.

6 We'll have future meetings in this series. We
7 don't have any currently scheduled but as we have them,
8 we'll make them available. We'll provide information
9 about them, make them available. We've kind of taken
10 everyone's e-mail address who's come to any of our
11 meetings and created a listserv for future meetings, so
12 that's how you can find out about them.

13 The meetings really have three purposes. One
14 is to provide technical assistance and to support
15 collaboration between PARCC and Smarter Balanced as
16 they're working on these very large comprehensive
17 assessment systems they're developing.

18 The second is to improve the -- expand the
19 knowledge and expertise of the department and the public
20 around key assessment issues related to the consortia,
21 and the third is to facilitate this conversation in a
22 public manner so that experts in the public all get a

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6

1 sense to hear what the challenges are that PARCC and
2 Smarter Balanced are struggling with and working to
3 resolve with the new assessment systems they're
4 creating, and we're very thankful to have a grant from
5 the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation to help us with
6 this work.

7 So the RTTA Program has fairly ambitious
8 goals. The requirement is that they develop, and this is
9 actually the absolute requirement from the Notice, they
10 develop an assessment system that measures the full
11 range of the content standards, including the hard-to-
12 measure standards, and it also measures the full
13 spectrum of performance, including very high- and very
14 low-achieving students. It includes a measure of
15 individual student growth and it helps develop a measure
16 of college and career readiness and whether students are
17 on track for college and career readiness.

18 We also expect that it will reflect good
19 instructional practice and support a culture of
20 continuous improvement in schools and that it will
21 effectively assess all students, including students with
22 disabilities and English learners, and, of course,

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7

1 that's the reason we're here today, but that's not a
2 separate component.

3 I think that's an important component that's
4 embedded in each of the other components above it. So
5 it's not -- you need to do these things and also include
6 students with disabilities and English learners but as
7 you're doing all those things, you need to make sure
8 you're including students with disabilities and English
9 learners, and I think that's an important point to make.

10 Looking forward to the assessments, we're
11 focusing mostly on summative assessments today because
12 that's, I guess, the primary requirement in the Race to
13 the Top Assessment Program, but it's important to note
14 that there is both a formative and interim component in
15 both PARCC and Smarter Balanced.

16 So it's really creating a cohesive system but
17 the minimal requirement is that they at least have a
18 summative assessment that are fully implemented by the
19 2014-15 school year in reading, language arts, and
20 mathematics, and at least once in Grades 2 through 8 and
21 once in high school, and the results need to be used to
22 inform teaching, learning, and program improvement,

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8

1 determinations of school effectiveness, determinations
2 of principal and teacher effectiveness for evaluation
3 and support, and determinations of individual student,
4 college, and career readiness. So no small hurdle for
5 them to tackle, PARCC and Smarter Balanced.

6 There are two grantees. They received
7 combined about \$360 million in last September. They
8 represent 45 states, plus D.C. There's the Partnership
9 for Assessment of Readiness of College and Careers,
10 better known as PARCC, which has Achieve as its project
11 management partner, and then the Smarter Balanced
12 Assessment Consortium, which has the project management
13 partner of WestEd.

14 And both, it's worth mentioning, there's
15 competitive priority for connection to institutes of
16 higher education and both have in their applications a
17 large percentage of direct matriculation students who,
18 the institutions that they're going into, have committed
19 to working with PARCC and Smarter Balanced so that the
20 students, when they get into the institutes of higher
21 ed, do not need to take remedial courses, and that's a
22 mouthful for me to say. I have trouble saying that.

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9

1 So today, we're here to talk about how to
2 create valid, fair, and reliable assessments for
3 students with disabilities and English learners. A
4 couple points to make.

5 The assessments need to include students with
6 disabilities and English learners. They need to make
7 sure that they're accessible for the populations and
8 also standardize accommodations across the states in
9 their consortium. Each consortium must develop a
10 definition of English learner, that's uniform across the
11 member states.

12 And an additional point, I want to point out
13 Neal Kingston from the Dynamic Learning Maps and Martha
14 Thurlow from the National Center and State
15 Collaborative, better known as NCSC, the two consortia
16 that are developing alternate assessments based on
17 alternate achievement standards which are also based on
18 the same common core standards. So they'll be working
19 closely on a lot of these issues for students with
20 disabilities with PARCC and Smarter Balanced because the
21 states and both consortia are in one or the other of
22 Dynamic Learning Maps or NCSC and we're very happy to

1 have them here today.

2 We want to make sure that all four consortia
3 are working together as they're moving to develop their
4 assessment systems, so there's a lot of cohesion across
5 the systems.

6 There's also the department put out a notice
7 for an enhanced assessment grant for English language
8 proficiency consortia and I don't think we've awarded
9 grants for those yet but at some point there will be one
10 or more consortia that will be developing English
11 language proficiency exams, as well. So that's an
12 additional connection point between the PARCC and
13 Smarter Balanced and those consortia.

14 For today's meeting, we have a number of
15 experts with us and PARCC and Smarter Balanced. The
16 goal is to share knowledge and experience with the
17 consortia, looking at where we are currently, what the
18 state of research in the field, and also what's
19 promising perhaps and what needs to be done to kind of
20 get to where we all want to be to make sure we have
21 valid, reliable, and fair assessments for English
22 learners and students with disabilities.

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11

1 The format. This morning, we're going to
2 focus on a couple key questions that we think PARCC and
3 Smarter Balanced need to work to resolve as they're
4 thinking about how to design the new assessments and
5 think about how to actually write items and improve the
6 accessibility of students and then the afternoon, we're
7 going to take that a step further and we'll actually
8 look at one mathematics standard and one reading,
9 language arts standard from the common core and have a
10 table exercise of everyone here to think about how they
11 would try to apply some of the conversation we've had
12 and some of the work that's been going on in the field
13 and then PARCC and Smarter Balanced to how to design
14 accessible items around those standards.

15 And in the Agenda everyone has, I think the
16 standards we've chosen should be in the back of that
17 Agenda, so you can actually see what those standards
18 will be.

19 So today, we'll have Introduction. Then we'll
20 have a discussion till about 10:15. Then we'll take a
21 short break and we'll have an additional discussion for
22 the rest of the morning. Lunch will be on your own from

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12

1 noon to 1, and there are several options for all of you
2 across the street. There's a McDonald's and a Quizno's
3 and a Wall Street Deli, I think. There's a couple
4 different options. Just keep in mind there's also a
5 cafeteria here in the building. If you leave, you'll
6 have to go back through Security when you come back
7 through. So just keep that in mind when you plan.

8 We will start again exactly at 1 o'clock, try
9 to keep on schedule because I know everyone's got busy
10 schedules. We don't want to keep people here longer
11 than we have to.

12 From 1 to 1:30, we'll have a fishbowl
13 discussion from the table of some public comments and
14 I'll talk about that in a second, and then from 1:30 to
15 around 3 is when we'll do the Table Exercise I just
16 mentioned. There will be an opportunity for Public
17 Comment at 3 o'clock, and then we'll wrap up and adjourn
18 by 3:30.

19 So the invited experts, I just want to
20 introduce them all, we have Jamal Abedi from the
21 University of California, Davis; Lizanne DeStefano from
22 the University of Illinois; Rebecca Kopriva from the

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13

1 Wisconsin Center for Educational Research; Mike Russell
2 from Measured Progress and Nimble Labs; Steve Sireci
3 from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst; and
4 Guillermo Solano-Flores from the University of Colorado,
5 Boulder.

6 Now the Public Comment period, in the Agenda
7 that hopefully everyone picked up, if you didn't, there
8 are copies outside, the last page is actually a Public
9 Comment period. We are very interested in hearing from
10 the public on key considerations and questions that the
11 department and PARCC and Smarter Balanced can be
12 thinking about around this issue of creating valid,
13 reliable, and fair assessments for students with
14 disabilities and English learners.

15 So the last page of the Agenda is actually a
16 Public Comment card. Anyone who's interested, please
17 feel free to fill it out, write your name, your
18 organization, and any questions you might have and drop
19 it off before lunch or right at lunch, at noon, before
20 you leave for lunch. We will collect them all and we'll
21 talk about them as a group internally and in the
22 afternoon, we'll actually start off by picking a few of

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14

1 the questions and try to discuss them with the table.

2 All of the questions that get turned in will
3 become part of the record and will be posted online with
4 the meeting. We probably won't get a chance to look at
5 all or talk to all of the questions this afternoon but
6 we'll try to get through several of them to get a sense
7 for the questions that you guys are raising for us.

8 We will also have in the afternoon a short
9 period for about 15 minutes where people can submit
10 verbal public comments. During lunch, you can sign up
11 if you'd like to do that. There will be a sign-up at
12 the Registration Desk outside. You'll get up to three
13 minutes for a person or organization and you can just
14 provide a question or a comment or thoughts based upon
15 this issue that you'd like us to consider or keep in
16 mind.

17 We might not get to everyone and in that case,
18 we certainly encourage anyone who has additional
19 thoughts they'd like to share to e-mail them to us at
20 racetothetop.assessment@ed.gov.

21 A few reminders, just kind of logistics
22 pieces. Please, everyone, place your cell phones on

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15

1 vibrate. There's a website where you can get a lot of
2 information about the Race to the Top Assessment Program
3 and this is -- I'll put on my legal hat.

4 The purpose of the meeting is to promote a
5 full discussion and hear a wide range of viewpoints on
6 creating valid, reliable, and fair assessments for
7 English learners and students with disabilities as well
8 as the challenges and opportunities afforded by the
9 program.

10 Through the meeting, we're not seeking to
11 promote or endorse any particular program, project,
12 methodology, or approach to the work but really to get a
13 fuller understanding about it. So we ask that you not
14 in your public comments or people at the table not try
15 to solicit work or your particular products during the
16 meeting.

17 Actually, there's one other point. For
18 everyone at the table, we've been asked please make sure
19 you use your microphones, so that way we can pick it up
20 for the transcription that we're having, and for the
21 first half hour or so, maybe the first time you talk at
22 least, if you could say your name before you start so

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16

1 that way the transcriptionist can make sure she's
2 assigning the right comment to the right person. That
3 would be appreciated.

4 And for everyone, hopefully you've figured out
5 where the bathrooms are by now, but the women's room, if
6 you go out this door, is on this side of the building,
7 my right, and the men's room is, if you go out this side
8 to the left side of the building, and they're both
9 directly behind us by the glass doors.

10 And I think that's everything. So now we'll
11 do introductions. I went through the experts and Neal
12 and Martha. So now I'll introduce PARCC and Smarter
13 Balanced and then I'll turn it over to them.

14 So from Smarter Balanced, we have Debbie
15 Matthews from the Kansas State Department of Education;
16 Michael Hock from the Vermont Department of Education;
17 Wendy Carver from the Utah Department of Education; Viji
18 Somasundaram, hopefully I didn't mispronounce that, from
19 the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction; Shelbi
20 Cole from the Missouri Department of Elementary and
21 Secondary Education; Gaye Fedorchak from the New
22 Hampshire Department of Education.

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17

1 And representing PARCC today, we have Roberta
2 Alley and Leila Williams, both from the Arizona
3 Department of Education; Melissa Fincher from the
4 Georgia Department of Education; Dan Wiener from the
5 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary
6 Education; and Andrew Hinkle from the Ohio Department of
7 Education.

8 And on that note, I'm actually going to turn
9 it over now to Debbie Matthews from Kansas to talk about
10 Smarter Balanced.

11 MS. MATTHEWS: Good morning. I'm Debbie
12 Matthews. I'm from the Kansas State Department of
13 Education, and I'm one of the co-chairmen on the
14 Accessibility and Accommodations Workgroup for Smarter
15 Balanced.

16 The purpose of the consortium is to develop a
17 set of comprehensive and innovative assessments for
18 Grades 3 through 8 and high school in English language
19 arts and math that align to the common core.

20 Students must leave high school prepared for
21 postsecondary success in college or career through
22 increased student learning and improved teaching.

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18

1 The assessments will be in operation in 2014-
2 15.

3 This is a map of our member states. Actually,
4 at the top it says 29. We have 30, I believe, now. The
5 green are governing states and the blue are advisory
6 states. We have 10 workgroups. We have transitioned to
7 common core, technology approach, item development,
8 performance tasks, test design, test administration,
9 reporting, formative processes and tools and
10 professional development, accessibility and
11 accommodations, and research and evaluation.

12 The purpose of the Accessibility and
13 Accommodations Workgroup is to ensure that the Smarter
14 Balanced Assessment System is maximally accessible to
15 the broadest range of students through identifying,
16 recommending, and evaluating strategies, tools, and
17 technologies, thereby providing information and guidance
18 that will positively impact critical aspects of
19 assessment, design, and development.

20 Our group is working to focus on a new
21 paradigm that will focus on the students first, not the
22 test items which address accessibility issues as part of

1 item development, not as an afterthought.

2 We are computer-based assessment which allows
3 technology to open many doors for students because
4 accessibility is built in to the assessment. The
5 necessity for accommodations is reduced. Accommodations
6 that are allowed are more targeted.

7 In both policy and practice, Smarter Balanced
8 will include the broadest range of students by
9 facilitating each student's ability to demonstrate as
10 fully as possible what they know and can do on targeted
11 constructs being measured in a manner that is equitable
12 and reliable and yields valid and interpretable results.

13 We have five goals and key activities. One is
14 to create policies that reflect current research, best
15 practice, and future possibilities related to
16 accessibility and accommodations; (2) create assessments
17 that are free from bias and sensitivity issues,
18 leveraging new technologies, including interoperability,
19 while preserving test constructs; (3) create accessible
20 and accommodative assessments that yield valid and
21 reliable results; (4) ensure accessibility and
22 accommodations practices and policies are implemented

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20

1 with fidelity; and (5) develop useful reporting and
2 presentation guidelines that include information on
3 accessibility and accommodation actions in aggregate and
4 at the student level.

5 And here's all the members of Smarter Balanced
6 that are here today. We have a member from the Item
7 Development Group and from Performance Tasks. So we
8 have more than the Accessibility and Combinations
9 Workgroup here.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. ALLEY: Hello. I'm Roberta Alley from the
12 Arizona Department of Education, and I am on the
13 Leadership Team for PARCC and chair, along with Melissa,
14 the Combinations and Accessibility Working Group.

15 The PARCC Vision is very similar to what we've
16 been hearing. We do want to assess the full range of
17 the common core and it is to be for all students and it
18 is to determine are they on track or ready for college
19 and career and by college ready, we mean they're ready
20 to take credit-bearing courses when they enter an
21 institute of beyond secondary education or being ready
22 for a career track that makes them have a viable income.

1 We do want to provide support for various
2 accountability uses that we've talked about earlier and
3 that the information provided is timely, that it's very
4 important that information's returned to schools and
5 students in a timely fashion to inform instruction.

6 We do want to leverage technology and the
7 various uses. It will be a technology-based assessment
8 and using innovative items and that can also support the
9 accommodations and assistive technology that will be
10 available for this assessment.

11 We do want to measure that range of complexity
12 of the standards that are across the full range of
13 standards for both English language arts and for
14 mathematics. We want to allow ELL students and students
15 with identified needs to demonstrate what they know and
16 can do in a way on the assessment that we get a true
17 understanding of that student's knowledge and where that
18 student is and what support that student will be
19 needing.

20 We'll be applying the principles of university
21 design during the development of that assessment and we
22 currently have some pilot projects going with some

1 research universities looking at some of those
2 innovative item types and definitely in the directions
3 for that group is discussion of universal design and
4 accessibility issues around those items that are being
5 looked at.

6 We certainly want to leverage technology and
7 as you all know, it's changing so rapidly. We're
8 struggling with how do we put out guidance that will
9 allow for the change in technology and not limit
10 technology use as we move forward.

11 This is the governing structure of PARCC and
12 as a member of the Leadership Team, we come down to the
13 operational working groups and that's where we will
14 focus a working group on the fairness, accessibility,
15 and accommodations for students.

16 The other side is our TAC, our Technical
17 Advisory Committee. Under that group, we have what we
18 call technical working groups or TWGs. They also will
19 have a TWG that focuses on fairness, accessibility, and
20 accommodations, and the two groups will work together as
21 we move forward. So we not only have a working
22 understanding of what accommodations mean but also that

1 technical advice we need as we move forward.

2 So the Assessment, Accommodation, Fairness TWG
3 is a limited number and it is to address high-priority
4 topics that are specific to the area of accessibility
5 and accommodations.

6 Oh, let me back up. The members of our TWG
7 are listed here. I'm not going to read their names but
8 these are the people we will go to. Dan from
9 Massachusetts chairs that committee and also functions
10 as a member of the Operational Working Group. So there
11 is good crossover between the two groups.

12 The Operational Working Group is comprised of
13 state representatives and staff from ACHIEVE and
14 eventually vendors as we move into this. They're just
15 going to be really looking at that day-to-day aspects of
16 how does this work in an assessment, how does this work
17 with students.

18 Here are the members of the Accessibility and
19 Accommodations and Fairness Working Group. I did not
20 put e-mail addresses but ACHIEVE has an address and they
21 can contact any of us if you need to contact us.

22 The working groups together will certainly be

1 looking at the existing accommodation policies but also
2 building a list of recommended standard accommodations
3 and really looking at the availability of assistive
4 technology that is going to be available because it is
5 going to be a technology-based assessment but also
6 looking at the needs for possibly some students with
7 paper-pencil. We've got a lot of issues to look at, but
8 we want to look forward, not backward, and I think
9 that's the important aspect. What can we do for
10 students?

11 We will be making a set of proposed
12 accommodations, drafting a common accommodations manual,
13 comparability of assessment administrations, monitoring
14 ongoing refinement of the accommodations. I think it's
15 an ongoing process we'll be working on together.

16 We do have to define the common definition of
17 English learner, a common set of policies and procedures
18 for that English learner, as well as students with
19 identified needs and policies and procedures for the
20 participation of those students in the assessment
21 system.

22 As part of the development process, we are

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25

1 working on it on the blueprint. We're working on a
2 design team. We all, many of the people on the working
3 group, have dual membership in other working groups, not
4 in the leadership role but in that, so that we are
5 involved in the Technology Working Group. We're
6 involved in the Design Working Group. We're involved in
7 each of the other working groups, the Research Working
8 Group. So there's cross-membership, so we can make sure
9 that each working group is interconnected and not
10 working in isolation.

11 We're going to build accessibility throughout
12 the test itself with no trade-offs. We really -- that's
13 our goal, is to make sure that all students have a fair
14 assessment.

15 MR. ROONEY: All right. Thank you, Roberta
16 and Debbie. Table Discussion - Defining the Population

17 MR. ROONEY: I want to take a minute now
18 before we get into the next part of the conversation,
19 which is going to be what we've termed Understanding the
20 Population, to take a minute just to set it up for
21 everyone and give you a few data points to help set the
22 context a little bit.

1 But before I'll do that, I'll even step
2 further back and say that we made a very purposeful
3 decision to have a public meeting about both how you
4 include students with disabilities and English learners
5 in one meeting but that's not to say that it's one
6 answer for both groups.

7 I think I want to be very clear and upfront
8 that the challenges facing PARCC and Smarter Balanced
9 are thinking about how to include students with
10 disabilities and English learners in the assessment
11 systems are similar but the groups themselves are very
12 different and even within each group, there's a lot of
13 distinctions that both consortia are going to have to
14 work through and struggle with.

15 So I think this is going to be a fruitful
16 conversation about how you think about the needs of
17 individual students, based upon their need, and some of
18 the challenges are going to be similar across the two
19 groups but there's also going to be some distinctions
20 that are important to consider. So I hope everyone at
21 the table and in the audience will keep that in mind as
22 we're talking today.

1 So a few points I just wanted to highlight.
2 This is a chart that actually comes from our IDEA data
3 which actually Martha's group has put together and I
4 stole from them which shows the number of -- percentage
5 breakdown of type of disability for students with
6 disabilities and you can see that specific learning
7 disability is the Number 1 category with about 43
8 percent of the population followed by speech or language
9 impairment and then other health impairments is about 11
10 percent and then intellectual display is about eight
11 percent and then there's some small categories, too.
12 The needs of those students are going to be different
13 from one another. So it's a point to keep in mind.

14 In 2008-09, which is the most recent data we
15 have, there are about 6.5 million children, ages 3 to
16 21, who received special education services. That's
17 about 13 percent of the population. The vast majority
18 of those students are enrolled in regular public schools
19 and even further, the majority of those students spend
20 80 percent or more of their time in general classes and
21 I think that's an interesting point.

22 That has risen a lot in the last 20 years. I

1 think in 1990 it was about 33 percent of the students
2 spent most of their time in general classes and now it's
3 57 percent. So that's been kind of a change in what's
4 going on in districts and in schools that is a change to
5 keep in mind.

6 The other point I wanted to make is that the
7 vast majority of those students take the general
8 reading, language arts, and mathematics assessments.
9 There are NCSC and Dynamic Learning Maps which are
10 developing alternate assessments based on alternate
11 achievement standards but that's for a small percentage
12 of overall students.

13 About one percent of all students who can be
14 included in the accountability system will take that
15 test which is approximately 10 percent of students with
16 disabilities, give or take, but all students are
17 expected to have access to and be assessed against grade
18 level content standard. So both students taking the
19 alternate assessment or students taking the general
20 test, it should be based on grade level content
21 standards.

22 For English learners, we've seen a tremendous

1 increase. You can see this. Hopefully this chart is
2 clear to everyone. It starts in 1980 and goes up to
3 2009. The percentage of students who speak a language
4 other than English at home has more than doubled from 10
5 percent in 1980 to 21 percent in 2009.

6 The percentage who speak a language other than
7 English at home and speak English with difficulty
8 actually has been fairly consistent and in fact in the
9 last 10 years it's declined somewhat from about seven
10 percent to about five percent. So that's an interesting
11 point.

12 There's about 4.7 million students in 1980 who
13 spoke a language other than English at home and that's
14 increased up to about 11.2 million in 2009 and it's
15 about five percent of the population which is about 2.7
16 million children speak a language other than English at
17 home and speak English with difficulty, but, not
18 surprising, there is a fair bit of diversity across
19 states in terms of the percentage of students who speak
20 English with difficulty in different areas of the
21 country.

22 So you can see California is actually 11

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

30

1 percent and then New York, Nevada, Arizona, and Texas is
2 around between six and nine percent, and then it goes a
3 little bit less down from there, but there's a fair bit
4 of diversity in the population across the states.

5 And just a kind of general context for English
6 learners, there are over 300 different languages spoken
7 by students. So you can see some of the top five.
8 Spanish is far and away the most popular language that
9 they say they speak with 3.5 million and then there's a
10 fairly big drop-off from the next set of languages.
11 Vietnamese, Chinese is actually -- I believe it's any
12 Chinese dialect, Arabic, and Hmong are the next four
13 most popular.

14 Interesting point that just, I think,
15 highlights the diversity within the population a little
16 bit further is, based on the 2000 Census, we know that
17 64 percent of English learners, of students who speak a
18 language other than English in the home, is were
19 actually born in the United States and, you know, I can
20 break that 64 percent out further to say that 42 percent
21 are second generation students and 22 percent are third
22 generation born in the United States.

1 And then another kind of subpoint that is
2 interesting to keep in mind is that there are about
3 18,500 refugee children, ages 6 to 18, that come in the
4 United States every year. So you can think about the
5 diversity within that population. You've got some third
6 generation born in the United States and then some
7 refugee children are being resettled that are coming
8 into schools every year that you've got to work with and
9 make sure you're including appropriately in the
10 assessment system.

11 So with that, I'm actually going to start by
12 starting with what are the key questions or key
13 challenges that need to be addressed by the consortia?

14 I'm actually going to ask the experts around
15 the table to help raise a question and a thought about
16 it that can help PARCC and Smarter Balanced think about
17 this. So I think we can just go around the room.

18 Martha, do you want to go first?

19 MS. THURLOW: Okay. Thank you very much. I'm
20 happy to be here at the table as a NCSC representative,
21 which is -- and, of course, many of you know I wear more
22 than one hat. So I might slide in and out of that

1 perspective, but this topic is really important as we
2 think about who's going to end up in the regular
3 assessment and in the alternate assessment.

4 We don't want any gaps when we think about who
5 the students are and which assessment they should take.
6 So as I thought about the big issues, you know, I first
7 went to kind of the issue that Patrick was bringing up,
8 is how do we make sure that we get valid results for all
9 the kids, regardless of who they are, what subgroup they
10 may be in, and then that led me to, you know, a series
11 of kind of mini questions.

12 How are the consortia, you know, with that
13 standing point, but how are the consortia going to make
14 sure that these students, all students are in their
15 minds, in their heads as they're thinking about their
16 design, as they're thinking about all aspects of design,
17 development, policy, doing it from the very beginning
18 rather than retrofitting, and I know we've had this
19 discussion because that word "retrofitting" was used so
20 often as we talked about the state assessments that we
21 had and so the opportunity to avoid that problem is
22 wonderful to have and we want to make sure not to lose

1 that opportunity.

2 I think it relates to defining that content
3 very clearly so that we can talk about what
4 accessibility means in terms of the specific content and
5 then what those implications are for the design, the
6 accessibility in the design, and then later
7 accommodations, that we shouldn't be thinking about that
8 first. That's later.

9 As I look at -- as many of you know that NCEO,
10 kind of my other hat, has put together several briefs
11 that are talking to the consortia about some things they
12 need to think about. The latest one we put together is
13 called Understanding the Students and that brief is
14 available here. I didn't grab it, so I don't actually
15 have it to kind of wave in front of you, but I hope
16 you'll pick it up during the break, and it highlights
17 the diversity, even if you're just thinking about kids
18 with disabilities, the diversity in that population.

19 And in our consortia states, the range of kids
20 with disabilities identified goes from about 10 percent
21 to about 19 percent. So the states are coming to this
22 new consortium assessment with very different

1 perspectives on who the kids are potentially.

2 So I think it's really important to be asking
3 about how are we going to get -- how are we going to
4 think about the characteristics of those students, how
5 are we going to make sure that we're very clear about
6 which students are participating in the regular
7 assessment and which students will participate in the
8 alternate assessment.

9 I looked at the participation rates in the
10 regular assessments. Right now, they range from 39
11 percent of students in one state are in the regular
12 assessment to 94 percent in another state. So again, I
13 think part of the discussion is going to have to be how
14 do we communicate among our states as consortia to
15 resolve our different perspectives and so that's, you
16 know, a question to the consortia. How are you going to
17 do that?

18 I guess I'll just end again by going back to,
19 with my NCSC hat, this discussion is so important and
20 it's important not just for the consortia, so I'm glad
21 we are at the table because we have to make sure that
22 we're complimenting each other, so no kids are left out.

1 Thanks.

2 MR. ROONEY: Thanks, Martha. Rebecca, you get
3 to go next. Yes, we're going around. Sorry.

4 MS. KOPRIVA: All right. I'm on. It's early
5 California time.

6 Okay. My question issue. All right. I
7 believe most of us assume, given the state of the tests
8 and the way tests have always been, and most of us
9 assume that students primarily make meaning through text
10 and I am here to challenge that.

11 I think there are many students who make a
12 significant amount of meaning through stuff other than
13 text and I'm not just talking about make meaning a very
14 basic, like point out nouns. I am talking about make
15 meaning in complex concepts, about complex concepts.

16 So I guess my question then is I think these
17 consortia need to take advantage of the computer
18 capacities to make meaning and convey meaning to the
19 student in regards to the questions they ask in ways
20 that are not just text and then you add on a couple
21 stuff but I'm talking about that you actually convey
22 fundamental meaning also in ways beyond text and then

1 also in the same vein, why do we assume the students
2 primarily convey what they know primarily through text?

3 My suggestion is that we need to set up the
4 situation, we need to set up the assessment situation,
5 so that these students can also convey meaning back to
6 us about what they know, using the computer's capacity
7 to demonstrate and otherwise provide us some information
8 in ways, in lots of different ways, and there are
9 various ways to demonstrate, to use support and
10 language, etcetera, etcetera, but we have to be able to
11 open up those possibilities for them.

12 Simply going a bubble is not helpful or even
13 typing in text, if this is not their primary way of
14 conversing, is very, very narrow, and I'm not just
15 talking about English learners. I'm actually talking
16 about students with learning disabilities and struggling
17 readers and various others.

18 MS. DeSTEFANO: Well, I would just like to
19 echo one of the points that Martha --

20 MR. ROONEY: Sorry. Could you introduce
21 yourself?

22 MS. DeSTEFANO: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm Lizanne

1 DeStefano from the University of Illinois.

2 I'd like to echo a point that Martha made and
3 then add a couple of my own.

4 I think the key question that we're all here
5 to answer is how can we maximize the validity and the
6 utility of assessment results for all kids but here
7 we're really focusing on students with disabilities and
8 English language learners. So not only the validity but
9 then how useful is that information for instructional
10 purposes, accountability purposes, and so on?

11 The second issue that I'd like to bring up is
12 I think how can we design accessible assessment systems
13 that reduce the need for accommodations, as Martha said,
14 but, in particular, I think it's a good time to think
15 about how the consortia are organized. Are they
16 organized, are you organized in a way that's really
17 going to promote innovative kind of cutting edge
18 treatment of these topics?

19 I see that you are -- both of you have TWGs
20 that deal with assessment and accommodation. I think
21 that's fantastic. But then how's that operationalized?
22 How are they interacting with other workgroups, other

1 parts of the assessment, and what external resources are
2 you drawing in to help you with this really challenging
3 task?

4 Then the third piece that I think I hope we
5 hit on today is how do we work with the common core
6 standards? So we're talking a lot about assessment but
7 really what underlies the assessment are these
8 standards. So how are we looking at these standards in a
9 way that promote valid measurement across the
10 performance continuum? What are the key constructs
11 within each standard that we are really looking to
12 measure? What are the learning progressions or
13 components or subskills related to those standards, and
14 how can we put that together in ways that tell us about
15 the performance of this particular group of students?

16 So in the afternoon, Rebecca and I are going
17 to lead a session that hopefully will kind of push on
18 that particular topic.

19 MR. ROONEY: Mike.

20 MR. RUSSELL: Mike Russell. Yeah. Building
21 on what Lizanne was discussing, I think one of the
22 opportunities we have in both consortia is to rethink

1 access from the perspective of measurement, so that, you
2 know, the way that we generally use the term is students
3 accessing content information, whatever it is we're
4 presenting to them, but in a measurement context, we can
5 think about this as our instruments accessing the
6 construct as they're operating within kids. It still
7 required kids to access information but really what
8 we're trying to do is access those constructs.

9 When we start thinking about that, that then
10 gives us an opportunity to think about what is allowable
11 in terms of how we flexibly tailor the testing
12 experience for kids, so we're maximizing the access to
13 that construct which maximizes the measures, and so one
14 of the things I encourage, as I look at both consortia's
15 kind of work plans, is careful consideration very, very
16 early on, not just about access and accessibility but
17 about the business rules that you're going to be
18 applying when you're writing items so that they can
19 maximize access to that construct in each individual
20 kid.

21 It's one thing to say we're going to be making
22 these accessible but it's very different to

1 operationalize that in a consistent way across thousands
2 of people that are writing your items so that they're
3 applying the same rules and principles as they're
4 thinking about these different needs, whether it's
5 representational forms, as Rebecca was talking about,
6 whether it's how we're going to do things in Braille,
7 sign, whatever it happens to be.

8 I think that's really critical. That's a
9 piece of work that needs to be done before we begin item
10 writing. So I'd encourage people to think about that.

11 MR. ROONEY: Jamal.

12 MR. ABEDI: Jamal Abedi from University of
13 California, Davis.

14 My question to the consortia is about how
15 universally the accessibility can be applied to English
16 language learners and students with disabilities and the
17 concept of universal design.

18 This is great. I think it would be excellent
19 to make assessment as accessible as you can make it to
20 broader group of students but at the same time, as my
21 colleague mentioned, there are major differences,
22 diversity, between these groups.

1 So I just wanted to focus on English language
2 learners. I think it's a big mistake to use a dichotomy
3 and say students are either ELL or non-ELL. ELL, the
4 students are very diverse population in every imaginable
5 aspect, including their level of English proficiency.
6 You may surprised to hear that some of these students
7 have a higher level of English proficiency than some
8 native speakers of English.

9 While you still categorize as English language
10 ELLs, there is something wrong with our classification
11 system or something going on, so that we can recognize
12 if you want to assign accommodations or if you want to
13 make assessment more accessible to these students, we
14 have to recognize these such diversity and understand
15 these are not the same groupings and do we want to label
16 them as the same groupings?

17 As Martha mentioned, even for students with
18 disabilities, there are a variety of these students with
19 a variety of background and diversities. So we have to
20 recognize diversity, particularly for English language
21 learners. We should not consider them as ELL just one
22 blanket assessment, calling them ELL students because

1 they are very different.

2 So my question is how we balance between the
3 concept of universal design and the students' background
4 characteristics, how we can address these issues that
5 are related to particular subgroup of ELL students and
6 the students with disabilities.

7 MR. ROONEY: Thank you. Guillermo.

8 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: Guillermo Solano-Flores,
9 University of Colorado at Boulder.

10 My question has to do with the basic issue in
11 ELL testing, which is a measurement error, and as you
12 know, a way to address measurement error is you
13 appropriately deal with issues of sampling.

14 Sampling is normally understood as just refer
15 to the populations that you are testing but actually
16 there are other issues of sampling. For example, the
17 way you select the items that you are going to be
18 including in a test.

19 So all this has to do with the heterogeneity
20 of the ELL population, as Jamal was referring to that
21 issue, and also to the fact that it usually is not well
22 recognized that assessment systems are limited in their

1 ability to accurately identify students who are and who
2 are not English language learners.

3 In other words, if we want these assessments
4 to work, we need to start by recognizing that there's a
5 lot of -- a high degree of uncertainty in the ways in
6 which we define English language learners. If we don't
7 incorporate that uncertainty as part of our procedures,
8 then we will be working under false premises about the
9 accuracy of the assessment systems to identify English
10 language learners.

11 So my question, and you will hear me talk
12 about those issues related to this question, is how do
13 you address issues of sampling and representation in ELL
14 testing?

15 And just to give you an example of why this is
16 so important, let's talk about the process of piloting
17 test items. How can we make sure that English language
18 learners are included in the pilot studies that are
19 supposed to determine if the students are understanding
20 the wording of the items properly?

21 Many test developers do not include English
22 language learners in that process. Why? Because they

1 are English language learners. They are not going to
2 understand it. How are they going to do interviews or
3 conduct interviews with them if they are English
4 language learners? There's some evidence that even if
5 you use in your pilot studies people who are, I mean,
6 part of the staff, staff members that do not speak the
7 first language of the English language learners, and
8 even if you are dealing with English language learners,
9 you will still be able to establish a good communication
10 in order for you to determine what are the changes that
11 you need to make in your items.

12 So this issue of representation is usually
13 neglected and I think that's something that should be
14 addressed properly.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. ROONEY: Thanks. Steve.

17 MR. SIRECI: Good morning. Steve Sireci from
18 the Center for Educational Assessment at the University
19 of Massachusetts, Amherst.

20 When I think about the Federal Government's
21 and the state governments' embracement of standardized
22 educational tests, I realize that could have good, bad,

1 good consequences, bad consequences or both, and I think
2 it's meetings like this that really help us try and
3 minimize any of the negative consequences and maximize
4 as much as possible the positive consequences.

5 So I just want to start by thanking the
6 Department of Ed for holding this meeting and also for
7 the invitation today to be a part of it.

8 In listening to Dr. Kopriva's comments, you
9 know, it just makes me realize that assessment is really
10 about communication, two-way communication, and whether
11 we are writing an achievement item or a survey question,
12 our job is to try and communicate to the examinee what
13 we're looking for and then they have to communicate back
14 to us what they think or what they know and so my
15 question is how do we know that the assessments we're
16 delivering, let's fast forward to the 2016 or whenever
17 these things are going to be administered, are actually
18 working for the special populations we're talking about.

19 So how do we know when students understand
20 what's being asked and are able to provide the
21 information back? So part of that gets into some of the
22 research we do at UMass in looking at data from

1 assessments to see if students are engaged and if they
2 understand and so forth and I won't get into words like
3 "dimensionality" or "factor structure." That's just an
4 example of how we find out that sometimes we're
5 measuring things very different and what we're really
6 looking at is, as Guillermo may have been implying, is
7 noise, is noise.

8 So I think his advice about the importance of
9 pilot testing here is going to be important. I think
10 the two assessment consortia who are here today are
11 going to make significant advances in making tests more
12 accessible and more inclusive but it's not going to be
13 the end of the story.

14 I think throughout the 21st Century we're
15 going to continue to make progress and we need to not
16 develop one design for accessibility for these
17 populations and, you know, pilot and implement it. I
18 think we're going to have to realize that we're going to
19 get information back from our pilot tests, if they're
20 done properly, that might involve redesigns.

21 So I don't think we should start out saying,
22 well, here's the design, let's implement it, and that's

1 what we're going to do.

2 When I look at the language in Smarter
3 Balanced and PARCC, it's very laudable. We're going to
4 make inclusive assessments that are valid for everybody.
5 It's the appropriate language to put in a proposal.
6 It's the right thing to do.

7 My question is, you know, how do we know if
8 it's done?

9 MR. KINGSTON: Neal Kingston, University of
10 Kansas and Director of the Dynamic Learning Maps
11 Project.

12 In states that are almost entirely computer-
13 based in their administration, there's still a very
14 small percentage of students who require paper as an
15 accommodation currently. In Kansas, three-tenths of a
16 percent of the students take the test in paper mode for
17 that reason.

18 In the past where we're using mostly multiple
19 choice items that's not been an issue, but as we move to
20 new computer-based item types that require computer for
21 administration, do you have plans for how we can reduce
22 that percentage from the .1 to .3 percent that it

1 currently is and/or alternatives for students who would
2 not be able to have the full panoply of item types?

3 Related question has to do with computerized
4 administration with accessibility and universal design
5 on the administration side.

6 Right now, most testing programs work from an
7 accommodation model primarily because accommodations
8 often cost more money to develop and so logistics were
9 an issue and with computers that's less the case. So
10 rather than just have large print be 18-point font, the
11 possibility now exists for students to control what the
12 font size is, for students to control whether there's a
13 popup glossary used or what language they should take
14 the test in without having to worry about how to
15 disseminate the proper language to the proper people.

16 Do you intend to have more of the traditional
17 accommodations model where a particular format is
18 expected of a student or do you intend to give student
19 choice? There are issues associated with each of those.

20 And then, finally, as we use tools to
21 determine how well we're doing with all of this, a
22 common one is the use of differential item functioning

1 to look at what differences there are and we could use
2 this to look at English language learners. We could use
3 this to look at students with disabilities who receive
4 accommodations and studies of those kinds have been done
5 in the past.

6 We now have the benefit of consortia that have
7 substantially more students. That thus allows us to
8 break down the data finer than has been done before.
9 Yet even in programs that have had large numbers,
10 there's been a reticence to look at the interactions
11 between different groups.

12 So my question related to this is do you
13 intend to break down subgroups so you're looking at
14 different language groups separately, so that you're
15 looking at people who are English learners but also have
16 some other kind of needs, disabilities, etcetera?

17 Thank you.

18 MR. ROONEY: Okay. Thank you all. That was a
19 lot of questions. That was very good.

20 So I'm actually going to turn it over to
21 either PARCC or Smarter Balanced, I don't know who would
22 like to go first, with any questions or thoughts or

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

50

1 reactions to any of the comments that were raised.

2 Michael.

3 MR. HOCK: I'm Michael Hock, and I'm the
4 Director of Educational Assessment from the State of
5 Vermont, and, boy, I wish I had the rest of the day to
6 talk to you about this because these are such great
7 questions and I'm actually pretty pleased that many of
8 them we thought about. We don't have answers but we
9 have thought about them.

10 But, anyway, since what I'm looking at is
11 understanding the population, I'll comment on this and I
12 think other comments about what SBAC wants to do will
13 come up later, but, you know, this is an activity we're
14 taking on now that we think is critical to the design of
15 our assessment and just, you know, the comments from
16 like Jamal and others here has made it clear to us that
17 our traditional definitions of different student
18 populations who experience barriers to assessment, the
19 old labels don't work, and so Debbie and I, as
20 Accessibility and Accommodations Group, right now is
21 taking on an activity where we're looking at those
22 traditionally-labeled populations and redefining them in

Capital Reporting Company
U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

51

1 terms of what their challenge to assessment would be.

2 Particularly as Jamal has pointed out that,
3 you know, we have a large group of English learners and
4 they're not a unitary group. You know, for example, in
5 Vermont, we have a small population of English learners
6 but almost all of them were born in another country and
7 they came to Vermont through our Refugee Resettlement
8 Program and for some of them their biggest issue is that
9 they came to the United States after being chased by big
10 ugly men with machetes on to an airplane and that
11 population of kids, I think, is very different than a
12 student who's third generation but his family speaks
13 Spanish at home and so I think that there may be cases
14 that one population shares needs and assessment with
15 students who have learning disabilities, for example,
16 but others, you know, from that group may share concerns
17 or barriers for assessment with other groups and so
18 again we're going through a process now where we're
19 taking those traditional labels and groups and trying to
20 really think about so what are the barriers for these
21 kids in assessment and we hope that will guide us to
22 making sure that we have options for all of them.

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

52

1 MS. FEDORCHAK: One quick observation. I was
2 running some quick numbers on my handy dandy calculator
3 over here while Martha and others were talking.

4 The numbers, I think, Martha, you said that
5 the states now have between 10 and 19 percent per state
6 of kids identified as being eligible for special
7 education services. All right.

8 So let's just round that into a middle zone,
9 15 percent. Okay. Let's just pretend it's 15 percent.
10 And I saw numbers of, I think, 21 percent now of
11 students who speak a language other than English at
12 home, is that correct?

13 Let's say we took the assumption, we made the
14 false assumption, this would not be true, but let's say
15 that those are two mutually-exclusive groups and you
16 added them together. Fifteen percent of the 800,000
17 kids per grade, that was a number that I learned at
18 dinner last night, I think the Smarter Balanced is going
19 to be assessing 800,000 children per grade, 15 percent
20 of that number is a 120,000 kids.

21 If you calculate 21 percent of that number to
22 cover the ELLs, we're talking about a 168,000, if we

1 pretended that they were separate groups. We know that
2 they're not. You'd be covering 36 percent of the
3 population of the students taking the Smarter Balanced
4 assessment, 36 percent. That's more than one in three.

5 Now let's pretend that we really know that
6 they're not different kids, that they're really
7 combined. Let's bring the numbers down, let's bring the
8 estimate down to 25 percent, one in four. Wow! Wow!
9 That's not just an assessment issue. That's a political
10 issue. That's a big deal. So I think it's very
11 important that we bring the people to the table who know
12 about these things.

13 The second point I wanted to make. I hope
14 that we can slowly move away from -- unfortunately, the
15 law is structured as it is and that's a problem right
16 now because I think it, to some extent, gets in the way.

17 We talk about the needs of students with
18 disabilities and the needs of ELL students. I think
19 everyone around the table here recognizes that those are
20 not -- I mean, it's important to understand what the
21 needs of a student who is not a primary speaker of
22 English are. There's no question about that. It's

1 important to understand the needs of specific disabling
2 conditions and what they do, but what we need to talk
3 about is this communication thing. I think Steve was
4 talking about it.

5 How do different children communicate
6 representationally, receive information, perform
7 information, represent information? We need to look at
8 their needs because sometimes before a child is an ELL
9 or a student with disabilities, they're a child and they
10 may be any number of things.

11 We also have kids that aren't in these numbers
12 that I just generated. We've got kids with 100 percent
13 deafness whose families do not identify them as having a
14 disability whatsoever. They simply speak another
15 language. In fact, sign language is one of the world
16 languages now. How many of those kids are there? How
17 about the kids with anxiety disorders? Some of our top
18 performing kids that panic when they get to a test.
19 Don't those kids deserve some consideration?

20 I mean, so we're really talking about all
21 kids. We need to think differently about -- and I guess
22 I would ask this group to talk a little bit about that -

1 - differently about what is the thin that we're trying
2 to address here? Are we looking at the right
3 categories? How should we be defining what
4 accessibility, the needs of accessibility needs to
5 serve?

6 MR. ROONEY: So Willy and then Dan.

7 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: I would like to mention
8 something that Michael -- refer to something that
9 Michael mentioned, which he recognizes the diversity and
10 he recognizes that we have to be aware of it.

11 However, I would like just to make a little
12 clarification, that the kind of diversity that we need
13 to recognize is not only that we have several ELL
14 populations or many ELL populations in the U.S. It's
15 also that we need to recognize that within a given
16 linguistic group, there's a lot of diversity. So that,
17 even if we decide, for example, -- just let me give you
18 some evidence from research.

19 As you know, a lot of the work in the field of
20 measurement that we have to do has to do with
21 determining the number of items that should be included
22 in a test, so that we can obtain dependable measures of

1 academic achievement. Those numbers vary tremendously,
2 even within ELLs who are native Spanish speakers.

3 Even if you test them in their native language
4 or if you test them in only English, those numbers are
5 going to vary considerably and those minimum numbers of
6 items that need to be included in a test are a
7 reflection of linguistic diversity within the same broad
8 linguistic group and we know that because we have
9 evidence that there's an interaction between the
10 strengths and weaknesses that each student has in
11 regarding to the language and the linguistic demands of
12 each item.

13 So we need to consider diversity at that fine-
14 grain level because otherwise if we just recognize
15 diversity in terms of broad linguistic group, that is
16 not going to help. We need to be more precise.

17 MR. WIENER: Good morning. I'm Dan Wiener
18 from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and
19 Secondary Education. I'm representing the PARCC
20 Consortium here today.

21 I want to thank the experts for giving us some
22 great questions to ponder and really sharpening our

1 focus on the kinds of next steps we've got to consider
2 as we move forward.

3 And as Michael stated for Smarter Balanced, we
4 thought about these things but we haven't solved them
5 and so the one thing that I wanted to, I guess, inform
6 everyone that we were planning to do and to synthesize
7 what I've heard this morning is that we probably first
8 and foremost need to add these questions to the list of
9 our tasks and responsibilities but also first, even
10 before that, to resolve the differences in our
11 perspectives on accommodations among the member states.

12 It's great that we all have more than 20, some
13 more than 25 states that are working in these consortia,
14 but that increases the complexity of the task and
15 resolving how we approach things like print disabilities
16 and how we approach the matter of assessments based on
17 modified achievement standards. Some of us do these
18 accommodations and these approaches and others of us do
19 not and we have some tough conversations ahead of us as
20 we try to figure out what we're going to do as we move
21 forward.

22 So Michael raised great points about how

1 technology might change our perspectives on
2 accommodations. For example, could any student, you
3 know, use a larger font size or a different background
4 color? Would it really change anything if they did?

5 Right now, accommodations in some of our
6 states, most of our states are only for students with
7 disabilities and students who are ELLs, but maybe we can
8 broaden that a little bit through the use of technology.

9 These are great questions for us to be
10 considering as we move forward and so I just wanted to
11 toss all of this into the middle of the room and let
12 people know that the experts are being heard and thank
13 you for focusing us on these things.

14 MR. ROONEY: Jamal.

15 MR. ABEDI: I want to say that English
16 language learners face a very, very challenging academic
17 career because they have to learn a language and at the
18 same time they have to learn the content language they
19 are struggling to learn.

20 One of the major problems with assessment of
21 English language learner has been the disconnect between
22 the level of English proficiency, Title 3, and their

1 performance in Title 1 assessments.

2 We have not done a good job in assigning
3 English language learners at the level of proficiency
4 that they can function on their Title 1 assessment. So
5 it's not their fault if they perform low. It's not
6 their fault. We don't have any indication of when they
7 are ready to actually take the assessments.

8 Given the variety of background of English
9 language learners with the level of proficiency, we have
10 to make sure that we assign them to the Title 1
11 assessment content in English assessment when they are
12 ready to actually take the content.

13 So my question to the consortia is that what
14 do you do, at what level do you assign English language
15 learners to content assessment in English, and at what
16 level do you know they are ready to actually take these
17 assessments, so if they get a lower score, the lower
18 score is only due to content, not due to language
19 proficiency?

20 So we have to have some mechanism, some ways
21 of knowing when they are ready to actually take the
22 assessment. Again, right now currently, there is a

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

60

1 disconnect between Title 1 and Title 3 as students are
2 tested in Title 3, as students are tested in Title 1,
3 but these two do not communicate with each other.

4 MR. ROONEY: Rebecca.

5 MS. KOPRIVA: I'd like to piggyback on Jamal's
6 and kind of fine-tune it.

7 The issue is these kids have less language and
8 they should still be learning complex content. So good
9 teachers can bridge that gap and they do by conveying
10 meaning in multi-symiotic or multimodal ways.

11 Okay. So then our assessment for these kids,
12 particularly ones that have less language, need to
13 include ways to still measure the challenging content
14 but do it in a broader range of approaches than simply
15 using the text.

16 It's not that they shouldn't be in content,
17 they shouldn't be testing content, they should be
18 testing content, and they should be tested in content in
19 the most challenging standards because they are learning
20 them, but we have be able to interpret them properly.
21 To be able to interpret them properly, we have to be
22 able to afford them the opportunities to tell us what

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

61

1 they know and that opens it up both for asking the
2 questions and then getting the information back.

3 MR. ROONEY: Leila and then Shelbi.

4 MS. WILLIAMS: I just wanted to piggyback on
5 something that Dan mentioned in his comment.

6 Many of my colleagues in other states have
7 modified assessments and Arizona chose not to move
8 forward on one and there's limited but there is
9 beginning to be some research that's coming out on what
10 they've found with these assessments because when I
11 think about what Gaye has said related to ensuring that
12 we're looking at all students, what are some of the
13 positives that we found in the development of these
14 assessments because we know there's been a heavy
15 emphasis on universal design and how they actually
16 utilize some of the accommodations. Some of them are
17 online and not.

18 I think that might help as well as we move
19 forward in our piloting and looking at the diverse
20 populations because there are things that, for instance,
21 in some of the research that we found in our state that
22 were really positive but also there was some things that

1 really presented some concerns related to instruction
2 and what students are gaining, based on the standards,
3 and just even with the modified assessment, using these
4 universal design, still couldn't display what they knew.
5 So that really brought up a lot of questions.

6 But then at the same point, we also found that
7 there are students who were part of that group who were
8 not identified students with disabilities but there was
9 some definitive positives.

10 So I think that in some ways, as we move
11 forward and when I think about, we talk about not having
12 that gap from the one percent assessment and what's
13 going on, that this is an opportunity to really open up
14 ensuring that students are being able to show what they
15 know and what they've learned.

16 MS. COLE: And I think we need to recognize,
17 too, that the whole story isn't there on those maps
18 showing the numbers and the percentages of English
19 language learners in each state that really that 11
20 percent in California is in pockets, I mean, it's spread
21 out, and the way we report data, it really -- we label
22 districts, we label schools, and we do all this

1 reporting based on those pockets of students and so we
2 really need to acknowledge upfront that this is an issue
3 and I really like what Jamal talked about in thinking
4 about that ELL is not a dichotomy, you know, that
5 they're really working on two simultaneous progressions
6 at one time and that is the ability to be proficient in
7 the English language while at the same time trying to
8 take in complex content which is also critical and so as
9 consortia, we really need to recognize that those two
10 things are occurring and what can we do to sort of bring
11 students slowly into the system so that maybe the
12 assessments look very different for a student who is
13 very new to speaking English versus someone who's been
14 here for a couple of years and is progressing along that
15 continuum.

16 Maybe there are different things we can do
17 with those items for students at different levels within
18 one progression while acknowledging they're trying to
19 learn the content, as well.

20 MR. ROONEY: Michael, I'm going to give you
21 the last word on this topic.

22 MR. RUSSELL: Okay. I want to come back to

1 something that Michael and Gaye said in light of the way
2 -- in light of the terms that we're using to describe
3 these kids, and I wonder if it would be useful to not
4 kind of use the categorizations that we've been using.

5 We're identifying a disability or a set of
6 disabilities. We're identifying the language status,
7 based on characteristics and experiences they've had,
8 and then trying to design variations to how we're
9 assessing these kids based on these descriptive
10 categories and instead think about, well, what are the
11 access needs or what do we need to do in order to access
12 them.

13 There's an overlap there, but I think when you
14 change that question or change the description, it
15 provides us an opportunity to rethink the problem and in
16 some cases be much more nuanced in what we're actually
17 trying to do to address the problem.

18 So I just wonder if there's an opportunity
19 here for us to kind of change our descriptions of kids
20 from what we've been calling them, which is students who
21 have a specific disability or in a certain point with
22 their language, to what do we actually need to do in

1 order to help them access content in a learning context
2 and what do we need to do in order to access the
3 constructs in an assessment context?

4 MR. CONATY: Thank you, Mike. I think this
5 isn't an official position of the department, but I
6 think it's helpful to try and summarize what I think
7 I've heard because there's so many useful comments and
8 at the risk of oversimplifying, I think there has been a
9 common theme across the comments and that's
10 heterogeneity among a continuum.

11 So if you think about this, who are we
12 testing, it's quite clear what Michael said and what
13 Jamal has said, is that there's a continuum there with a
14 lot of diversity along that continuum and that the use
15 of categories rather than a continuum is in fact
16 impeding both the identification of kids who participate
17 in different assessments but also, as Steven suggested,
18 sort of what do you do with the results.

19 And then I think the -- so, you know, who's
20 being assessed, if you think about it more continuously
21 in a heterogeneous way, I think it helps us a little
22 bit, and then, of course, the next question is what's

1 being tested?

2 So a couple of you mentioned the idea of a
3 construct but even inside a construct, the issue was
4 raised that there are subcontent domains that need to be
5 accessed to really give a valid measure of that single
6 construct and it's probably safe to say that there's
7 also a little bit of heterogeneity and continuum even
8 inside those constructs, especially when you link it to
9 another heterogeneity that you mentioned to have
10 instruments and items that are sensitive along the range
11 of performance, so that the diversity in access to a
12 construct at the lower end of the performance scale
13 might be somewhat different than it would be at the
14 higher end of the performance scale.

15 And then, of course, so we've got the what's
16 being tested and then you've got the how are we doing it
17 and Dr. Kopriva, you know, described that we have to
18 think about the power of technology to provide multiple
19 stimulus and then multiple response formats to access
20 the diversity not only of the children but also of the
21 items and also of the constructs.

22 So I think that, you know, there was an

1 article in the Times a few weeks ago about super
2 computers and how they've changed the nature of science
3 in some content domains and I think the aspiration here
4 is to think about the technology in the same way.

5 And then so we've got who's being tested and
6 what's being tested, how are they being tested, and then
7 I think there was a safety valve put in there, is how do
8 you pilot pre-test these items and then do a post-test
9 of those pilots to try and verify that we are in fact
10 testing the right thing.

11 I don't know, Steven, how you would say it,
12 but it was really how do you build in a continuum of
13 self- reflection in the development of the assessments
14 and then, finally, the one that I think, you know, sort
15 of started and closed was there are definitional
16 differences across the states, both in terms of the
17 population to be tested and in terms of the results and
18 how they're shared and who's included, and that that's
19 another source of diversity and heterogeneity and it
20 probably lies across a continuum, as well.

21 I mean, when you get statistics that are
22 double one another, is that really a reflection of the

1 reality or is that a reflection of definitional
2 differences across the units of analysis?

3 So I think there is -- it's an extremely tough
4 issue, of course, but I think if we think about
5 heterogeneity across a continuum in each of these sort
6 of steps in developing assessments, I think the end
7 result will be both more sensitive but also more
8 reliable, fair, and valid for the children that we're
9 trying to assess.

10 So I think it was a very helpful conversation
11 and I think we're due for a break, Patrick.

12 MR. ROONEY: That's right. So we're going to
13 take a short 10-minute break.

14 I want to thank you all for the questions, the
15 conversation. As we spend the rest of the morning,
16 we're going to get a little more fine-grained into a
17 couple specific topics, but these questions, I think,
18 will help seed that conversation. I think we should all
19 keep them in mind throughout the rest of the day.

20 So 10 minutes and we'll be back. Thanks.

21 (Whereupon, a recess was taken.) Table

22 Discussion (Continued) Technology Support for Assessment

1 Accessibility

2 MR. ROONEY: I'd like to make a couple
3 announcements before we start. I realize I mentioned
4 this this morning but I didn't tell you how to do it.

5 In your Agenda, the last page, if you want to
6 submit written comments, we'd certainly appreciate that.
7 We ask that you, on your way out to lunch or even some
8 time between now and noon, drop them off at the
9 Registration Desk which is right around the corner out
10 this door to my right.

11 Also, some of you, I think, snuck in this room
12 without necessarily going to the Registration Desk. We
13 want to get an accurate list of who is here today
14 because we'll actually make that information public, a
15 list of attendees, as part of the materials we make
16 available from the meeting. So if you snuck in and
17 didn't actually have someone sign off your name at this
18 desk, not at the Security Desk when you first got in the
19 building, we're a very secure building, so at this desk
20 right outside this door, please do so at some point
21 today, maybe even before you go to lunch, at the desk.

22 Also, the sign-up for Public Comment will be

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

70

1 at lunch on your way out or on your way back. There
2 will be a sheet at the Registration Desk where you can
3 sign up for the actual verbal Public Comment part at 3
4 o'clock. So if you'd like to sign up for that then,
5 that's when to do it.

6 And I think we've gotten a couple questions
7 about materials from today's meeting. All of the
8 PowerPoints from today will be available on our Race to
9 the Top Assessment website. If you go to ed.gov and
10 search for Race to the Top Assessment, our search has
11 gotten better, so it should come up.

12 We will also have a transcript from today. In
13 probably about two to three weeks, we'll have that
14 posted online, along with all of the public comments we
15 get and the participant list, once you all officially
16 register with us.

17 And on that note, I am going to turn it over
18 to Mike Russell to talk a little bit about a project
19 he's working on and we're going to talk broadly about,
20 as we move to computer-based testing across the two
21 consortia, what are the opportunities that presents for
22 us and then what are the challenges that provides for

1 all students but particularly for these two groups of
2 students.

3 So Mike.

4 MR. RUSSELL: Thanks, Patrick. Yes. I
5 interpreted my question or the issue I was supposed to
6 address as kind of accessibility in a digital- or a
7 computer-based environment and specifically the role
8 that the accessible, portable, and profile standard can
9 play in supporting that.

10 So I'm going to try to quickly cover four
11 broad topics, one of which we've touched on already.
12 One is just this notion of accessibility. What does it
13 mean in the assessment context? Second is what are we
14 already doing and how does APIP fit into it? Third, I
15 want to briefly talk about how there's different types
16 of standards in the education sector and kind of talk
17 about the relationships between those, and, lastly, I
18 want to just address some misunderstandings that seem to
19 be emerging around APIP and interoperability. So I'm
20 going to do this relatively quickly.

21 So as a number of you have started to talk
22 about, accessibility in the assessment context, you

1 know, we think about it as a two-way street. One way is
2 the student being able to access information that we're
3 presenting to them in an assessment context, directions,
4 prompts, response options, and so forth, and that's
5 important because if the students don't understand
6 what's being asked of them and what's being presented to
7 them, we're going to have a measurement problem.

8 But then the other is, as we've talked about a
9 little bit already, this notion of the test accessing
10 the student and we try to access constructs of students
11 by presenting information that's believed to stimulate
12 the construct, giving them opportunity to interact with
13 content and as they're applying the construct and
14 because we can't see what's going on in their minds,
15 having them produce responses that we hope are
16 reflective of the products of the constructs that
17 they've been applying.

18 So really there's a two-way interaction that
19 is occurring in an assessment context and we need to
20 make sure that both the student's access to and the test
21 access to the construct is going to allow for valid
22 measures.

1 So in the digital environment, there's a
2 number of things that have already been demonstrated and
3 used in operational and research context to assist in
4 this.

5 We've already demonstrated that we can match
6 the content representational forms to student access
7 needs. We've seen that we can match language, the way in
8 which language is used, whether we're talking about an
9 English version or translated versions of whole items,
10 parts of items, directions, so forth. We can have
11 simplified English versions of items and they can be
12 tailored, the presentation can be tailored based on who
13 the student is and what their access needs are.

14 Similarly with audio or verbal
15 representations, there's already a lot of systems that
16 can do text-to- speech or playing of prerecorded voice.
17 We can already have -- and then as an example in the
18 NECAP Program, it's nuanced further. So depending on
19 who the student is, we can have audio representation of
20 only text-based content. We can have audio
21 representations that are descriptions of graphic, and we
22 can have different descriptions for students who are

1 non-sighted versus students who are sighted and may need
2 different types of information presented to them.

3 We can do Braille. Oregon is doing
4 refreshable electronic Braille already and there's been
5 some work done on signing, so embedded signing within a
6 computer- based environment. So there's already
7 demonstrations that this can be done. It's not that
8 novel in terms of practice.

9 Similarly, when we think about interaction and
10 response modes, there's a lot of use already of various
11 assistive communication devices in the computer-based
12 environments. So again, we can already do this. So
13 what's the challenges? Well, one of the challenges is
14 we need to develop a standard method for coding the
15 access needs of individuals in an assessment context so
16 that as we're moving information from a student
17 information system into an assessment system, we're
18 using the same terms and we're interpreting them in the
19 same way so we can create those experiences that are
20 appropriate to measure each individual student.

21 Similarly, an even larger challenge in my mind
22 is we have item content that's in the digital format and

1 different people are using different methods for trying
2 to make that accessible and what we really need is a
3 standard method for tagging content and adding
4 accessibility information so again that item can move
5 from an item development offering tool to a test
6 delivery system to another test delivery system and
7 those tags are being and accessibility information is
8 being interpreted and rendered in the same way across
9 systems and so really what we need is a standard for a
10 file exchange format.

11 Now this is a highly-technical boring problem
12 for most of us but if we don't have it, we're basically
13 talking apples and oranges as we're talking across
14 systems and across programs and so this is a key need.

15 APIP was designed, the Accessible Portable
16 Item Profile was designed to address all three of those
17 problems simultaneously and really what APIP is is a
18 file exchange format and what do I mean by a file
19 exchange format?

20 Well, many of us traveled here. We had our
21 suitcases or a better example is when we go on vacation.
22 We have a large suitcase or a number of suitcases that

1 are jam packed with stuff, probably over-packed with
2 stuff. When we get to wherever we're going, we divide
3 it up. We put our beach stuff into our beach bag, our
4 tennis into our tennis bag, golf stuff goes in one
5 corner, and when we go out each time, we only take the
6 bag that's appropriate for what we're going to do on
7 that activity.

8 A file exchange format is effectively that big
9 piece of luggage that contains all this information,
10 right, and so the idea is we want to over-specify when
11 we're exchanging information so everyone is interpreted
12 and has access to the same information but then when we
13 get it to our destination, test delivery system, we're
14 going to unpackage that so that it can be delivered
15 effectively for each individual kid.

16 So what do we need? We need to know stuff
17 about items. We need to be able to specify the content
18 accessibility information metadata and so forth. We
19 need to know stuff about kids. So we need to know their
20 access needs profile.

21 APIP, without going into all the details,
22 provides a structure for both of those, so that we can

1 exchange those two pieces of information in a seamless
2 efficient manner that's interpreted the same by
3 everybody.

4 So APIP addresses a number of accessibility
5 needs. Again, I won't take the time to read through all
6 of them but there's language-related needs that relate
7 to different types of information being translated into
8 other languages, allowing for simplified language in
9 English, having audio representations of either the
10 English, simplified English or the translated version of
11 the items. There's visual needs that can be met through
12 magnification reverse contrast, color tinting and so
13 forth.

14 APIP addresses a variety of executive
15 functioning or methods for maintaining focus through
16 auditory calming and masking and so forth. There's
17 information processing tags that are embedded in APIP
18 for flagging, for alternate representations, much like
19 Rebecca's talking about, and then probably the most
20 relevant to most of what we're talking about today is
21 these representational forms. So APIP allows for
22 multiple forms of verbal or audio support, specifying

1 tactile materials that correspond to graphics and so
2 forth, Braille, and then it's able to support two
3 different types of sign, ASL and sign English.

4 So where does APIP fit in this whole notion of
5 standards? Well, I think about standards and education.
6 There's really four broad categories. We have content
7 standards. The common core are becoming the defined
8 content standards that we're interested in and those
9 define what it is we want students to know and be able
10 to do.

11 Performance standards are effectively telling
12 us, well, how well do we want students to know and be
13 able to do things and effectively the assessments,
14 either state assessments or the consortia assessments,
15 are going to define those performance standards.

16 We then have data standards which are really
17 specifying what are the data elements and how do we
18 exchange data in a way that we can interpret it in the
19 same way, and the data standards that are out there, SIF
20 and the Common Education Data Standards and EDFI, are
21 all around specific discrete pieces of information that
22 get exchanged, and we have these interoperability

1 standards which are very similar to data standards but
2 they really focus on interactions between systems and
3 experiences that are supposed to be created by systems,
4 whether it's a learning system or an assessment system.

5 So if we then start stitching these all
6 together, what does it look like? Well, in an
7 assessment program, we have common core state standards
8 to define what it is we're supposed to be measuring. We
9 have student information systems that provide us
10 information about kids, who are they, what was their
11 prior performance, what accommodations or access needs
12 do they have and so forth.

13 We then have information about the items
14 themselves. So IMS, the Global Learning Consortium has
15 built a bunch of interoperability standards, one of
16 which focuses on item content, this thing called QTI,
17 which we don't have to go into.

18 APIP is really just a version of QTI and what
19 it does is provide specific information about items and
20 how to make them accessible for kids. What needs to
21 happen is that APIP personal needs profile needs to be
22 married with the student information and now we have

1 kind of a seamless integration of assessment and
2 information about student access needs.

3 So what's that mean for an assessment context?

4 Well, assessment begins by figuring out who are the kids
5 that are going to participate in our program. So in
6 reality, we can pull information from the student
7 information system to populate and define who it is
8 participating in the assessment.

9 Once we know that, we can have students log in
10 and then we can pull their access needs. That allows us
11 then to do tailored test administration. Test
12 administration then is pulling items that are in APIP or
13 some other item format style and we're able to then
14 tailor the experience and the pieces of the item that
15 are being presented to kids. We record responses. We
16 score. Scores go right back into that student model
17 because that's where it resides. It's associated with
18 the kid or an adaptive engine, you have a little
19 triangle that's going on until you get a stable
20 estimate. In the end, ultimately what's important about
21 assessment is reporting, so we can pull that information
22 back out from the student model for teachers, parents,

1 students, administrators, to make use of the data that
2 comes out.

3 So really, you can see, it looks kind of
4 complex, but it ends up being a very elegant model
5 that's marrying multiple types of standards to create an
6 assessment system.

7 Last thing I want to quickly address is some
8 misunderstandings around APIP. You know, there's some
9 notion that APIP, the standard, is proprietary and it's
10 industry-led. It's not. It's an open standard. It was
11 developed in collaboration with a number of state
12 assessment programs and the state assessment programs
13 actually were the ones that made decisions about what's
14 included and what's not included in APIP.

15 There's a notion that it impedes or clashes
16 with some of these other data standards, CIF, for
17 example. It doesn't. As that diagram shows, it
18 complements and should interact with it. It's not. It
19 doesn't compete in any way.

20 There's a notion that it doesn't support
21 innovation. It does. QTI has a very elegant
22 interaction model that supports a wide variety of item

1 types. APIP, being based on QTI, can support all of
2 those interaction models, as well, and then there's this
3 notion or concern about high bandwidth, that APIP,
4 because it has all this accessibility stuff in it, there
5 are going to be huge files.

6 Well, again, think about your suitcase.
7 Suitcase is huge, but once you start unpacking the
8 contents and tailoring the contents to your individual
9 practices or, in this case, individual students, most of
10 the items are going to be very lightweight and no
11 different than what we're currently seeing in the
12 assessment systems.

13 So I think APIP can provide a powerful
14 solution for accessibility in electronic format and can
15 solve some or provide a solution for some of the issues
16 we're talking about.

17 So are we going to hand it over? Are we going
18 to do questions?

19 MR. ROONEY: Well, so I think we've got about
20 10 minutes now to talk about technology writ large and
21 either questions for Mike and APIP or I think APIP is
22 clear or technology is clear anyway.

1 Moving to computer-based testing I think
2 provides a clear opportunity to help standardize things
3 across states and when you're talking about large-scale
4 assessment and the consortia are certainly creating
5 large-scale assessments, it's clearly an opportunity to
6 help standardize things across states but there's
7 probably other challenges that are going to be systemic
8 or that are going to come up when you move to computer-
9 based testing for these two populations.

10 If people have ideas they want to raise, we
11 can try to talk through what those questions are if they
12 have things to handle it.

13 So, Wendy, we can start with you and then
14 Jamal second and then Willy.

15 MS. CARVER: Hello. I'm Wendy Carver, and I
16 work in the State Department in Utah, and Utah's
17 recently -- well, not recently, over the last five or so
18 years we've gone to computer-based assessments. That's
19 really changed how we look at accommodations and
20 accessibility.

21 The way we used to look at it in a paper-based
22 assessment is not at all how you view it in a computer-

1 based system. The majority of our students take our
2 assessments, students with disabilities, English
3 language learners, regular education students take them
4 computer- based, and there are -- what we've discovered
5 is problems, lots of problems that we really need to
6 think through.

7 One of the problems is with the read aloud
8 accommodation. On a paper-based assessment, it's
9 generally a human that reads it. Some states have audio
10 files. We've embedded our read aloud for each item into
11 the assessment. Well, there are different ways that you
12 may -- reading text is fairly simple, but how do you
13 read the graphics. I mean, a student who's a visual
14 learner needs the graphics read in maybe a different way
15 than a student with a learning disability.

16 For example, if a student is a visual learner
17 and you're trying to say X squared, that would be X
18 super script 2 but if I said X super script 2 to a
19 student with a learning disability, they'd think I'd
20 lost my mind and so maybe you have to look at the read
21 aloud accommodation in different ways and that means the
22 description of the graphics.

1 We're in an EAG grant with some other states
2 and finding that the graphics, we've been giving
3 students way too much information. We're overloading
4 them with information and sorting through the
5 information becomes more difficult for the students
6 instead of just telling them what they need to know so
7 they can go ahead and figure these problems out.

8 Another thing that's concerning me is I know
9 that Oregon's done the use of a Brailleur, refreshable
10 Brailleur, but what about tactile graphics? How does the
11 student get the tactile graphics delivered to them? Is
12 there a portable tactile graphics machine that sits next
13 to the student and that's where they -- the tactile
14 graphics, by the way, is Braille reads text but it
15 doesn't read your graphs, your pie charts, your
16 whatever, and so that comes in in a tactile graphic
17 format. So how does the student get that? So I'm
18 worrying about that.

19 I'm also worrying about for students who have
20 hearing problems only have an avatar, can we put an
21 avatar on a screen? Will the student have prior
22 knowledge of use of an avatar instead of a human signing

1 to them? Will states agree that there's one way that we
2 should do this? American Sign Language or maybe not
3 that, something else? How will the states come to
4 agreement over all of this?

5 You think about a read aloud accommodation.
6 If we looked at each state here in the room and asked
7 what are your rules for a read aloud accommodation,
8 we're going to get everything under the sun and I think
9 those are really huge issues, too.

10 So I want to thank you. I got to lay out all
11 of my worries to you. So thanks very much.

12 MR. ROONEY: So before, Jamal, we go to you,
13 does anyone have a response or reaction to Wendy's
14 comments? So maybe Rebecca and then Mike and then Jamal
15 will go.

16 MS. KOPRIVA: One of the things we have been
17 wrestling with a lot is exactly what you're talking
18 about, not so much all the other things for students
19 like with Braille and so on, but this issue of once you
20 start moving into using visuals, animations, animation
21 simulations, interactions of text with moving stuff, and
22 you're interacting with these actual visual images in

1 one way or another, you can very, very, very, very fast
2 get to overload and so how does one do this effectively,
3 and I would say a huge percentage of our work has been
4 trying to figure that out because it is -- we've gone
5 from, in a sense, kind of a dearth of stimulus to too
6 much stimulus and how do you sort it? That's a very
7 tough question.

8 Certainly, we have some information about it
9 and so do others, advertising people. We mainly have
10 gone outside of education to get some of these answers
11 and then also wrestled with how they apply. So I think
12 there is hope and that's just in that arena, much less
13 in the Braille, but it is something that has to be
14 consciously understood so you keep the focus on what the
15 target constructs are.

16 MR. RUSSELL: So, Wendy, I think it's useful
17 that you break your questions into different categories.
18 So some of your concerns and questions are around policy
19 and so we talk about what different states do and don't
20 do and how they're going to do it, those are policy
21 questions.

22 Then there's technical questions which are how

1 do we actually do this. So you identified read aloud,
2 that there's multiple ways in which read aloud might be
3 implemented, and that becomes a technical question, and
4 so, for example, APIP tries to address that in the read
5 aloud by having different categories of read aloud, so
6 that you could have multiple descriptions of the graphic
7 using the appropriate text. All right. But that's a
8 technical problem.

9 Then the third is kind of what I would call
10 practical problems and those fall into, well, if we have
11 these -- if we establish these policies and come up with
12 a technical solution, how do we then establish best
13 practices so that when we're building content, we're not
14 over-describing things or we're describing them
15 appropriately or, you know, whatever it happens to be
16 and so I think those are all -- all the questions you're
17 asking are really important.

18 But I think it's also useful to
19 compartmentalize the questions so that it doesn't become
20 overwhelming and then we can think logically. Well,
21 what do we need to do? We need to make some policy
22 recommendations, make sure we have technical solutions

1 to support those, and then build practices so that we
2 can implement them with fidelity.

3 MR. ROONEY: So Martha and then Jamal. Sorry.

4 MS. THURLOW: I think I'm going back to a
5 point that Mike made but I think it relates to the other
6 comments that have been made, as well, and that was that
7 notion of, I liked the phrase you used, marrying the
8 APIP personal needs profile and then identifying the
9 accommodations, and I think that sounds so wonderful but
10 I think we have an issue that really needs to be
11 addressed right there and that we haven't yet figured
12 out how to make some of those decisions very well and if
13 we don't figure -- if the consortia don't figure that
14 out, how to train decision-makers how to make things
15 really, really clear, we're going to run into some of
16 the same problems of kids getting access avenues or
17 accommodations that they don't really need that can then
18 interfere with their performance and vice versa, not
19 getting what they need for us to really get valid
20 results.

21 MR. ROONEY: Thanks. Jamal.

22 MR. ABEDI: The type of potentials that

1 computer technology in general and computer in
2 particular can bring to assessment for English language
3 learners and students with disabilities are enormous.
4 Great potential, many accommodations that cannot be done
5 with paper and pencil, this can be done with computers
6 and so forth.

7 For instance, imagine the kind of adaptive
8 tests that you can consider using English language
9 proficiency and assign items based on the level of
10 proficiency to and many, many other things that has been
11 done.

12 The only concern I have, however, is the
13 comparability issue. Many states are using paper and
14 pencil tests right now and we need to think of the
15 transition. After 2014 when we want to transition to
16 the new system and I know both consortia are considering
17 doing computer-based assessment which is good, great,
18 grateful for, but you have to think about that
19 comparability between paper and pencil and also the
20 computer technology in general with the assessment and
21 how we can -- because again, when we want to transition,
22 we have to have some comparability between these two

1 systems.

2 MR. ROONEY: Willy?

3 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: I would like to start by
4 saying that just because the technology is available and
5 certain accommodations are available, that doesn't mean
6 that we know how to use them properly and that doesn't
7 mean that it's going to be implemented properly.

8 So even if you have a great thing in front of
9 you, you have to be very cautious and say is it going to
10 be used properly because if not, it's better not to mess
11 with that.

12 So I have some comments about, and I want to
13 elaborate a little bit about, what Jamal said. It's a
14 matter of not only a comparability but also the
15 exchangeability of measures. So we know from research
16 that if you give exactly two tests exactly with the same
17 content in a computer and paper and pencil, there's
18 going to be a lot of variation. So kids will do well in
19 one form, in one format, will not necessarily do well in
20 the other and kids will do not well in one format, maybe
21 will do it well in the other format.

22 So what happens is that every test or every

1 test format is telling you a different story about the
2 achievement of the students. What we don't know -- I
3 mean, there's evidence on that for sure. What we don't
4 know is to what extent that interaction between students
5 and test format varies, depending on the linguistic
6 status of the student.

7 So what I think that we need -- that if you
8 really want to go with the computer-administered
9 approach, I think that you really need to perform a
10 series of studies of exchangeability across linguistic
11 groups and also a series of studies on usability because
12 we have been talking about accessibility. Actually, we
13 can -- an aspect of it is the usability.

14 Cognitive interviews about how the students
15 from one and the other group are understanding what they
16 have in front of them on the screen, what kind of things
17 should we allow the students to do with their computers,
18 are they going to be allowed to adjust to the font size
19 of the test, of what they see on the screen or not?
20 Each option has a set of advantages and disadvantages.
21 That if we try to get very fancy in the way in which we
22 administer the test by computer probably that is not

1 going to work because, as Rebecca said, many features
2 may overwhelm the students.

3 And the other is when we think about all the
4 issues of exchangeability, accessibility, usability, if
5 you really want to go computer-based, you really want to
6 make a good case of fairness and validity because
7 research shows that there's a lot of uncertainty when
8 you move from one test format to the other, so you need
9 to perform all those studies as part of your process of
10 development.

11 I know that maybe the solicitation for this
12 proposal did not include to do research but I think that
13 you need to perform these studies as part of the
14 activities to defining how you want to construct your
15 tests.

16 MR. ROONEY: I'm sorry, Willy. I might make
17 that the last comment on this topic because I want to
18 make sure we move on.

19 But just to clarify, I think that was a nice
20 kind of point that Mike was making of kind of there's
21 the policy questions and then there's the technical
22 questions and the research on whether the technical

1 questions are - - the solutions are working as intended
2 is the point.

3 There actually is a fair bit of research and
4 evaluation in both PARCC and Smarter Balanced that they
5 haven't, I think, detailed what their research plan is
6 going to be but clearly these are the kinds of questions
7 that need to be part of that as they're going through
8 and as they're designing their items and testing how
9 they work. So I think this is a good conversation to
10 help them as they're thinking through these questions.

11 So on that note, I want to move to the next
12 part of the Agenda which is talking about Item Design
13 and Development and there's a couple different pieces to
14 this. I think we've spent a lot of time -- I think one
15 of the kind of ways to move forward in the field is to
16 design upfront accessible items so you can reduce the
17 need for accommodations on the back end and this is the
18 point that -- I forget whether it was Lizanne or Rebecca
19 made this morning with her question of, you know, just
20 really rethinking how you design assessment items so
21 that way you kind of reduce the need to do it on the
22 back end because you do it on the front end.

1 So I want to spend a fair bit of time the rest
2 of the morning talking about that, but I do want to take
3 a few minutes in the morning and it's, I think, about
4 five minutes for Jamal and Martha combined to talk a
5 little bit about accommodations because that is an area
6 that I think there's been a lot of research in the last
7 few years that's kind of taken the field pretty far
8 along, talk about where it is and kind of maybe some
9 next steps, and then switch from there to start talking
10 about when you're thinking about how to create items
11 accessible so it's kind of the two work hand-in-glove,
12 so you reduce the need for accommodations but then at
13 the same time you're also making sure that you've got
14 the right accommodations where needed.

15 So I'm going to turn it over to Jamal.

16 Research and Practice on Accommodations

17 MR. ABEDI: I want to thank the Department of
18 Education for paying attention to these two subgroups
19 are extremely important. They are dear to us. We know
20 they need attention and without attention, their
21 accountability system, assessment system for the nation
22 is going to be in question. So they need attention and

1 thank you for paying this level of attention.

2 We have five minutes, actually four, four
3 minutes and 30 seconds by now. I wanted to spend three
4 minutes or two and 30 minutes, and I wanted to spend
5 about two minutes of this three minutes of this two and
6 a half minutes on opening and introduction to my
7 presentation and 30 seconds on my presentation, if
8 that's okay with you.

9 So in my introduction, I have to point to two
10 very, very important points. The first point is that,
11 as Patrick mentioned, and this is a practice that ELL
12 students and students with disabilities is always
13 mentioned side by side. So that brings some kind of
14 unintended association between the two groups which
15 again, as I said, both groups are so dear for us. There
16 is absolutely no negative aspect of anything regarding
17 any of these groups, but I wanted to tell you that
18 bilingualism and linear languages of the disabilities as
19 a positive is a gift, so because that association brings
20 that concept to that. So I wanted to bring this clear
21 and all of us know about this.

22 But more importantly, when we put English

1 language learners and students with disabilities
2 together, bring the common mistake that all the
3 accommodations that are used for students with
4 disabilities can be used for English language learners
5 and, unfortunately, that's some practice sometimes in
6 the nation sometimes. I'm not saying all the states.
7 That by the sake of calling them an accommodation, we
8 can use it for the English language learners. For
9 instance, putting answers in booklet is one
10 accommodation that you are using for students with
11 disabilities -- I mean English language learners.

12 A small group testing, one-on-one testing,
13 there is no point to any of these accommodations. It
14 does not resolve any of these issues for English
15 language learners. So that's a basic issue, that just
16 by calling something an accommodation that doesn't mean
17 that is appropriate for English language learners. We
18 have to make sure, as soon as students with disabilities
19 have variety of the groups, but it is a common
20 denominator for English language learners and that's the
21 need for language proficiency.

22 So accommodations that we are going to use and

1 we want to use for English language learners has to fit
2 this need and we have to make sure that there are direct
3 -- addressing directly their needs and so forth.

4 So I wanted to -- one and a half minutes, so
5 one more minute.

6 I wanted to just tell you that I wanted to
7 list at least six, six -- sorry about this. So to the
8 right? Okay. So let's see how to fix this.

9 Okay. So there are at least six different
10 criteria we have to use in order to make sure that these
11 accommodations are relevant or useful for students,
12 English language learners, and maybe for students with
13 disabilities, as well, if not all agrees with me.

14 The first criteria is effectiveness. Whether
15 accommodations we are using for these students are
16 effective in making assessments more accessible for
17 these students. If it's not effective, then there is no
18 use for it.

19 The second point, the second criteria is
20 validity. How valid is the outcome of accommodative
21 assessment, whether the accommodation actually alters
22 the construct being measured, whether accommodation

1 actually brings unintended consequences, whether
2 accommodations bring -- gives unfair advantage to it
3 because we want to help them. We don't want to give
4 them unfair advantage so that they receive appropriate
5 help rather than helping them beyond what they need.

6 We need to also see the differential impact of
7 the accommodations. We cannot use an accommodation that
8 is used for everyone, one size fits all. There is no
9 such accommodation. We have to make sure that the
10 accommodations we are using fits the student background
11 for the students who are proficient ELL students, for
12 the students who are relatively proficient, then, for
13 instance, dictionary might help or glossary might help.

14 For those who just arrived here and they
15 cannot speak English, the native language testing might
16 help. So it depends on the background of the students,
17 different accommodations should be used. So that's the
18 differential impact. So we cannot, we should not use as
19 one single or a group of accommodations that works for
20 everyone because there is no such thing that something
21 works for everyone.

22 Comparability. If accommodation alters the

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

100

1 construct, then the accommodative and non-accommodative
2 assessments are not comparable. Therefore, they cannot
3 be used for accountability. They cannot be used for
4 assessment. Because we are altering the construct, the
5 outcome of accommodation, accommodative assessment may
6 not be helpful at all.

7 And relevance. Again, there are many, and I
8 can give you, if you give me another five minutes, we
9 can give you many accommodations that are created,
10 developed, and used for students with disabilities and
11 are used exactly the same without even change for
12 English language learners, so they're not relevant for
13 English language learners. So relevancy is the most
14 important aspect.

15 And also feasibility. If accommodations are
16 not feasible, if they're valid, if they're making
17 assessments more accessible, but they are not feasible
18 in larger- scale assessment, what's the use of them?
19 For instance, one-on-one testing, an accommodation used
20 for English language learners, for larger-scale
21 assessment, if you want to do one-on-one testing, you
22 can imagine how much time, how much feasibility,

1 logistical issues we are going to have.

2 So there are criteria that have to be used in
3 order to make sure that accommodations are -- again, the
4 concept of accommodations is one of the most complex
5 aspects of assessment for English language learners
6 without using these criteria. We make a decision, we
7 have accommodations, and we are not aware of the
8 consequences.

9 So then some accommodations may not be
10 effective in making assessments more accessible for
11 English language learners; example, one-on-one testing.
12 Imagine the students who really need assessment with
13 language, give them one-on-one testing. What does it do
14 for them? Or ask them to put their answer in booklet
15 rather than answer sheet. What does it do for them?

16 Some accommodations alter the construct by
17 providing unfair advantage to recipients of
18 accommodation. Example of that is dictionary which is a
19 commonly-used accommodation of ELL students but the
20 dictionary and glossary provide help with actual answer
21 to the test items that may not be fair and may not be
22 valid.

1 Some accommodations do not alter the construct
2 and they may be comparable. An example is language
3 linguistic modification. We have many, many different
4 studies that language modification does not impact the
5 construct. So there are some research, even though
6 research results are mixed, but still we have some
7 indication that some of these accommodations can be
8 used. Some of these accommodations are not to be used
9 because of changes to the construct and so forth.

10 And then we have no hard evidence for many of
11 the accommodations that are used currently by states.
12 So let me just go to the end of this and then provide
13 some research needs to examine the validity of
14 accommodations, if accommodations impact the construct,
15 research needs to determine the effectiveness of certain
16 accommodations, making sure a single accommodation is
17 used, making sure that they are effective in making
18 assessment without changing the construct.

19 What does this look like? Randomized field
20 experiment needs to be done for accommodations and I
21 wanted to present a design. Another 30 seconds, right?
22 I think I have another 30 seconds.

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

103

1 Now one problem is research on accommodations
2 with existing data, existing data that cannot be used to
3 evaluate the validity and effectiveness. Why is that?
4 Because in existing data, you cannot accommodate the
5 students who cannot be accommodated, but in research in
6 accommodation, you have to provide accommodations for
7 those who are not supposed to receive accommodations and
8 you have to deprive some students from receiving
9 accommodations who have to receive accommodations.

10 So then the existing data are not relevant,
11 may not be good for doing. So we have to do something
12 like this in research. Control for all sources of
13 extraneous variable, control for any sources of initial
14 differences between them, assign students, both ELL and
15 non-ELL, and I think for disabilities, it's the same, to
16 accommodated and non-accommodated assessment.

17 Take a look at this design here. If you
18 assign ELL students who are accommodated and non-
19 accommodated assessment, and if even G1, Group G1 who
20 are accommodated perform better than G2, then that
21 suggests that accommodations is effective in making
22 assessment more accessible.

1 However, at the same time, if you go to G3 and
2 G4, they should do the same. Non-ELL students who
3 receive accommodations should not perform differently
4 than non-ELL students who are not receiving
5 accommodation. Why? Because accommodation should not
6 change the construct. So if non-ELL students in Group 3
7 perform better than non-ELL students in Group 4, that
8 means accommodation has done something above and beyond
9 what it's supposed to do.

10 So then we have to consider this type of
11 design by random design of subjects to these two groups
12 and then make sure that ELL students benefit, non-ELL
13 students do not benefit because they are not supposed to
14 benefit and accommodations are not supposed to change
15 the construct or make assessment easier for them.

16 So I think that's it.

17 MR. ROONEY: Can you pass that?

18 MR. ABEDI: Sure.

19 MS. THURLOW: Oh, no. Jamal, you go ahead and
20 do mine. So Jamal has kindly given me two of his five
21 minutes. I'll be brief, though.

22 Because we're talking about accommodations but

1 we're all realizing that some of these are no longer
2 going to be viewed as accommodations, they're going to
3 be part of the design and that's going to relate and
4 help us think more about what is best practice for all
5 students rather than -- and what makes the assessment
6 available to all students rather than our subgroups that
7 we're most concerned about today.

8 So Jamal asked me to talk about two things.
9 Can you get up to mine or no? Oh, yes. I didn't know
10 they'd come in. Just whip them all in there because I'm
11 not going to talk about each one. I went back to the
12 literature to try to just pull out what are those
13 accommodations that have been really well researched and
14 we can say they're evidence-based accommodations.

15 Which ones have conflicting evidence and then
16 which ones haven't we really even studied and so you can
17 see we've got -- and thanks to Steve Sireci and his
18 colleagues who first identified these are the ones that
19 we probably really can be pretty sure about extended
20 time in the oral and administration for math
21 assessments, but the others, those that we've looked at,
22 like reading the test or oral administration, segmented

1 text, a new one, scribe calculator, there's a lot of
2 conflicting evidence still when you look at those for
3 students with disabilities and then we have hundreds,
4 literally hundreds of accommodations that we haven't
5 looked at yet.

6 I listed the engagement motivation
7 accommodations there because there's more and more
8 discussion about how that plays into the access feature
9 and there was a recent article that talked about maybe
10 even one of the functions of all kinds of accommodations
11 is that they help to engage or motivate the students.

12 So there's more to be looked at there, but
13 when we think about the hundreds of accommodations that
14 we are identifying, we can't do research on all of them.

15 So you can go to the next one where, you know,
16 I've been doing this for decades and so thinking about
17 the research and how it plays into what the consortia
18 are doing, I thought really as we think about the needs
19 as we go forward, we cannot forget to clarify the
20 content. If we don't have the content clarified, what
21 are the claims we really want to make? The
22 accommodations research doesn't inform us very well.

1 So I think that for many of our
2 accommodations, what we have to do is be focusing on a
3 strong rationale for the accommodation in light of the
4 content assessed and that we can't devote time and
5 effort to research that potentially will give us
6 conflicting evidence.

7 We need to focus on improving the selection of
8 students for participation in the research that we do.
9 Right now, we end up with checking on the effects of
10 accommodations for students who probably don't need
11 those accommodations and that, I think, is part of why
12 we're getting conflicting results.

13 And then I think when we think about those
14 accommodations that are still controversial or maybe
15 those access avenues that are still controversial,
16 there's where we need to devote our research and to the
17 extent we can, experimental research maybe empirical
18 studies are what we need, as well.

19 And then very bottom line, I think I mentioned
20 this my last comment before, that we have to think about
21 that decision-making process. We have to figure out how
22 to identify those access needs that students have and

1 then how we marry them with whatever it is, an access
2 avenue or accommodation.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. ROONEY: I think we can -- well, one
5 question and then we have to move on. I think it will
6 cycle through the rest of the conversation.

7 So I thought I saw Leila's hand first. So
8 she'll get to ask the question.

9 MS. WILLIAMS: As I hear both of the
10 presentations and even what we talked about previously
11 with the technology piece, and having been a special
12 educator who's sat on many, many IEPs in the past, I
13 still, you know, have a little bit of this disconnect of
14 what I'm thinking when I'm making decisions in that team
15 decision process because we've been trained that we also
16 look at what's happening instructionally and then we
17 also talk about what's going to be happening on the
18 assessment.

19 So now I find that how I might view
20 accommodations, and I think that's where some of these
21 issues or questions about training come into play, is
22 because as a teacher who's teaching in a traditional

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

109

1 format with students or students who might be in the
2 general ed setting and what their accommodations will
3 look like and then having to have the student turn
4 around and do an assessment where they've not been
5 exposed to the kinds of supports or access that will be
6 available to them on the assessments, how do we ensure
7 that through that year of instruction that's going on,
8 that not only are we still doing our traditional methods
9 of instruction perhaps but giving them opportunities to
10 sit at a computer and we know that's another discussion
11 in itself because I know in Arizona, we will go to
12 regions where, you know, access to computers is going to
13 be interesting, you know.

14 So I would love that, you know. There's these
15 huge Gates grants and we'd have iPads and other things
16 available to every child, so that in with their
17 traditional instruction and formats of learning, they
18 also are having some connection of what that might look
19 like in a computer-aided type instruction environment,
20 whether it's informative assessment, things like that,
21 because I think it's also going to take a big training
22 not only on the professionals who are going to be

1 working with the students but also students being able
2 to make some decisions.

3 So I'm thinking the high school students we
4 know we have a lot of student-led IEPs where they are
5 making decisions and it's not the shopping list of, oh,
6 yeah, we're going to do all these accommodations and
7 then they get to the test and they're like, oh, my gosh,
8 but also looking at younger students to be able to
9 understand how they learn and how they can best
10 demonstrate.

11 And one last point is when I think about some
12 of the research and some of the things that have been
13 proposed here, things that we've talked about and are
14 curious about but I think also with students who have
15 had accommodations that we might look in these
16 groupings, is really how long have they been
17 implemented, I mean, because again we have these
18 decisions where there's an accommodation but how
19 consistently are they being utilized so that you can
20 truly know what happened to the student prior to that
21 accommodation coming into place when we do this type of
22 research.

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

111

1 MR. ROONEY: Yikes. Thank you. I think that
2 might be a good point to switch then to the next topic
3 on the Agenda which is moving into -- kind of flipping
4 it around. I think a lot of the questions are still
5 relevant and I think Jamal's points about the research
6 are still definitely germane to this part of the
7 conversation, too, of how do you think about creating
8 accessible items and reducing the need for accommodation
9 on the end but still making sure that you're doing the
10 same research to see how they work.

11 I don't know if anyone from either PARCC or
12 Smarter Balanced wants to help set up kind of the
13 questions you have about how you design accessible items
14 upfront and then open the conversation from there.

15 Melissa, do you want to go? How to Improve
16 Accessibility in Item Design and Development

17 MS. FINCHER: Yeah. As I've been listening to
18 the conversation this morning, I've been always going
19 back to instruction because instruction comes first and
20 we're putting a lot of eggs in the assessment basket and
21 I think we need to put as many eggs in the instruction
22 basket and make sure that the instruction is accessible

1 to students, that the content they can get to, they
2 understand it.

3 Certainly, you know, lots of states have done
4 research as they have grappled with whether to build an
5 alternative assessment based on modified achievement
6 standards.

7 It's very hard to tease apart what aspect of
8 the student's language proficiency or their disability
9 interacts with the content versus their lack of
10 opportunity to learn and their lack of access to the
11 content and so I think as we -- there are wonderful
12 teachers out there that are doing just phenomenal
13 things. We need to learn from them and build some of the
14 things that they're doing into our assessment systems as
15 we build, but likewise it goes back to what you were
16 saying about the two-way street.

17 MR. ROONEY: Viji, did you want to --

18 MS. SOMASUNDARAM: Thank you so much. This is
19 a great meeting and I have been learning a lot.

20 The one thing that, you know, when we have
21 designed items for our state, the one thing that comes
22 during item reviews and even during the review, the

1 final review before the test is going to be administered
2 is there are certain standards that just does not lend
3 itself for students with certain kinds of disabilities
4 and, you know, especially the items that deals with
5 color, the item that deals with shade, the item that
6 deals with the three-dimensional objects and a certain
7 way of asking the questions, and, yeah, we do not want
8 to leave out those important things at the same time we
9 have to make sure that we are asking the right thing and
10 the answer is not we just mask those items for that
11 group of students.

12 And, you know, I want -- those are the kind of
13 things that we are considering from the get-go and the
14 one thing that we are doing that I am really happy about
15 is we are not restricted to those two item types that we
16 used to have before. We are having more of these item
17 types with performance tasks, with technology-enhanced
18 items.

19 I'm hopeful that we will be able to do a
20 better job of improving the accessibility to the
21 students and, right, I want to echo all of you who have
22 said that these accessibility and accommodations should

1 be known to the students before they are in the task
2 because it will be another nightmare for the student to
3 just administer the items with accommodations without
4 them having to know what it is that they are going to do
5 with that.

6 And, you know, for example, when you have a
7 test already and then a translated script and they're
8 dealing with a lot of paper and it's another hard thing
9 to deal with that with eighth grade students and even
10 some of the students who are at the higher grades. So
11 those kind of things and even a lot more are considered
12 right now and then recently Smarter-issued item
13 specifications and we have included a section
14 particularly for the accommodations policy and
15 guidelines and the bias and sensitivity policy and
16 guidelines and we have specifically asked for things to
17 be considered while making the items.

18 So I think those would be really helpful but
19 we are actually working a lot with Accessibility and
20 Accommodations Workgroup and when I say we, we have the
21 Item Development Workgroup and the Performance Task
22 Workgroup and Test Design to make sure that we are all

1 engaged in all these thoughts from the get-go, so it's
2 not Item Development going first and the Accommodations
3 kicking later, coming with the policy or a big chart
4 saying these are the spreadsheets, these are the
5 accommodations you would use which some of us have been
6 using in the past.

7 So I'm really hopeful that we are talking
8 about all of these and we are going to consider that
9 before we put that test in front of the student.

10 MR. ROONEY: Thanks, Viji. Lizanne, and then
11 Gaye.

12 MS. DeSTEFANO: You know, I think what we're
13 really doing at this point in assessment development is
14 raising the bar on item development in a really, really,
15 really big way and I know that the consortia are at the
16 point where they're sort of releasing RFAs for item
17 development.

18 I think this is an absolutely critical piece
19 of the success of these consortium, is to make sure that
20 those item development teams have the expertise on the
21 teams and the guidance to really develop the kind of
22 items that are accessible and give us information and if

1 there's just -- there's many considerations but two that
2 I think are really important is linguistic complexity of
3 the items.

4 In some of the work that I'll be talking about
5 this afternoon, the linguistic complexity of the item, I
6 don't mean the reading level I mean how complicated the
7 sentence structure, the semantics, the vocabulary was,
8 was the single most important barrier to accessibility
9 for both English language learners and students with
10 disabilities in math.

11 So having people on those teams that really
12 understand language is really important, and I think the
13 second piece is to be able to unpack a standard and
14 develop a suite of items that measure the range of
15 content, knowledge, and skills that students could
16 exhibit and still be meeting some aspect of that
17 standard.

18 Very often in assessment, we pick this item to
19 measure this standard, this item to measure this
20 standard, this item to measure this standard. We're
21 limited because we're constrained by the number of items
22 that we can have, the number of time that we can use for

1 testing, the p value for those items. The difficulty
2 level of those items are all over the place and so when
3 we put them together, we have a very uneven
4 representation of what a child knows and can do for that
5 set of standards.

6 So I think we need to really push a much more
7 systematic and reasoned item development process.

8 MR. ROONEY: Gaye.

9 MS. FEDORCHAK: Perfect time, actually.
10 Thanks, Lizanne, for that. I can build off of your
11 comments.

12 I want to say that if we wait until item
13 development to build in accessibility, it's too late.
14 We've missed the boat. We need to be building content
15 maps where we bring experts in blindness, experts in
16 deafness, experts in motor impairment, experts in
17 cognition, experts in communication disorders together,
18 looking at every single construct within the common
19 core, every single construct, and we need to be
20 identifying with people who really understand
21 representational structures of different needs, what the
22 representational boundaries might be, and then we need

1 to get content people in the same room and actually we
2 need to lock the door behind them because we need to put
3 them together and not let them come out until they agree
4 on what the representational boundaries are that will
5 not violate the construct because unless we map this
6 from the content, the construct forward, construct by
7 construct, we can't build a test that's accessible that
8 validly represents the constructs, let alone an item,
9 think about trying to put together a performance test
10 that represents many constructs together.

11 What if accessibility for construct 1
12 completely collides with accessibility that's allowable
13 for construct 2? You're not only going to have to have
14 a scoring plan in mind, a set of scoring structures,
15 parameters, and engineering for scoring upfront, you're
16 going to need to know whether the construct has been
17 violated, so you know how many points the kid got on
18 that performance task because if we're really talking
19 about complex tasks and real-world tasks, kids will need
20 access for certain parts of it. They may need the same
21 access but they may not be showing the construct there.

22 The complications, the engineering here is

1 deep. We need to be very thoughtful about this. We
2 really need to have the right people at the table. We
3 can't be talking about students with disabilities in a
4 general sense or ELLs in a general sense. We need to be
5 talking about access needs cognitively, specifically,
6 perceptually, you know, sensory, perceptually,
7 motorically, linguistically, emotional, behavioral.

8 There's very specific kinds of things. Even
9 something, a specific learning disability, could be
10 either a verbal learning disability or could be a non-
11 verbal learning disability, and those two access needs
12 could be diametrically opposed and contradictory.

13 I mean, we need to have much deeper, richer
14 talk about the access needs and we need to have the
15 right people at the table. We may need to take a very
16 deep look at content before we even think about items.

17 MR. ROONEY: Well, Steve and then Willy.

18 MR. SIRECI: I want to connect some of the
19 really important comments that have been made and expand
20 the discussion from item design to test design.

21 Starting with what Martha said about the
22 importance of giving information to teachers and others

1 to make informed accommodation decisions, NCEO has done
2 a lot of good work in helping us and helping teachers
3 get that information but it's still very difficult, and
4 I wanted to connect that with what Michael said about
5 kind of all the design and whether data flows because I
6 want a system that is actually going to provide
7 information back, a feedback pass-through into doing in
8 a way that says this is a student who needs something,
9 some type of accommodation, some type of adaptivity, and
10 I don't mean adaptive testing just with respect to item
11 difficulty, like we're currently doing, but adaptivity
12 with respect to presentation, test administration,
13 format, and so forth.

14 Is it possible? I think all we need to do is
15 look at the gaming industry, look at what Sony's doing,
16 look at what Nintendo's doing. Look at kids playing the
17 Wii and DS and Playstations. They're being rewarded.
18 They're jumping up to levels. So the difficulty's being
19 adjusted and dare I say it, they're doing it without
20 item response theory. They are, I think.

21 They're also giving do you need more time,
22 help messages, sometimes audio kicks in, and there's not

1 someone there saying this is a student who needs audio
2 administration. The computer is doing this
3 automatically, and I think if we design a system in this
4 way, we've been broadening it outside of English
5 language learners and students with disabilities to
6 students who just for whatever reason aren't engaged or
7 don't care.

8 So this will help increase the engagement by
9 having the computer keep track of what's going on and
10 keep getting these extra measures, these extra layers
11 that are needed.

12 MR. ROONEY: Willy.

13 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: Thank you. I have four
14 specific things to suggest. So the first one is I'm
15 going to reiterate the presentation of English language
16 learners through the entire process of assessment
17 development. If you develop your items test and pilot
18 them and then you say, oh, so what do we know about the
19 ELLs and what accommodations are we going to offer, that
20 is not going to work? What you have to do is to make
21 sure that you have the ELLs all the time in mind and you
22 incorporate them in all the stages as you are piloting

1 your items. Otherwise, it is not going to work. So
2 that is one. That's the presentation of ELLs.

3 Remember that in the first participation today
4 I said I'm going to be bugging you with issues of
5 sampling and presentation. Well, linguistic
6 professionals in the fields of linguistics and
7 anthropology, they should be part of the development
8 team.

9 Many developers claim, okay, we have that kind
10 of professionals but they have just a few hours of a
11 consultant time, from linguistics and the other
12 specialists. That is not going to do the job. They
13 have to be all the time writing the items, overseeing
14 the process of writing the items, otherwise it's not
15 going to work.

16 So the third component is as equally
17 important. You have to be extremely detailed in the way
18 in which you develop your item specifications
19 documentation. In my experience, the worst assessments
20 are those in which the item specifications just give
21 general directions, like for example, include three
22 items with this and this format. That is not going to

1 work. You really need to go very deep in the
2 characteristics of the format of the items, even the
3 kinds of tasks, and make sure that they reflect some
4 conceptual framework that you have about the nature of
5 the tasks.

6 Just to give you an example. Of the many item
7 specifications documents that I have examined, when I
8 see an item specifications document that is 15 pages
9 long, I know that is not going to give the proper
10 guidance for the item writers to write their items. If
11 I see a document of 250 pages, and, of course, well
12 written, that document most likely or probably the
13 authors really know the nature of the tasks and they
14 have a clear idea of the kinds of things that they are
15 assessing.

16 So it is very important to pay attention to
17 the items specifications document, and then the other
18 one has to do with the -- well, it looks like
19 everybody's going to do the computer-based, computer
20 administration approach. So I think that's something
21 related to accessibilities. Again, a series of studies
22 of usability that you have to perform so that always

1 using ELLs and non-ELLs in the kind of design that Jamal
2 was showing in that 2X2 chart.

3 The notion here is how much time do you have
4 to allow for students to get familiar with the mouse,
5 the format that they see on the screen, the kind of --
6 the way in which each type of task works, and how what
7 kinds of operations you need to perform or actions you
8 need to perform with the computer, and so on.

9 That has to be studied for each particular
10 task that you include in the assessment. Otherwise,
11 you're not going to get much. I mean, there's going to
12 be a lot of sources of invalidity and people will
13 question the validity of the tasks. So you really need
14 to spend the good time assessing those issues and making
15 sure that you come up with a set routine for test
16 administration that includes training in order for the
17 students to get familiar with the kinds of tasks and the
18 interfaces that you have.

19 MR. ROONEY: Michael.

20 MR. HOCK: I won't say that it's entirely
21 impossible to create -- to develop a single assessment
22 item that will be accessible for everybody but I would

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

125

1 say that, given our current level of technology, it's
2 going to be impossible for us to develop single
3 assessment items that are accessible to everyone and I'm
4 just thinking for a moment that if I were a test
5 director and I was here listening to this conversation
6 today, I'd be flipping out because if I do everything
7 that everyone here said today, we're going to have a
8 test with like a 150 items that no kid would want to
9 take and wait a minute, I am a test director.

10 So, you know, that raises a question of how we
11 address all these needs and still make tests that we can
12 afford for one thing but also that they're something
13 that kids will actually take and this gives me a chance
14 to talk about why Vermont wanted to be part of the
15 Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium and I think it
16 also brings in some of the things Mike was talking about
17 with APIP and, you know, coding items for accessibility.

18 So, by the way, I'm going to apologize to
19 everyone for making simplistic something that's actually
20 very complex, but kind of the centerpiece of the Smarter
21 Balanced Assessment Consortium is something called
22 Computer Adaptive Testing and, you know, what many of

1 the issues we talk about that have been problematic with
2 our current generation of tests have to do with the fact
3 that they're fixed form tests. Every kid takes exactly
4 the same set of items.

5 In computer adaptive testing, it's a
6 completely different approach, that basically the way it
7 works, and again I'm simplifying something that's very
8 complex but, you know, I give Debbie a first math item
9 from her grade level and depending on how she performs
10 on that item, the computer, the algorithms in the
11 computer move the student either to a more difficult
12 item or a harder item and basically what the computer is
13 doing is it's looking at reducing the variants around
14 that item every time so that we get to a point that
15 we're finding the item on the test that's the best
16 description, the best predictor of what the student's
17 skill level is, and again that's very simplistic but
18 that's kind of how it works.

19 So one of the things that I think is great
20 about this for our students who have special assessment
21 needs is that it allows us to produce all the different
22 kinds of items that people have been describing here

1 today but we don't have to give every one of them to
2 every kid. It's just part of the -- you know, it's part
3 of the way the adaptive engine works and this is coming
4 back to the importance of a system like APIP, that, you
5 know, it works in two ways.

6 It can, for example, say that on this
7 particular item, even though we've designated read aloud
8 as appropriate for the student, on this particular item,
9 we may not use read aloud because that'll violate the
10 construct that we're trying to measure, or because APIP
11 allows us to put in a set of student's characteristics
12 related to accessibility, we can -- the computer
13 basically can say don't deliver item A to this student,
14 that we have item B which, getting back to Rebecca's
15 point about, you know, we always use linguistic
16 representations and we don't have to do that. So maybe
17 for Michael, we're going to give him an item that
18 measures the same construct as item A but it's item B
19 and it doesn't require a linguistic representation, but
20 I heard Michael talk one time about what's behind the
21 curtain.

22 What's behind the curtain on that is that

1 there are computer algorithms that tells what items get
2 delivered to the student and again that allows us to
3 create a variety of item types both along a continuum of
4 representations, learning progressions and so forth,
5 which, by the way, I think is another great advantage of
6 this, that we can look at learning progressions in the
7 sense we're not giving every item to every kid. We can
8 actually look at a learning progression and create items
9 along that progression so that we're measuring the grade
10 level construct but at various levels within the
11 learning progression.

12 So the only issue is, so that I don't drive
13 poor Viji and Colby crazy with this, is that we have to
14 find the limits on what we can afford because we could -
15 - I think, is it 40,000 items that we're at right now,
16 Viji? Yeah. So Smarter Balanced right now is intending
17 to develop about 40,000 items and a lot of the
18 variations within there are just necessary for measuring
19 across the common core, but it will also provide us this
20 opportunity to provide variations across things like
21 linguistic complexity and so forth.

22 So I think this puts a new spin on universal

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

129

1 design, Martha.

2 MR. ROONEY: I'll just add my two cents,
3 Michael, that I appreciate your point but you still have
4 the same question you have to resolve, which both PARCC
5 and Smarter Balanced have to resolve, which is the
6 computer adaptive engine will work well if the items
7 that the student is taking -- the way -- if they respond
8 incorrectly it's not a problem if they weren't able to
9 demonstrate what they know and could do. I think those
10 items need to be accessible so that way it's a true
11 representation of their knowledge. That way you can
12 figure out where to go.

13 You'd hate to have a computer adaptive engine
14 that kind of pushed students down towards easier
15 questions because it wasn't about what they knew and
16 didn't know as kind of how they could access the test.
17 I think that's going to be the ultimate fundamental
18 question that both PARCC and Smarter Balanced have to
19 deal with, regardless of whether it's computer adaptive
20 or not, and I know you guys know that but I just want to
21 make sure that --

22 MR. HOCK: If you'll just give me a quick

1 follow-up on that, that you're absolutely right, and
2 that's why all the folks today who have talked about
3 making sure that students with special assessment needs
4 are part of island piloting and that sort of thing,
5 that's why it's critical.

6 Also, one other flip side of this is, and this
7 is another thing I like about computer adaptive testing,
8 that right now in our fixed form tests, let's say I have
9 four items and Debbie gets item 1 and 2 right but 3 and
10 4 wrong, and I get items 1 and 4 right and 2 and 3
11 wrong, on a fixed form test we'll get the same score,
12 but in a computer adaptive situation, I'm actually
13 treated differently than.

14 So you're right and this is part of our
15 research agenda, but it actually avoids having kids go
16 artificially to lower levels.

17 MR. ROONEY: Willy, and then Rebecca, and then
18 Neil.

19 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: I just want to react a
20 little bit to what Mike said about a cost effectiveness
21 and I knew that this issue would arise.

22 Well, I wouldn't be that concerned.

1 Essentially, it's just a little bit more. It's not as
2 dramatic as you fear because you have to be strategic.
3 Suppose that you really put a very good effort into
4 developing a good set of item specifications and as part
5 of the team, you are going to have your linguists and
6 your cultural anthropologists involved in the process,
7 not just consultants that come two hours like the people
8 who are going to be developing the document, that is
9 probably the increase in the cost, and you develop item
10 specifications and task specifications that are so
11 detailed that will tell the item writers very clearly
12 what they have to write depending on the content area,
13 the topic, and the level of complexity and so on, and as
14 part of the item specifications, there's some
15 descriptions about language.

16 I'm not talking about the regular ones and the
17 usual tense. We all know that. We're talking about how
18 the language is connected to the content. That is
19 something that a linguist is going to be able to tell
20 you.

21 So as part of the item specifications, you
22 also have templates that describe the structure of the

1 tasks that you want to develop. I don't see why that
2 should be increasingly or dramatically expensive. It's
3 just strategic and it's just the effort that you put
4 into that and I think that that is the critical stage.

5 MR. ROONEY: Rebecca.

6 MS. KOPRIVA: All right. When I hear that we
7 have to marry the student needs and the content needs, I
8 see both levels. I see both it has to be done through
9 expert folks sitting at the table for developing item
10 specs, I agree, they have to include this deep thinking
11 of what in heaven's name you're measuring so you know
12 how to do it differently, construct maps for knowing
13 what you're measuring well as you're developing and then
14 the development itself. You also have to
15 have these experts, and I'm talking about accessibility
16 experts at this point, and I'm using that term extremely
17 broadly because we don't have time to get into
18 specifics. We also have to have, like we said before,
19 these students represented in all the piloting and I
20 would encourage us to disaggregate results to ensure
21 validity after the fact with these particular groups and
22 again it's not ELL/non- ELL or anybody else. It's

1 actually understanding exactly what's going on with some
2 of these students and then, as Steve was saying, enough
3 time to be able to redo and refine and that's often not
4 -- it's given just a nod but it's not enough time is
5 being spent on that, I would suggest. So what we need,
6 those are -- that has to be considered. That's one side
7 of marrying.

8 The other side of marrying, the student needs
9 and the proper ways of students -- the information being
10 communicated to the student and from the student is that
11 we have got to get these algorithms, effective
12 algorithms developed, and that is what Martha said, but
13 I want to underscore that. It is not simple. Everybody
14 can write algorithms and you have a lot of crap
15 algorithms out there, frankly. So the trick is to
16 really -- there has to be consideration of exactly what
17 are the most essential characteristics for students and
18 that are the - - that link to the most active dimensions
19 of particular kinds of accommodations and the main
20 emphases within constructs.

21 That may sound simple or not, but so like for
22 ELLs, there is the issue of certainly we need to

1 understand their level of English language proficiency,
2 but we have also got to understand their first language
3 proficiency. We have to understand some issues
4 associated with cultural proximity and I'm not going to
5 get into that but Willy was starting to raise some of
6 these points, plus there are others in terms of time and
7 various other things.

8 We have to understand what has happened in
9 their schooling so far and so their schooling
10 experiences and a very big piece of this that has to go
11 into those algorithms are their strengths. These
12 students have strengths, as well. So those algorithms
13 are a big project, I would suggest, and I would
14 encourage the consortia to be making sure that those are
15 well constructed.

16 MR. ROONEY: Neil, and then Steve.

17 MR. KINGSTON: Two things. One, I want to
18 underscore the importance of the specifications that you
19 were talking about before. Often, we make the mistake
20 of thinking the way to solve a problem is to throw lots
21 and lots of people on it and we talk -- someone put up a
22 slide with 300 language groups and think how many

1 cultural groups and if we want to add to the review of
2 every item 300 or 400 or 500 people, yes, that will not
3 be doable, and if you want to consider that many people
4 who are English language learners also have other kinds
5 of differences, issues, there's a cross between the
6 special education and language.

7 One doesn't imply the other but they're
8 independent and so you need to think about the
9 interactions in all of this, very detailed
10 specifications, more research to help us understand
11 better how to develop better specifications is going to
12 be critical.

13 Secondly, all of this is made more crucial,
14 more critical by the use of adaptive testing and that's
15 not often well understood because if you don't get it
16 right and you make an adaptation decision, you put
17 someone on the wrong pathway, it's like if you're
18 playing a game and you have to guess my location and you
19 can ask me questions and I will tell you yes or no and
20 you ask me if I'm to the east or west of the Mississippi
21 River and I give you the wrong answer to the first
22 question, you're never going to guess which side of the

1 Mississippi I'm on. You're already honing in on the
2 wrong trait and this happens very fast in most adaptive
3 testing models and adaptive testing models that are
4 currently implemented depend on unidimensionality as an
5 assumption.

6 Every single thing we've been talking about
7 today is non-unidimensionality. The models don't apply
8 unless you get very clever about how to apply them and
9 I've not yet seen that cleverness in action. I'm not
10 saying it's not there. I've not yet seen the
11 demonstration. So this issue wants us to -- makes us
12 want to be particularly careful.

13 MR. SIRECI: I was going to comment on
14 dimensionality but I think the dimensionality issues
15 that are brought up are not limited to adaptive testing
16 but what I wanted to say in response to Michael is I
17 want to put a more positive spin on what you said
18 because in your initial remarks about the difficulty and
19 the expense, I wanted to immediately protest and then
20 what I wanted to say to you is exactly what you said
21 afterwards because what you outlined is a system that's
22 flexible with respect to adaptivity at the difficulty

1 level and probably multi-stage is a better design to
2 use, but also flexible in adaptivity at the test
3 administration format, item format, and so forth.

4 So what you outlined is exactly the type of
5 system that I think is going to save people. You'll
6 need fewer items because of difficulty and you can make
7 features available to examinees. If the calculator
8 doesn't affect the construct, you can make it available.
9 They can click on it, if they need an audio
10 presentation, whatever. You're letting the computer --
11 you're taking advantage of computer technology and
12 providing the layers of accommodation and adaptivity
13 that are not possible in paper-based testing and I think
14 with the money funding these consortia, maybe even
15 working together on some special studies, we should be
16 able to do this.

17 MR. ROONEY: So I think Lizanne was next and
18 then that might be the last comment.

19 MS. DeSTEFANO: I just want to make a brief
20 comment. I think what we're talking about is really
21 using some of the very, very deep understanding of the
22 construct from multiple perspectives, the needs of the

1 target population, married with computer adaptive
2 testing to raise the bar.

3 I think we're all in agreement that we have to
4 do some adaptive testing in order to meet our goals for
5 these assessments, but to actually raise the standard of
6 that by this careful upfront work that we're talking
7 about.

8 MR. ROONEY: So we are actually over 12 now.
9 I don't know if we want to do -- I think Leila had her
10 hand up. I'll let her ask one last -- yes.

11 MS. WILLIAMS: Very short. I promise. Leila
12 from Arizona again.

13 One thing I just wanted to mention in this
14 group, and I know while it's philosophically probably
15 one of those controversial types of things, and I
16 understand that we are talking about two distinct groups
17 who are very important as we look about assessments, but
18 I know some of the challenges that, you know, I've
19 witnessed and we also need to keep in mind, as Gaye was
20 talking about, when we think about these specific
21 groups, we know there are students who are also ELL with
22 disabilities. So now we're looking at -- because I

1 listened to both groups and I'm thinking, okay, how can
2 I now infuse all of that?

3 So I just wanted to keep that out there as
4 we're thinking about this, that we're also thinking
5 about this small population, as well.

6 MR. ROONEY: Realize as you're talking that
7 everyone else is probably hungry and so the audience
8 will turn on you at some point if you talk too long.
9 I'll give you one minute.

10 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: Just one minute.
11 Essentially, it's kind of a joke but it's an analogy. I
12 used it the other day and it was very successful, so I'm
13 going to try this.

14 So if you think about the fact that it's
15 summer and many of you are wearing sweaters because it
16 is very cold in here, that's a good example of how a
17 system that was developed having comfort and advantages
18 at night for the users ends up being a little damaging.
19 So we have to protect ourselves against the system that
20 was created with the purpose of serving us. That's
21 something that we have to have in mind when we think
22 about the ELL assessment. So we think about these

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

140

1 wonderful accommodations and these innovations and so on
2 and maybe we are disserving rather than serving the
3 students.

4 So I don't mean to sound pessimistic or
5 fatalistic or something. I just want to say that we
6 have to be very cautious in how we proceed and be kind
7 of -- always have a very -- have an inquisitive mind to
8 think about the ideas we want to introduce -- the way in
9 which we want to proceed in our tests.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. ROONEY: Okay. I'm going to let that be
12 the last comment. Thanks.

13 Thank everyone for the conversation. We're
14 going to take a break until 1 o'clock. We'll try to
15 start right on the dot at 1 o'clock. So, everyone, if
16 you have any questions you want to drop off, please do
17 so at the Registration Desk. Otherwise, we'll see you
18 back at 1 o'clock.

19 Thank you.

20 (Whereupon, at 12:05 p.m., the meeting
21 was recessed for lunch, to reconvene
22 this same day at 1 o'clock p.m.)

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

141

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2 A F T E R N O O N S E S S I O N

3 (1:09 p.m.) Table Discussion (Continued)

4 MR. CONATY: Welcome back, everybody. I'm
5 going to kick off this half of the session by reading
6 one of the questions we received but before that, I just
7 wanted to say a few words about this morning.

8 I think a couple of distinctions were made
9 that are very important to emphasize. For sort of
10 practical purposes, we're discussing two populations at
11 this meeting but as was said a number of occasions this
12 morning, just because there's a solution for one group
13 that doesn't translate into a solution for the other
14 group and you have to be sensitive to the differences
15 between the ELLs and special ed, and I think it's
16 important to recognize that distinction.

17 There are, of course, some children for whom
18 both issues exist and they are in some ways a third
19 group but I think it's important to not automatically
20 translate language load issues into special ed or in
21 multiple format issues into ELL issues. I think that's
22 one thing.

1 The other thing that I think we heard is, as I
2 reflected on this morning, we spent a lot of time
3 talking about issues but inside that conversation was
4 steps that we would take to lead to solutions. So I
5 think, you know, people hinted at work that was underway
6 or things that they knew about or projects that were
7 underway.

8 It wasn't just the presentation or the
9 recitation of a bunch of problems. There actually are
10 issues that are known in the field and issues that
11 people are working on and some issues in which there's
12 been a substantial amount of progress, and I think that
13 leads to the question that we received.

14 This morning, I believe there was, and I think
15 it's a fair characterization, that there was a heavy
16 emphasis on the development of assessments. How do you
17 construct good items? How do you combine those items in
18 a way that, you know, really do represent true score for
19 individuals, but not so much was talked about in terms
20 of the reporting and the way the question is framed,
21 they're talking about reporting as being accessible, and
22 I think if you read the question carefully, they're

1 talking about accessibility for this generation of
2 assessments.

3 Can we make the reporting of results
4 accessible in new ways and by accessible, the question
5 implies accessible for multiple uses. Can we start --
6 will these tests have the power and can we use these
7 tests and report on these tests in a way that not only
8 are used for accountability purposes but also might
9 serve a diagnostic purpose or might serve an
10 instructional purpose?

11 So there's accessibility in that way, and then
12 there's also embedded in the question is the notion of
13 accessibility to people with different cultural
14 backgrounds, people with different -- so that's useful
15 to parents and communities in a format that's accessible
16 to ELL parents, to the ELL community's leaders, to
17 school boards, to various groups that have to make
18 decisions about providing instructional services for
19 children with special needs.

20 So I think the issue really is what can we say
21 about reporting both to be accessible for multiple
22 purposes that is useful, and, secondly, how can we make

1 it accessible to the diversity of audiences that will
2 hear about these results, and I'm happy to have anybody
3 respond to that question, but it's a very long question
4 and I've not done it justice, but I think I tried to
5 capture its components.

6 Neil.

7 MR. KINGSTON: A number of states have already
8 been experimenting with a variety of ways to increase
9 the accessibility of their reports. This needs to
10 continue as the consortia think about this issue. They
11 need to build on where states are.

12 What might have initially been an English
13 language report but perhaps a brochure for speakers of
14 any of several other languages to help translate it has
15 become for some states multiple languages for language
16 reports and now for more than 10 states, I'm not sure, I
17 have somewhere back at my office the number, websites
18 that supplements what's on the actual reports where
19 there can be individual not only translations in terms
20 of language but also different ways to point parents to
21 ways in which they can help their children's education.
22 We need to just continue on these various directions.

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145

1 MR. ROONEY: Jamal.

2 MR. ABEDI: Accessibility, of course, depends
3 very highly on the audience and as you saw nicely
4 mentioned, it is good to have the report as much as
5 accessible as we can make it for multiple group of
6 people.

7 But one suggestion I have is to, rather than
8 consortia define this, actually go into the audience
9 group and do some kind of focus groups and things like
10 that and asking them, presenting with the different
11 reports and asking them what they would expect to see
12 from these reports.

13 This has been done with NAEP reporting with
14 the focus group and cognitive labs and stuff like that.
15 I think it's good to do it for this and it's not
16 expensive. It can be done very easily. Go to the actual
17 audience and actually ask them what they see in this
18 report and how the report can be improved.

19 MR. ROONEY: Thanks, Jamal. Gaye, and then
20 Michael.

21 MS. FEDORCHAK: A couple of quick comments.
22 One of the things that our state's exploring for the

1 future, we just launched a new assessment that's video-
2 based and it's anchored around access-based learning
3 progressions and the feedback we're getting, we're
4 collecting these stories, we're going to publish them
5 eventually, but it has to do with parents saying, oh, I
6 didn't think my son could do math, I didn't think my son
7 could do a linear pattern and now I understand how my
8 son's doing it because they can see it in the video.

9 Where I'm going here is I think there are
10 things that we can do with the technology with respect
11 to reporting, first of all. For example, we can not
12 only give -- we can give reports about how well a
13 student did but we can also talk about the constructs,
14 kinds of constructs the child showed success with to
15 some extent.

16 I mean, I understand that there are certain
17 reporting parameters we have to be cautious about, but
18 we can still honor those and then allow screens, for
19 example, computer screens to come up to say how well did
20 my child test, here's your child's score. Well, what
21 did my child do well? These are the things my child --
22 you know, what did my child do, what kinds of constructs

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147

1 did my child do well with?

2 And then the third thing that we don't offer
3 right now that I think we have a unique potential to
4 begin to offer for the first time for every student, it
5 has nothing to do with subgroups, it has to do with
6 every student's unique access needs, how does my child
7 show that knowledge? How? It's not just the what, it
8 is the what. What does my child know, but how do they
9 show it? How do they know it?

10 That will be useful to employers, it will be
11 useful to teachers, but it also suggests to me that we
12 need to create, and this is something that we're working
13 on, as well, exemplars, perhaps video exemplars, perhaps
14 other kinds of exemplars, of what construct knowledge
15 looks like from different access perspectives.

16 How does a student with total blindness
17 demonstrate knowledge of spatial relationships or
18 acceleration? How does a child with deafness
19 demonstrate word identification? I mean, there are
20 different kinds of things we need to understand better
21 but we need to be able to see them in different forms,
22 different representational forms. Parents need to be

1 able to understand how does my child read, how does my
2 child make meaning from text, how does my child
3 construct mathematical understanding?

4 We need to be able to show exemplars from
5 different access perspectives. So we need to start --
6 it's an engineering but it's a data collection system
7 and providing other ways for people to see examples of
8 this. Teachers need it, parents need it, students need
9 it.

10 MR. HOCK: You know, this actually is just
11 expanding on what Gaye just said to you all, but, you
12 know, this morning I think our focus on the uses of
13 technology were primarily around how we deliver
14 assessments to students but I believe in a sense, you
15 know, we're moving in this direction of increased use of
16 technology.

17 It's something that we can actually apply
18 across many parts of the assessment and so, for example,
19 Mike's group now has a project with the NECAP states and
20 several other states to look at technologies that will
21 help IEP teams or folks that are -- I'm not sure what to
22 tell them -- the folks that are responsible for the

1 programs for English learners, that these tools will
2 help them make good decisions about what access tools
3 that students need and so forth.

4 On the other end of things that a number of
5 states have done some great things with something that I
6 think is -- one name for it anyways is dynamic
7 reporting, but, you know, this is a situation where
8 parents or teachers can go online and you can get the
9 typical reports you always get from assessments but you
10 can also -- and this is great for teachers.

11 You can go in and you can combine groups of
12 interest to you because, you know, maybe just looking at
13 English learners isn't enough. We actually want to look
14 at how male English language learners do versus female
15 language learners or we want to look at students with
16 disabilities who also come from low socioeconomic groups
17 and so this is something that these dynamic reporting
18 tools can allow us to do.

19 One other quick thing that I think works
20 really well is that most of our states release some of
21 their assessment items every year to the public and, you
22 know, I believe both consortia plan on doing that in the

1 assessments they're designing and so teachers can
2 actually look at real test items and they can look at
3 all their students and whether or not students answered
4 those questions right or wrong. If it's a multiple
5 choice item, they can look at students who got it wrong
6 and what choice they made that was incorrect and again
7 you can slice and dice that in many ways according to
8 what interests you, males, females, males who also have
9 disabilities and who also are English language learners
10 or whatever.

11 So again, I think that technology's going to
12 serve us from planning for students all the way through
13 reporting for those students.

14 MR. ROONEY: Anyone else want to comment?

15 (No response.) Table Exercise

16 MR. ROONEY: No? Okay. Well, thank you,
17 everyone, and we'll move on to the next part of the
18 Agenda which is actually going to be a Table Exercise.
19 Everyone here, hopefully this goes as intended.

20 I'll see it up and then I'll turn it over. We
21 actually have Rebecca Kopriva and Lizanne DeStefano are
22 going to help us facilitate this piece, both of whom

1 have done a wealth of research in thinking about
2 accessible items. Lizanne has focused a lot on student
3 disabilities and Rebecca's done a lot of research on
4 English learners. So hopefully they can bring in their
5 experiences to help us work through this question.

6 But we actually want to take a common core
7 standard, one in math and one in reading language arts,
8 and think about what is the contractor trying to
9 measure, how to do it, and then actually think about
10 what are the kind of barriers and challenges and ways to
11 address those barriers and challenges to create
12 accessible items for all kids but particularly for these
13 two groups of kids.

14 A couple caveats I want to put on the table
15 first to be clear. This is just an example. It's to
16 help us think through the morning discussion and kind of
17 bring it down to a concrete level of what this challenge
18 is going to look like.

19 I think there was a lot of conversation this
20 morning that I would love to emphasize, that there need
21 to be the right people at the table all through the
22 steps in the process, and so people who have a strong

1 grasp of linguistic characteristics and knowledge about
2 that piece, content experts, particularly who have to be
3 involved, they are not here at this table today with us,
4 and so this is kind of just not designed to put either
5 PARCC or Smarter Balanced on the spot and say this is
6 the answer, you've decided that you're going to do this
7 and committing anyone to anything.

8 It really is designed to get people to think
9 in pretty concrete terms about what this problem looks
10 like and how to try to address it.

11 We picked two standards that are -- it's a
12 Grade 7 math standard and a Grade 8 reading for
13 informational text standard that were admittedly a
14 little challenging. The goal was to find standards that
15 didn't really lend themselves easily to multiple choice
16 questions or a single multiple choice question anyway,
17 so that there's - - you know, one of the features of the
18 common core is the states put them together and adopted
19 them is that it raises the challenge level, I think, in
20 terms of designing a test around them.

21 So we picked two standards that we thought
22 would address that challenge and so I think that's to

1 get people to think about alternative types of
2 assessment items, whether it's performance tasks. I
3 know Shelbi in the Performance Task Workgroup has been
4 working on this, and technology-enhanced items, I think,
5 you know, they provide a lot of opportunities to try to
6 address the content that's in the standards but it also
7 raises questions about how you do that and you make the
8 test accessible and fair for all students.

9 So I think that's an interesting challenge for
10 us to kind of talk through as part of this exercise and
11 the other piece of this that we haven't talked much
12 about, I mentioned the first thing this morning, is the
13 difference between doing this in a summative way versus
14 in a formative or for an interim purpose where maybe the
15 psychometric validity requires kind of a lower
16 threshold, in which case it opens up a little more
17 possibilities for you.

18 I think that's an interesting idea to consider
19 as you're thinking about what the purpose is that you're
20 designing these items for because I think how you
21 address it might change, depending on how you want to do
22 it, and that's probably something to keep in the back of

1 your mind as you're thinking through this.

2 So on that note, I'm actually going to turn it
3 over to Lizanne. I think she goes first.

4 MS. DeSTEFANO: Okay. What I'm going to talk
5 about for the next 10 minutes or so is a study that I've
6 been involved in for the last several years with one of
7 my students, Jeremiah Johnson, who has recently
8 graduated and relocated to the Boston area and is under-
9 employed. So if there's anybody in the Boston area that
10 needs a fantastic psychometrician that knows a lot about
11 NAEP, I got a guy for you. Okay. That's my plug for
12 Jeremiah.

13 I'm talking about this because -- not because
14 it's the be all and end all of studies but I think that
15 it raises some issues in a practical way that we've been
16 talking about earlier and also for me, this has been a
17 really important study because it's really shaped some
18 of my thinking about accessibility. So that's the
19 spirit in which it's presented.

20 The origin of this study really had very
21 little to do with students with disabilities or English
22 language learners. It really began when NAEP started

1 something called TUDA, which is Trial Urban District
2 Assessment, where they were trying to produce scores for
3 urban districts, and they did this for awhile and then
4 the urban districts that they were working with said,
5 you know what, I don't think this is worth our time
6 because a lot of our students score in the lower end of
7 the performance continuum, in the below basic category,
8 and we get very little information about those students.

9 We know a lot about what they can't do but we
10 don't know anything about what they can do and as NAEP
11 was moving more into the NCLB accountability domain,
12 these districts were very worried that if that
13 population was showing gains, that NAEP was insensitive
14 to those gains because of large standard errors of
15 measurement in the lower end of the performance
16 continuum.

17 So this study was actually NAEP's response and
18 I'm a part of the NAEP Validity Panel, so it was a study
19 that we chose as the NAEP Validity Panel. It was really
20 an idea of how do we develop more precision at the lower
21 end of the performance continuum. But then when we
22 began to look at the population of students in the lower

1 end of the performance continuum, we found that, of
2 course, that there were relatively large proportions of
3 students with disabilities and English language learners
4 in that end of the continuum and so we expanded the
5 design of this study to include significant populations
6 of English language learners and students with
7 disabilities so that we could specifically examine the
8 impact of these accommodations on those particular
9 students.

10 So it relates to what Willy was saying before,
11 thinking ahead to say if we want to make judgments about
12 these students, then we need to create a design that
13 enables us to do that.

14 Okay. So it's a little bit of a turnaround
15 from what we're doing today where we're talking
16 specifically about those populations. This was how do
17 you make the whole assessment more reliable and valid at
18 the lower end and then what's the impact on these
19 groups.

20 The process was quite detailed and if you're
21 interested, I'm not going to have time to go into it
22 today, but there is a paper on this if you're

1 interested, I could send it to you, but one of the most
2 critical pieces of this was actually developing a
3 definition of what constitutes an accessible block of
4 items.

5 So what does accessibility mean in your
6 particular context, and in our case, the National
7 Assessment Governing Board, NAGB, makes decisions about
8 NAEP and they had some very, very clear ideas about what
9 constituted an accessible block and NAGB made it very
10 clear that what was really driving the construction of
11 the block at that grade level was the NAEP framework.

12 So the analogy here would be the common core
13 standards. They were not interested in out-of-grade
14 level things. They were not interested in varying from
15 the grade level framework at all. Grade 4 and Grade 8
16 are the grades that we worked in.

17 So part of our definition of accessibility was
18 that it had to relate in a clear way to the NAEP
19 framework for that grade level and we had other aspects
20 of accessibility that I'll talk a little bit.

21 We realized the process was going to be very
22 important and so we developed a process for doing this

1 and maybe some of the things in that process will be
2 useful to you and then we needed to develop two
3 accessible items and put them into an operational NAEP
4 to see if, indeed, they did improve performance at the
5 lower end of the performance continuum, but, most
6 importantly, we needed to be able to scale those items,
7 scale those accessible items with the whole NAEP item
8 pool. Okay? So those are the things that we had to
9 worry about.

10 We did have a panel process and this is where
11 I became convinced that having these diverse
12 professionals coming together to really critically look
13 at a framework, a standard, and then develop assessment
14 items was absolutely invaluable and we had extremely
15 high-level experts, particularly our math experts,
16 mathematicians, were very, very, very critical to this
17 process, not math educators but mathematicians who could
18 look at a math item and really think about the
19 mathematics involved and some of them were cognitive
20 scientists who specialized in mathematics and they were
21 invaluable for helping to look at what are the component
22 skills, what are the learning progressions, how can we

1 take apart that aspect of the framework in ways that
2 make sense for instruction and learning, and, of course,
3 individuals with experience working with English
4 language learners and individuals with experience
5 working with students with disabilities.

6 Now we did something a little bit funky in
7 that we wanted a parent block of NAEP. We wanted to be
8 able to compare these accessible blocks, the performance
9 of students on these accessible blocks, with NAEP blocks
10 and so we took existing NAEP blocks, applied a set of
11 modification guidelines to increase accessibility and
12 then developed a daughter block that was related to the
13 parent block in terms of its relation to the NAEP
14 framework. That isn't reality for these consortia but
15 that was how our design was constructed and we came up
16 with some item modification guidelines to increase
17 accessibility and those are in the paper, as well, if
18 people are interested.

19 When we talked about accessible items, we had
20 a number of characteristics. This is not all of them,
21 but they're ones that we've talked about. The construct
22 of interest is absolutely important. Clearly defining

1 what the construct is that you're measuring in a very,
2 very specific way. Identify the range of knowledge and
3 skills that represent that construct. So have a variety
4 of items, a suite of items that all relate to that same
5 construct. Look at the emphasis of knowledge and skills
6 that's in the standard and make sure that that's
7 represented in your items that are assessing that
8 standard and then, of course, considering the
9 characteristics of the target population.

10 There's other ones that relate to reporting
11 and other things, but again I don't have time to go over
12 them today. So those are the kinds of things that were
13 governing this idea of what makes an item accessible.

14 Things that turned out to be very important is
15 guidelines for increasing accessibility and, as I said,
16 language load was critically important. I meant to pull
17 this out at lunch time but I think 64 percent of the
18 items and we ended up reducing language load as one of
19 the barriers.

20 I should say that part of the process is we
21 did cognitive labs with students using real items to
22 find out where the barriers were to them getting those

1 items right. We over-sampled English language learners
2 and students with disabilities in our cog lab, so we had
3 an idea of how those students in particular responded to
4 these items.

5 Distracters turned out to be very, very
6 important. The response options turned out to be very
7 important. The formatting was a critical variable.
8 Graphics were important. The contextual information
9 that was provided when it enhanced understanding, it was
10 fabulous, but many times it actually detracted from a
11 student's understanding of the problem or distracted the
12 student.

13 Extraneous information was a barrier,
14 particularly to students with disabilities, and cues
15 that were provided also could aid or detract from
16 understanding. Again, I don't have time to go into
17 those but the paper goes into more details. So those
18 were all things about increasing accessibility.

19 There also was an aspect to this that is
20 reducing cognitive demand because sometimes the items on
21 NAEP were set at a very high level of assessing that
22 standard. The students could not perform at that level

1 but they did have knowledge and skills that related to
2 that standard. It's just that the assessment was not
3 tapping those and so in some cases we did reduce the
4 cognitive complexity of the item.

5 Reducing the number of objectives assessed in
6 a single item, for both English language learners and
7 students with disabilities, multistep problems were a
8 problem sometimes because they didn't really understand
9 what the multiple steps were, so they'd do an aspect of
10 the problem and think they were done and move on to the
11 next item, sometimes because they made an error in an
12 earlier step that made their final answer wrong, and if
13 their rubric did not give them credit for steps along
14 the way, then they were seriously disadvantaged for
15 that.

16 So number of steps was an issue for low-
17 performing students unless they had a template to
18 structure the process. Unless you told them what the
19 steps were, sometimes they had difficulty with multistep
20 problems, and then the rubrics and how items were
21 scored, as I said, was a big issue.

22 Overall, we looked at percent correct between

1 the accessible block and the parent block, the source
2 block, and you can see that the percent correct in both
3 4th grade and 8th grade was much higher.

4 Some people at this point say, well, aren't
5 you just making the items easier, isn't that what you're
6 doing? In some ways we are. We are reducing the
7 cognitive complexity of the item but remember one of the
8 conditions is that the item still has to have a clear
9 link to the standard that's being assessed and so the
10 link to that was not lost. In some cases the cognitive
11 complexity was being reduced, but at the same time we
12 were reducing construct and relevant barriers to that
13 and, unfortunately, we were doing both of those at the
14 same time because NAEP, like everything else, is under a
15 tight timeline and we had to get these blocks into
16 operational stages.

17 So we can't necessarily partition out the
18 variance that's attributable to both of those changes,
19 but if you look at the idea of where are you getting
20 more information about student performance, the fact
21 that more students are able to exhibit performance and
22 get credit for it is an indication that you're getting

1 more information about how the student -- what the
2 students know about those constructs.

3 There's many of these figures which I won't go
4 through. This goes over percent correct, but there's
5 two other dimensions that are important, the percent
6 omit, because another issue with low-performing students
7 in NAEP is they don't get through it, they skip a lot of
8 items and that's missing information, and then the
9 percent non-response. There's a lot of fatigue
10 associated with NAEP. The later items generally don't -
11 - are answered less frequently than the earlier items
12 and you can see that the accessible blocks reduced the
13 missing data by both of those sources.

14 I won't go through all of these. Oh, we did
15 disaggregate then for students with disabilities and
16 with English language learners. So we looked at how
17 they behave for the group as a whole and also for those
18 two subgroups and we saw similar patterns of
19 performance.

20 We had another group for English language
21 learners that I haven't heard people talk about.
22 Students once known as English language learners because

1 there are students who have gone through bilingual
2 programs, are now out, and we actually disaggregated and
3 looked at them independently. They're actually a very
4 interesting group. I want to look at that data a little
5 bit more.

6 Okay. I'll just fly through these. The
7 scaling was really important. Here is an IRT for the
8 discrimination parameters and you see that it's very
9 similar between accessible and source blocks in terms of
10 discrimination. This is Grade 4, looks pretty similar
11 for Grade 8.

12 This is guessing parameter, C parameter, much
13 narrower for accessible compared to source but quite
14 similar, 8th grade. Here's the difficulty parameters.
15 So you see there is a difficulty. There's a difference
16 in the difficulty parameter between the accessible and
17 the source blocking compared to the ability
18 distribution. There it is for 8th grade.

19 This is the data that I'm most happy with
20 because here you have the test information functions.
21 The blue is the regular booklet, the mother block. The
22 dark brownish is the accessible block, and the red is

1 the overall, and you can see that for kids in the lower
2 end of the performance continuum, if you look at the
3 blue line, the test produced very little information for
4 them. So the large urbans are right. They weren't
5 finding out very much about that population.

6 If you look at the brown curve you see there's
7 much more information available now for kids at that end
8 of the distribution and on the flip side of that, --
9 that's 8th grade, similar kind of function. On the flip
10 side of that, there's a standard error of measurement.
11 Again, the blue line is the mother block, the brown line
12 is the daughter block. You can see that standard error
13 in that lower quartile was reduced by implementing the
14 accessible booklet.

15 If you look -- if you do a little more
16 detailed analysis, so if you look across the continuum
17 of performance, 5th percentile, 10th percentile, 25th up
18 to 95th, you look at the source block at the 5th
19 percentile, standard error of measurement was about
20 18.3. In the accessible booklet, it was reduced to
21 10.8.

22 At the other end of the continuum, though, if

1 you look at the 95th percentile, there for the source
2 booklet, the standard error of measurement was 9.7 and
3 in the accessible block it was 24.7. So you see that it
4 reduced standard error at the lower end, increased error
5 at the upper end.

6 So what did we learn by that? There was
7 substantial similar average gains in percent correct by
8 block, consistent declines in the number of students
9 omitting various items, declines in the percentage of
10 students not reaching items, items were scalable with
11 the regular NAEP block, modified items had similar
12 discrimination and guessing characteristics, and there
13 was significant reductions in item difficulty.

14 For lowest-performing students, conditional
15 standard error of measurement was significantly lower on
16 accessible blocks than source blocks.

17 The way that this is being used in NAEP is
18 sort of twofold. One is that now accessible items are
19 being spiraled into the matrix, so in the national
20 sample a percentage of students take an accessible block
21 and a traditional block and so that lowers the tail of
22 the test and produces smaller standard errors at the

1 lower end of the performance continuum. So that's the
2 big picture of
3 NAEP.

4 It's also been used in Puerto Rico as an
5 accommodation, so that students with special needs can
6 be assigned a regular block and an accessible block as a
7 way of getting a better measurement and making that
8 experience for the student more palatable.

9 NAEP has had a lot of problems with non-
10 participation. Teachers in schools get to decide
11 whether students participate in NAEP and many of them
12 say that NAEP is a very stressful experience for low-
13 performing students because it's long and they don't get
14 very many of the items right and so offering this as an
15 accommodation, an option for them to actually do more
16 items that they can have success from has been
17 successful in getting more kids to participate in NAEP.

18 Thanks.

19 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. I'm going to talk for a
20 few minutes. I'm actually going to show some very
21 specific ideas of what I mean when I say we should open
22 up some of the technology pieces of -- yeah. Some

1 ideas. There are many ideas out there. These are some.

2 Okay. So we're measuring the content
3 knowledge of these people. How can we do that with
4 technology? All right. I suggest technology can
5 fundamentally improve the measurement and it can be done
6 in several ways but certainly included in that is making
7 use of multi-symiotic representations.

8 Can you guys hear me or do I need to move this
9 thing over? All right. All right. There we go.

10 Making use of multi-symiotic representations
11 to primarily convey meaning and what I mean by that is
12 I'm not saying don't use text. I am saying use text and
13 other stuff, and the other stuff -- oh, be quiet. I'll
14 talk softer. Oh, okay, okay.

15 Okay. So I'm saying that we use text but we
16 can also use other multi-symiotic representations and we
17 can use those in ways that actually have a larger load
18 of conveying meaning, not just left as supplementary but
19 actually can actually take part of the primarily
20 conveying meaning that particularly that complex items
21 need.

22 Okay. Also, I think, and this has been

1 discussed a lot here today, this issue of establishing
2 effective profiles. That's that linking business. So
3 that we can get -- students can get proper
4 accommodations and proper adaptations can be made within
5 the text and the items themselves.

6 Okay. So why bother with multi-symiotic?
7 Students with literacy and languages are learning
8 complex content. I made that point earlier. I want to
9 make it again. The idea -- kids may have language
10 issues. They may have literacy issues, but it does not
11 mean that they are not learning complex content and if
12 they aren't, they should be.

13 So I would suggest that we need to keep the
14 full array of complex items and the complex measurement
15 in task for all students, including these students, but
16 given that there is a gap between their literacy skills
17 and their knowledge and skills in terms of the content,
18 how does one do that?

19 Teachers know how to do it. They have -- and
20 they're the ones that taught me and have taught many of
21 you, I'm sure, how to do this. It does depend on
22 successful adaptation in terms of conveying meaning both

1 to the student in terms of what you want as well as from
2 the student in terms of what they can tell us that they
3 know and we talked about that already.

4 Okay. So these methods can be used to
5 effectively measure these challenging standards.
6 Specifically, they can broaden how students can respond.
7 They can broaden how we present the problems to begin
8 with, and they also can broaden our understanding of how
9 students conceptualize knowledge and skills. So how do
10 they get to that place, similar to what Gaye was
11 mentioning?

12 Okay. Most often, it's best if multiple
13 points of access can occur and in technology, in these
14 kinds of tasks, there's no reason why you only have one
15 or the other. A lot of times you can open it up to
16 several. Part of this is with the accommodations and
17 part of it is the way you build your items and you build
18 the items on the screen. Okay. I'll leave that for
19 now.

20 I will say that most of what I'm going to show
21 you are dealing with more complex items rather than
22 less. They are very basic or the more basic knowledge

1 and skills oftentimes can be handled with plain language
2 and plain language with graphics. So what I am talking
3 about is keep going and keep going and include these
4 kinds of tasks, too, to make sure you round out the full
5 range of standards and complexity for these students, as
6 well as others.

7 Okay. So we're opening up response models or
8 methods. I'm going to give you a few examples and I'm
9 going to flip through them quick or else Patrick's going
10 to kill me. I have a great incentive.

11 Okay. Okay. I'm just going to show you a
12 very quick and I'm going to flash it on the screen just
13 screen shots. These things, several of them are within
14 -- they're all within context of tasks but I want to
15 give you a feel. No reason at all why you can't be
16 having students build things. Here's one that's built
17 at 4th grade. They can build and this is only one very
18 small limiting example. Build the baby into a prism,
19 you know. What is it like when you pull it out and so
20 they can go into that prism when it's folded?

21 Okay. Here's another one. Here's an open
22 response base but instead of just having text which,

1 frankly, if we're going to go to construct a response,
2 it's going to be you have to type a response, that just
3 kills these kids because it limits greatly the way that
4 they can show what they know, much less the automatic
5 scoring can finish them off if the automatic scoring
6 isn't sensitive to language and literacy issues.

7 Okay. So here you have a combination of text
8 that they can use but they can also use lines and
9 drawings that either they can draw or they can be pulled
10 over, objects that can be pulled over. I'm going to
11 show you a couple examples.

12 Here's an example where they've used text and
13 they've also just used a picture. Obviously they can
14 also do algorithms, by the way. I mean, there's no
15 reason why they can't actually just do algorithms to
16 answer this. Here's another one. Here's another one.
17 So there are very -- I mean, we have a hundred of these,
18 maybe a thousand, and we have a ton of them. These kids
19 utilize this ability to open up these questions.

20 Very importantly, this is for English
21 learners, particularly ones that have lower proficiency
22 in English. I'm going to talk about the kids that are

1 transitioning up. I'm talking about kids with major
2 issues. I'm also talking about it has been shown to
3 work for kids with -- students with language
4 disabilities and also with various other kinds of kids,
5 like kids who are autistic, deaf and hard of hearing,
6 oftentimes emotionally disturbed kids for a variety of
7 reasons.

8 To an extent for several of those groups and
9 in many cases, it's on par with the kids who are native
10 English speakers. We're not kidding and we're not
11 dumbing down the test.

12 Here's another one where they're actually
13 asked to draw. Up at the right is an example of the
14 kind of thing they're going to draw but they actually
15 have to respond to something about amino acids and don't
16 ask me to explain these things. Anyway, they're going
17 to actually have to draw this cloudogram and that's
18 actually a rollover. In many cases, you'll notice we're
19 using some text. I have text here. I have text here.
20 Very little text and when I use text, I will support the
21 text if it's non-target and that's an example of
22 supporting the word cloudograms since I'm not asking

1 anybody to tell me what is a cloudogram. They just do
2 it.

3 Here's an example of a Lewis structure, asking
4 them to design Lewis structures and we're actually in
5 this case having to pull over tiles and create this and
6 here's an example of a solution.

7 You can utilize all different kinds of pieces
8 and in this case we're utilizing combination of
9 structures that have already been created where they
10 have to mix and match and here's an example of a
11 placement that could be used, where many, many different
12 kinds of placements can be used.

13 Okay. Here's a situation where we also often
14 ask students to explain and to tell us why they're doing
15 things. I'm not suggesting we don't use that technique,
16 but there are times when we could ask them this question
17 in a way that targets the kind of information that we
18 need and so what you see over there on the left-hand
19 corner are words and in this case it's in a task.
20 They're all words that are in the task and all parts of
21 the task are represented there and when you roll over
22 them, you will see they have -- they are supported. So

1 sand is sand and salt is salt and so on with pictures.

2 The one you have in the top right-hand corner
3 is the -- it's actually an animated rollover for does
4 not absorb. Anyway, so we're asking them to explain and
5 we have it set up. Sometimes we have a set-up like this
6 where they can interchangeably use different language in
7 different spots. Sometimes in cases like this, the
8 language, the parts of speech are -- and phrases are
9 indicated by different colors and this helps kids who
10 are English learners in particular because they're used
11 to different kinds of orders of speech.

12 Now here we're talking about a causal chain.
13 You can get really complex in this stuff. We're talking
14 about a causal chain. Here's another causal chain.
15 We're not kidding. These kids can do this stuff. We
16 just have to give them a chance. So these are the kinds
17 of opening up that I'm talking about.

18 We can also open up presentation models.
19 Scott, you around? All right. Okay. You want to do
20 the first one?

21 I'm going to show you just a couple screens
22 here. This is a 4th grade science item, so anyway, it's

1 okay. Yeah. Hit Go. Sorry. Okay. Now hit the next.
2 You'll notice there's no language there, other than the
3 Other. Here's Animal Wonders. Again, all of this stuff
4 is supported and I'm not going to expect Scott to show -
5 - to roll over anything, but the idea is that you can
6 see anything that's underlined is supported.

7 Why don't you, Scott, roll over -- go back.
8 Roll over -- wait. There you go. Roll over Height.
9 There you go. You see how it's supported? He can get
10 an idea.

11 The idea here is that -- and you may think,
12 oh, it's just that thing going on the ramp was not --
13 was just fun. We don't do anything fun. We do it for a
14 purpose and I don't mean it that way, but, anyway, we do
15 it for a purpose and the purpose is actually when you
16 get to a point of asking the question, which we do ask
17 through text, you actually use very little text because
18 you have set everything up and you have set up your
19 questions so that what is left can be easily accessible.

20 Okay. That's the end of that one. Go to the
21 next one. Thank you. That was elementary. This is
22 high school. Okay. Go. Go again. Oh, it's not done.

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

178

1 Okay. There you go.

2 Okay. In this case, we obviously have
3 something about fossils and something about layers. So
4 this is focusing the student, focusing them without
5 language. They're getting some kind of a sense. We have
6 learned how to pace, how to show things, how to pace,
7 how much time it takes to get the student focused, and
8 then we move on.

9 Next screen. Okay. We're also saying that
10 there is something that's going to be happening in this
11 item that has to do with radioactive decay and so we put
12 this on the screen. The students again -- what we're
13 trying to do is focus them and we use some language to
14 certainly to label the axes, but you'll notice that --
15 and there's some language in the top again that's
16 supported. So the students are narrowing down what all
17 they're going to do. This is a very challenging item in
18 high school.

19 Okay. Go to the next one. Okay. Now in this
20 place, and this is part of a -- they're all part of
21 longer items, but in this one now, what you have is new
22 pictures on the left where you have a combination of

1 established -- you have established layers and the older
2 layers and newer layers. You also have to understand
3 what's happening in that middle V at the top, on the top
4 picture, that that's the newest layer. These students
5 are going to have to understand that.

6 In the bottom picture, you've now added the
7 additional information about that it's structures that
8 are being folded or layers are being folded over. This
9 is all additional information that's given to the
10 student without a whole lot of language per se but when
11 they are focusing on it, they get the understanding of
12 it. The piece, the table to the right top is actually
13 giving them information which is linking the pictures to
14 the graph, and then after all that, you see the
15 question.

16 So because of that, we can take something that
17 in the traditional item was three paragraphs long and
18 make it one sentence.

19 Okay. Cut in. Yeah. Be done. There you go.
20 All right. Okay. Just wanted to point out to you that
21 this can be done and it can be done in performance tasks
22 and it should be done, I would suggest, in performance

1 tasks. It can also be done in items that are of lesser
2 length.

3 Okay. Also, we can open up problem-solving
4 windows and the reason for opening up problem-solving
5 windows is to broaden our understanding about how these
6 kids can conceptualize. This is particularly useful,
7 informative, but I would suggest to you that there's no
8 reason why you can't build some of this into your
9 summative so you can be getting some information about
10 how students are going about solving the problem.

11 To some extent in mathematics, we say show
12 their work, but there's also other ways you can do it.
13 So I'm just -- I'm not going to show you how we do it
14 but I am going to show you a screen from one that
15 actually had built-in choice. So the students actually
16 had to figure out how to do this solution and they had
17 to figure out what to select on the left-hand side.
18 They had to figure out the milliliters that they wanted
19 of each selection and the order that they were doing
20 this in.

21 By keep track of this information, we had a
22 lot of information about the skill level that the

1 student has in understanding the construct.

2 Okay. So I want to say, too, I think the
3 issue with -- everybody says to me, yes, but these are
4 expensive. Well, certainly they're more than multiple
5 choice, but I would suggest to you that for kids with --
6 kids that need this kind of approach and I would suggest
7 it's not limited to certain narrow definitions, that the
8 issue here is that you can intersperse the more
9 challenging ones that are done like this with the more
10 basic ones that often can use some kind of a plain
11 language with visual. So it isn't all or nothing. It's
12 targeted, and as I tell some people, well, what happens
13 - - when people talk about performance tests, oh, my
14 goodness, if you make things like that, what's going to
15 happen with kids who are good readers? I say you can
16 give them an accommodation, give them one language, but
17 you can also build your variations, so.

18 Okay. So the second thing is about profiles
19 and again we've talked a lot about that today. Profiles
20 and linking or marrying, as Mike Russell said, student
21 needs and strengths with proper accommodations.

22 Let's see. Essentially, I would strongly

1 suggest we need to make effective, being the effective,
2 being an emphasized word, profiles for all these various
3 populations and we do that for purposes of
4 accommodating, if you want to put it that way. You can
5 also do it -- we also should be doing it, frankly, to
6 think through the kind of adaptations I was just showing
7 you.

8 So it can be used for a number of reasons.
9 Students within similar or the same profiles share
10 similar strengths and weaknesses, very important, that's
11 strengths, not just challenges, and a similar suite of
12 tools and accommodations.

13 Effective linking procedure, effective, you
14 see that again, effective can be linked to appropriate
15 accommodations. They can be inappropriate or
16 appropriate. We have a really -- okay. I'm not going
17 to get into that. All right.

18 So here's an example. We have one -- here's a
19 profile of -- here's one profile of an English learner
20 in the system that we've done for English learners and
21 you can see down the right-hand side, you have Forms,
22 Administration, Tools and Response. Just thinking about

1 all of this together as it applies to a task and it is
2 actually matching student information. It does include,
3 as I said, English language proficiency, one proficiency
4 in closer proximity and some other things, to the
5 uncertain accommodations, and this was on a paper and
6 pencil but this begins to give you an idea of what we're
7 dealing with. We're not dealing with three steps.
8 We're also not dealing with 500. It is doable. It has
9 been done for ELLs and I have to assume it's doable for
10 students with disabilities and these algorithms can be
11 built in, so the students don't ever see this. This is
12 the black box underneath.

13 Okay. And as I said, they can be built and
14 they should be. These kinds of understandings should be
15 built into the kinds -- should be considered during the
16 adaptations, like what I showed you on the first place.

17 15 minutes? All right. Shutting up. Okay.
18 Now we're going to do our task. Questions to consider.
19 This is a task. Okay. Oh, I love this part. This is
20 actually for -- this is for the experts. Experts say
21 they know how to do this. So this is a little
22 performance task. Oh, boy, in public, right.

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

184

1 Absolutely. That's the way it should be.

2 All right. So I'm going to actually be giving
3 you -- these are the kinds of questions that these
4 panelists here should be considering. Okay? You have
5 them on some paper that you were given at some point.
6 So I'm going to move this and if you need to look for
7 it, be my guest. All right.

8 In other words, what are you trying to measure
9 and various other things. All right. This is the
10 standard we're doing. You also have the math standard
11 in front of you and I will be coming back to it but it's
12 probably a good time to be looking for it. All right.

13 MS. DeSTEFANO: It's in your Agenda.

14 MS. KOPRIVA: This is a math standard in 7th
15 grade and it is solving multistep and real-world
16 problems posed with positive and negative rational
17 numbers and so on using tools strategically of
18 properties of operations to calculate with numbers in
19 any form. See, this is complex.

20 No single task will measure all this stuff,
21 right? Right. So what we're asking is that you begin
22 to think about some specific aspects, some specific

1 aspect of this standard.

2 Okay. This actually is labeled Mathematics
3 Common Core Standard but it should be labeled what
4 you're supposed to do. Okay. So Number 1, I want you
5 to think in your brains about an individual, a
6 particular student profile, think of a type of student
7 with certain needs and certain challenges, and you're
8 going to need to tell us about who that is.

9 Next thing I want you to do is I want you to
10 specify what knowledge and skills that you want to focus
11 on and rather than -- you're not going to get off the
12 hook with just doing it in a basic way. I also want to
13 know in a more complex way. So we want to have a sense
14 that you understand the difference and we all understand
15 the difference and how we might differently make
16 accessible a basic task versus a more complex one.

17 Third thing is give an example of particular
18 item or task topic. In other words, we're not asking
19 you to wordsmith an item and we know you're not content
20 experts. We are wanting you to give us some kind of a
21 sense of what it is you're trying to get to and that
22 will measure the more basic knowledge and skills and

1 that will also measure the more complex. So give us
2 some kind of a feel of what it is you're trying to get
3 to and what your approach is going to be and then tell
4 us how you're going to solve the problem for that
5 student, that particular type of student that you have
6 in your head, how you're going to make these two tasks
7 accessible for that type of student.

8 Got it? Any questions? Lizanne will answer
9 them.

10 MS. DeSTEFANO: Yes?

11 MS. CARVER: By these two questions, you mean
12 the two math questions that are in the examples, right?

13 MS. DeSTEFANO: No. I think what Rebecca's
14 talking about is to think about it, at assessing it a
15 very high and complex level, and then think about how
16 you might want to look at some subskills or some
17 developmental progression of maybe somebody who couldn't
18 master the full task may know pieces of that standard
19 and we'd want to know what do they know about this
20 standard.

21 So the standard deals with whole numbers,
22 decimals, and fractions, right? So you might want to

1 have a suite of items that enables you to assess what a
2 student knows about whole numbers, decimals, and
3 fractions, or you could have a single item that assessed
4 all three of those constructs.

5 Okay. So, you know, another way to think
6 about it is how would you collect evidence to know what
7 a student knows about that particular standard? How
8 would you design a process to do that?

9 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. And we are asking that
10 you think about it, at least that you give us some
11 information about how you would approach it for your
12 particular student from a more complex standpoint and
13 also from a more basic standpoint.

14 Yes, Steve.

15 MR. SIRECI: I don't know if this is what
16 you're looking for but let's say you had a math problem
17 that would say something -- a vignette where you have a
18 certain amount of money and you need to buy lunch or
19 something like that. You could remove text by, you
20 know, having the menu and a wallet with a limited amount
21 of money in there and, you know, a cash register and as
22 they started to place things into their cafeteria tray

1 or whatever, they'd have to account for how much money
2 they're spending, how much change they would get,
3 something like that?

4 MS. KOPRIVA: That's what I'm looking for and
5 you're going to start off by telling me what it is
6 you're intending -- first of all, what is the particular
7 student you're making this accessible for, what
8 particular type of strengths and challenges, and also
9 then what you're trying to measure with that.

10 MR. SIRECI: Well, I'm trying to measure
11 multistep real-life mathematical problems and think of
12 the type of student who'd have trouble with text maybe
13 in the English language. So maybe it's an English
14 language learner or maybe it's a student who's
15 overwhelmed by seeing a lot of text and would just be
16 much more relaxed and interacting with a picture-based
17 item.

18 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. Okay. So would you
19 consider that to be -- so how -- would you consider
20 that to be pretty complex?

21 MR. SIRECI: No. I would think that's simple
22 and to raise the complexity, I would have some -- a

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

189

1 coupon for like a free drink or something where they'd
2 have to make some choices to identify what's the best
3 value they could get.

4 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. You pass. Yes, Leila.

5 MS. WILLIAMS: Even looking at that last
6 component where it talks about mental math and
7 estimation, what we think about students, especially the
8 ones that Steve described, you could probably even break
9 it out even further where if the text is too complex and
10 having some of the solutions in place but where they
11 have some options to make appropriate estimations
12 because we know sometimes for students that can be
13 difficult.

14 So given some of the examples you showed of
15 items of how they looked visually or being able to make
16 movement of how much is filling up or, you know, total
17 amount would be might be another piece that you could
18 add to it.

19 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. So and that would be
20 actually at the lower -- maybe if we were looking at the
21 simpler skills, reducing complexity?

22 MS. WILLIAMS: Exactly. So that we can find

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

190

1 out what skills does the student possess as they're
2 moving through a series of items perhaps related to it.

3 MS. KOPRIVA: Mm-hmm. Good. More complex.
4 Jamal.

5 MR. ABEDI: First of all, let's say a student
6 who is not proficient but fluent in both L1 and L2. So
7 she or he knows I can read language in both languages
8 but not enough to actually provide details of what she
9 or he wanted to do. So I would approach it in kind of
10 performance assessment kind of tasks and provide type of
11 things that she or he can play with it in order to
12 present it in the performance type of work rather than
13 explaining because the person, the student has to have
14 enough proficiency and enough writing skills to actually
15 provide but if you provide performance tasks type of --

16 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. So, Jamal, what is it
17 you're trying to measure right now?

18 MR. ABEDI: Well, let's say I'm trying to
19 measure fractions and decimals.

20 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. And what are you going to
21 do with those fractions? What is it? You want to
22 measure how well they know?

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

191

1 MR. ABEDI: How well they know.

2 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay.

3 MR. ABEDI: And how well they understand it
4 but they may have perfect understanding of these
5 concepts but they may not have the language facilities
6 to express, to write, to say how much they know about
7 this.

8 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay.

9 MR. ABEDI: And performance assessment gives
10 them the opportunity to actually do this.

11 MS. KOPRIVA: So what would you make sure is
12 included in the performance assessment?

13 MR. ABEDI: I wanted to make sure that all the
14 components that a student needs in order to demonstrate
15 give them -- like I wanted to just give you one example,
16 like what Richard Cheverson actually did, did hands-on
17 performance in giving them some bulbs and all those
18 things to create. So things like that.

19 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay.

20 MR. ABEDI: I think in advance to see what is
21 needed in order to present the concept. Does that make
22 sense?

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

192

1 MS. KOPRIVA: Yeah.

2 MR. ABEDI: Am I passed or?

3 MS. KOPRIVA: No. Yeah. No. So is that your
4 basic one or more complex one?

5 MR. ABEDI: Complex one.

6 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. And basic?

7 MR. ABEDI: I think this can be presented in
8 both basic and complex one, depending on --

9 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. So how would you
10 distinguish that? You would do it -- you would use the
11 same approach.

12 MR. ABEDI: Right. Exactly.

13 MS. KOPRIVA: And tell me what the distinction
14 would be in the way -- in what it is you're measuring.
15 You would do more -- you would have them more steps in
16 the more complex? You would --

17 MR. ABEDI: More steps and more complex, I
18 give them because in performance assessment, the
19 students have enough opportunity, chance, time rather
20 than being a time test and try to answer multiple choice
21 questions and stuff like that. So it has more
22 opportunity to present.

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

193

1 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. Great.

2 MR. ABEDI: So how I'm doing?

3 MS. KOPRIVA: You're doing great. You passed.

4 Sorry. I think --

5 MR. ROONEY: I think Viji's had her hand up

6 awhile, then Mike.

7 MS. KOPRIVA: Sorry, sorry.

8 MS. SOMASUNDARAM: I thought I will make this
9 something interesting, a subject with a cake, and then I
10 will come back with another item but not that
11 interesting.

12 So, you know, for a complex item, I think what
13 we could do, I'm thinking of a T item, a teacher
14 bringing in a cake so we can have a cake example and we
15 can say a class has 30 students, 20 students and then
16 there are two kinds of cake, a chocolate cake and a
17 marble cake or a vanilla cake. Because it is complex, I
18 am having two kinds of cake, and if the cakes are
19 divided equally and everyone gets both pieces, okay,
20 what is the piece, and they have to be able to dissect
21 and do that and they have to do that with the minimum
22 language load, partition the sentences because I see

1 this question because it's presented in a subject like
2 that.

3 You know, those are the kind of strategies
4 that you have to look at, like make it small, make it
5 easy so that everybody can, you know, approach it easily
6 so that it's not having the heavy language load and then
7 underline the places wherever it's needed, and then, of
8 course, we have to teach the technique for students to
9 omit the sentence that's not needed but that's a
10 formative technique. For summative purposes, we can
11 just keep it to the point and then they can be able to
12 drag the pieces and then they can tell us here is one
13 piece and then we can queue a fraction and put a little
14 box where they have to say 1×30 or 1×14 plus 1×14 or
15 whatever. So that is something I thought about.

16 And then a basic, we can have minimum number
17 of kids in the class and just have one cake. We can do
18 that, and then I thought about supply list and the
19 parent giving three of their students who are at
20 different grade levels and then giving money to the
21 student, you know, to their three children and telling
22 here I give you so many dollars and they are in

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

195

1 different grade levels, and you can talk about -- you
2 can just give simple examples. Grade 7 supply list \$30,
3 Grade 6 \$20. So in this, I am trying to measure the
4 positive and negative. So there's some grade levels,
5 the money will be enough and some it will not be enough.
6 So they will tell what is not enough. Something like
7 that as the concept, but, anyway, again we have to think
8 about presenting the various things that they could use
9 and then making it interesting for them and a real-world
10 connection at the same time, not using too much
11 information that is going to distract them and, you
12 know, that is not going to let us know why they are not
13 knowing or sometimes they may know that and because we
14 are giving all these indirect ways of measuring, they
15 may stop and they may not proceed further.

16 Like we said before, lots of times kids just
17 answer the one question and then they just go away. If
18 we just direct their attention to all these, there are
19 three parts to this question or something like that and
20 underline the three, that gets their attention because
21 this is a long test and they are already doing this. So
22 that's the kind of things I thought about. I don't know

1 if I passed or what.

2 MS. KOPRIVA: You passed.

3 MS. SOMASUNDARAM: Thank you.

4 MS. KOPRIVA: You passed. Michael.

5 MR. HOCK: Actually, I want to talk about what
6 I wouldn't do on this item. First of all, I think one
7 of the things that's interesting about the standard you
8 gave us is that it actually has levels of complexity
9 embedded in it and so we could use the same sort of item
10 structure but have it to do with whole numbers at sort
11 of the least complex level and then with fractions and
12 then with decimals.

13 But in terms of what we would not do or what
14 we shouldn't do and, frankly, I've seen this too often
15 in the assessments that we have now and that is to add
16 complexity by using numbers that we actually would never
17 try to solve in our heads, that we would have them apply
18 decimals to, you know, a nine-digit number or something
19 like that.

20 MS. KOPRIVA: So what is it you're trying to
21 measure?

22 MR. HOCK: That's right. What I'm trying to

1 measure whether kids can do multistep problems, you
2 know, using that method. That's right.

3 MS. KOPRIVA: So that --

4 MR. HOCK: Actually, you know, something
5 that's always worked for me is our friend Norman Webb, I
6 don't know whether it originated with Norman, but,
7 anyway, he talks about source of challenge in an item
8 and the source of challenge, you should be able to look
9 at a test item and say what is it that we're challenging
10 the student to do with this particular item and when you
11 look at that source of challenge, you should be able to
12 look back at the standard and say, ahh, what the
13 standard says is the source of challenge rather than the
14 source of challenge being the complexity of the language
15 or using numbers so big that nobody would solve it
16 without a calculator in the real world.

17 So again, I think that in terms of source of
18 challenge, I would not want to do -- I would not try to
19 want to create complexity by doing something that really
20 is outside of what the standard is asking.

21 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. So one of the things you
22 mentioned is that what you don't want to do is the

Capital Reporting Company
U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

198

1 language and also the items or the numbers being huge.

2 What else?

3 MR. HOCK: They're going to embarrass us with
4 these things.

5 MS. DeSTEFANO: Well, --

6 MR. HOCK: Well, and there's other things we
7 could do in here. Another one I thought of actually
8 when I was talking about this is that I might ask the
9 students to -- the student is a recent arrival in the
10 United States who only knows how to use Copex and now we
11 first have the student exchange Copex into dollars and
12 then go into the school cafeteria and buy lunch, again
13 getting back to this notion of source of challenge.

14 This standard is not saying kids should be
15 able to transfer one monetary system into another. So I
16 shouldn't use that to increase the complexity of the
17 cycle.

18 MS. DeSTEFANO: But I like the fact that you
19 keyed on whole numbers, fractions, and decimals, right,
20 because that's kind of the instructional progression.
21 Typically, we teach whole numbers, then fractions, then
22 decimals.

1 There's also messy numbers and clean numbers.
2 So ones that are easy to calculate, ones that are -- so
3 those are the kinds of things that can be varied to
4 change complexity but still get at where a student is at
5 addressing those standards.

6 This standard also gives you the option of
7 looking at math in context, real-life examples, and
8 mathematical problems. So another way to cut it is to
9 give some naked math computation and some computation in
10 context and to see where do kids shake out there. Are
11 they able to do naked math but not apply it in context?
12 Then how can we help them learn to do math in context?

13 So I like this standard because it does give
14 you some ideas about how to vary the presentation to
15 help you understand where the kid is at instructionally.

16 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. Willy is next, and,
17 Willy, I know you're going to talk about something with
18 doing with English learners which is good, but then
19 after that, we need to have some examples of ways of
20 approaching this that have to do with some of the
21 disabilities that are not around language.

22 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: I was thinking more --

Capital Reporting Company
U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

200

1 rather than thinking of a specific item, I was thinking
2 about the family of items.

3 MS. DeSTEFANO: Yes, suite of items.

4 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: So, in other words, as a
5 template that would allow me to generate very easily
6 items which pose problems of the same kind. So what I
7 was thinking, you have a whole and fractions and you
8 have fractions --

9 MS. KOPRIVA: What is it you're trying to
10 measure, Willy?

11 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: I'm going to get there,
12 I'm going to get there.

13 MS. KOPRIVA: All right.

14 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: You have two forms of
15 representation of fractions which is in decimal form and
16 in ratio form. So what I would be trying to measure is
17 the ability to use multiple forms of representation of
18 different components of the same problem, be able to use
19 them in combination to solve a problem that involves
20 adding numbers.

21 So what I was thinking is a format of a
22 problem in which you have something like your class

1 wants to build a bookcase, for example, and you have the
2 following materials and this is what they cost. So you
3 would have a column. You would have rows for, for
4 example, wood, nails, a hammer and so on, and you would
5 have columns for the amount, the cost for unit, and how
6 much you need and how much you have, for example, and
7 then the question is how much you are missing, how much
8 you need or how much you still need to collect money for
9 or something like that.

10 Obviously you present information in the
11 table, fractions in both the ratio format and the
12 decimal format, and you can vary the complexity of the
13 problem in multiple ways. One is by increasing the
14 number of items that you need to include to construct
15 whatever you want to build by increasing the number of
16 different fractions representations. That's another
17 possibility.

18 And obviously in one problem you're going to
19 have bookcases and another problem you're going to have,
20 let's say a garden bath, in another case, another item,
21 you're going to have a fence or whatever. So the
22 context is going to be very simple. You have to -- you

1 need to build this and this is what you need and what
2 you have, something like that.

3 So I think that will be essentially the
4 structure of the problem. This can be done with very
5 clear indications for the item writers about what they
6 have to vary. So even if you have the bookcase problem,
7 you may have multiple bookcase problems within that kind
8 of -- that type of problem or you may vary bookcase,
9 fence, whatever.

10 MS. KOPRIVA: And that would make your -- that
11 would allow your complexity to increase or decrease --

12 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: Exactly.

13 MS. KOPRIVA: -- is what you're saying?

14 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: Yeah.

15 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. And talk to me about the
16 type of student this would be good for.

17 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: In the way in which I'm
18 thinking about this problem, we would have many -- much
19 language in terms of the contextual information. All
20 you have is your class wants to build this. This is
21 what you have, something like that, and obviously I'm
22 trying to minimize linguistic demands. I'm trying to

1 use information to provide information in graphic or
2 tabular form and actually I can also add some
3 illustration that represents the thing that we want to
4 build just to provide some visual support for students
5 to understand the context.

6 Now whether -- obviously I'm doing it in a way
7 in which I'm thinking ELLs from the beginning but I
8 don't have yet an empirical proof that actually that is
9 working because it might be the case that I may have a
10 very short sentence but the semantic load is so much
11 and, I mean, so compacted that probably I am increasing
12 the linguistic demands.

13 So still I would need to make a series of
14 refinements.

15 MS. KOPRIVA: Good. Thanks, Willy. Wendy.

16 MS. CARVER: Okay. I'd like to take Willy's
17 problem and think about it in terms of a student who is
18 blind, okay, and for that student, if you have the list
19 of different things, that would be easier for a student
20 who's blind to grasp than if it were put in a pie chart,
21 for example, because the pie chart, the graphics for the
22 pie chart would be much more complex.

1 So that's why I would put it in one format
2 versus another format when I'm doing the graphics.

3 I'd also want to provide a read aloud
4 accommodation that would be embedded for students and
5 I'm going to stick with my student who's blind and I
6 would -- as the student goes through the problem, I
7 would have the read aloud give the student the
8 information that they need, based on the chart. You can
9 go down information in a chart much easier than again
10 back to the pie graph or something like that.

11 Now if I move from a student who's blind to a
12 student who has a learning disability, this student can
13 see but has difficulty reading, I may still provide a
14 read aloud accommodation but I wouldn't provide -- I
15 wouldn't have to explain what's on there, like I
16 wouldn't have to say hammer, the student could see the
17 picture of the hammer. I may still need to say hammer
18 so that they know what I'm reading across like the cost
19 of it and those kinds of things.

20 So what I'm trying to get at is that as I go
21 through the problem that's been created, I have to think
22 about all the different populations and make sure that

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

205

1 whether it's more complex or less complex, I've covered
2 for all the different disabilities that I might be
3 seeing.

4 MS. KOPRIVA: Good. That's good. And
5 variations. So you might, as you say, have -- you could
6 either have one that could solve several problems or you
7 might have to have a variation in there.

8 MS. CARVER: Mm-hmm.

9 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. Thank you, Wendy. Gaye.

10 MS. FEDORCHAK: I was thinking about what you
11 asked and then I was thinking why am I struggling and I
12 was thinking because I wouldn't be giving you a verbal
13 response, I'd be sitting here with a pencil and a sketch
14 pad.

15 MS. DeSTEFANO: And you wanted a pad, too.

16 MS. FEDORCHAK: I did. I did, actually.

17 MS. DeSTEFANO: I'm sorry.

18 MS. FEDORCHAK: And I would be trying to --
19 what I'd want to be able to do, I would identify and try
20 this first problem, a woman making \$25 an hour gets a 10
21 percent raise, I'd be doing percents and decimals
22 basically in a two-or-three-step problem, you know,

1 determining how much it would be, how much her new pay
2 rate would be per hour after the raise and so forth, and
3 then I'd probably add a third step saying how much would
4 she make now if she's working a four-hour day, something
5 like that, about a three-step problem. So I'd make the
6 multiple steps and so forth.

7 What I would want to be able to do, I'd want
8 to be able to use this thing to help inform instruction.
9 So I'm really thinking about it as a formative kind of
10 item. I'd like to see how the child constructs their
11 response and I'd like to be able to capture that data
12 behind the scenes. I'd like to be able to identify what
13 elements the child counts as important and when they
14 change their mind, I'd like to see that. I'd like to
15 have that data somehow captured behind the scenes.

16 So what I was trying to conceptualize in my
17 head is if I had a child with a reading disability who
18 was going to be solving this problem primarily let's say
19 visually, I'm not going to tackle the issue with
20 blindness because I thought about that, Wendy, because I
21 thought it might actually involve manipulatives that
22 have nothing to do with the computer, that they could

1 actually move around and touch and feel but that's
2 showing how they can construct their response but I
3 haven't quite figured that one out yet, but I'd try to
4 figure out how to give the child a set of visual tools
5 that they could manipulate on the screen that would have
6 meaning, like unit blocks or something that they could
7 help to illustrate for me the reasoning processes
8 they're going through, how they're clustering, how
9 they're decomposing, how they're reconfiguring the
10 salary structure, and then if I wanted to make it more
11 complex, I would probably ask them to try to help me
12 understand if they could write one sentence telling me
13 how this problem was solved, how might they represent
14 that in a sentence, but I would give them visual tools
15 they could select from to build the sentence.

16 So I might actually ask them to notate it, to
17 create a notation or a number sentence at the end
18 telling us how they did that. I think that would be a
19 higher level of complexity.

20 MS. KOPRIVA: All right. That sounds good.
21 And tell me about the type of student you had in your
22 mind.

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

208

1 MS. FEDORCHAK: I was thinking about a child
2 with a reading disability that had vision, intact vision
3 and intact motor impairment, motor skills or at least
4 the ability to move things through a switch or something
5 on screen.

6 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. Thanks. Mike.

7 MR. RUSSELL: So I'm going to get a zero on my
8 test by copying from Steve.

9 MS. DeSTEFANO: Don't ever copy from Steve.

10 MR. RUSSELL: One of the things I found
11 interesting about Steve -- well, actually, a lot of the
12 examples, Steve's because it was the first, is that he
13 designed something for students who had language-related
14 needs but what he designed, if you think about a variety
15 of different access needs that are related to
16 disabilities, you could actually enhance that item. You
17 could build in additional information or ways of
18 manipulating content.

19 So, for example, if you think about a student
20 who has fine motor skill issues, if I understand Steve's
21 item right, you're kind of manipulating things on to the
22 cafeteria tray, right? Well, if the kid can't use a

1 mouse, how are they going to do that? Well, you could
2 build in mechanisms to be used to have entering to be
3 able to get to those objects and then to manipulate
4 those objects.

5 And one of the powers of thinking about
6 Steve's example in particular is you can then create a
7 template, an item template for which the complexity of
8 the problem can change. He changed it by just adding
9 one element, a coupon, but you can also change it by
10 changing the numbers themselves. You could also change
11 the context. So instead of a cafeteria, you could go to
12 a grocery store where your numbers, you may have more --
13 be dealing with more decimals than whole numbers or two
14 50 kind of things.

15 So you can change the complexity of the
16 mathematics as well as the context within that template
17 but by doing that with the template, you can still
18 manipulate all those objects using tab enter because all
19 you're doing is substituting the pictures but not the
20 manipulations and then you could also think about, you
21 know, a read aloud support, so there's limited text in
22 Steve's example but, you know, it's when he was

1 referring, you could still have read aloud, so you could
2 still have verbal presentations and all that is is an
3 additional tag, accessibility tag that's associated with
4 that text.

5 So you can now start meeting not just
6 traditional language needs but there may be a student
7 who has a language need who may also be dyslexic. So
8 they have a decoding issue, as well. So you can kind of
9 combine both of those, who may also not be able to use a
10 mouse. So you can start thinking about how you can kind
11 of layer on accessibility options either through the
12 features of the template itself, the item template, as
13 well as additional kind of accessibility tagged
14 information that's on that item and then you can also
15 vary the complexity of the item by just changing the
16 content itself.

17 MS. KOPRIVA: I think there are many good
18 points you made and one of them was showing that by
19 adapting pieces, you can actually make this accessible
20 for several different types of students.

21 MR. RUSSELL: And the power of that is, you
22 know, people talk about the costs. Well, yeah, if we

1 were designing a different item for every single kid who
2 we can come up with these scenarios of what access needs
3 they have, yeah, that's prohibitive, but if we start
4 thinking about it from a template perspective, for which
5 we can easily substitute content and we invest our time
6 and energy into building these templates, that's going
7 to be more expensive to build a good template than to
8 build any item, but once you build a good template, it's
9 going to be much more efficient to build the items
10 associated with that. So your investment costs will go
11 down with time.

12 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. Thank you. Roberta.

13 MS. ALLEY: I was really trying to think
14 through. We've come up with a lot of examples and
15 almost all of them have been positive numbers and I know
16 for a lot of these students when you go into the
17 negative realm, it becomes much more difficult because
18 it's not concrete where it's less than whole and I was
19 trying to visualize how we could visualize something
20 that's less than and I believe at 7th grade negative
21 numbers will be a part of a large number of these items
22 and so we need to think -- it's easier to think in

1 positive numbers than negative and I didn't hear any
2 mixture of using fractions and decimals and quite often
3 in a real-life problem, we might be mixing those.

4 So thinking about how we visualize moving
5 between fractions and decimals for these students. So I
6 didn't come up with a real good problem but --

7 MS. KOPRIVA: No. I think that's good.

8 MS. DeSTEFANO: I think that's a good part
9 about how the breadth of items that you could create
10 that still address the standard. We've been sort of
11 taking it in pieces but there's ones that could actually
12 include multiple elements.

13 There's one phrase in here, using tools
14 strategically, and we haven't talked very much about
15 that either. So for your example, maybe a number line
16 could be a tool. It could be a drop down. It could be,
17 you know, that a student could access and that maybe the
18 computer could record whether the student utilized the
19 number line or not, so you'd see whether or not they had
20 some support in doing that. So that's an example of a
21 tool.

22 MS. KOPRIVA: Yes, Willy.

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

213

1 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: Yeah. Just wanted to -- I
2 appreciate the fact that Rebecca was all the time in
3 this exercise keeping us on the line.

4 MS. KOPRIVA: With the construct.

5 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: What is a construct and
6 then what is the population that you have in mind, and
7 what makes this simulation different from a practice,
8 current practice is that you have the diverse population
9 of students in mind since the moment in which you start
10 interpreting the standard which is very different from
11 developing the items and then see what you do with them
12 when it comes to using them with the ELLs or students
13 with disabilities.

14 So I would say that probably, in addition to
15 developing those templates, based on interpreting the
16 standards, each standard with the diverse population in
17 mind, we also -- well, I mean, you or whoever is going
18 to do this have some little discussion in their teams
19 about the linguistic challenges or the other challenges
20 the other students may experience that we should take
21 into account before even trying to generate items that
22 assess knowledges specified by those standards.

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

215

1 MS. KOPRIVA: And start with what you want to
2 measure because in here it's a little different. You do
3 need to specify the part. You want to go with the main
4 argument or, you know, let us know.

5 MS. DeSTEFANO: Willy.

6 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: There are two things that
7 from my perspective stand out. One is the content and
8 the other is the form. So the content is obviously what
9 are we going to do. The form is the style in which
10 Winston Churchill is giving his message.

11 So if we focus on the content, I think that
12 some context should be provided for the student to
13 understand that that was said in a situation of war,
14 that the information or that contextual information
15 could be provided visually or with a voice, for example,
16 in the computer explaining something that happened in
17 plain language.

18 MS. DeSTEFANO: I thought when I read the
19 first sentence, "I say to the House as I said to
20 ministers," that if you didn't have that bigger context,
21 how would you interpret that --

22 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: Of course.

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

216

1 MS. DeSTEFANO: -- introductory phrase?

2 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: You can also think about
3 -- and this is something that many English language arts
4 people would not like which is you make the adaptation
5 to the --

6 MS. DeSTEFANO: To the text? You don't like
7 that at all, no.

8 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: Exactly. But I don't want
9 to get into that.

10 MS. DeSTEFANO: No, no. No, no, no. But that
11 is a good point. The use of authentic text is sacred in
12 a lot of assessments. So adapting them in the ways that
13 you're talking about is very controversial.

14 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: Another discussion I had
15 like this with people, both in English language arts and
16 in Mexico in Spanish language arts or the equivalent
17 which is that there's a serious sampling issue in
18 English language arts because it is extremely difficult
19 to find the passage that has the linguistic features
20 that you need and the literary forms that you need but
21 at the same time meets a set of specifications regarding
22 complexity, for example, or form and style.

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

217

1 MS. DeSTEFANO: Yes, very hard.

2 MR. WIENER: So I agree that there should be
3 some kind of purpose-setting statement and perhaps even
4 some footnotes for House or minister and I'm looking
5 also at the -- you didn't really ask -- well, you did.
6 You set it up the same way as the math problem but it
7 says assessing whether the reasoning is sound, evidence
8 is relevant and sufficient, and whether irrelevant
9 evidence was introduced, so three different constructs,
10 but I don't see in any of those the fact that this has
11 to be a comprehension of print that involves the coding.

12 So I'm going to, you know, -- I'll be the
13 elephant in the room.

14 MS. DeSTEFANO: Excellent. Yeah.

15 MR. WIENER: I'm going to say I think you
16 should play a speech -- I think you should play Winston
17 Churchill giving the speech and I think you might want
18 to provide not adapted text. I'm not suggesting that
19 this speech be adapted in any way but that it be read by
20 -- you know, without the cheering in the background and
21 the British accent by a voice familiar to the test-taker
22 and that you could answer these three -- well, they're

1 not questions. Address these three constructs, any one
2 of them, without having to -- you know, a severely
3 dyslexic student could do that in that way.

4 MS. DeSTEFANO: Mm-hmm. Good. Jamal, and
5 then Wendy. Don't fight.

6 MR. ABEDI: I just have a comment. It's
7 related to language accessibility. In your work you're
8 doing right now, we are looking for how to make it
9 linguistically accessible. We know that's much more
10 difficult in the reading language arts because the
11 content of reading language arts is language and we
12 don't know.

13 So, basically, what you wanted to do and the
14 big task is to differentiate between language that is
15 related to the construct and language that's unrelated
16 or construct relevant relevant. That's a big task.
17 That's something that a team should do and work.

18 So that's the common -- is a complex task,
19 again particularly in the form of written language arts,
20 but there are some complexities that may not be
21 necessarily part of the content standards that could be
22 played, but, in general, the concept of accessibility, I

1 believe, is to touch things that is irrelevant, language
2 that is irrelevant.

3 So we wanted to make sure that we recognize.
4 This I'm sure you do, but just wanted to make sure that
5 when we are touching language, we are aware of that.

6 MS. KOPRIVA: Well, and that's -- actually,
7 I'm glad you said that that way because that would be
8 one of the questions. While you have authentic text
9 here and it really is, the point of this standard is to
10 read and to get arguments and to understand and evaluate
11 the argument which means you have to understand it. You
12 know, you have to get there from there.

13 So but it may not be whether or not you
14 understand what a minister is in the house of wherever
15 they are.

16 MR. ABEDI: Right, right.

17 MS. DeSTEFANO: The parliament.

18 MS. KOPRIVA: Right. There you go, and
19 several of these other words. So it would be a way of
20 distinguishing of those two in terms of what you support
21 and what you don't support, then taking care, for
22 instance, that you don't touch anything related to the

1 argument, if that is what you're meaning to measure.

2 Let me ask you, too, Jamal, because you can
3 follow up with this, that do you think that -- so now
4 you're being asked to evaluate the argument, say, or
5 some other -- you can pick any piece in this. Given
6 that again the point is to read this, can you think of
7 either more or less accessible ways to ask the question
8 of what you want the students to do versus -- in other
9 words, you understand what I'm asking? In other words,
10 the question itself shouldn't be a reading task.

11 MR. ABEDI: I think one way would be to
12 present the question and also possibly response in
13 several different forms of linguistic, based on level of
14 complexity, and then make sure that all those level of
15 complexity that you are presenting are construct
16 relevant and if the students can understand even the
17 simplest, lowest level of complexity, but still they're
18 at the same level of addressing the construct, I think
19 we are in good shape. I don't know whether I'm clear on
20 that or not.

21 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. And I ask that question
22 as we move forward to other folks. So, Wendy, in other

1 words, there's a distinction between the charge which is
2 being able to pull out the argument here in this text
3 versus how you ask the question of how you evaluate the
4 argument or anything else. Okay. Anyway, why don't you
5 give me your example of what you're thinking?

6 MS. CARVER: I was going to add on to what Dan
7 said because for a student who's blind, again you could
8 probably use the same read aloud. In this instance, it
9 could probably be the same read aloud for a student who
10 doesn't have vision as for a student who has vision but
11 struggles with reading.

12 But then I was thinking about what you would
13 do for the student with a hearing loss and presumably
14 the student would be able to see this and read it but
15 you might also want to provide an avatar but you'd have
16 to make sure in doing that that you didn't use ALS, that
17 you used the exact language that's been presented here
18 and I just wanted to mention that.

19 MS. KOPRIVA: Good point. Thank you.
20 Michael, then Neil.

21 MR. HOCK: Yeah. In fact, I thought that what
22 Wendy's suggesting might be a way that I would vary -- I

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

222

1 could vary the level of complexity of this item. Like
2 for example, at one level, we could use the same basic
3 scaffolding or structure of questions but at one level,
4 we would ask those questions specifically about
5 Churchill's text but then at another level I might have
6 an item that says, you know, Winston Churchill gave this
7 speech at the beginning of World War II, below are Dan's
8 notes that he made after reading this, or then I might
9 go to another level and say here's a PowerPoint slide
10 that Lizanne made on Churchill's speech and ask the same
11 questions, but what we've done is we've broken it down
12 to smaller and smaller easier-to-interpret chunks to get
13 different levels.

14 MS. DeSTEFANO: Neil was the next one.

15 MR. KINGSTON: I was going to say there are a
16 number of other elephants in the room besides the one
17 that Dan mentioned earlier. One that was touched on
18 briefly was the use of authentic text which you can't
19 touch or not. There are other problems with using
20 authentic text and so I tend to lean against doing too
21 much of that because -- well, for the reasons stated.

22 MS. FEDORCHAK: Just a comment. When we talk

1 about doing this with a sign avatar or in sign language
2 potentially, we can't address the question unless we get
3 the English language arts people here and experts in
4 sign. We really need to have them come talk about this
5 because one of the questions I would have is is sign-
6 exact English necessary? Can they use true ASL? I
7 mean, some of the phrases might not translate at all
8 comprehensively in a comprehensible way, if you use
9 sign- exact English. It might not make any sense at
10 all. We need advice on this.

11 MS. DeSTEFANO: Willy, and then Martha.

12 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: I'm thinking again in
13 terms of the templates and I can use Churchill as a
14 template. Well, Churchill's speech as a template because
15 if I read the standard here is not about understanding
16 Churchill or understanding what Churchill said to the
17 House of Commons and so on. What I read here is
18 delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims
19 in the text.

20 Okay. So what about if I use the same
21 structure and just replace some portions of the text and
22 then I have a situation in which the president is

1 talking to the people in a situation of a bad economy or
2 a father talking to their children about what to do now
3 that their mother has died or something that is as
4 dramatic and so on, and I think that it's as much as we
5 may not -- as much as we would like to use this
6 particular speech because it's beautiful and it's
7 inspirational, that is not what the standard says. So
8 we can use this as a structure, keep the intensity and
9 the emotion, and so on. So this is one part of my
10 participation.

11 The other part is I just want to mention some
12 concerns I have always had. People have mentioned
13 avatars and I think that that's a good resource that we
14 may consider, but there's a question that I have always
15 had in my mind and I have asked people and nobody has
16 been able to answer me. I hope that someone can come up
17 with an answer here.

18 Frequently because of my students come to me
19 and show me software and the instructional materials in
20 computer and so on, would these avatars, most of them
21 cartoonized of those characters with these features that
22 are like cartoons with these high-pitched voices and

1 these kind of bright colors and so on, my question has
2 always been why do we assume or why should we assume
3 that because we are dealing with a student population,
4 we should use these cartoonized characters and these
5 high- pitched voices and so on? Why should we do that?

6 I don't think that there's any proof,
7 empirical evidence that that works and that is better
8 for children or adolescents. If someone has empirical
9 evidence, I would like to hear it.

10 MS. DeSTEFANO: Mike, did you want to respond
11 specifically to that, and then we'll close with Martha?

12 MR. RUSSELL: Yeah. Well, my joking answer is
13 we know that from the Snoopy cartoons, the Peanuts
14 cartoons.

15 MS. DeSTEFANO: Blah-blah-blah.

16 MR. RUSSELL: If you use adult voices, the
17 kids just hear it as blah-blah-blah. My serious answer,
18 though, is that the issue of avatars, I think, is a
19 tricky one and I was talking to someone during the lunch
20 break about this, that for signing in particular, you
21 don't need an avatar to do signing. You can have a
22 recorded human doing signing, as well, and I believe

1 Massachusetts, you guys have been doing that for awhile,
2 right? A DVD-based. So it's easy to translate that
3 over and deliver that.

4 The challenge with that kind of approach,
5 though, is you have band width issues because you're
6 having video and you also have cost issues because
7 you're working with humans who are doing the recording.
8 So the elegance of an avatar solution is really that you
9 may be able to, depending on how the technologies are
10 implemented, you can have a much lower band width
11 provision of a visual stimulus by something that looks
12 like a human.

13 The avatars that are available, you know,
14 depending again on the technologies that are used, the
15 student can actually manipulate the skin on the avatar,
16 I don't mean literally, physically, I mean the look and
17 feel of the avatar because that's the way the avatars
18 work. It's just a wire frame and you're just putting a
19 skin on top of it. That skin can look like an
20 alligator, it can look like a person, it can look like a
21 person with dark skin, with light skin, blonde hair. So
22 the student can actually control all that and if you

1 wanted to, you could build that into a student's
2 profile.

3 Regarding the voice, the same thing. Most of
4 them are synthesized voices. So it's very easy to alter
5 the voice for an avatar, again if the technology that
6 you're using allows for that.

7 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: No. I understand that.
8 My only question is do we have empirical evidence that -
9 - I mean, I'm not against the avatars. I think that
10 they are great. But do we have empirical evidence that
11 high- pitched voices and cartoonized characters are
12 better in the context of instruction and assessment? I
13 mean, all those features can be manipulated. I don't
14 know if they are necessarily an advantage but assuming
15 that they are, that is not actually the point. The
16 point is do they work or do they interfere?

17 MS. DeSTEFANO: So I think we need to get
18 Martha's last comment and then move on.

19 MS. THURLOW: I'll be quick. I just wanted to
20 note that this has been a great exercise for showing how
21 we can bring our interpretations to what the construct
22 is about and come up with great accessible ways, but I

1 think we haven't recall figured out how to address that
2 issue of these are our interpretations.

3 Gaye, you brought it up when you said we have
4 to have the content people in the room. The hard
5 discussion is going to be about what are those
6 acceptable interpretations of the construct and that's,
7 I hope, the consortia are going to really work on that.

8 MS. DeSTEFANO: Yeah. Very good. Very good.
9 Okay.

10 MR. ROONEY: I made that point in the
11 beginning. Thank you for emphasizing that at the end,
12 that we didn't have those people here at the table and
13 this was just an exercise to kind of think about how you
14 would do this in a real-life practice, but clearly a
15 much broader and inclusive group is going to be
16 necessary throughout the process in doing that.

17 MR. SIRECI: And a well-specified process
18 because not -- people are not going to be holding hands
19 and singing Kumbaya at the end. So there's got to be a
20 way to actually move it along and come to some idea
21 about what's going to be assessed and ways for doing
22 that.

Capital Reporting Company
U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

229

1 MS. FEDORCHAK: You really have to lock them
2 in the room and go away.

3 MS. DeSTEFANO: Well, 10 people locked in a
4 room is how we did the NAEP study. So that's it. Okay.
5 Patrick, we're done.

6 MR. ROONEY: Thank you, both. So we're a
7 little bit over time but I want to take -- it was a very
8 good exercise. I appreciate everyone's thoughts on
9 that. We're going to have Public Comment in a second but
10 I wanted to give the experts one last chance to do kind
11 of a final recommendation for the consortia moving
12 forward as a thought for them to take away from this
13 meeting, kind of a suggestion for them to think about, a
14 recommendation.

15 We're actually -- I didn't give any warning
16 about this, but we're going in reverse order than we did
17 this morning. So that means Steve gets to go first and
18 then we'll just go around. Concluding Comments

19 MR. SIRECI: Rebecca, thanks. Really
20 interesting stuff.

21 As educational researcher, as a
22 psychometrician, as a parent of three kids in public

Capital Reporting Company
U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

230

1 schools, and also from other perspectives, I just want
2 to thank the Department of Ed for today. Assessing
3 these hard-to- assess populations is one of the most
4 formidable issues facing psychometrics and I'm
5 encouraged by what I heard today.

6 My question to PARCC and Smarter Balanced is
7 what research on accessibility, what research on
8 validity are you planning to do, and I guess I would add
9 what research are you planning to do based on pilot
10 data?

11 Ideally, I'd like to see some partnership
12 across the two consortia, but I think, I hope there's
13 some validity studies planned now and, if not, I'd
14 encourage you to start doing that.

15 Also, this idea of a system where you're using
16 the computer to figure out what the student might need,
17 not just teacher judgments, is helpful and also think we
18 need to tie that back to score reporting.

19 I think for most students, they're going to be
20 able to populate a complete score report and for others
21 you're going to say there was too much of -- you
22 wouldn't say this on the report but there'll be some

1 incomplete data because there would be too much of a
2 construct shift to modify items in certain ways.

3 So I like everything that was said,
4 particularly what you said, Michael, about building
5 these really flexible systems based on templates and so
6 forth.

7 You know, I want to tell everyone here if
8 you're not a member of the National Council on
9 Measurement Education, you should be because there's a
10 lot of progress and a lot being written. You get two
11 journals with your membership. It's like \$75 a year.
12 I'm not on the Board. I used to be, but really this is
13 an important organization, www.ncme.org, and Jacqueline
14 Leighton, Editor of Educational Measurement, Issues and
15 Practice, which is one of the journals you get, was
16 talking about Race to the Top in her editorial and she
17 said, you know, unless we start talking about learning,
18 it's going to be shot to the middle of something like
19 that and I sent her an e-mail, it's like you're exactly
20 right, and I think if one really interesting thing to
21 look at to integrate assessment and learning and some of
22 the new computer- based formats we're talking about is

1 Rosetta Stone.

2 I'm a Spanish language owner and I'm not very
3 good at it but Rosetta Stone actually is teaching me
4 things as it's assessing me. So as you start to think
5 about prototypes, I would take a good look at that. Just
6 as an example, a lot of the responses back that it's
7 testing on is pronunciation and I can adjust the level
8 of -- I can't roll my Rs and I can adjust their scoring
9 to accept that.

10 We laugh and it's funny but here's Rosetta
11 Stone and this is, you know, technology five years old
12 that's way ahead of where we are, but thank you very
13 much.

14 MR. ROONEY: Thanks, Steve. Since we're
15 running a little short on time, I ask everyone just to
16 try to keep it to a minute, if possible.

17 So, Willy, you're next.

18 MR. SOLANO-FLORES: I will. First of all,
19 thank you for inviting me to this important meeting and
20 I have learned a lot and I have had a lot of fun.

21 I want to mention that if I have to -- many
22 things have been said here about how this assessment

1 should be and what should be taken into consideration
2 and obviously there are concerns. There may be some
3 concerns about cost or logistics or just simply the
4 difference between doing the things that we know and
5 doing the things in alternative ways.

6 But I think that all these ideas are justified
7 by the fact that these, as I read in the proposals,
8 these are supposed to be a new generation of tests with
9 a high commitment to make a fair and valid assessment
10 for these special populations.

11 So I think that, based on that, on those
12 grounds, if you accomplish 30 percent of what we have
13 said, I would be very happy. I think that we should
14 shoot at least for that. I mean, if you can accomplish
15 100 percent of what we have said, that would be
16 obviously great.

17 And if I have two or three things that I would
18 like to insist for you to really pay attention to, one
19 of them is representation of English language learners
20 throughout entire process of assessment development.
21 Since you read the standards and you interpret them,
22 have that in mind and include them in your pilot

1 studies.

2 The other is a good, excellent item
3 specifications document. Without that, we are dead.

4 MR. ROONEY: Thanks, Willy. Jamal.

5 MR. ABEDI: I wanted to repeat and say thank
6 you again very much for this opportunity. Bringing the
7 two consortia together is extremely important to share,
8 collaborate, share ideas, and stuff like that. It's
9 almost a year gone from the two consortia but there are
10 things that should have been done at the very beginning
11 and should be done right now and that's collaboration on
12 definition of the terms and stuff like that.

13 What do we mean by accessibility? Do we have
14 a common understanding across the two consortia? The
15 two consortia can put all the energies and everything
16 together and have -- because comparability is one of the
17 most important aspects of this. For instance, even
18 though both consortia use common core set of standards,
19 but they are using different ways, so the more
20 collaboration, the more common project, common
21 definition.

22 In terms of accommodation, for instance, I

1 wanted to make this suggestion. We really, really don't
2 need to use hundreds of accommodations. If the two
3 consortia come together and identify a handful of
4 accommodations that are useful and that's research-based
5 and so these are the type of things that saying that
6 collaboration actually may make a difference and is
7 extremely important to build it at the beginning, even
8 though one year is gone, but still it is not too late.

9 MR. ROONEY: Thanks, Jamal. Mike.

10 MR. RUSSELL: I've got real quickly three
11 things. One is we talked a lot about a lot of different
12 issues and I think when you put it all together, it's
13 very complex and I would certainly encourage people to
14 try to compartmentalize the issues to the extent
15 possible and then deal with each set of issues
16 independently, while thinking about the other ones, but
17 really try to address them independently.

18 Secondly, you know, there's a lot of work
19 that's going to be done in the next 12 months and a lot
20 of it is dependent on things that happen before it and I
21 think there's two things in particular related to
22 accessibility that need to happen.

1 One, I think the consortia need to make
2 decisions on interoperability and how they're going to
3 approach that interoperability, has to happen before you
4 start building content, otherwise it's too late. It has
5 to happen before you design your systems or it's too
6 late.

7 And the second is then establishing best
8 practices and, as Jamal was suggesting, I think if you
9 can do that across all four consortia, we have an
10 opportunity to really move the field and practice in
11 schools for it. So I strongly encourage you to do that
12 ASAP.

13 MR. ROONEY: Thanks, Mike. Lizanne.

14 MS. DeSTEFANO: I would just like to say that,
15 you know, I think this is a transformative time in
16 assessment. I don't think that we've had this
17 opportunity in my professional lifetime. I'm not sure
18 we'll see this opportunity again. So the stuff that the
19 consortia does are really going to set the course for
20 assessment for the next few decades. So what you do is
21 really, really important.

22 I'm always sad that the timelines are so tight

1 on these because I think sometimes we constrain really
2 good work because we have to hit these timelines, but,
3 you know, I just want to encourage you to be bold and
4 really, really try to address this area seriously.

5 Just two other things. One, we haven't talked
6 about very much. I love it that you have technical
7 working groups, but I really want to encourage you not
8 to have those technical working groups on the
9 accessibility siloed so that they're in a room talking
10 about accessibility while the assessment's being
11 developed and piloted and everything is happening. So
12 the integration is really important and pulling in the
13 highest-level experts that you can to inform item
14 development in your RFPs is, I think, really important.
15 And then the last thing is that the common core
16 standards really need to be unpacked. The common core
17 standards really need to be analyzed to see what are the
18 areas that we want to assess and how can we design those
19 assessments.

20 So, you know, we're talking a lot about the
21 assessment part but let's not forget the standards that
22 underlie the assessment because that's what really

1 characterizes learning and what really drives
2 instructions. So think about how we need to consider
3 those standards.

4 MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. I have two points. My
5 main one is actually a point that Jamal brought up and
6 that was brought up in some conversations during a break
7 and that is I think we need to -- I guess I would
8 encourage us to continue to think very deeply and very
9 broadly but also precisely about comparability and that
10 comparability -- I think we need to focus on measuring
11 the same and I would say even at the same item target or
12 task target certainly below a standard but measure --
13 focus on measuring that the best rather than against the
14 reference point of a traditional item.

15 I think we need to think about this different.
16 It's comparability related to the targets as we're
17 thinking in terms of various adaptations.

18 Okay. And then the second point I want to
19 make is I am assuming that there will be enough
20 flexibility in the APIP standards and so on to include
21 the types of things I was showing.

22 MR. ROONEY: All that can be done.

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

239

1 MS. KOPRIVA: Yahoo!

2 MS. THURLOW: Well, I have the advantage of
3 being able to say ditto to everything everybody said.
4 It was wonderful to have this conversation, even though
5 it's taking place a little bit later than maybe would
6 have been optimal, but it's not too late. So I think
7 it's really important that we've had this conversation.

8 We heard lots of issues and many ideas, I
9 think, for how to address those issues. I think getting
10 agreement across the states within consortia, not to
11 mention what we want to do across consortia, isn't going
12 to be a small task and I think we've recognized that,
13 but really working on a process to make that happen, I
14 think it's going to be really important.

15 Really two points. One, I think there's a lot
16 we can learn from what's already gone on, so we don't
17 want to lose the opportunity to look at some of the work
18 that's come out of the Enhanced Assessment Grants, some
19 of the work that's come out of the General Supervision -
20 - and I forgot the -- GSEGs, including the work on the
21 Alternative Assessment Based on Alternative Achievement
22 Standards. It's for a different group of kids but,

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

240

1 believe me, I think the regular assessment consortia can
2 learn a lot from what's going on in that area, as well.

3 Lots more to be done to generate the
4 collaboration we need, not just within the consortia but
5 then across the consortia, the Regular Assessment
6 Consortia, the Alternate Assessment Based on Alternative
7 Achievement Standards Consortia, and soon the ELP
8 Consortia. I think that cross-communication really,
9 really needs to occur and again I hope for the groups to
10 come up with specific ways to make that occur and as a
11 representative of NCSC, one of the two Alternative
12 Assessment Based on Alternative Achievement Standards
13 Consortia, I just think it's so critical that that
14 cross- communication occur, so that we in the end have
15 an assessment system, hopefully an educational
16 instruction assessment system, that's really for all
17 students and that when we say all students, we really
18 mean all.

19 Thanks.

20 MR. ROONEY: Thank you, Martha. So at this
21 point, we have two people who signed up to provide
22 Public Comment. So I'll say your names, you guys.

Capital Reporting Company
U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

241

1 There's actually microphones on either side here. So I
2 think you know who you are but I'll say your names. If
3 you guys introduce yourselves and your organization, and
4 then we ask that you talk for no more than three minutes
5 as our request.

6 So the first up is Karen Barton and then after
7 that's going to be -- I apologize if I pronounce this
8 wrong -- Barbara Raimondo. Public Comment

9 MS. BARTON: Hi. Is this on? So I'm Karen
10 Barton. Thank you. I'm from CTB McGraw-Hill, and I'm
11 coming to you just to express my opinion not of our
12 company but as a former special educator and researcher
13 in the area of special education and students with
14 disabilities and assessments, and I'm just going to --
15 I'm probably not going to use the three minutes because
16 I know everybody's short on time. So I'm going to have
17 three points and hopefully the brevity of it will not
18 diminish the importance of it or how I actually convey
19 the ideas.

20 The first one is on the whole idea of really
21 getting clear on who we're talking about and the
22 policies around identification, accommodation, and all

Capital Reporting Company
U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

242

1 of those things. It can drive folks like us who've been
2 doing research on accommodations combined here much,
3 much longer than I've been alive, combined, combined,
4 okay, cumulatively, Rebecca, thank you, but what drives
5 us crazy and drives other folks crazy is when you think
6 about the validity of accommodations, the data is dirty
7 and it's highly varied and highly inconsistent and when
8 we look at how -- right now, how local schools are
9 making decisions about things like, oh, I don't know,
10 the one percent or the two percent and who's in and
11 who's out and they're really playing an AYP game and
12 they're still providing accommodations to everybody that
13 don't need it and so on, then validity on existing data
14 becomes very, very frustrating and discouraging and not
15 real.

16 So the good work needs to be done on really
17 defining that. So my question was how will SBAC and
18 PARCC address the inconsistencies, train decision-makers
19 with clarity, and build systems of instruction and
20 assessment to be flexible in the face of inevitable
21 diversity, diversity in decisions and identification and
22 so on?

1 I would even counter that even in the best
2 scenario and standardized identification of students,
3 it's more than three groups. We have samples of one
4 everywhere.

5 Second, on comparability, I actually present a
6 caution and a challenge. The caution is that
7 comparability should not forsake validity. When you
8 actually get down to the dirty of doing a comparability
9 study, you want to be careful that you recognize that at
10 some point, depending on what you're actually comparing,
11 non-comparability may actually be more desirable and the
12 target might be better of consequential comparability.
13 The devil is in the details.

14 Thirdly, technology. I started to get very
15 disturbed by all the chaos of the differences in
16 students and items and access and the variety of
17 infinite possibilities of profiles and how we build
18 these items and how we're going to track all the
19 different forms of these items and so on and then I
20 thought, you know what, technology really does reveal
21 for us a lot of inconsistencies that we have had the
22 luxury of ignoring.

Capital Reporting Company
U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

244

1 These things that we have ignored that a read
2 aloud in one classroom is different than a read aloud in
3 another classroom and we've been okay with that. So
4 technology reveals that. We can embrace it. We can go
5 crazy or we can embrace those diversities and then
6 leverage them and the technology in the form of
7 personalization in and flexibility with the assessments.
8 So that students who are learning disabled and gifted at
9 the same time are encouraged and we can actually meet
10 their needs instructionally and move them forward.

11 MR. ROONEY: Thank you. Barbara.

12 MS. RAIMONDO: Hi. My name is Barbara
13 Raimondo. I'm with the Conference of Educational
14 Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf, and
15 thank all of you for your work today and your comments.
16 I really appreciated the discussion, particularly around
17 the signing avatar, and I want people around the table
18 to know that signing avatars are not used in deaf
19 education.

20 So a child who is deaf would not have
21 experience with a signing avatar before potentially
22 seeing the signing avatar on a test, an assessment, and

1 I appreciated the comments of Dr. Solano-Flores who
2 really emphasized the need for evidence in this, that if
3 we're going to go ahead and make that decision to use an
4 avatar or a person or whatever it is we use, we need to
5 know what kind of evidence we're basing that decision
6 on, and I thought the interchange between Wendy Carver
7 and Gaye Fedorchak was just priceless because you
8 illustrated exactly what is going on.

9 Well, should it be signed English? Is it ASL?
10 Is it the authentic representation of the text? And I
11 don't know if you heard me say Amen when you said we
12 really need the right people in the room to help make
13 this decision.

14 So my question for you, given that we need to
15 design these test items with all the right people in the
16 room, with all the right perspectives from the start,
17 not at the end, what are the consortia doing to make
18 sure that the right people are at the table, and how are
19 you reaching out to deaf educators, educators of blind
20 children, and others to make sure that those right
21 people are at the table helping you make these
22 decisions?

Capital Reporting Company
U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

246

1 MR. ROONEY: Thank you. And we have a third
2 person who's signed up.

3 MS. BOYD: Rosanna Boyd, President of the
4 National Association for Bilingual Education, and I have
5 heard everyone and there's one thing that I have not
6 heard here today and that is the issue of beginning
7 English language learners be tested in another language,
8 in their native language.

9 I did not hear one word about the native
10 language assessment and I think we need to consider that
11 if we want to really know what the students can do and
12 know and there's so many children in the United States
13 that have had formal schooling, in this case Spanish,
14 and can tell you what they can do and know.

15 So really would like you all to consider
16 developing also assessments in Spanish since that is the
17 largest ELL population in this country.

18 MR. ROONEY: Thank you. I will actually say,
19 because I probably should have done this in the
20 beginning, that Smarter Balanced as part of their grant
21 has an additional module, I think is the way to put it,
22 a budget module where they're going to translate the

Capital Reporting Company
U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

247

1 test into five different languages, but I think they
2 said Spanish, American Sign Language, and then the next
3 three most populous based upon those dates in Smarter
4 Balanced. So that is in the works and part of their
5 process and PARCC is not part of that process, although
6 I know it was part of some conversations they've had.

7 But thank you for those comments. I think --
8 do you want to do a wrap-up? Closing Comments

9 MR. CONATY: Sure. Let me, first of all,
10 thank the people who've been around the room all day and
11 equally thank the experts but, most importantly, thank
12 the two consortia for participating in the meeting.

13 You know, somebody said something about their
14 lifetime and I may well be the oldest person in the room
15 and one of the dangers of these kind of meetings is it's
16 a very high level of abstraction but I think this one
17 did provide some specific suggestions about next steps.

18 I mean, it's quite clear you have to think
19 about accessibility on the front end. Secondly, you
20 have to have a lot of people participating in it.
21 Thirdly, you need some specification of the definitions
22 of the terms, both of the target population and so you

1 don't get a lot of classificationers, and then there was
2 a very clear specific suggestion about the
3 specifications for item development, specifications for
4 interoperability standards, and all of these in fact are
5 technical problems that can be solved, and I think we
6 heard another suggestion twice and I want to echo, is
7 there are other issues that won't be solved as part of
8 this process. It can be considered, it can be
9 evaluated, but some of the issues just have to be put
10 aside for the time being, and I think it's important to
11 focus on those that are related to the central task of
12 developing reliable, fair, valid assessments that take
13 into account the diversity of the kids in our schools
14 and take into account, as this last exercise.

15 I developed a problem. I developed a solution
16 but I could only do that because I knew the answer. I
17 couldn't have solved the problem I developed for myself
18 if I hadn't designed the problem. It's not an easy
19 task. I had a little balance board where they have bags
20 of sand and the different batters, trying to get them to
21 solve a simultaneous equation.

22 No. I actually realized with my methodology,

1 I could have solved it through trial and error, that I
2 wouldn't have demonstrated anything other than
3 persistence, and so I think that the complexity of the
4 task, and then the second one was about Churchill. That
5 was used as a prompt for argument. You know, that was
6 sort of persuasion. That wasn't really -- was that a
7 good prompt to test that standard when in fact what was
8 the argument? The argument was really a rally through
9 persuasion a group of people to a cause. It wasn't an
10 argument that says we should invest in biotechnology.
11 So I think you have to be careful, even when you start
12 to identify the prompts, how they're going to line up
13 with that.

14 So I think it's been a very productive
15 conversation. It's been an important day for, I think,
16 the consortia, but I do think they walk away with really
17 specific recommendations that they can make a lot of
18 progress on.

19 So I thank everybody for that.

20 MR. ROONEY: And I want to echo Joe's thanks
21 and thank you all for being here, those of you who have
22 been very patient in the audience all day and those of

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

250

1 you who around the table for really bringing thoughtful
2 comments and suggestions to the table. I think it's
3 been a very interesting conversation for me personally.

4 A couple reminders. The transcript and all
5 the presentations will be available on our website.
6 That's actually the full address. I'm not going to read
7 it off. It's up there on the screen. If you have any
8 comments or questions, you can e-mail them to us always
9 at racetothetop.assessment@ed.gov. Nice long e-mail
10 address.

11 We will have future meetings. I mentioned
12 this in the beginning. There aren't any yet scheduled
13 but potential topics which kind of came up a little bit
14 today that I think are useful for us to think about are
15 interoperability and technology standards which both
16 PARCC and Smarter Balanced are kind of tasked with
17 creating interoperable technology standards. That way
18 they could share things and share data and share items
19 across states and across whoever once the test comes
20 out.

21 The growth model and setting achievement
22 standards and performance level descriptors, which I

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U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

251

1 think are going to be challenges for both PARCC and
2 Smarter Balanced to address.

3 And as we finalize dates, locations, and other
4 details about those meetings, we'll make them available.
5 Since you all showed up today, you'll all end up on that
6 list when we do make that available. So I apologize if
7 you don't want our e-mails in advance. I don't know if
8 there's a way for you to get off that list. However, we
9 do not use it very often. So if anyone else has any
10 additional written public comments they'd like to hand
11 in, you can hand them to me after the meeting.

12 Thank you, everyone, and have a good day.

13 (Applause.)

14 (Whereupon, at 3:14 p.m., the meeting
15 was adjourned.)

16

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1 CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

2 I, NATASHA KORNILOVA, the officer before whom the
3 foregoing deposition was taken, do hereby certify that
4 the witness whose testimony appears in the foregoing
5 deposition was duly sworn by me; that the testimony of
6 said witness was taken by me via audio recording and
7 thereafter reduced to typewriting under my direction;
8 that said deposition is a true record of the testimony
9 given by said witness; that I am neither counsel for,
10 related to, nor employed by and of the parties to the
11 action in which this deposition was taken; and,
12 further, that I am not a relative or employee of any
13 counsel or attorney employed by the parties hereto, nor
14 financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of
15 this action.

16

17

18 NATASHA KORNILOVA

19

20

21

22

Capital Reporting Company
U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

Page 1

<u> </u> \$ <u> </u>	183:17	246 2:20	45 8:8
\$20 195:3	150 125:8	25 53:8 57:13	4th 163:3 172:17
\$25 205:20	154 2:15,17	250 123:11	176:22
\$30 195:2	168,000 52:22	253 2:21	<u> </u> 5 <u> </u>
\$360 8:7	18 31:3	25th 166:17	5 20:1
\$75 231:11	18,500 31:3	27 2:7	50 209:14
<u> </u> 1 <u> </u>	18.3 166:20	29 18:4	500 135:2 183:8
1 12:1,8,12 27:7	18-point 48:10	2X2 124:2	57 28:3
47:22 59:1,4,10	19 33:21 52:5	<u> </u> 3 <u> </u>	5th 166:17,18
60:1,2 118:11	1980 29:2,5,12	3 12:15,17 17:18	<u> </u> 6 <u> </u>
130:9,10	1990 28:1	19:19 27:15	6 31:3 195:3
140:14,15,18,22	1X14 194:14	47:22 58:22	6.5 27:15
185:4	1X30 194:14	60:1,2 70:3	64 30:17,20 160:17
1:09 141:3	<u> </u> 2 <u> </u>	104:6 130:9,10	<u> </u> 7 <u> </u>
1:30 12:12,14	2 7:20 19:16 84:18	3.5 30:9	7 152:12 195:2
10 1:8 18:6 28:15	118:13 130:9,10	3:14 251:14	71 2:8
29:4,9 33:20	2.7 29:15	3:30 12:18	7th 184:14 211:20
52:5 68:20 82:20	20 27:22 57:12	30 18:4 96:3,4,7	<u> </u> 8 <u> </u>
144:16 154:5	193:15	102:21,22	8 7:20 17:18
205:20 229:3	2000 30:16	193:15 233:12	152:12 157:15
10.8 166:21	2008-09 27:14	300 30:6 134:22	165:11 214:12
10:15 11:20	2009 29:3,5,14	135:2	80 27:20
100 54:12 233:15	2011 1:8	33 28:1	800,000 52:16,19
10-minute 68:13	2014 18:1 90:15	36 53:2,4	8th 163:3
10th 166:17	2014-15 5:4 7:19	39 34:10	165:14,18 166:9
11 27:9 29:22	2016 45:16	<u> </u> 4 <u> </u>	<u> </u> 9 <u> </u>
62:19	20202 1:10	4 2:3 19:21 104:7	9.7 167:2
11.2 29:14	21 27:16 29:5	130:10 157:15	9:00 1:8
114 2:12	52:10,21	165:10	94 34:12
12 138:8 235:19	21st 46:14	4.7 29:12	95th 166:18 167:1
12:05 140:20	22 30:21	40,000 128:15,17	98 2:10
120,000 52:20	235 2:19	400 1:9 135:2	
13 27:17	24.7 167:3	42 30:20	
145 2:14		43 27:7	
15 14:9 18:2			
52:9,19 123:8			

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Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 2

<p style="text-align: center;"><u> </u> A <u> </u></p> <p>a.m 1:8</p> <p>Abedi 2:11 12:20 40:12 58:15 89:22 95:17 104:18 145:2 190:5,18 191:1,3,9,13,20 192:2,5,7,12,17 193:2 218:6 219:16 220:11 234:5</p> <p>ability 19:9 43:1 63:6 165:17 173:19 200:17 208:4</p> <p>able 36:10 44:9 45:20 48:2 60:20,21,22 62:14 72:2 76:17 78:2,9,13 80:13 110:1,8 113:19 116:13 129:8 131:19 133:3 137:16 147:21 148:1,4 158:6 159:8 163:21 189:15 193:20 194:11 197:8,11 198:15 199:11 200:18 205:19 206:7,8,11,12 209:3 210:9 214:9 221:2,14 224:16 226:9 230:20 239:3</p> <p>absolute 6:9</p> <p>absolutely 96:16 115:18 130:1 158:14 159:22 184:1</p>	<p>absorb 176:4</p> <p>abstraction 247:16</p> <p>academic 56:1 58:16</p> <p>acceleration 147:18</p> <p>accent 217:21</p> <p>accept 232:9</p> <p>acceptable 228:6</p> <p>access 28:17 39:1,7,8,12,16,1 9 64:11 65:1,2 66:11,19 72:2,10,20,21 73:6,13 74:15 76:12,20 79:11 80:2,10 89:16 106:8 107:15,22 108:1 109:5,12 112:10 118:20,21 119:5,11,14 129:16 147:6,15 148:5 149:2 171:13 208:15 211:2 212:17 243:16</p> <p>access-based 146:2</p> <p>accessed 66:5</p> <p>accessibilities 123:21</p> <p>accessibility 2:9,12 11:6 17:14 18:10,12,22 19:4,16,21 20:3,8,14 22:4,14,19 23:4,18 25:11 33:4,6 39:16</p>	<p>40:15 46:16 48:4 50:20 55:4 69:1 71:6,12,22 75:4,7 76:18 77:4 82:4,14 83:20 92:12 93:4 111:16 113:20,22 114:19 116:8 117:13 118:11,12 125:17 127:12 132:15 143:1,11,13 144:9 145:2 154:18 157:5,17,20 159:11,17 160:15 161:18 210:3,11,13 218:7,22 230:7 234:13 235:22 237:9,10 247:19</p> <p>accessible 9:7 11:14 18:14 19:19 37:12 39:22 40:19 41:13 46:12 71:8 75:2,15 79:20 94:16 95:11 98:16 100:17 101:10 103:22 111:8,13,22 115:22 118:7 124:22 125:3 129:10 142:21 143:4,5,15,21 144:1 145:5 151:2,12 153:8 157:3,9 158:3,7 159:8,9,19 160:13 163:1 164:12 165:9,13,16,22</p>	<p>166:14,20 167:3,16,18,20 168:6 177:19 185:16 186:7 188:7 210:19 218:9 220:7 227:22</p> <p>accessing 39:3,5 72:9</p> <p>accommodate 103:4</p> <p>accommodated 103:5,16,18,19,2 0</p> <p>accommodating 182:4</p> <p>accommodation 20:3 23:2 24:1 37:20 47:15 48:7 84:8,21 86:5,7 97:7,10,16 98:21,22 99:7,9,22 100:5,19 101:18,19 102:16 103:6 104:5,8 107:3 108:2 110:18,21 111:8 120:1,9 137:12 168:5,15 181:16 204:4,14 234:22 241:22</p> <p>accommodations 2:10 9:8 17:14 18:11,13 19:5,16,22 21:9 22:15,20,22 23:5,19 24:2,12,14 33:7 37:13 41:12 48:7,17 49:4 50:20 57:11,18 58:2,5 61:16</p>
---	--	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 3

79:11 83:19 89:9,17 90:4 91:5 94:17 95:5,12,14,16 97:3,13,22 98:11,15 99:2,7,10,17,19 100:9,15 101:3,4,7,9,16 102:1,7,8,11,14, 16,20 103:1,6,7,9,21 104:3,14,22 105:2,13,14 106:4,7,10,13,22 107:2,10,11,14 108:20 109:2 110:6,15 113:22 114:3,14,20 115:2,5 121:19 133:19 140:1 156:8 170:4 171:16 181:21 182:12,15 183:5 235:2,4 242:2,6,12	accurately 43:1 Achieve 8:10 23:13,20 achievement 9:17 28:11 45:11 56:1 57:17 92:2 112:5 239:21 240:7,12 250:21 acids 174:15 acknowledge 63:2 acknowledging 63:18 across 9:8,10 10:4 12:2 21:12 26:18 29:18 30:4 38:9 40:1 65:9 67:16,20 68:2,5 70:20 75:8,13,14 83:3,6 92:10 128:19,20 148:18 166:16 204:18 230:12 234:14 236:9 239:10,11 240:5 250:19 action 136:9 252:11,15 actions 20:3 124:7 active 133:18 activities 19:13 93:14 activity 50:13,21 76:7 214:18 actual 70:3 86:22 101:20 144:18 145:16 actually 6:9 11:5,7,17 13:8,15,22 15:17 17:8 18:3 27:2,3	29:8,22 30:11,19 31:11,14 33:14 35:21 36:15 42:15 45:17 49:20 50:7 59:7,12,16,21 61:15 64:16,22 69:14,17 81:13 88:1 92:12 94:3 96:2 98:21 99:1 114:19 117:9 118:1 120:6 125:13,19 128:8 130:12,15 133:1 138:5,8 142:9 145:8,17 148:10,17 149:13 150:2,18,21 151:6,9 154:2 155:17 157:2 161:10 165:2,3 168:15,20 169:17,19 173:15 174:12,14,17,18 175:4 176:3 177:15,17 179:12 180:15 183:2,20 184:2 185:2 189:20 190:8,14 191:10,16 196:5,8,16 197:4 198:7 203:2,8 205:16 206:21 207:1,16 208:11,16 210:19 212:11 219:6 226:15,22 227:15 228:20 229:15 232:3 235:6 238:5 241:1,18 243:5,8,10,11	244:9 246:18 248:22 250:6 adaptation 135:16 170:22 216:4 adaptations 170:4 182:6 183:16 238:17 adapted 217:18,19 adapting 210:19 216:12 adaptive 80:18 90:7 120:10 125:22 126:5 127:3 129:6,13,19 130:7,12 135:14 136:2,3,15 138:1,4 adaptivity 120:9,11 136:22 137:2,12 add 35:20 37:3 57:8 129:2 135:1 189:18 196:15 203:2 206:3 221:6 230:8 added 52:16 179:6 adding 75:3 200:20 209:8 addition 213:14 additional 9:12 10:12 11:21 14:18 179:7,9 208:17 210:3,13 246:21 251:10 address 3:16 5:10 18:22 23:3,20 42:4,12 43:13 55:2 64:17 71:6,18 75:16
--	---	---	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 4

<p>81:7 88:4 125:11 151:11 152:10,22 153:6,21 212:10 218:1 223:2 228:1 235:17 237:4 239:9 242:18 250:6,10 251:2</p> <p>addressed 4:7 31:13 44:14 89:11</p> <p>addresses 23:20 77:4,14</p> <p>addressing 98:3 199:5 220:18</p> <p>adjourn 12:17</p> <p>adjourned 251:15</p> <p>adjust 92:18 232:7,8</p> <p>adjusted 120:19</p> <p>administer 92:22 114:3</p> <p>administered 45:17 113:1</p> <p>administration 18:8 47:13,21 48:4,5 80:11,12 105:20,22 120:12 121:2 123:20 124:16 137:3 182:22</p> <p>administrations 24:13</p> <p>administrators 81:1 244:14</p> <p>admittedly 152:13</p> <p>adolescents 225:8</p> <p>adopted 152:18</p>	<p>adult 225:16</p> <p>advance 191:20 251:7</p> <p>advances 46:11</p> <p>advantage 35:17 99:2,4 101:17 128:5 137:11 227:14 239:2</p> <p>advantages 92:20 139:17</p> <p>advertising 87:9</p> <p>advice 23:1 46:8 223:10</p> <p>advisory 18:5 22:17</p> <p>affect 137:8</p> <p>afford 60:22 125:12 128:14</p> <p>afforded 15:8</p> <p>afternoon 2:13 11:6 13:22 14:5,8 38:16 116:5</p> <p>afterthought 19:1</p> <p>afterwards 136:21</p> <p>against 28:17 139:19 222:20 227:9 238:13</p> <p>agenda 2:2 11:15,17 13:6,15 69:5 94:12 111:3 130:15 150:18 184:13 214:14</p> <p>ages 27:15 31:3</p> <p>aggregate 20:3</p> <p>ago 67:1</p> <p>agreement 86:4 138:3 239:10</p>	<p>ahead 57:19 85:7 104:19 156:11 232:12 245:3</p> <p>ahh 197:12</p> <p>aid 161:15</p> <p>airplane 51:10</p> <p>algorithms 126:10 128:1 133:11,12,14,15 134:11,12 173:14,15 183:10</p> <p>align 17:19</p> <p>alive 242:3</p> <p>Alley 2:5 17:2 20:11 211:13</p> <p>alligator 226:20</p> <p>allow 21:14 22:9 72:21 92:17 124:4 146:18 149:18 200:5 202:11</p> <p>allowable 39:10 118:12</p> <p>allowed 19:6 92:18</p> <p>allowing 77:8</p> <p>allows 19:2 49:7 77:21 80:10 126:21 127:11 128:2 227:6</p> <p>alone 118:8</p> <p>aloud 84:7,10,21 86:5,7 88:1,2,5 127:7,9 204:3,7,14 209:21 210:1 221:8,9 244:2</p> <p>already 71:11,14 72:9</p>	<p>73:2,5,15,17 74:4,6,10,12 114:7 136:1 144:7 171:3 175:9 195:21 239:16</p> <p>ALS 221:16</p> <p>alter 101:16 102:1 227:4</p> <p>altering 100:4</p> <p>alternate 9:16,17 28:10,19 32:3 34:8 77:18 240:6</p> <p>alternative 112:5 153:1 233:5 239:21 240:6,11,12</p> <p>alternatives 48:1</p> <p>alters 98:21 99:22</p> <p>am 3:8 20:12 35:10,14 70:17 113:14 125:9 169:12 172:2 180:14 192:2 193:18 195:3 203:11 205:11 238:19 252:9,12</p> <p>ambitious 6:7</p> <p>Amen 245:11</p> <p>American 86:2 247:2</p> <p>Amherst 13:3 44:19</p> <p>amino 174:15</p> <p>among 3:16 34:14 57:11 65:10</p> <p>amount 35:12 142:12 187:18,20</p>
--	--	--	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 5

189:17 201:5 analogy 139:11 157:12 analysis 68:2 166:16 analyzed 237:17 anchored 146:2 and/or 48:1 Andrew 17:6 Animal 177:3 animated 176:3 animation 86:20 animations 86:20 announcements 69:3 answer 26:6 37:5 101:14,15,20 113:10 135:21 152:6 162:12 173:16 186:8 192:20 195:17 217:22 224:16,17 225:12,17 248:16 answered 150:3 164:11 answers 50:8 87:10 97:9 anthropologists 131:6 anthropology 122:7 anxiety 54:17 anybody 132:22 144:2 154:9 175:1 214:21 anyone 13:16	14:18 86:13 111:11 150:14 152:7 251:9 anything 58:4 96:16 152:7 155:10 177:5,6,13 219:22 221:4 249:2 anyway 50:10 82:22 152:16 174:16 176:4,22 177:14 195:7 197:7 221:4 anyways 149:6 apart 112:7 159:1 APIP 71:14,19 75:15,17 76:21 77:4,14,17,21 78:4 79:18,21 80:12 81:8,9,14 82:1,3,13,21 88:4 89:8 125:17 127:4,10 238:20 apologize 125:18 241:7 251:6 appears 252:4 Applause 251:13 apples 75:13 applications 8:16 applied 40:15 159:10 applies 183:1 apply 11:11 87:11 136:7,8 148:17 196:17 199:11 applying 21:20 39:18 40:3 72:13,17	appreciate 69:6 129:3 213:2 229:8 appreciated 16:3 244:16 245:1 approach 15:12 18:7 57:15,16 92:9 123:20 126:6 181:6 186:3 187:11 190:9 192:11 194:5 226:4 236:3 approaches 57:18 60:14 approaching 199:20 appropriate 47:5 74:20 76:6 88:7 97:17 99:4 127:8 182:14,16 189:11 appropriately 31:9 42:13 88:15 approximately 28:15 April 5:2 Arabic 30:12 area 23:4 95:5 131:12 154:8,9 237:4 240:2 241:13 areas 29:20 237:18 arena 87:12 aren't 54:11 121:6 163:4 170:12 250:12 argument 215:4 219:11 220:1,4 221:2,4 223:18	249:5,8,10 arguments 219:10 arise 130:21 Arizona 17:2 20:12 30:1 61:7 109:11 138:12 array 170:14 arrival 198:9 arrived 99:14 article 67:1 106:9 artificially 130:16 arts 7:19 11:9 17:19 21:13 28:8 151:7 214:8,10,11,19 216:3,15,16,18 218:10,11,19 223:3 ASAP 236:12 aside 248:10 ASL 78:3 223:6 245:9 aspect 24:9 41:5 92:13 96:16 100:14 112:7 116:16 159:1 161:19 162:9 185:1 aspects 18:18 23:15 32:16 101:5 157:19 184:22 234:17 aspiration 67:3 assess 6:21 20:16 68:9 187:1 213:22 214:6 230:3 237:18 assessed 28:17 65:20 107:4
--	---	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

162:5 163:9 187:3 228:21 assessing 52:19 64:9 123:15 124:14 160:7 161:21 186:14 217:7 230:2 232:4 assessment 1:3 2:5,6,8 3:18 4:19,20 5:17,20 6:3,10 7:13,18 8:9,12 10:4,7 15:2 18:14,19 19:2,4 21:7,10,16,21 23:2,16 24:5,13,20 25:14 26:10 28:19 31:10 32:3,5 33:22 34:7,8,12 36:4 37:6,12,20 38:1,6,7 40:19 41:13,22 42:22 43:9 44:18 45:9 46:10 50:4,15,18 51:1,14,17,21 53:4,9 58:20 59:4,11,15,22 60:11 62:3,12 65:3 68:22 70:9,10 71:13,22 72:3,19 74:15,17 79:4,7 80:1,3,4,8,21 81:6,12 82:12 83:4,22 84:8,11 90:2,17,20 94:20 95:21 98:21 100:4,5,18,21 101:5,12 102:18 103:16,19,22 104:15 105:5 108:18 109:4,20	111:20 112:5,14 115:13 116:18 121:16 124:10,21 125:3,15,21 126:20 130:3 139:22 146:1 148:18 149:21 153:2 155:2 156:17 157:7 158:13 162:2 190:10 191:9,12 192:18 227:12 231:21 232:22 233:9,20 236:16,20 237:21,22 239:18,21 240:1,5,6,12,15, 16 242:20 244:22 246:10 assessments 5:5 7:10,11 9:2,5,16 10:21 11:4 13:13 15:6 17:17 18:1 19:16,20 28:8,10 32:20 34:10 43:3 45:15 46:1 47:4 57:16 59:1,7,17 61:7,10,14 63:12 65:17 67:13 68:6 78:13,14 83:5,18 84:2 98:16 100:2,17 101:10 105:21 109:6 122:19 138:5,17 142:16 143:2 148:14 149:9 150:1 196:15 216:12 237:19 241:14 244:7 246:16 248:12 assessment's 237:10	ASSESSMENTS 1:5 assign 41:12 59:10,14 90:9 103:14,18 assigned 168:6 assigning 16:2 59:2 assist 73:3 assistance 5:14 assistive 21:9 24:3 74:11 associated 48:19 80:17 134:4 164:10 210:3 211:10 214:4 association 96:14,19 246:4 assume 35:7,9 36:1 183:9 225:2 assuming 227:14 238:19 assumption 52:13,14 136:5 attendees 69:15 attending 4:16 attention 95:18,20,22 96:1 123:16 195:18,20 233:18 attorney 252:13 attributable 163:18 audience 26:21 139:7 145:3,8,17 249:22 audiences 144:1	audio 73:14,19,20 77:9,22 84:9 120:22 121:1 137:9 252:6 auditory 77:16 August 1:8 authentic 216:11 219:8 222:18,20 245:10 authors 123:13 autistic 174:5 automated 5:5 automatic 173:4,5 automatically 121:3 141:19 availability 24:3 available 5:8,9 21:10 24:4 33:14 69:16 70:8 91:4,5 105:6 109:6,16 137:7,8 166:7 226:13 250:5 251:4,6 avatar 85:20,21,22 221:15 223:1 225:21 226:8,15,17 227:5 244:17,21,22 245:4 avatars 224:13,20 225:18 226:13,17 227:9 244:18 avenue 1:9 108:2 avenues 89:16 107:15 average 167:7 avoid 32:21
---	--	--	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 7

avoids 130:15	246:20 247:4	bath 201:20	236:7 238:13
awarded 10:8	250:16 251:2	bathrooms 16:5	243:1
aware 55:10 101:7 219:5	band 226:5,10	batters 248:20	better 8:10 9:15 70:11 75:21
away 30:8 53:14 195:17 229:2,12 249:16	bandwidth 82:3	beach 76:3	91:10 103:20
awhile 155:3 193:6 226:1	bar 115:14 138:2	beautiful 224:6	104:7 113:20
axes 178:14	Barbara 241:8 244:11,12	became 158:11	135:11 137:1
AYP 242:11	barrier 116:8 161:13	become 14:3 88:19 144:15	147:20 168:7
<hr/> B <hr/>	barriers 50:18 51:17,20 151:10,11 160:19,22 163:12	becomes 85:5 88:3 211:17 242:14	225:7 227:12 243:12
baby 172:18	Barton 241:6,9,10	becoming 78:7	beyond 20:21 35:22 99:5 104:8
background 41:19 42:3 58:3 59:8 99:10,16 217:20	base 172:22	begin 40:9 147:4 171:7 184:21	bias 19:17 114:15
backgrounds 143:14	based 9:16,17 14:14 26:17 28:10,20 30:16 47:13 57:16 62:2 63:1 64:7,9 73:12 74:6 82:1 83:9 84:1,4 90:9 112:5 146:2 204:8 213:15 220:13 230:9 231:5,22 233:11 239:21 240:6,12 247:3	beginning 32:17 61:9 203:7 222:7 228:11 234:10 235:7 246:6,20 250:12	bigger 215:20
backward 24:8	basic 35:14 42:10 97:15 155:7 171:22 181:10 185:12,16,22 187:13 192:4,6,8 194:16 222:2	begins 80:4 183:6	biggest 51:8
bad 44:22 45:1 224:1	basically 75:12 126:6,12 127:13 205:22 218:13	behalf 3:5	bilingual 165:1 246:4
bag 76:3,4,6	basing 245:5	behave 164:17	bilingualism 96:18
bags 248:19	basket 111:20,22	behavioral 119:7	biotechnology 249:10
balance 42:2 248:19		behind 16:9 118:2 127:20,22 206:12,15	bit 25:22 29:18 30:3,16 54:22 58:8 65:22 66:7 70:18 72:9 91:13 94:3 95:1,5 108:13 130:20 131:1 156:14 157:20 159:6 165:5 214:8 229:7 239:5 250:13
Balanced 2:5 5:15 6:2 7:15 8:5,11,19 9:20 10:13,15 11:3,13 13:11 16:13,14 17:10,15 18:14 19:7 20:5 26:8 31:16 47:3 49:21 52:18 53:3 57:3 94:4 111:12 125:15,21 128:16 129:5,18 152:5 230:6		believe 18:4 30:11 35:7 142:14 148:14 149:22 211:20 219:1 225:22 240:1	black 183:12
		believed 72:11	blah-blah-blah 225:15,17
		benefit 4:4,9 49:6 104:12,13,14	blanket 41:22
		besides 222:16	blind 203:18,20 204:5,11 221:7 245:19
		best 19:14 88:12 105:4 110:9 126:15,16 171:12 189:2	blindness 117:15

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 8

147:16 206:20 block 157:3,9,11 159:7,12,13 163:1,2 165:21,22 166:11,12,18 167:3,8,11,20,21 168:6 blocking 165:17 blocks 159:8,9,10 163:15 164:12 165:9 167:16 207:6 blonde 226:21 blue 18:5 165:21 166:3,11 blueprint 25:1 board 157:7 231:12 248:19 boards 143:17 boat 117:14 bold 237:3 bookcase 201:1 202:6,7,8 bookcases 201:19 booklet 97:9 101:14 165:21 166:14,20 167:2 boring 75:11 born 30:19,22 31:6 51:6 Boston 154:8,9 bother 170:6 bottom 107:19 179:6 Boulder 13:5 42:9 boundaries 117:22	118:4 bout 180:9 box 183:12 194:14 boy 50:5 183:22 Boyd 246:3 Braces 214:15 Braille 40:6 74:3,4 78:2 85:14 86:19 87:13 Brailler 85:9,10 brains 185:5 breadth 212:9 break 4:14 11:21 30:20 33:16 49:8,13 68:11,13 87:17 140:14 189:8 225:20 238:6 breakdown 27:5 brevery 241:17 bridge 60:9 brief 33:13 104:21 137:19 briefly 71:15 222:18 briefs 33:10 bright 225:1 bring 37:11 53:7,11 63:10 90:2 96:20 97:2 99:2 117:15 151:4,17 227:21 bringing 32:7 193:14 234:6 250:1 brings 96:13,19 99:1 125:16	Britains 214:15 British 217:21 broad 56:7,15 71:11 78:6 broaden 58:8 171:6,7,8 180:5 broadening 121:4 broader 40:20 60:14 228:15 broadest 18:15 19:8 broadly 70:19 132:17 238:9 brochure 144:13 broken 222:11 brought 62:5 136:15 228:3 238:5,6 brown 166:6,11 brownish 165:22 bubble 36:12 budget 246:22 bugging 122:4 build 25:11 67:12 89:1 112:4,13,15 117:10,13 118:7 144:11 171:17 172:16,17,18 180:8 181:17 201:1,15 202:1,20 203:4 207:15 208:17 209:2 211:7,8,9 227:1 235:7 242:19 243:17 building 12:5 16:6,8 24:2 38:20 69:19 88:13 117:14	211:6 231:4 236:4 built 19:4 79:15 172:16 183:11,13,15 built-in 180:15 bulbs 191:17 bunch 79:15 142:9 business 39:17 170:2 busy 12:9 buy 187:18 198:12 <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">C</p> <hr/> cafeteria 12:5 187:22 198:12 208:22 209:11 cake 193:9,14,16,17,1 8 194:17 cakes 193:18 calculate 52:21 184:18 199:2 calculator 52:2 106:1 137:7 197:16 California 2:11 12:21 29:22 35:5 40:13 62:20 calming 77:16 capacities 35:18 capacity 36:6 capture 144:5 206:11 captured 206:15 card 13:16 care 121:7 219:21
---	--	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

Page 9

<p>career 6:16,17 8:4 17:21 20:19,22 58:17</p> <p>Careers 2:6 8:9</p> <p>careful 39:15 136:12 138:6 243:9 249:11</p> <p>carefully 142:22</p> <p>cartoonized 224:21 225:4 227:11</p> <p>cartoons 224:22 225:13,14</p> <p>Carver 16:17 83:15 186:11 203:16 205:8 221:6 245:6</p> <p>case 14:17 48:9 82:9 93:6 153:16 157:6 175:5,8,19 178:2 201:20 203:9 214:3 246:13</p> <p>cases 51:13 64:16 162:3 163:10 174:9,18 176:7</p> <p>cash 187:21</p> <p>catch 4:15</p> <p>categories 27:11 55:3 64:10 65:15 78:6 87:17 88:5</p> <p>categorizations 64:4</p> <p>categorize 41:9</p> <p>category 27:7 155:7</p> <p>causal 176:12,14</p> <p>cause 249:9</p>	<p>caution 243:6</p> <p>cautious 91:9 140:6 146:17</p> <p>caveats 151:14</p> <p>cell 14:22</p> <p>Census 30:16</p> <p>Center 2:17 9:14 13:1 44:18</p> <p>centerpiece 125:20</p> <p>central 3:17 248:11</p> <p>cents 129:2</p> <p>Century 46:14</p> <p>certain 64:21 91:5 102:15 113:2,3,6 118:20 146:16 181:7 185:7 187:18 231:2</p> <p>certainly 14:18 22:6 23:22 69:6 83:4 87:8 112:3 133:22 169:6 178:14 181:4 235:13 238:12</p> <p>CERTIFICATE 252:1</p> <p>certify 252:3</p> <p>chain 176:12,14</p> <p>chair 20:13</p> <p>chairs 23:9</p> <p>challenge 35:10 51:1 74:21 151:17 152:19,22 153:9 197:7,8,11,13,14 ,18 198:13 226:4 243:6</p> <p>challenges 6:1</p>	<p>15:8 26:8,18 31:13 70:22 74:13 83:7 138:18 151:10,11 182:11 185:7 188:8 213:19 214:4 251:1</p> <p>challenging 38:2 58:16 60:13,19 152:14 171:5 178:17 181:9 197:9</p> <p>chance 14:4 125:13 176:16 192:19 229:10</p> <p>change 22:9 28:3,4 58:1,4 64:14,19 100:11 104:6,14 153:21 188:2 199:4 206:14 209:8,9,10,15</p> <p>changed 67:2 83:19 209:8</p> <p>changes 44:10 102:9 163:18</p> <p>changing 22:7 102:18 209:10 210:15</p> <p>chaos 243:15</p> <p>characteristics 34:4 42:4 64:7 123:2 127:11 133:17 152:1 159:20 160:9 167:12</p> <p>characterization 142:15</p> <p>characterizes 238:1</p> <p>characters 224:21</p>	<p>225:4 227:11</p> <p>charge 221:1</p> <p>chart 27:2 29:1 115:3 124:2 203:20,21,22 204:8,9</p> <p>charts 85:15</p> <p>chased 51:9</p> <p>checking 107:9</p> <p>cheering 217:20</p> <p>Cheverson 191:16</p> <p>child 54:8,9 109:16 117:4 146:14,20,21,22 147:1,6,8,18 148:1,2 206:10,13,17 207:4 208:1 244:20</p> <p>children 4:9 27:15 29:16 31:3,7 52:19 54:5 66:20 68:8 141:17 143:19 194:21 224:2 225:8 245:20 246:12</p> <p>children's 144:21</p> <p>child's 146:20</p> <p>Chinese 30:11,12</p> <p>chocolate 193:16</p> <p>choice 47:19 48:19 150:5,6 152:15,16 180:15 181:5 192:20</p> <p>choices 189:2</p> <p>chose 61:7 155:19</p> <p>chosen 11:16</p>
--	--	---	---

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Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 10

<p>chunks 222:12</p> <p>Churchill 214:14 215:10 217:17 222:6 223:13,16 249:4</p> <p>Churchill's 222:5,10 223:14</p> <p>CIF 81:16</p> <p>claim 122:9</p> <p>claims 106:21 223:18</p> <p>clarification 55:12</p> <p>clarified 106:20</p> <p>clarify 93:19 106:19</p> <p>clarity 242:19</p> <p>clashes 81:15</p> <p>class 193:15 194:17 200:22 202:20</p> <p>classes 27:20 28:2</p> <p>classification 41:10</p> <p>classificationers 248:1</p> <p>classroom 244:2,3</p> <p>clean 199:1</p> <p>clear 26:7 29:2 34:5 50:16 65:12 82:22 83:2 89:15 96:20 123:14 151:15 157:8,10,18 163:8 202:5 220:19 241:21 247:18 248:2</p> <p>clearly 33:3 83:5 94:6 131:11</p>	<p>159:22 228:14</p> <p>clever 136:8</p> <p>cleverness 136:9</p> <p>click 137:9</p> <p>close 225:11</p> <p>closed 67:15</p> <p>closely 9:19</p> <p>closer 183:4</p> <p>Closing 2:21 247:8</p> <p>cloudogram 174:17 175:1</p> <p>cloudograms 174:22</p> <p>clustering 207:8</p> <p>co-chairmen 17:13</p> <p>coding 74:14 125:17 217:11</p> <p>cog 161:2</p> <p>cognition 117:17</p> <p>cognitive 92:14 145:14 158:19 160:21 161:20 162:4 163:7,10</p> <p>cognitively 119:5</p> <p>cohesion 10:4</p> <p>cohesive 7:16</p> <p>Colby 128:13</p> <p>cold 139:16</p> <p>Cole 16:20 62:16</p> <p>collaborate 234:8</p> <p>collaboration 5:15 81:11 234:11,20 235:6 240:4</p> <p>Collaborative 9:15</p> <p>colleague 40:21</p>	<p>colleagues 61:6 105:18</p> <p>collect 13:20 187:6 201:8</p> <p>collecting 146:4</p> <p>collection 148:6</p> <p>college 2:6 6:16,17 8:4,9 17:21 20:18,19</p> <p>collides 118:12</p> <p>color 58:4 77:12 113:5</p> <p>Colorado 13:4 42:9</p> <p>colors 176:9 225:1</p> <p>column 201:3</p> <p>columns 201:5</p> <p>combination 173:7 175:8 178:22 200:19</p> <p>Combinations 20:8,14</p> <p>combine 142:17 149:11 210:9</p> <p>combined 8:7 53:7 95:4 242:2,3</p> <p>comes 27:2 81:2 85:16 111:19 112:21 213:12 250:19</p> <p>comfort 139:17</p> <p>coming 4:11 5:4 31:7 33:21 61:9 110:21 115:3 127:3 158:12 184:11 241:11</p> <p>comment 2:20 12:17 13:6,9,16</p>	<p>14:14 16:2 50:11 61:5 69:22 70:3 93:17 107:20 136:13 137:18,20 140:12 150:14 218:6 222:22 227:18 229:9 240:22 241:8</p> <p>comments 2:19,21 3:22 12:13 14:10 15:14 45:8 50:1,12,15 65:7,9 69:6 70:14 86:14 89:6 91:12 117:11 119:19 145:21 229:18 244:15 245:1 247:7,8 250:2,8 251:10</p> <p>commitment 233:9</p> <p>committed 8:18</p> <p>committee 22:17 23:9</p> <p>committing 152:7</p> <p>common 9:18 11:9 17:19 18:7 20:17 24:12,16,17 38:5 48:22 65:9 78:7,20 79:7 97:2,19 117:18 128:19 151:6 152:18 157:12 185:3 214:11 218:18 234:14,18,20 237:15,16</p> <p>commonly-used 101:19</p> <p>Commons 223:17</p> <p>communicate</p>
---	--	---	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 11

<p>34:14 45:12,13 54:5 60:3</p> <p>communicated 133:10</p> <p>communication 44:9 45:10 54:3 74:11 117:17 240:14</p> <p>communities 143:15</p> <p>community's 143:16</p> <p>compacted 203:11</p> <p>company 241:12</p> <p>comparability 24:13 90:13,19,22 91:14 99:22 234:16 238:9,10,16 243:5,7,8,12</p> <p>comparable 100:2 102:2</p> <p>compare 159:8</p> <p>compared 165:13,17</p> <p>comparing 243:10</p> <p>compartmentalize 88:19 235:14</p> <p>compete 81:19</p> <p>competitive 8:15</p> <p>complements 81:18</p> <p>complete 230:20</p> <p>completely 118:12 126:6</p> <p>complex 35:15 60:8 63:8 81:4</p>	<p>101:4 118:19 125:20 126:8 169:20 170:8,11,14 171:21 176:13 184:19 185:13,16 186:1,15 187:12 188:20 189:9 190:3 192:4,5,8,16,17 193:12,17 196:11 203:22 205:1 207:11 218:18 235:13</p> <p>complexities 218:20</p> <p>complexity 21:11 57:14 116:2,5 128:21 131:13 162:4 163:7,11 172:5 188:22 189:21 196:8,16 197:14,19 198:16 199:4 201:12 202:11 207:19 209:7,15 210:15 216:22 220:14,15,17 222:1 249:3</p> <p>complicated 116:6</p> <p>complications 118:22</p> <p>complimenting 34:22</p> <p>component 7:2,3,14 122:16 158:21 189:6</p> <p>components 7:4 38:13 144:5 191:14 200:18</p> <p>comprehensible</p>	<p>223:8</p> <p>comprehension 217:11</p> <p>comprehensive 5:16 17:17</p> <p>comprehensively 223:8</p> <p>comprised 23:12</p> <p>computation 199:9</p> <p>computer 35:17 47:12,20 74:6 83:8,22 84:4 90:1,20 91:17 92:22 109:10 121:2,9 123:19 124:8 125:22 126:5,10,11,12 127:12 128:1 129:6,13,19 130:7,12 137:10,11 138:1 146:19 206:22 212:18 215:16 224:20 230:16 231:22</p> <p>computer-administered 92:8</p> <p>computer-aided 109:19</p> <p>computer-based 19:2 47:20 70:20 71:7 74:11 83:1,18 90:17 93:5 123:19</p> <p>computerized 48:3</p> <p>computers 48:9 67:2 90:5 92:17 109:12</p>	<p>computer's 36:6</p> <p>Conaty 2:3,21 3:3,8 65:4 141:4 247:9</p> <p>concept 40:17 42:3 96:20 101:4 191:21 195:7 218:22</p> <p>concepts 35:15 191:5</p> <p>conceptual 123:4</p> <p>conceptualize 171:9 180:6 206:16</p> <p>concern 82:3 90:12</p> <p>concerned 105:7 130:22</p> <p>concerning 85:8</p> <p>concerns 51:16 62:1 87:18 224:12 233:2,3</p> <p>Concluding 2:19 229:18</p> <p>concrete 151:17 152:9 211:18</p> <p>conditional 167:14</p> <p>conditions 54:2 163:8</p> <p>conduct 44:3</p> <p>Conference 244:13</p> <p>conflicting 105:15 106:2 107:6,12</p> <p>connect 119:18 120:4</p> <p>connected 131:18</p> <p>connection 8:15</p>
---	--	--	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 12

10:12 109:18 195:10 consciously 87:14 consequences 45:1,3,4 99:1 101:8 consequential 243:12 consider 14:15 26:20 41:21 56:13 57:1 90:8 104:10 115:8 135:3 153:18 183:18 188:19 224:14 238:2 246:10,15 considerably 56:5 consideration 39:15 54:19 133:16 233:1 considerations 13:10 116:1 considered 114:11,17 133:6 183:15 248:8 considering 58:10 90:16 113:13 160:8 184:4 consistent 29:8 40:1 167:8 consistently 110:19 consortia 4:3 5:20 9:15,21 10:2,8,10,13,17 26:13 31:13 32:12,13 33:11,19 34:14,16,20 35:17 37:15	38:22 40:14 46:10 49:6 57:13 59:13 63:9 70:21 78:14 83:4 89:13 90:16 106:17 115:15 134:14 137:14 144:10 145:8 149:22 159:14 228:7 229:11 230:12 234:7,9,14,15,18 235:3 236:1,9,19 239:10,11 240:1,4,5,6,7,8,1 3 245:17 247:12 249:16 consortia's 39:14 consortium 2:5 8:12 9:9 17:16 33:22 56:20 79:14 115:19 125:15,21 constituted 157:9 constitutes 157:3 constrain 237:1 constrained 116:21 construct 39:6,13,19 66:3,6,12 72:12,13,21 93:14 98:22 100:1,4 101:16 102:1,5,9,14,18 104:6,15 117:18,19 118:5,6,7,11,13, 16,21 127:10,18 128:10 132:12 137:8,22 142:17 147:14 148:3 159:21 160:1,3,5	163:12 173:1 181:1 201:14 207:2 213:4,5 218:15,16 220:15,18 227:21 228:6 231:2 constructed 134:15 159:15 construction 157:10 constructs 19:11,19 38:10 39:8 65:3 66:8,21 72:10,16 87:15 118:8,10 133:20 146:13,14,22 164:2 187:4 206:10 217:9 218:1 consultant 122:11 consultants 131:7 contact 23:21 contains 76:9 content 6:11 28:18,20 33:2,4 39:3 58:18 59:11,12,15,18 60:8,13,16,17,18 63:8,19 65:1 67:3 72:13 73:6,20 74:22 75:3 76:17 78:6,8 79:16 88:13 91:17 106:20 107:4 112:1,9,11 116:15 117:14 118:1,6 119:16 131:12,18 132:7 152:2 153:6	169:2 170:8,11,17 185:19 208:18 210:16 211:5 214:5,6 215:7,8,11 218:11,21 228:4 236:4 contents 82:8 context 25:22 30:5 39:4 65:1,3 71:13,22 72:3,19 73:3 74:15 80:3 157:6 172:14 199:7,10,11,12 201:22 203:5 209:11,16 215:12,20 227:12 contextual 161:8 202:19 215:14 continue 46:15 144:10,22 238:8 Continued 2:14 68:22 141:3 continuous 6:20 continuously 65:20 continuum 38:10 63:15 65:10,13,14,15 66:7 67:12,20 68:5 128:3 155:7,16,21 156:1,4 158:5 166:2,16,22 168:1 contractor 151:8 contradictory 119:12
---	--	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 13

<p>contrast 77:12</p> <p>control 48:11,12 103:12,13 226:22</p> <p>controversial 107:14,15 138:15 216:13</p> <p>conversation 4:22 5:21 11:11 25:18 26:16 68:10,15,18 94:9 108:6 111:7,14,18 125:5 140:13 142:3 151:19 239:4,7 249:15 250:3</p> <p>conversations 57:19 238:6 247:6</p> <p>conversing 36:14</p> <p>convey 35:18,21 36:2,5 169:11 241:18</p> <p>conveying 60:9 169:18,20 170:22</p> <p>convinced 158:11</p> <p>Copex 198:10,11</p> <p>copies 13:8</p> <p>copy 208:9</p> <p>copying 208:8</p> <p>core 9:18 11:9 17:19 18:7 20:17 38:5 78:7 79:7 117:19 128:19 151:6 152:18 157:12 185:3 214:11 234:18 237:15,16</p>	<p>corner 69:9 76:5 175:19 176:2</p> <p>correct 52:12 162:22 163:2 164:4 167:7</p> <p>correspond 78:1</p> <p>cost 48:8 130:20 131:9 201:2,5 204:18 226:6 233:3</p> <p>costs 210:22 211:10</p> <p>Council 231:8</p> <p>counsel 252:9,13</p> <p>counter 243:1</p> <p>country 29:21 51:6 246:17</p> <p>counts 206:13</p> <p>couple 3:15 9:4 11:2 12:3 35:20 37:3 63:14 66:2 68:17 69:2 70:6 94:13 141:8 145:21 151:14 173:11 176:21 214:17 250:4</p> <p>coupon 189:1 209:9</p> <p>course 6:22 31:21 65:22 66:15 68:4 123:11 141:17 145:2 156:2 159:2 160:8 194:8 215:22 236:19</p> <p>courses 8:21 20:20</p> <p>cover 52:22 71:10</p> <p>covered 205:1</p> <p>covering 53:2</p>	<p>crap 133:14</p> <p>crazy 128:13 242:5 244:5</p> <p>create 9:2 19:14,16,19 74:19 81:5 95:10 124:21 128:3,8 147:12 151:11 156:12 175:5 191:18 197:19 207:17 209:6 212:9</p> <p>created 5:11 79:3 100:9 139:20 175:9 204:21</p> <p>creating 1:5 6:4 7:16 13:12 15:6 83:4 111:7 250:17</p> <p>credit 162:13 163:22</p> <p>credit-bearing 20:20</p> <p>criteria 98:10,14,19 101:2,6</p> <p>critical 18:18 40:8 50:14 63:8 115:18 130:5 132:4 135:12,14 157:2 158:16 161:7 240:13</p> <p>critically 158:12 160:16</p> <p>cross 135:5 240:14</p> <p>cross-communication 240:8</p> <p>cross-membership 25:8</p>	<p>crossover 23:11</p> <p>crucial 135:13</p> <p>CTB 241:10</p> <p>cues 161:14</p> <p>cultural 131:6 134:4 135:1 143:13</p> <p>culture 6:19</p> <p>cumulatively 242:4</p> <p>curious 110:14</p> <p>current 19:14 125:1 126:2 213:8</p> <p>currently 5:7 10:17 21:22 47:15 48:1 59:22 82:11 102:11 120:11 136:4</p> <p>curtain 127:21,22</p> <p>curve 166:6</p> <p>cut 179:19 199:8</p> <p>cutting 37:17</p> <p>cycle 108:6 198:17</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">D</p> <hr/> <p>D.C 1:10 8:8</p> <p>damaging 139:18</p> <p>Dan 17:4 23:8 55:6 56:17 61:5 221:6 222:17</p> <p>dandy 52:2</p> <p>dangers 247:15</p> <p>Dan's 222:7</p> <p>dare 120:19</p> <p>dark 165:22 226:21</p>
--	---	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 14

<p>data 25:21 27:2,14 45:22 49:8 62:21 78:16,17,18,19,2 0 79:1 81:1,16 103:2,4,10 120:5 148:6 164:13 165:4,19 206:11,15 230:10 231:1 242:6,13 250:18</p> <p>dates 247:3 251:3</p> <p>daughter 159:12 166:12</p> <p>Davis 2:11 12:21 40:13</p> <p>day 3:12 4:12 50:5 68:19 139:12 140:22 206:4 247:10 249:15,22 251:12</p> <p>day-to-day 4:7,8 23:15</p> <p>dead 234:3</p> <p>deaf 174:5 244:14,18,20 245:19</p> <p>deafness 54:13 117:16 147:18</p> <p>deal 37:20 42:13 53:10 114:9 129:19 235:15</p> <p>dealing 44:8 114:8 171:21 183:7,8 209:13 225:3</p> <p>deals 113:4,5,6 186:21</p> <p>dear 95:19 96:15</p> <p>dearth 87:5</p> <p>Debbie 16:14</p>	<p>17:9,11 25:16 50:19 126:8 130:9</p> <p>Deborah 2:4</p> <p>decades 106:16 236:20</p> <p>decay 178:11</p> <p>decide 55:17 168:10</p> <p>decided 152:6</p> <p>decimal 200:15 201:12</p> <p>decimals 186:22 187:2 190:19 196:12,18 198:19,22 205:21 209:13 212:2,5</p> <p>decision 26:3 101:6 108:15 135:16 245:3,5,13</p> <p>decision-makers 89:14 242:18</p> <p>decision-making 107:21</p> <p>decisions 81:13 89:12 108:14 110:2,5,18 120:1 143:18 149:2 157:7 236:2 242:9,21 245:22</p> <p>declined 29:9</p> <p>declines 167:8,9</p> <p>decoding 210:8</p> <p>decomposing 207:9</p> <p>decrease 202:11</p> <p>deep 119:1,16</p>	<p>123:1 132:10 137:21</p> <p>deeper 119:13</p> <p>deeply 238:8</p> <p>define 24:16 43:6 78:9,15 79:8 80:7 145:8</p> <p>defined 78:7</p> <p>defining 2:7 25:16 33:2 55:3 93:14 159:22 242:17</p> <p>definitely 22:2 111:6</p> <p>definition 9:10 24:16 157:3,17 234:12,21</p> <p>definitional 67:15 68:1</p> <p>definitions 50:17 181:7 247:21</p> <p>definitive 62:9</p> <p>degree 43:5</p> <p>Deli 12:3</p> <p>delineate 223:18</p> <p>deliver 127:13 148:13 226:3</p> <p>delivered 76:14 85:11 128:2</p> <p>delivering 45:16</p> <p>delivery 75:6 76:13</p> <p>demand 161:20</p> <p>demands 56:11 202:22 203:12</p> <p>demonstrate 19:9 21:15 36:7,9 110:10 129:9 147:17,19</p>	<p>191:14</p> <p>demonstrated 73:2,5 249:2</p> <p>demonstration 136:11</p> <p>demonstrations 74:7</p> <p>denominator 97:20</p> <p>department 1:1,9 2:4,22 3:5,10 5:19 10:6 13:11 16:15,16,17,19,2 0,22 17:3,4,5,6,12 20:12 45:6 56:18 65:5 83:16 95:17 230:2</p> <p>depend 136:4 170:21</p> <p>dependable 55:22</p> <p>dependent 235:20</p> <p>depending 73:18 92:5 126:9 131:12 153:21 192:8 226:9,14 243:10</p> <p>depends 99:16 145:2</p> <p>deposition 252:3,5,8,11</p> <p>deprive 103:8</p> <p>Deputy 3:5</p> <p>describe 64:2 131:22</p> <p>described 66:17 189:8</p> <p>describing 88:14 126:22</p>
--	---	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 15

<p>description 64:14 84:22 126:16</p> <p>descriptions 64:19 73:21,22 88:6 131:15</p> <p>descriptive 64:9</p> <p>descriptors 250:22</p> <p>deserve 54:19</p> <p>design 2:12 11:4,13 18:8,19 21:21 22:3 25:2,6 32:16 33:5,6 37:12 40:17 42:3 46:16,22 48:4 50:14 61:15 62:4 64:8 94:12,16,20 102:21 103:17 104:11 105:3 111:13,16 114:22 119:20 120:5 121:3 124:1 129:1 137:1 156:5,12 159:15 175:4 187:8 236:5 237:18 245:15</p> <p>designated 127:7</p> <p>designed 75:15,16 112:21 152:4,8 208:13,14 248:18</p> <p>designing 94:8 150:1 152:20 153:20 211:1</p> <p>desirable 243:11</p> <p>desk 14:12 69:9,12,18,19,21 70:2 140:17</p> <p>destefano 36:18,22 115:12 137:19</p>	<p>154:4 184:13 186:10,13 198:5,18 200:3 205:15,17 208:9 212:8 214:7,21 215:5,18 216:1,6,10 217:1,14 218:4 219:17 222:14 223:11 225:10,15 227:17 228:8 229:3 236:14</p> <p>DeStefano 2:16 12:21 37:1 150:21</p> <p>destination 76:13</p> <p>detailed 94:5 122:17 131:11 135:9 156:20 166:16</p> <p>details 76:21 161:17 190:8 243:13 251:4</p> <p>determinations 8:1,3</p> <p>determine 20:18 43:19 44:10 48:21 102:15</p> <p>determining 55:21 206:1</p> <p>detract 161:15</p> <p>detracted 161:10</p> <p>develop 6:8,10,15 9:9 10:3 17:16 20:1 46:16 48:8 74:14 115:21 116:14 121:17 122:18 124:21 125:2 128:17 131:9 132:1</p>	<p>135:11 155:20 158:2,13</p> <p>developed 81:11 100:10 133:12 139:17 157:22 159:12 237:11 248:15,17</p> <p>developers 43:21 122:9</p> <p>developing 5:17 9:16 10:10 28:10 68:6 131:4,8 132:9,13 157:2 213:11,15 246:16 248:12</p> <p>development 2:12 18:7,10,19 19:1 20:7 21:21 24:22 32:17 61:13 67:13 75:5 93:10 94:13 111:16 114:21 115:2,13,14,17,2 0 117:7,13 121:17 122:7 132:14 142:16 233:20 237:14 248:3</p> <p>developmental 186:17</p> <p>devices 74:11</p> <p>devil 243:13</p> <p>devote 107:4,16</p> <p>diagnostic 143:9</p> <p>diagram 81:17</p> <p>dialect 30:12</p> <p>diametrically 119:12</p> <p>dice 150:7</p> <p>dichotomy 41:2</p>	<p>63:4</p> <p>dictionary 99:13 101:18,20</p> <p>died 224:3</p> <p>difference 153:13 165:15 185:14,15 233:4 235:6</p> <p>differences 40:21 49:1 57:10 67:16 68:2 103:14 135:5 141:14 243:15</p> <p>different 12:4 26:12 27:12 29:20 30:6 33:22 34:15 36:8 39:22 40:4 42:1 46:5 49:11,14 50:17 51:11 53:6 54:5 58:3 63:12,16,17 65:17 66:13 71:15 73:22 74:2 75:1 77:7 78:3 82:11 84:11,14,21 87:17,19 88:5 92:1 94:13 98:9 99:17 102:3 117:21 126:6,21 143:13,14 144:20 145:10 147:15,20,21,22 148:5 175:7,11 176:6,7,9,11 194:20 195:1 200:18 201:16 203:19 204:22 205:2 208:15 210:20 211:1 213:7,10 215:2 217:9 220:13 222:13 234:19</p>
---	---	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 16

235:11 238:15 239:22 243:19 244:2 247:1 248:20 differential 48:22 99:6,18 differentiate 218:14 differently 54:21 55:1 104:3 130:13 132:12 185:15 difficult 85:5 120:3 126:11 189:13 211:17 216:18 218:10 difficulty 29:7,17,20 117:1 120:11 136:18,22 137:6 162:19 165:14,15,16 167:13 204:13 difficulty's 120:18 digital 71:6 73:1 74:22 dimensionality 46:3 136:14 dimensions 133:18 164:5 diminish 241:18 dinner 52:18 direct 8:17 98:2 195:18 direction 148:15 252:7 directions 22:2 72:3 73:10 122:21 144:22	directly 16:9 98:3 director 47:10 50:4 125:5,9 dirty 242:6 243:8 disabilities 1:6 6:22 7:6,8 9:3,6,20 10:22 13:14 15:7 26:4,10 27:6 28:16 33:18,20 36:16 37:7 40:16 41:18 42:6 49:3,16 51:15 53:18 54:9 57:15 58:7 62:8 64:6 84:2 90:3 96:12,18 97:1,4,11,18 98:13 100:10 103:15 106:3 113:3 116:10 119:3 121:5 138:22 149:16 150:9 151:3 154:21 156:3,7 159:5 161:2,14 162:7 164:15 174:4 183:10 199:21 205:2 208:16 213:13 241:14 disability 27:5,7 54:14 64:5,21 84:15,19 112:8 119:9,10,11 204:12 206:17 208:2 disabled 244:8 disabling 54:1 disadvantaged 162:14 disadvantages	92:20 disaggregate 132:20 164:15 disaggregated 165:2 disconnect 58:21 60:1 108:13 discouraging 242:14 discovered 84:4 discrete 78:21 discrimination 165:8,10 167:12 discuss 3:20 14:1 discussed 170:1 discussing 38:21 141:10 discussion 2:7,14 4:1 11:20,21 12:13 15:5 22:3 25:16 32:19 34:13,19 68:22 106:8 109:10 119:20 141:3 151:16 213:18 216:14 228:5 244:16 disorders 54:17 117:17 display 27:10 62:4 dissect 193:20 disseminate 48:15 disserving 140:2 distinct 138:16 distinction 141:16 192:13 221:1 distinctions 26:13,19 141:8	distinguish 192:10 distinguished 3:19 distinguishing 219:20 distract 195:11 distracted 161:11 Distracters 161:5 distribution 165:18 166:8 District 155:1 districts 4:8 28:4 62:22 155:3,4,12 disturbed 174:6 243:15 ditto 239:3 diverse 41:4 61:19 158:11 213:8,16 diversities 41:19 244:5 diversity 29:18 30:4,15 31:5 33:17,18 40:22 41:14,20 55:9,12,16 56:7,13,15 65:14 66:11,20 67:19 144:1 242:21 248:13 divide 76:2 divided 193:19 doable 135:3 183:8,9 document 123:8,11,12,17 131:8 234:3 documentation 122:19 documents 123:7
---	---	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 17

<p>dollars 194:22 198:11</p> <p>domain 155:11</p> <p>domains 66:4 67:3</p> <p>done 10:19 40:9 46:20 47:8 49:4,8 59:2 74:5,7 85:9 90:4,5,11 102:20 104:8 112:3 120:1 132:8 144:4 145:13,16 149:5 151:1,3 162:10 169:5 177:22 179:19,21,22 180:1 181:9 182:20 183:9 202:4 222:11 229:5 234:10,11 235:19 238:22 240:3 242:16 246:19</p> <p>door 16:6 69:10,20 118:2</p> <p>doors 16:9 19:3</p> <p>dot 140:15</p> <p>double 67:22</p> <p>doubled 29:4</p> <p>Dr 45:8 66:17 245:1</p> <p>drafting 24:12</p> <p>drag 194:12</p> <p>dramatic 131:2 224:4</p> <p>dramatically 132:2</p> <p>draw 173:9 174:13,14,17</p>	<p>drawing 38:2</p> <p>drawings 173:9</p> <p>drink 189:1</p> <p>drive 128:12 242:1</p> <p>drives 238:1 242:4,5</p> <p>driving 157:10</p> <p>drop 13:18 69:8 140:16 212:16</p> <p>drop-off 30:10</p> <p>DS 120:17</p> <p>dual 25:3</p> <p>due 59:18 68:11</p> <p>duly 252:5</p> <p>dumbing 174:11</p> <p>during 4:14 14:10 15:15 21:21 33:16 112:22 183:15 225:19 238:6</p> <p>DVD-based 226:2</p> <p>dynamic 9:13,22 28:9 47:10 149:6,17</p> <p>dyslexic 210:7 218:3</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <hr/> <p>EAG 85:1</p> <p>earlier 21:2 154:16 162:12 164:11 170:8 222:17</p> <p>early 35:4 39:16</p> <p>easier 104:15 129:14 163:5 203:19 204:9</p>	<p>211:22</p> <p>easier-to-interpret 222:12</p> <p>easily 145:16 152:15 177:19 194:5 200:5 211:5</p> <p>east 135:20</p> <p>easy 194:5 199:2 226:2 227:4 248:18</p> <p>echo 36:19 37:2 113:21 248:6 249:20</p> <p>economy 224:1</p> <p>ed 8:21 45:6 109:2 141:15,20 230:2</p> <p>ed.gov 70:9</p> <p>EDFI 78:20</p> <p>edge 37:17</p> <p>Editor 231:14</p> <p>editorial 231:16</p> <p>education 1:1,9 2:4,22 8:16 16:15,16,17,21,2 2 17:3,4,6,7,13 20:12,21 27:16 52:7 56:19 71:16 78:5,20 84:3 87:10 95:18 135:6 144:21 231:9 241:13 244:19 246:4</p> <p>educational 2:18 13:1 44:18,22 50:4 229:21 231:14 240:15 244:13</p> <p>educator 108:12</p>	<p>241:12</p> <p>educators 158:17 245:19</p> <p>effective 3:17 98:16,17 101:10 102:17 103:21 133:11 170:2 182:1,13,14</p> <p>effectively 6:21 76:8,15 78:11,13 87:2 171:5</p> <p>effectiveness 8:1,2 98:14 102:15 103:3 130:20</p> <p>effects 107:9</p> <p>efficient 77:2 211:9</p> <p>effort 107:5 131:3 132:3</p> <p>eggs 111:20,21</p> <p>eight 27:10</p> <p>eighth 114:9</p> <p>either 41:3 49:21 77:9 78:14 82:21 111:11 119:10 126:11 152:4 173:9 205:6 210:11 212:15 220:7 241:1</p> <p>elaborate 91:13</p> <p>electronic 74:4 82:14</p> <p>elegance 226:8</p> <p>elegant 81:4,21</p> <p>element 209:9</p> <p>elementary 16:20 17:5 56:18 177:21</p>
---	---	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 18

<p>elements 78:17 206:13 212:12</p> <p>elephant 217:13</p> <p>elephants 222:16</p> <p>eligible 52:6</p> <p>ELL 21:14 41:3,21,22 42:5,11,20 43:13 53:18 54:8 55:13,14 63:4 96:11 99:11 101:19 103:14,18 104:12 132:22 138:21 139:22 141:21 143:16 246:17</p> <p>ELL/non 132:22</p> <p>ELLs 41:10 52:22 56:2 58:7 119:4 121:19,21 122:2 124:1 133:22 141:15 183:9 203:7 213:12 214:3</p> <p>ELP 240:7</p> <p>else 86:3 132:22 139:7 150:14 163:14 172:9 198:2 221:4 251:9</p> <p>e-mail 5:10 14:19 23:20 231:19 250:8,9</p> <p>e-mails 251:7</p> <p>embarrass 198:3</p> <p>embedded 7:4 74:5 77:17 84:10 143:12 196:9 204:4</p>	<p>embrace 244:4,5</p> <p>embracement 44:21</p> <p>emerging 71:19</p> <p>emotion 224:9</p> <p>emotional 119:7</p> <p>emotionally 174:6</p> <p>emphases 133:20</p> <p>emphasis 61:15 142:16 160:5</p> <p>emphasize 141:9 151:20</p> <p>emphasized 182:2 245:2</p> <p>emphasizing 228:11</p> <p>empirical 107:17 203:8 225:7,8 227:8,10</p> <p>employed 154:9 252:10,13</p> <p>employee 252:12</p> <p>employers 147:10</p> <p>enables 156:13 187:1</p> <p>encourage 14:18 39:14 40:10 132:20 134:14 230:14 235:13 236:11 237:3,7 238:8</p> <p>encouraged 230:5 244:9</p> <p>endorse 15:11</p> <p>energies 234:15</p> <p>energy 211:6</p> <p>engage 106:11</p>	<p>engaged 46:1 115:1 121:6</p> <p>engagement 106:6 121:8</p> <p>engine 80:18 127:3 129:6,13</p> <p>engineering 118:15,22 148:6</p> <p>English 1:6 6:22 7:6,8 9:3,6,10 10:7,10,21 13:14 15:7 17:18 21:13 24:17,18 26:4,10 28:22 29:4,7,13,16,17, 20 30:5,17,18 36:15 37:8 40:15 41:1,5,7,8,9,20 43:2,6,9,17,21 44:1,3,7,8 49:2,15 51:3,5 52:11 53:22 56:4 58:15,21,22 59:3,8,11,14,15 62:18 63:7,13 73:9,11 77:9,10 78:3 84:2 90:2,8 96:22 97:4,8,11,14,17, 20 98:1,12 99:15 100:12,13,20 101:5,11 116:9 121:4,15 134:1 135:4 144:12 149:1,13,14 150:9 151:4 154:21 156:3,6 159:3 161:1 162:6 164:16,20,22 173:20,22 174:10 176:10 182:19,20 183:3</p>	<p>188:13 199:18 214:8,9 216:3,15,18 223:3,6,9 233:19 245:9 246:7</p> <p>enhance 208:16</p> <p>enhanced 10:7 161:9 239:18</p> <p>enormous 90:3</p> <p>enrolled 27:18</p> <p>ensure 18:13 19:21 109:6 132:20</p> <p>ensuring 61:11 62:14</p> <p>enter 20:20 209:18</p> <p>entering 209:2</p> <p>entire 121:16 233:20</p> <p>entirely 47:12 124:20</p> <p>environment 4:1 71:7 73:1 74:6 109:19</p> <p>environments 74:12</p> <p>equally 122:16 193:19 247:11</p> <p>equation 248:21</p> <p>equitable 19:11</p> <p>equivalent 216:16</p> <p>error 42:11,12 162:11 166:10,12,19 167:2,4,15 249:1</p> <p>errors 155:14 167:22</p> <p>especially 66:8</p>
--	---	---	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 19

113:4 189:7 essential 133:17 essentially 131:1 139:11 181:22 202:3 establish 44:9 88:11,12 established 179:1 establishing 170:1 236:7 estimate 53:8 80:20 estimation 189:7 estimations 189:11 etcetera 36:10 49:16 evaluate 103:3 219:10 220:4 221:3 223:18 evaluated 248:9 evaluating 18:16 evaluation 8:2 18:11 94:4 eventually 23:14 146:5 everybody 47:4 77:3 124:22 133:13 141:4 181:3 194:5 239:3 242:12 249:19 everybody's 123:19 241:16 everyone 3:4,6,7 4:2 11:10,15 13:7 14:17,22 15:18 16:4 25:21 26:20 29:2 53:19 57:6 76:11	99:8,20,21 125:3,7,19 139:7 140:13,15 150:17,19 193:19 231:7 232:15 246:5 251:12 everyone's 5:10 12:9 229:8 everything 16:10 86:8 125:6 163:14 177:18 231:3 234:15 237:11 239:3 everywhere 243:4 evidence 44:4 55:18 56:9 92:3 102:10 105:15 106:2 107:6 187:6 217:7,9 225:7,9 227:8,10 245:2,5 evidence-based 105:14 exact 221:17 223:6,9 exactly 12:8 86:17 91:16 100:11 126:3 133:1,16 136:20 137:4 189:22 192:12 202:12 216:8 231:19 245:8 examine 102:13 156:7 214:2 examined 123:7 examinee 45:12 examinees 137:7 example 42:16 43:15 46:4	51:4,15 55:17 58:2 73:17 75:21 81:17 84:16 88:4 101:11,18 102:2 114:6 122:21 123:6 127:6 139:16 146:11,19 148:18 151:15 172:18 173:12 174:13,21 175:3,6,10 182:18 185:17 191:15 193:14 201:1,4,6 203:21 208:19 209:6,22 212:15,20 215:15 216:22 221:5 222:2 232:6 examples 148:7 172:8 173:11 186:12 189:14 195:2 199:7,19 208:12 211:14 exams 10:11 excellent 40:18 217:14 234:2 exchange 75:10,18,19 76:8 77:1 78:18 198:11 exchangeability 91:15 92:10 93:4 exchanged 78:22 exchanging 76:11 executive 77:14 exemplars 147:13,14 148:4 exercise 2:15,17 11:10 12:15	150:15,18 153:10 213:3 227:20 228:13 229:8 248:14 exhibit 116:16 163:21 exist 141:18 existing 24:1 103:2,4,10 159:10 242:13 exists 48:11 expand 5:18 119:19 expanded 156:4 expanding 148:11 expect 6:18 145:11 177:4 expected 28:17 48:18 expense 136:19 expensive 132:2 145:16 181:4 211:7 experience 10:16 39:12 50:18 80:14 122:19 159:3,4 168:8,12 213:20 244:21 experiences 64:7 74:19 79:3 134:10 151:5 experiment 102:20 experimental 107:17 experimenting 144:8 expert 132:9 expertise 5:19
---	---	--	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 20

115:20 experts 3:19 5:22 10:15 12:19 16:11 31:14 56:21 58:12 117:15,16,17 132:15,16 152:2 158:15 183:20 185:20 223:3 229:10 237:13 247:11 explain 174:16 175:14 176:4 204:15 explaining 190:13 215:16 exploring 145:22 exposed 109:5 express 191:6 241:11 extended 105:19 extent 53:16 92:4 107:17 146:15 174:8 180:11 235:14 external 38:1 extra 121:10 extraneous 103:13 161:13 extremely 68:3 95:19 122:17 132:16 158:14 216:18 234:7 235:7 <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">F</p> <hr/> fabulous 161:10 face 58:16 242:20 faces 3:11	facilitate 5:21 150:22 facilitating 19:9 facilities 191:5 facing 26:8 230:4 fact 29:8 42:21 54:15 65:15 67:9 126:2 132:21 139:14 163:20 198:18 213:2 217:10 221:21 233:7 248:4 249:7 factor 46:3 fair 1:5 9:2 10:21 13:13 15:6 25:13 29:18 30:3 68:8 94:3 95:1 101:21 142:15 153:8 233:9 248:12 fairly 6:7 29:8 30:10 84:12 fairness 22:14,19 23:2,19 93:6 fall 88:10 false 43:8 52:14 familiar 3:11 124:4,17 217:21 families 54:13 family 51:12 200:2 214:6 fancy 92:21 fantastic 37:21 154:10 fashion 21:5 fast 45:16 87:1 136:2 fatalistic 140:5	father 224:2 fatigue 164:9 fault 59:5,6 fear 131:2 feasibility 100:15,22 feasible 100:16,17 feature 106:8 features 93:1 137:7 152:17 210:12 216:19 224:21 227:13 Federal 44:20 Fedorchak 16:21 52:1 117:9 145:21 205:10,16,18 208:1 222:22 229:1 245:7 feedback 120:7 146:3 feel 13:17 172:15 186:2 207:1 226:17 female 149:14 females 150:8 fence 201:21 202:9 fewer 137:6 fidelity 20:1 89:2 field 10:18 11:12 55:19 94:15 95:7 102:19 142:10 236:10 fields 122:6 Fifteen 52:16 fight 218:5 figure 57:20 85:7	87:4 89:13 107:21 129:12 180:16,17,18 207:4 230:16 figured 16:4 89:11 207:3 228:1 figures 164:3 figuring 80:4 file 75:10,18 76:8 files 82:5 84:10 fill 13:17 filling 189:16 final 113:1 162:12 229:11 finalize 251:3 finally 48:20 67:14 financially 252:14 Fincher 17:3 111:17 finding 85:2 126:15 166:5 fine 4:15,21 56:13 208:20 fine-grained 68:16 finer 49:8 fine-tune 60:6 finish 173:5 first 15:21 18:21 31:18 32:6 33:8 44:7 49:22 57:7,9 69:18 96:10 98:14 105:18 108:7 111:19 115:2 121:14 122:3 126:8 134:2 135:21 146:11 147:4 151:15
---	---	---	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 21

<p>153:12 154:3 176:20 183:16 188:6 190:5 196:6 198:11 205:20 208:12 215:19 229:17 232:18 241:6,20 247:9</p> <p>fishbowl 12:12</p> <p>fit 71:14 78:4 98:1</p> <p>fits 99:8,10</p> <p>five 19:13 29:10,15 30:7 83:17 95:4 96:2 100:8 104:20 232:11 247:1</p> <p>fix 98:8</p> <p>fixed 126:3 130:8,11</p> <p>flagging 77:18</p> <p>flash 172:12</p> <p>flexibility 238:20 244:7</p> <p>flexible 136:22 137:2 231:5 242:20</p> <p>flexibly 39:11</p> <p>flip 130:6 166:8,9 172:9</p> <p>flipping 111:3 125:6</p> <p>Flora 6:5</p> <p>flows 120:5</p> <p>fluent 190:6</p> <p>fly 165:6</p> <p>focus 11:2 18:20,21 22:14 41:1 57:1 77:15</p>	<p>79:2 87:14 107:7 145:9,14 148:12 178:13 185:10 215:11 238:10,13 248:11</p> <p>focused 151:2 178:7</p> <p>focuses 22:19 79:16</p> <p>focusing 7:11 37:7 58:13 107:2 178:4 179:11</p> <p>folded 172:20 179:8</p> <p>folks 4:21 130:2 132:9 148:21,22 220:22 242:1,5</p> <p>follow-up 130:1</p> <p>font 48:10,12 58:3 92:18</p> <p>footnotes 217:4</p> <p>foregoing 252:3,4</p> <p>foremost 57:8</p> <p>forget 94:18 106:19 237:21</p> <p>forgot 239:20</p> <p>form 91:19 126:3 130:8,11 184:19 200:15,16 203:2 215:8,9 216:22 218:19 244:6</p> <p>formal 246:13</p> <p>format 11:1 48:17 74:22 75:10,18,19 76:8 80:13 82:14 85:17 91:19,20,21</p>	<p>92:1,5 93:8 109:1 120:13 122:22 123:2 124:5 137:3 141:21 143:15 200:21 201:11,12 204:1,2</p> <p>formative 7:14 18:9 153:14 194:10 206:9</p> <p>formats 66:19 109:17 231:22</p> <p>formatting 161:7</p> <p>former 241:12</p> <p>formidable 230:4</p> <p>forms 40:5 73:6 77:21,22 147:21,22 182:21 200:14,17 216:20 220:13 243:19</p> <p>forsake 243:7</p> <p>forth 46:2 72:4 73:10 76:18 77:13,16 78:2 79:12 90:6 98:3 102:9 120:13 128:4,21 137:3 149:3 206:2,6 231:6</p> <p>forward 7:10 22:10,21 23:1 24:8 45:16 57:2,21 58:10 61:8,19 62:11 94:15 106:19 118:6 220:22 229:12 244:10</p> <p>fossils 178:3</p>	<p>Foundation 6:5</p> <p>four-hour 206:4</p> <p>fraction 194:13</p> <p>fractions 186:22 187:3 190:19,21 196:11 198:19,21 200:7,8,15 201:11,16 212:2,5</p> <p>frame 226:18</p> <p>framed 142:20</p> <p>framework 123:4 157:11,15,19 158:13 159:1,14</p> <p>frankly 133:15 173:1 182:5 196:14</p> <p>free 4:1 13:17 19:17 189:1</p> <p>frequently 164:11 224:18</p> <p>friend 197:5</p> <p>front 33:15 91:8 92:16 94:22 115:9 184:11 247:19</p> <p>fruitful 26:15</p> <p>frustrating 242:14</p> <p>full 6:10,12 15:5 20:16 21:12 48:2 170:14 172:4 186:18 250:6</p> <p>fuller 15:13</p> <p>fully 7:18 19:10</p> <p>fun 177:13 232:20</p> <p>function 59:4 166:9</p>
--	--	--	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 22

functioning 48:22 77:15	228:3 245:7	252:9	126:9 128:9
functions 23:9 106:10 165:20	gears 214:8	gives 39:10 99:2 125:13 191:9 199:6	152:12 157:11,15,19 163:3 165:10,11,14,18 166:9 172:17 176:22 184:15 194:20 195:1,2,3,4 211:20 214:12
fundamental 35:22 129:17	general 27:20 28:2,7,19 30:5 90:1,20 109:2 119:4 122:21 218:22 239:19	giving 56:21 72:12 85:2 109:9 119:22 120:21 128:7 179:13 184:2 191:17 194:19,20 195:14 205:12 215:10 217:17	grades 7:20 17:18 114:10 157:16
fundamentally 169:5	generally 39:2 84:9 164:10	glad 34:20 219:7	graduated 154:8
funding 137:14	generate 200:5 213:21 240:3	glass 16:9	grain 56:14
funky 159:6	generated 54:12	Global 79:14	grant 6:4 10:7 85:1 246:20
funny 232:10	generation 30:21,22 31:6 51:12 126:2 143:1 233:8	glossary 48:13 99:13 101:20	grantees 8:6
future 5:6,11 19:15 146:1 250:11	Georgia 17:4	goal 10:16 25:13 152:14	grants 10:9 109:15 239:18
<hr/> G <hr/>	germane 111:6	goals 3:13 6:8 19:13 138:4	graph 179:14 204:10
G1 103:19	get-go 113:13 115:1	golf 76:4	graphic 73:21 85:16 88:6 203:1
G2 103:20	gets 45:21 53:16 130:9 193:19 195:20 205:20 229:17	gone 83:18 87:4,10 165:1 234:9 235:8 239:16	graphics 78:1 84:13,14,22 85:2,10,11,12,14 161:8 172:2 203:21 204:2
G3 104:1	getting 61:2 89:16,19 107:12 121:10 127:14 146:3 160:22 163:19,22 168:7,17 178:5 180:9 198:13 239:9 241:21	goodness 181:14	graphs 85:15
G4 104:2	gift 96:19	gosh 110:7	grappled 112:4
gaining 62:2	gifted 244:8	gotten 70:6,11	grasp 152:1 203:20
gains 155:13,14 167:7	given 35:7 55:15 59:8 104:20 125:1 133:4 170:16 179:9 184:5 189:14 220:5 245:14	governing 18:5 22:11 157:7 160:13	grateful 90:18
game 135:18 242:11		governments 44:21	great 40:18 50:6 56:22 57:12,22 58:9 90:4,17 91:8 112:19 126:19 128:5 149:5,10 172:10 193:1,3
gaming 120:15		Government's 44:20	
gap 60:9 62:12 170:16		grab 33:14	
gaps 32:4		grade 28:17,20 52:17,19 114:9	
garden 201:20			
Gates 109:15			
gathered 3:18			
Gaye 16:21 61:11 64:1 115:11 117:8 138:19 145:19 148:11 171:10 205:9			

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 23

227:10,20,22 233:16 greatly 173:3 green 18:5 grocery 209:12 grounds 233:12 group 13:21 18:20 20:7,14 22:3,14,17 23:10,12,19 25:3,5,6,8,9 26:12 27:3 38:15 40:20 50:20 51:3,4,16 54:22 55:16 56:8,15 62:7 92:15 97:12 99:19 103:19 104:6,7 113:11 138:14 141:12,14,19 145:5,9,14 148:19 164:17,20 165:4 228:15 239:22 249:9 groupings 41:15,16 110:16 groups 4:10 22:13,18,20 23:11,22 25:3,7 26:6,11,19 40:22 49:11,14 51:17,19 52:15 53:1 71:1 92:11 96:14,15,17 97:19 104:11 132:21 134:22 135:1 138:16,21 139:1 143:17 145:9 149:11,16 151:13 156:19 174:8 237:7,8	240:9 243:3 growth 6:15 250:21 GSEGs 239:20 guess 4:18 7:12 34:18 35:16 54:21 57:5 135:18,22 230:8 238:7 guessing 165:12 167:12 guest 184:7 guidance 18:17 22:8 115:21 123:10 guide 51:21 guidelines 20:2 114:15,16 159:11,16 160:15 Guillermo 13:4 42:7,8 46:6 guy 154:11 guys 14:7 129:20 169:8 226:1 240:22 241:3 <hr/> H <hr/> hair 226:21 half 15:21 96:6 98:4 141:5 hammer 201:4 204:16,17 Hampshire 16:22 hand 82:17 108:7 138:10 193:5 251:10,11 handful 235:3	hand-in-glove 95:11 handle 83:12 handled 172:1 hands 228:18 hands-on 191:16 handy 52:2 happen 79:21 181:15 235:20,22 236:3,5 239:13 happened 110:20 134:8 215:16 happens 40:7 88:15 91:22 136:2 181:12 happy 9:22 31:20 113:14 144:2 165:19 233:13 hard 102:10 112:7 114:8 174:5 217:1 228:4 harder 126:12 hard-to 6:11 230:3 hat 15:3 31:22 33:10 34:19 hate 129:13 haven't 57:4 89:11 94:5 105:16 106:4 153:11 164:21 207:3 212:14 228:1 237:5 having 15:20 48:14 54:13 62:11 72:15 77:9 88:5 108:11 109:3,18 113:16 114:4 116:11	121:9 130:15 139:17 158:11 172:16,22 175:5 187:20 189:10 193:18 194:6 218:2 226:6 head 186:6 206:17 heads 32:15 196:17 health 27:9 hear 6:1 15:5 41:6 43:11 108:9 132:6 144:2 169:8 212:1 225:9,17 246:9 heard 57:7 58:12 65:7 127:20 142:1 164:21 230:5 239:8 245:11 246:5,6 248:6 hearing 13:9 20:16 85:20 174:5 221:13 heaven's 132:11 heavy 61:14 142:15 194:6 Height 177:8 Hello 20:11 83:15 help 6:5 25:21 31:15,16 38:2 45:2 56:16 61:18 65:1 68:18 83:2,6 94:10 99:3,5,13,16 101:20 105:4 106:11 111:12 120:22 121:8 135:10 144:14,21 148:21 149:2
---	---	--	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 24

<p>150:22 151:5,16 199:12,15 206:8 207:7,11 245:12</p> <p>helpful 36:12 65:6 68:10 100:6 114:18 230:17</p> <p>helping 99:5 120:2 158:21 245:21</p> <p>helps 6:15 65:21 176:9</p> <p>hereby 252:3</p> <p>here's 20:5 46:22 146:20 165:14 172:16,21 173:12,16 174:12 175:3,6,10,13 176:14 177:3 182:18,19 222:9 232:10</p> <p>hereto 252:13</p> <p>he's 70:19</p> <p>heterogeneity 42:19 65:10 66:7,9 67:19 68:5</p> <p>heterogeneous 65:21</p> <p>Hewlett 6:5</p> <p>Hi 241:9 244:12</p> <p>high 6:13 7:21 17:18,20 43:5 82:3 110:3 161:21 177:22 178:18 186:15 225:5 227:11 233:9 247:16</p> <p>higher 8:16,20 41:7 66:14 114:10 163:3</p>	<p>207:19</p> <p>highest-level 237:13</p> <p>high-level 158:15</p> <p>highlight 27:1</p> <p>highlights 30:15 33:16</p> <p>highly 145:3 242:7</p> <p>highly-technical 75:11</p> <p>high-pitched 224:22</p> <p>high-priority 23:3</p> <p>Hinkle 17:6</p> <p>hinted 142:5</p> <p>hit 38:5 177:1 237:2</p> <p>Hmong 30:12</p> <p>Hock 16:16 50:3 124:20 129:22 148:10 196:5,22 197:4 198:3,6 221:21</p> <p>holding 45:6 228:18</p> <p>home 29:4,7,13,17 30:18 51:13 52:12</p> <p>honing 136:1</p> <p>honor 146:18</p> <p>hook 185:12</p> <p>hope 3:13 4:2 26:20 33:15 38:4 51:21 53:13 72:15 87:12 224:16 228:7 230:12 240:9</p> <p>hopeful 113:19</p>	<p>115:7</p> <p>hopefully 4:21 13:7 16:4,18 29:1 38:17 150:19 151:4 240:15 241:17</p> <p>hour 15:21 205:20 206:2</p> <p>hours 122:10 131:7</p> <p>house 215:19 217:4 219:14 223:17</p> <p>how's 37:21</p> <p>huge 82:5,7 86:9 87:3 109:15 198:1</p> <p>human 84:9 85:22 225:22 226:12</p> <p>humans 226:7</p> <p>hundred 173:17</p> <p>hundreds 106:3,4,13 235:2</p> <p>hungry 139:7</p> <p>hurdle 8:4</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">I</p> <hr/> <p>I'd 3:6 37:2,11 40:10 60:5 69:2 84:19 125:6 203:16 204:3 205:13,19,21 206:3,5,7,10,11, 12,14 207:3 230:11,13</p> <p>idea 27:2 66:2 76:10 123:14 153:18 155:20 160:13 161:3 163:19 170:9</p>	<p>177:5,10,11 183:6 214:15 228:20 230:15 241:20</p> <p>Ideally 230:11</p> <p>ideas 83:10 140:8 157:8 168:21 169:1 199:14 233:6 234:8 239:8 241:19</p> <p>identification 4:5 65:16 147:19 241:22 242:21 243:2</p> <p>identified 21:15 24:19 33:20 52:6 62:8 88:1 105:18</p> <p>identify 43:1,9 54:13 107:22 160:2 189:2 205:19 206:12 214:2 235:3 249:12</p> <p>identifying 18:15 64:5,6 89:8 106:14 117:20</p> <p>IEP 148:21</p> <p>IEPs 108:12 110:4</p> <p>ignored 244:1</p> <p>ignoring 243:22</p> <p>II 222:7</p> <p>I'll 12:14 15:3 16:12,13 26:1 34:18 50:11 104:21 116:4 129:2 138:10 139:9 150:20 157:20 165:6 169:13 171:18 217:12 227:19</p>
---	---	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 25

240:22 241:2 Illinois 2:16 12:22 37:1 illustrate 207:7 illustrated 245:8 illustration 203:3 I'm 4:18,19 17:8,11,12,13 20:11 23:7 31:11,14,19 34:20 35:4,13,21 36:14,15,22 49:20 50:3,7,10 56:17,19 63:20 71:10,19 83:15 85:17,19 89:4 93:16 95:15 97:6 105:10 108:14 110:3 113:19 115:7 121:14 122:4 125:3,18 126:7 130:12 131:16 132:15,16 134:4 135:20 136:1,9 139:1,12 140:11 141:4 144:2,16 146:9 148:21 154:2,4,13 155:18 156:21 165:19 168:19,20 169:12,15 170:21 171:20 172:8,11,12 173:10,22 174:1,2,22 175:15 176:17,21 177:4 180:13 182:16 184:2,6 188:4,10 190:18 193:2,13 196:22	200:11,12 202:17,21,22 203:6,7 204:2,5,18,20 205:17 206:9,19 208:7 217:4,12,15,18 219:4,7 220:9,19 223:12 227:9 230:4 231:12 232:2 236:17,22 241:9,10,14,15,1 6 244:13 250:6 images 86:22 imaginable 41:4 imagine 90:7 100:22 101:12 immediately 136:19 impact 18:18 99:6,18 102:4,14 156:8,18 impairment 27:9 117:16 208:3 impairments 27:9 impedes 81:15 impeding 65:16 implement 46:17,22 89:2 implemented 7:18 19:22 88:3 91:7 110:17 136:4 226:10 implementing 166:13 implications 33:5 implies 143:5 imply 135:7 implying 46:6	importance 46:8 119:22 127:4 134:18 241:18 important 7:3,9,13 21:4 24:9 26:20 32:1 34:2,19,20 43:16 46:9 53:11,20 54:1 72:5 80:20 88:17 95:19 96:10 100:14 113:8 116:2,8,12 119:19 122:17 123:16 138:17 141:9,16,19 154:17 157:22 159:22 160:14,16 161:6,7,8 164:5 165:7 182:10 206:13 231:13 232:19 234:7,17 235:7 236:21 237:12,14 239:7,14 248:10 249:15 importantly 96:22 158:6 173:20 247:11 impossible 124:21 125:2 improve 2:12 5:18 11:5 111:15 158:4 169:5 improved 17:22 145:18 improvement 6:20 7:22 improving 107:7 113:20 IMS 79:14 inappropriate	182:15 incentive 172:10 include 7:5 9:5 19:8 20:2 26:4,9 43:21 60:13 93:12 122:21 124:10 132:10 156:5 172:3 183:2 201:14 212:12 233:22 238:20 included 28:14 43:18 55:21 56:6 67:18 81:14 114:13 169:6 191:12 includes 6:14 124:16 including 6:11,13,21 7:8 19:18 31:9 41:5 42:18 170:15 239:20 inclusive 46:12 47:4 228:15 income 20:22 incomplete 231:1 inconsistencies 242:18 243:21 inconsistent 242:7 incorporate 43:7 121:22 incorrect 150:6 incorrectly 129:8 increase 29:1 121:8 131:9 144:8 159:11,16 198:16 202:11 increased 17:22
---	--	---	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 26

29:14 148:15 167:4 increases 57:14 increasing 160:15 161:18 201:13,15 203:11 increasingly 132:2 indeed 158:4 independent 135:8 independently 165:3 235:16,17 indicated 176:9 indication 59:6 102:7 163:22 indications 202:5 indirect 195:14 individual 6:15 8:3 26:17 39:19 74:20 76:15 82:8,9 144:19 185:5 individuals 74:15 142:19 159:3,4 industry 120:15 industry-led 81:10 inevitable 242:20 infinite 243:17 inform 7:22 21:5 57:5 106:22 206:8 237:13 information 3:22 4:5 5:8 15:2 18:17 20:2 21:3 36:7 37:9 39:3,7 45:21 46:19 54:6,7 61:2 69:14 72:2,11	74:2,16,17 75:4,7 76:9,11,12,18 77:1,7,17 78:21 79:9,10,13,19,22 80:2,6,7,21 85:3,4,5 87:8 115:22 119:22 120:3,7 133:9 155:8 161:8,13 163:20 164:1,8 165:20 166:3,7 175:17 179:7,9,13 180:9,21,22 183:2 187:11 195:11 201:10 202:19 203:1 204:8,9 208:17 210:14 215:14 informational 152:13 214:12 information's 21:4 informative 109:20 180:7 informed 120:1 infrastructure 5:3 infuse 139:2 initial 103:13 136:18 initially 144:12 innovation 81:21 innovations 140:1 innovative 17:17 21:8 22:2 37:17 inquisitive 140:7 insensitive 155:13 inside 66:3,8 142:3 insist 233:18	inspirational 224:7 instance 61:20 90:7 97:9 99:13 100:19 219:22 221:8 234:17,22 instead 64:10 85:6,22 172:22 209:11 institute 20:21 institutes 8:15,20 institutions 8:18 instruction 16:19 21:5 62:1 109:7,9,17,19 111:19,21,22 159:2 206:8 227:12 240:16 242:19 instructional 6:19 37:9 143:10,18 198:20 224:19 instructionally 108:16 199:15 244:10 instructions 238:2 instruments 39:5 66:10 intact 208:2,3 integrate 231:21 integration 80:1 237:12 intellectual 27:10 intend 48:16,18 49:13 intended 94:1 150:19 intending 128:16	188:6 intensity 224:8 interact 72:12 81:18 interacting 37:22 86:22 188:16 interaction 56:9 72:18 74:9 81:22 82:2 92:4 interactions 49:10 79:2 86:21 135:9 interacts 112:9 interchange 245:6 interchangeably 176:6 interconnected 25:9 interest 149:12 159:22 interested 13:9,16 78:8 156:21 157:1,13,14 159:18 252:14 interesting 27:21 29:10 30:14 31:2 109:13 153:9,18 165:4 193:9,11 195:9 196:7 208:11 229:20 231:20 250:3 interests 150:8 interfaces 124:18 interfere 89:18 227:16 interim 7:14 153:14 internally 13:21 interoperability
---	--	--	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 27

19:18 71:19 78:22 79:15 236:2,3 248:4 250:15 interoperable 250:17 interpret 60:20,21 78:18 215:21 233:21 interpretable 19:12 interpretations 227:21 228:2,6 interpreted 71:5 75:8 76:11 77:2 interpreting 74:18 213:10,15 intersperse 181:8 interviews 44:2,3 92:14 introduce 12:20 16:12 36:20 140:8 241:3 introduced 217:9 introduction 2:3 3:2 11:19 96:6,9 introductions 16:11 introductory 216:1 invalidity 124:12 invaluable 158:14,21 invest 211:5 249:10 investment 211:10 invitation 45:7 invited 12:19	inviting 232:19 involve 46:20 206:21 involved 25:5,6 131:6 152:3 154:6 158:19 involves 200:19 217:11 iPads 109:15 irrelevant 217:8 219:1,2 IRT 165:7 island 130:4 isn't 62:17 65:5 149:13 159:14 163:5 173:6 181:11 239:11 isolation 25:10 issue 4:7,14 13:12 14:15 32:7 35:6 37:11 42:10,21 44:12 47:19 48:9 51:8 53:9,10 60:7 63:2 66:3 68:4 71:5 86:19 89:10 90:13 97:15 128:12 130:21 133:22 136:11 143:20 144:10 162:16,21 164:6 170:1 181:3,8 206:19 210:8 216:17 225:18 228:2 246:6 issues 3:16,17,20 4:6 5:20 9:19 18:22 19:17 22:4 24:7 32:6 42:4,13,16 43:12,13 48:19	82:15 86:9 93:4 97:14 101:1 108:21 122:4 124:14 126:1 134:3 135:5 136:14 141:18,20,21 142:3,10,11 154:15 170:10 173:6 174:2 208:20 226:5,6 230:4 231:14 235:12,14,15 239:8,9 248:7,9 item 2:2,12 18:7 19:1 20:6 22:2 40:9 45:11 47:20 48:2,22 56:12 74:22 75:4,5,16 79:16 80:13,14 81:22 84:10 94:12 111:16 112:22 113:5,15,16 114:12,21 115:2,14,16,20 116:5,18,19,20 117:7,12 118:8 119:20 120:10,20 122:18,20 123:6,8,10 124:22 126:8,10,12,14,1 5 127:7,8,13,14,17 ,18 128:3,7 130:9 131:4,9,11,14,21 132:9 135:2 137:3 150:5 158:7,18 159:16 160:13 162:4,6,11	163:7,8 167:13 176:22 178:11,17 179:17 185:18,19 187:3 188:17 193:10,12,13 196:6,9 197:7,9,10 200:1 201:20 202:5 206:10 208:16,21 209:7 210:12,14,15 211:1,8 222:1,6 234:2 237:13 238:11,14 248:3 items 11:5,14 18:22 21:8 22:4 39:18 40:2 42:17 43:17,20 44:11 47:19 55:21 56:6 63:17 66:10,21 67:8 73:9,10,11 76:17 77:11 79:13,19 80:12 82:10 90:9 94:8,16,20 95:10 101:21 111:8,13 112:21 113:4,10,18 114:3,17 115:22 116:3,14,21 117:1,2 119:16 121:17 122:1,13,14,22 123:2,10,17 125:3,8,17 126:4,22 128:1,8,15,17 129:6,10 130:9,10 137:6 142:17 149:21 150:2 151:2,12 153:2,4,20 157:4
--	---	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 28

158:3,6,7,14 159:19 160:4,7,18,21 161:1,4,20 162:20 163:5 164:8,10,11 167:9,10,11,18 168:14,16 169:20 170:5,14 171:17,18,21 178:21 180:1 187:1 189:15 190:2 198:1 200:2,3,6 201:14 211:9,21 212:9 213:11,21 214:6 231:2 243:16,18,19 245:15 250:18 it's 3:10 7:5,13,16 8:14 21:3 22:7 24:14 26:5 27:13 28:2 29:9,14 30:11 34:2,20 35:4 37:14 39:21,22 40:4,6 41:2 45:2 46:12 47:3,5,6,8 52:9 53:10,20,22 55:14 57:12 59:5 60:16 62:20 65:6,12 66:6 68:3 73:18 74:7 78:2 79:4 80:17 81:9,10,18 83:5 84:8 87:16 88:18 91:7,10,13 95:3,11 98:17 103:15 104:9 109:20,21 110:5 112:7 114:8 115:1 117:13 120:3 122:14 124:20 125:1	126:5,13 127:2,18 129:8,10,19 130:5 131:1 132:2,3,22 133:4 135:17 136:10 138:14 139:11,14 141:15,19 142:15 144:3 145:15 146:2 147:7 148:6,17 150:4 151:15 152:11 153:2 154:14,17,19 156:14 162:2 165:8 168:4,13 171:12 172:20 173:2 174:9,21 175:19 176:3,22 177:9,12,22 179:7 181:7,11 183:9 184:11,13 188:13,14 194:1,6,7 205:1 209:22 211:8,18,22 215:2 218:6 224:4,6 226:2,18 227:4 231:11,18,19 232:4,6,10 234:8 235:12 236:4,5 238:16 239:5,6,7,14,22 240:13 242:7 243:3 247:15,18 248:10,18 249:14,15 250:2,7 I've 57:7 65:7 106:16 111:17,18 136:9,10 138:18	144:4 154:5 196:14 205:1 235:10 242:3 <hr/> J <hr/> Jacqueline 231:13 jam 76:1 Jamal 2:11 12:20 40:11,12 42:20 50:16 51:2 58:14 63:3 65:13 83:14 86:12,14 89:3,21 91:13 95:4,15 104:19,20 105:8 124:1 145:1,19 190:4,16 218:4 220:2 234:4 235:9 236:8 238:5 Jamal's 60:5 111:5 Jeremiah 154:7,12 job 45:12 59:2 113:20 122:12 Joe 3:8 4:17 Joe's 249:20 Johnson 154:7 joke 139:11 joking 225:12 Joseph 2:3,21 journals 231:11,15 judgments 156:11 230:17 jumping 120:18 June 5:4 justice 144:4 justified 233:6 <hr/> K <hr/>	Kansas 16:15 17:9,12 47:10,15 Karen 241:6,9 key 5:20 11:2 13:10 19:13 31:12 37:4 38:10 75:14 keyed 198:19 kick 141:5 kicking 115:3 kicks 120:22 kid 39:20 76:15 80:18 118:17 125:8 126:3 127:2 128:7 199:15 208:22 211:1 kidding 174:10 176:15 kids 32:9 33:17,19 34:1,22 37:6 39:6,7,12 51:11,21 52:6,17,20 53:6 54:11,12,16,17,1 8,19,21 60:7,11 64:3,9,19 65:16 76:19 79:10,20 80:4,15 89:16 91:18,20 118:19 120:16 125:13 130:15 151:12,13 166:1,7 168:17 170:9 173:3,18,22 174:1,3,4,5,6,9 176:9,15 180:6 181:5,6,15 194:17 195:16 197:1 198:14 199:10 225:17
--	--	--	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 29

229:22 239:22 248:13 kill 172:10 kills 173:3 kindly 104:20 kinds 49:4 57:1 94:6 106:10 109:5 113:3 119:8 123:3,14 124:7,17 126:22 133:19 135:4 146:14,22 147:14,20 160:12 171:14 172:4 174:4 175:7,12 176:11,16 183:14,15 184:3 193:16,18 199:3 204:19 Kingston 9:13 47:9 134:17 144:7 222:15 knew 62:4 129:15 130:21 142:6 248:16 knowledge 4:5 5:19 10:16 21:17 85:22 116:15 129:11 147:7,14,17 152:1 160:2,5 162:1 169:3 170:17 171:9,22 185:10,22 knowledges 213:22 known 8:10 9:15 114:1 142:10 164:22 Kopriva 2:17	12:22 35:4 60:5 66:17 86:16 132:6 150:21 168:19 184:14 187:9 188:4,18 189:4,19 190:3,16,20 191:2,8,11,19 192:1,3,6,9,13 193:1,3,7 196:2,4,20 197:3,21 199:16 200:9,13 202:10,13,15 203:15 205:4,9 207:20 208:6 210:17 211:12 212:7,22 213:4 215:1 219:6,18 220:21 221:19 238:4 239:1 Kopriva's 45:8 KORNILOVA 252:2,18 Kumbaya 228:19 <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 0 auto;"/> L <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 0 auto;"/> L1 190:6 L2 190:6 lab 161:2 label 41:15 62:21,22 178:14 labeled 185:2,3 labels 50:19 51:19 labs 13:2 145:14 160:21 lack 112:9,10 language 7:19 10:7,11 11:9 17:18 21:13 27:8	28:8 29:3,6,13,16 30:8,18 36:10 37:8 40:16 41:1,9,20 43:2,6,10,17,22 44:1,4,7,8 47:2,5 48:13,15 49:2,14 52:11 54:15 56:3,11 58:16,17,18,21 59:3,9,14,18 60:7,12 62:19 63:7 64:6,22 73:7,8 77:8 84:3 86:2 90:2,8 97:1,4,8,11,15,1 7,20,21 98:1,12 99:15 100:12,13,20 101:5,11,13 102:2,4 112:8 116:9,12 121:5,15 131:15,18 134:1,2,22 135:4,6 141:20 144:13,15,20 149:14,15 150:9 151:7 154:22 156:3,6 159:4 160:16,18 161:1 162:6 164:16,20,22 170:9 172:1,2 173:6 174:3 176:6,8 177:2 178:5,13,15 179:10 181:11,16 183:3 188:13,14 190:7 191:5 193:22 194:6 197:14 198:1 199:21 202:19 210:6,7	214:8,10,11,19 215:17 216:3,15,16,18 218:7,10,11,14,1 5,19 219:1,5 221:17 223:1,3 232:2 233:19 246:7,8,10 247:2 language-related 77:6 208:13 languages 30:6,10 54:16 77:8 96:18 144:14,15 170:7 190:7 247:1 large 5:16 8:17 48:10 49:9 51:3 75:22 82:20 155:14 156:2 166:4 211:21 larger 58:3 74:21 100:18 169:17 larger-scale 100:20 large-scale 83:3,5 largest 246:17 last 8:7 13:8,15 27:22 29:9 52:18 63:21 69:5 81:7 83:17 93:17 95:6 107:20 110:11 137:18 138:10 140:12 154:6 189:5 227:18 229:10 237:15 248:14 lastly 71:17 late 117:13 235:8 236:4,6 239:6 later 33:6,8 50:13 115:3 164:10
--	--	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 30

239:5 latest 33:12 laudable 47:3 laugh 232:10 launched 146:1 law 53:15 lay 86:10 layer 179:4 210:11 layers 121:10 137:12 178:3 179:1,2,8 lead 4:18 38:17 142:4 leaders 143:16 leadership 20:13 22:12 25:4 leads 142:13 lean 222:20 learn 58:17,18,19 63:19 110:9 112:10,13 167:6 199:12 239:16 240:2 learned 52:17 62:15 178:6 232:20 learner 9:10 24:17,18 58:21 84:14,16 182:19 188:14 learners 1:6 6:22 7:6,9 9:3,6 10:22 13:14 15:7 26:4,10 28:22 30:6,17 36:15 37:8 40:16 41:2,21 43:2,6,10,18,22 44:1,4,7,8	49:2,15 51:3,5 58:16 59:3,9,15 62:19 84:3 90:3 97:1,4,8,11,15,1 7,20 98:1,12 100:12,13,20 101:5,11 116:9 121:5,16 135:4 149:1,13,14,15 150:9 151:4 154:22 156:3,6 159:4 161:1 162:6 164:16,21,22 173:21 176:10 182:20 199:18 233:19 246:7 learning 7:22 9:13,22 17:22 27:6 28:9 36:16 38:12 47:10 51:15 60:8,19 65:1 79:4,14 84:15,19 109:17 112:19 119:9,10,11 128:4,6,8,11 146:2 158:22 159:2 170:7,11 204:12 231:17,21 238:1 244:8 least 7:17,20 15:22 98:7,9 187:10 196:11 208:3 233:14 leave 12:5 13:20 17:20 113:8 171:18 led 32:10 left-hand 175:18 180:17	legal 15:3 Leighton 231:14 Leila 17:2 61:3 138:9,11 189:4 Leila's 108:7 lend 113:2 152:15 length 180:2 less 30:3 48:9 60:7,12 87:12 164:11 171:22 173:4 205:1 211:18,20 220:7 lesser 180:1 let's 43:16 45:16 46:22 52:8,9,13,14 53:5,7 98:8 130:8 181:22 187:16 190:5,18 201:20 206:18 237:21 letting 137:10 level 20:4 28:18,20 41:5,7 56:14 58:22 59:3,9,14,16 90:9 96:1 116:6 117:2 125:1 126:9,17 128:10 131:13 134:1 137:1 151:17 152:19 157:11,14,15,19 161:21,22 180:22 186:15 196:11 207:19 220:13,14,17,18 222:1,2,3,5,9 232:7 247:16 250:22 levels 63:17	120:18 128:10 130:16 132:8 194:20 195:1,4 196:8 222:13 leverage 21:6 22:6 244:6 leveraging 19:18 Lewis 175:3,4 lies 67:20 lifetime 236:17 247:14 light 64:1,2 107:3 226:21 lightweight 82:10 likely 123:12 likewise 112:15 limit 22:9 limited 23:3 42:22 61:8 116:21 136:15 181:7 187:20 209:21 limiting 172:18 limits 128:14 173:3 line 107:19 166:3,11 212:15,19 213:3 249:12 linear 96:18 146:7 lines 173:8 linguist 131:19 linguistic 55:16 56:7,8,11,15 92:5,10 102:3 116:2,5 122:5 127:15,19 128:21 152:1 202:22 203:12
--	---	--	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 31

213:19 214:3 216:19 220:13 linguistically 119:7 218:9 linguistics 122:6,11 linguists 131:5 link 66:8 133:18 163:9,10 linked 182:14 linking 170:2 179:13 181:20 182:13 list 24:2 57:8 69:13,15 70:15 98:7 110:5 194:18 195:2 203:18 251:6,8 listed 23:7 106:6 listened 139:1 listening 45:8 111:17 125:5 listserv 5:11 literacy 170:7,10,16 173:6 literally 106:4 226:16 literary 216:20 literature 105:12 little 25:22 30:3,15 54:22 55:11 58:8 65:21 66:7 68:16 70:18 72:9 80:18 91:13 95:5 108:13 130:20 131:1 139:18 152:14 153:16 154:21 155:8	156:14 157:20 159:6 165:4 166:3,15 174:20 177:17 183:21 194:13 213:18 214:8 215:2 229:7 232:15 239:5 248:19 250:13 lively 4:22 Lizanne 2:16 12:21 36:22 38:21 94:18 115:10 117:10 137:17 150:21 151:2 154:3 186:8 222:10 236:13 load 141:20 160:16,18 169:17 193:22 194:6 203:10 local 5:3 242:8 location 135:18 locations 251:3 lock 118:2 229:1 locked 229:3 log 80:9 logically 88:20 logistical 101:1 logistics 14:21 48:8 233:3 long 110:16 123:9 139:8 144:3 168:13 179:17 195:21 250:9 longer 12:10 105:1 178:21 242:3 lose 32:22 239:17	loss 221:13 lost 84:20 163:10 lot 9:19 10:4 15:1 24:7 26:12 27:22 38:6 43:5 49:19 55:16,19 62:5 65:14 73:15 74:10 86:17 91:18 93:7 94:14 95:6 106:1 110:4 111:4,20 112:19 114:8,11,19 120:2 124:12 128:17 133:14 142:2 151:2,3,19 153:5 154:10 155:6,9 164:7,9 168:9 170:1 171:15 179:10 180:22 181:19 188:15 208:11 211:14,16 216:12 231:10 232:6,20 235:11,18,19 237:20 239:15 240:2 243:21 247:20 248:1 249:17 lots 36:8 84:5 112:3 134:20,21 195:16 239:8 240:3 love 109:14 151:20 183:19 237:6 low 59:5 149:16 162:16 168:12 low-achieving 6:14 lower 59:17 66:12 130:16 153:15 155:6,15,20,22	156:18 158:5 166:1,13 167:4,15 168:1 173:21 189:20 226:10 lowers 167:21 lowest 220:17 lowest-performing 167:14 low-performing 164:6 luggage 76:9 lunch 11:22 13:19,20 14:10 69:7,21 70:1 140:21 160:17 187:18 198:12 225:19 luxury 243:22 <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">M</p> <hr/> machetes 51:10 machine 85:12 magnification 77:12 main 133:19 215:3 238:5 mainly 87:9 maintaining 77:15 major 40:21 58:20 174:1 majority 27:17,19 28:7 84:1 male 149:14 males 150:8 management 8:11,12
--	---	--	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 32

managers 3:10	13:3 17:5 23:9	maximizes 39:13	92:3 97:11,16
manipulate 207:5 209:3,18 226:15	44:19 56:18 226:1	maximizing 39:12	110:17 116:6 119:13 120:10
manipulated 227:13	master 186:18	may 32:10 41:6 46:6 51:13,16	124:11 140:4 146:16 147:19
manipulating 208:18,21	match 73:5,7 175:10	54:10 74:1 84:12 93:2 100:5	157:5 168:21 169:11 170:11
manipulations 209:20	matching 183:2	101:9,21 102:2 103:11	173:14,17 177:14 186:11
manipulatives 206:21	materials 69:15 70:7 78:1 201:2 224:19	118:20,21 119:15 127:9	203:11 213:17 223:7 226:16
manner 5:22 19:11 77:2	math 17:19 105:20 116:10 126:8	133:21 170:9,10 177:11 186:18	227:9,13 233:14 234:13 240:18 247:18
manual 24:12	146:6 151:7 152:12	191:4,5 195:13,15	meaning 35:9,12,13,15,18
map 18:3 118:5	158:15,17,18 184:10,14	202:7,8 203:9 204:13,17	,22 36:5 60:10 148:2
maps 9:13,22 28:9 47:10 62:17 117:15 132:12	186:12 187:16 189:6	209:12 210:6,7,9 213:20 218:20	169:11,18,20 170:22 207:6 220:1
marble 193:17	199:7,9,11,12 217:6	219:13 224:5,14 226:9 233:2	means 33:4 84:21 104:8 219:11 229:17
married 79:22 138:1	mathematical 148:3 188:11 199:8	235:6 243:11 247:14	meant 160:16
marry 108:1 132:7	mathematicians 158:16,17	maybe 15:21 58:7 63:11,16 69:21	measure 6:12,14,15 21:11
marrying 81:5 89:7 133:7,8 181:20	mathematics 7:20 11:8 21:14 28:8	84:14,20 86:2,14 91:20 93:11 95:8	38:12 60:13 66:5 74:20
Martha 9:13 16:12 31:18 35:2 36:19 37:2,13 41:17 52:3,4 89:3 95:4 119:21 129:1 133:12 223:11 225:11 240:20	158:19,20 180:11 185:2 209:16	98:12 106:9 107:14,17 127:16 137:14	116:14,19,20 127:10 151:9 171:5 184:8,20 185:22 186:1 188:9,10 190:17,19,22 195:3 196:21 197:1 200:10,16 215:2 220:1 238:12
Martha's 27:3 227:18	matriculation 8:17	140:2 149:12 153:14 158:1 173:18 186:17	measured 2:9 13:2 19:11 98:22
Maryland 1:9	matrix 167:19	188:12,13,14 189:20 212:15,17 239:5	measurement 38:9 39:1,4 42:11,12
mask 113:10	matter 57:16 91:14	McDonald's 12:2	
masking 77:16	Matthews 2:4 16:15 17:9,11,12	McGraw-Hill 241:10	
Massachusetts	maximally 18:14	mean 20:19 22:22 44:5 53:20 54:20 62:20 67:21 71:13 75:18 80:3 84:13 91:5,7	

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 33

55:20 72:7 155:15 166:10,19 167:2,15 168:7 169:5 170:14 231:9,14 measures 6:10,12 39:13 55:22 72:22 91:15 121:10 127:18 measuring 46:5 79:8 128:9,18 132:11,13 160:1 169:2 192:14 195:14 238:10,13 mechanism 59:20 mechanisms 209:2 meet 138:4 244:9 meeting 1:5 3:14,21 5:1 10:14 14:4 15:4,10,16 26:3,5 45:6 69:16 70:7 112:19 116:16 140:20 141:11 210:5 229:13 232:19 247:12 251:11,14 meetings 5:2,6,11,13 45:2 247:15 250:11 251:4 meets 216:21 Melissa 17:3 20:13 111:15 member 9:11 18:3 20:6 22:12 23:10 57:11 231:8 members 20:5	23:6,18 44:6 membership 25:3 231:11 men 51:10 men's 16:7 mental 189:6 mention 55:7 138:13 221:18 224:11 232:21 239:11 mentioned 12:16 40:21 41:17 55:9 61:5 66:2,9 69:3 96:11,13 107:19 145:4 153:12 197:22 222:17 224:12 250:11 mentioning 8:14 171:11 menu 187:20 mess 91:10 message 215:10 messages 120:22 messy 199:1 met 77:11 metadata 76:18 method 74:14 75:3 197:2 methodology 15:12 248:22 methods 75:1 77:15 109:8 171:4 172:8 Mexico 216:16 Michael 16:16 50:2,3 55:8,9 57:3,22 63:20 64:1 65:12 120:4	124:19 127:17,20 129:3 136:16 145:20 196:4 221:20 231:4 microphones 15:19 241:1 middle 52:8 58:11 179:3 231:18 Mike 2:9 13:1 38:19,20 65:4 70:18 71:3 82:21 86:14 89:5 93:20 125:16 130:20 181:20 193:6 208:6 225:10 235:9 236:13 Mike's 148:19 milliliters 180:18 million 8:7 27:15 29:12,14,16 30:9 mind 12:4,7 14:16 26:21 27:13 28:5 31:2 68:19 74:21 84:20 118:14 121:21 138:19 139:21 140:7 154:1 206:14 207:22 213:6,9,17 224:15 233:22 minds 32:15 72:14 mine 104:20 105:9 mini 32:11 minimal 7:17 minimize 45:3 202:22 minimum 56:5 193:21 194:16 minister 217:4	219:14 ministers 215:20 minute 25:17,20 98:5 125:9 139:9,10 232:16 minutes 14:9,13 68:20 82:20 95:3,4 96:2,3,4,5,6 98:4 100:8 104:21 154:5 168:20 183:17 214:17 241:4,15 mispronounce 16:18 missed 117:14 missing 164:8,13 201:7 Mississippi 135:20 136:1 Missouri 16:20 mistake 41:2 97:2 134:19 misunderstanding s 71:18 81:8 mix 175:10 mixed 102:6 mixing 212:3 mixture 212:2 Mm-hmm 190:3 205:8 218:4 mode 47:16 model 48:7,17 80:16,22 81:4,22 250:21 models 82:2 136:3,7 172:7 176:18
---	---	--	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 34

<p>modes 74:10</p> <p>modification 102:3,4 159:11,16</p> <p>modified 57:17 61:7 62:3 112:5 167:11</p> <p>modify 231:2</p> <p>module 246:21,22</p> <p>moment 125:4 213:9</p> <p>monetary 198:15</p> <p>money 48:8 137:14 187:18,21 188:1 194:20 195:5 201:8</p> <p>monitoring 24:13</p> <p>months 235:19</p> <p>morning 3:4 11:1,22 17:11 44:17 56:17 57:7 68:15 69:4 94:19 95:2,3 111:18 141:7,12 142:2,14 148:12 151:16,20 153:12 229:17</p> <p>mostly 7:11 47:18</p> <p>mother 165:21 166:11 224:3</p> <p>motivate 106:11</p> <p>motivation 106:6</p> <p>motor 117:16 208:3,20</p> <p>motorically 119:7</p> <p>mouse 124:4 209:1 210:10</p>	<p>mouthful 8:22</p> <p>move 22:10,21 23:1,14 47:19 53:14 57:2,20 58:10 61:7,18 62:10 70:20 75:4 83:8 93:8,18 94:11,15 108:5 126:11 150:17 162:10 169:8 178:8 184:6 204:11 207:1 208:4 220:22 227:18 228:20 236:10 244:10</p> <p>movement 189:16</p> <p>moving 5:3 10:3 74:16 83:1 86:20,21 111:3 148:15 155:11 190:2 212:4 229:11</p> <p>multimodal 60:10</p> <p>multiple 47:18 66:18,19 77:22 81:5 88:2,6 137:22 141:21 143:5,21 144:15 145:5 150:4 152:15,16 162:9 171:12 181:4 192:20 200:17 201:13 202:7 206:6 212:12</p> <p>multi-stage 137:1</p> <p>multistep 162:7,19 184:15 188:11 197:1</p> <p>multi-symiotic 60:10 169:7,10,16 170:6</p>	<p>mutually- exclusive 52:15</p> <p>myself 4:13 248:17</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">N</p> <hr/> <p>NAEP 145:13 154:11,22 155:10,13,18,19 157:8,11,18 158:3,7 159:7,9,10,13 161:21 163:14 164:7,10 167:11,17 168:3,9,11,12,17 229:4</p> <p>NAEP's 155:17</p> <p>NAGB 157:7,9</p> <p>nails 201:4</p> <p>naked 199:9,11</p> <p>narrow 36:14 181:7</p> <p>narrower 165:13</p> <p>narrowing 178:16</p> <p>NATASHA 252:2,18</p> <p>nation 95:21 97:6</p> <p>national 9:14 157:6 167:19 231:8 246:4</p> <p>native 41:8 56:2,3 99:15 174:9 246:8,9</p> <p>nature 67:2 123:4,13</p> <p>NCEO 33:9 120:1</p> <p>NCLB 155:11</p> <p>NCSC 9:15,22 28:9 31:20 34:19</p>	<p>240:11</p> <p>Neal 9:13 16:11 47:9</p> <p>NECAP 73:18 148:19</p> <p>necessarily 69:12 91:19 163:17 218:21 227:14</p> <p>necessary 128:18 223:6 228:16</p> <p>necessity 19:5</p> <p>negative 45:3 96:16 184:16 195:4 211:17,20 212:1</p> <p>neglected 44:13</p> <p>Neil 130:18 134:16 144:6 221:20 222:14</p> <p>neither 252:9</p> <p>Nevada 30:1</p> <p>newer 179:2</p> <p>newest 179:4</p> <p>nice 3:10 93:19 250:9</p> <p>nicely 145:3</p> <p>night 52:18 139:18</p> <p>nightmare 114:2</p> <p>Nimble 13:2</p> <p>nine 30:2</p> <p>nine-digit 196:18</p> <p>Nintendo's 120:16</p> <p>nobody 197:15 224:15</p> <p>nod 133:4</p> <p>noise 46:7</p>
---	--	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 35

<p>non 103:18 119:10 168:9</p> <p>non- accommodated 103:16</p> <p>non- accommodative 100:1</p> <p>non- comparability 243:11</p> <p>non-ell 104:2</p> <p>non-ELL 41:3 103:15 104:4,6,7,12</p> <p>non-ELLs 124:1</p> <p>non-response 164:9</p> <p>non-sighted 74:1</p> <p>non-target 174:21</p> <p>non- unidimensionali ty 136:7</p> <p>noon 12:1 13:19 69:8</p> <p>nor 252:10,13</p> <p>normally 42:14</p> <p>Norman 197:5,6</p> <p>NOTARY 252:1</p> <p>notate 207:16</p> <p>notation 207:17</p> <p>note 7:13 17:8 70:17 94:11 154:2 227:20</p> <p>notes 222:8</p> <p>nothing 147:5 181:11 206:22</p>	<p>notice 6:9 10:6 174:18 177:2 178:14</p> <p>notion 71:12 72:9 78:4 81:9,15,20 82:3 89:7 124:3 143:12 198:13</p> <p>nouns 35:14</p> <p>novel 74:8</p> <p>nuanced 64:16 73:18</p> <p>NW 1:9</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">O</p> <hr/> <p>objectives 162:5</p> <p>objects 113:6 173:10 209:3,4,18</p> <p>observation 52:1</p> <p>obtain 55:22</p> <p>obviously 173:13 178:2 201:10,18 202:21 203:6 215:8 233:2,16</p> <p>occasions 141:11</p> <p>occur 171:13 240:9,10,14</p> <p>occurring 63:10 72:19</p> <p>o'clock 12:8,17 70:4 140:14,15,18,22</p> <p>offer 121:19 147:2,4 214:21</p> <p>offering 75:5 168:14</p> <p>office 144:17</p> <p>officer 252:2</p>	<p>official 65:5</p> <p>officially 70:15</p> <p>oftentimes 172:1 174:6</p> <p>oh 23:6 36:22 104:19 105:9 110:5,7 121:18 146:5 164:14 169:13,14 177:12,22 181:13 183:19,22 242:9</p> <p>Ohio 17:6</p> <p>okay 31:19 35:6 49:18 52:9 60:11 63:22 96:8 98:8,9 122:9 139:1 140:11 150:16 154:4,11 156:14 158:8 165:6 168:19 169:2,14,15,22 170:6 171:4,12,18 172:7,11,21 173:7 175:13 176:19 177:1,20,22 178:1,2,9,19 179:19,20 180:3 181:2,18 182:16 183:13,17,19 184:4 185:2,4 187:5,9 188:18 189:4,19 190:16,20 191:2,8,19 192:6,9 193:1,19 197:21 199:16 202:15 203:16,18 205:9 208:6 211:12 214:7 220:21</p>	<p>221:4 223:20 228:9 229:4 238:4,18 242:4 244:3</p> <p>old 50:19 232:11</p> <p>older 179:1</p> <p>oldest 247:14</p> <p>omit 164:6 194:9</p> <p>omitting 167:9</p> <p>one-on-one 97:12 100:19,21 101:11,13</p> <p>ones 60:12 81:13 105:15,16,18 131:16 159:21 160:10 170:20 173:21 181:9,10 189:8 199:2 212:11 235:16</p> <p>ongoing 24:14,15</p> <p>online 5:3 14:3 61:17 70:14 149:8</p> <p>open 4:1 19:3 36:11 62:13 81:10 111:14 168:21 171:15 172:21 173:19 176:18 180:3</p> <p>opening 2:3 3:2 96:6 172:7 176:17 180:4</p> <p>opens 61:1 153:16</p> <p>operating 39:6</p> <p>operation 18:1</p> <p>operational 22:13 23:10,12 73:3 158:3 163:16</p> <p>operationalize</p>
--	---	---	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 36

<p>40:1 operationalized 37:21 operations 124:7 184:18 opinion 241:11 opportunities 15:8 38:22 60:22 70:21 109:9 153:5 opportunity 12:16 32:21 33:1 39:10 62:13 64:15,18 72:12 83:2,5 112:10 128:20 191:10 192:19,22 234:6 236:10,17,18 239:17 opposed 119:12 optimal 239:6 option 92:20 168:15 199:6 options 12:1,4 51:22 72:4 161:6 189:11 210:11 oral 105:20,22 oranges 75:13 order 44:10 64:11 65:1,2 98:10 101:3 124:16 138:4 180:19 190:11 191:14,21 229:16 orders 176:11 Oregon 74:3 Oregon's 85:9 organization</p>	<p>13:18 14:13 231:13 241:3 organized 37:15,16 origin 154:20 originated 197:6 others 4:3 36:17 50:16 51:16 52:3 57:18 87:9 105:21 119:22 134:6 172:6 230:20 245:20 otherwise 36:7 56:14 122:1,14 124:10 140:17 236:4 252:14 ourselves 139:19 outcome 98:20 100:5 252:14 outlined 136:21 137:4 out-of-grade 157:13 outside 13:8 14:12 69:20 87:10 121:4 197:20 overall 28:12 162:22 166:1 over-describing 88:14 overlap 64:13 overload 87:2 overloading 85:3 over-packed 76:1 over-sampled 161:1 overseeing 122:13 oversimplifying</p>	<p>65:8 over-specify 76:10 overview 4:20 overwhelm 93:2 overwhelmed 188:15 overwhelming 88:20 owner 232:2 <hr/> P <hr/> p.m 140:20,22 141:3 251:14 pace 178:6 packed 76:1 pad 205:14,15 page 2:2 13:8,15 69:5 pages 123:8,11 palatable 168:8 panel 3:19 155:18,19 158:10 panelists 184:4 panic 54:18 panoply 48:2 paper 47:14,16 90:5,13,19 91:17 114:8 156:22 159:17 161:17 183:5 184:5 paper-based 83:21 84:8 137:13 paper-pencil 24:7 par 174:9 paradigm 18:21 paragraphs</p>	<p>179:17 parameter 165:12,16 parameters 118:15 146:17 165:8,14 PARCC 2:6 5:15 6:1 7:15 8:5,10,19 9:20 10:12,15 11:2,13 13:11 16:12 17:1 20:13,15 22:11 26:8 31:16 47:3 49:21 56:19 94:4 111:11 129:4,18 152:5 230:6 242:18 247:5 250:16 251:1 parent 159:7,13 163:1 194:19 229:22 parents 80:22 143:15,16 144:20 146:5 147:22 148:8 149:8 parliament 219:17 participant 70:15 participants 4:2 participate 34:7 65:16 80:5 168:11,17 participating 3:7 34:6 80:8 247:12,20 participation 24:20 34:9 107:8 122:3 168:10 224:10 particular</p>
---	---	--	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 37

15:11,15 37:14 38:15,18 42:5 48:17 90:2 124:9 127:7,8 132:21 133:19 156:8 157:6 161:3 176:10 185:6,17 186:5 187:7,12 188:6,8 197:10 209:6 214:4,6 224:6 225:20 235:21 particularly 4:9 41:20 51:2 60:12 71:1 114:14 136:12 151:12 152:2 158:15 161:14 169:20 173:21 180:6 218:19 231:4 244:16 parties 252:10,13 partition 163:17 193:22 partner 8:11,13 partnership 2:6 8:8 230:11 pass 104:17 189:4 passage 216:19 passed 192:2 193:3 196:1,2,4 pass-through 120:7 past 47:18 49:5 108:12 115:6 pathway 135:17 patient 249:22 Patrick 2:3,21 3:12 4:11,13,18 32:7 68:11 71:4	96:11 229:5 Patrick's 172:9 pattern 146:7 patterns 164:18 Pause 214:20 pay 123:16 206:1 233:18 paying 95:18 96:1 Peanuts 225:13 pencil 90:5,14,19 91:17 183:6 205:13 people 12:10 14:9 15:14 23:8 25:2 40:2,10 44:5 48:15 49:15 53:11 58:12 75:1 83:10 87:9 116:11 117:20 118:1 119:2,15 124:12 126:22 131:7 134:21 135:2,3 137:5 142:5,11 143:13,14 145:6 148:7 151:21,22 152:8 153:1 159:18 163:4 164:21 169:3 181:12,13 210:22 216:4,15 223:3 224:1,12,15 228:4,12,18 229:3 235:13 240:21 244:17 245:12,15,18,21 247:10,20 249:9 per 52:5,17,19 179:10 206:2 percent	27:8,10,11,17,20 28:1,3,13,15 29:5,10,15 30:1,2,17,20,21 33:20,21 34:11,12 47:16,22 52:5,9,10,16,19, 21 53:2,4,8 54:12 62:12,20 160:17 162:22 163:2 164:4,5,9 167:7 205:21 233:12,15 242:10 percentage 8:17 27:4 28:11 29:3,6,19 47:14,22 87:3 167:9,20 percentages 62:18 percentile 166:17,19 167:1 percents 205:21 perceptually 119:6 perfect 117:9 191:4 perform 54:6 59:5 92:9 93:9,13 103:20 104:3,7 123:22 124:7,8 161:22 performance 6:13 18:8 20:7 38:10,15 59:1 66:11,12,14 78:11,15 79:11 89:18 113:17 114:21 118:9,18 153:2,3 155:7,15,21 156:1 158:4,5	159:8 163:20,21 164:19 166:2,17 168:1 179:21,22 181:13 183:22 190:10,12,15 191:9,12,17 192:18 250:22 performing 54:18 162:17 168:13 performs 126:9 perhaps 10:19 109:9 144:13 147:13 190:2 217:3 period 13:6,9 14:9 persistence 249:3 person 14:13 16:2 190:13 226:20,21 245:4 246:2 247:14 personal 79:21 89:8 personalization 244:7 personally 250:3 perspective 32:1 39:1 211:4 215:7 perspectives 34:1,15 57:11 58:1 137:22 147:15 148:5 230:1 245:16 persuasion 249:6,9 pessimistic 140:4 phenomenal 112:12 philosophically 138:14
---	--	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 38

<p>phones 14:22</p> <p>phrase 89:7 212:13 216:1</p> <p>phrases 176:8 223:7</p> <p>physically 226:16</p> <p>pick 15:19 33:16 116:18 220:5</p> <p>picked 13:7 152:11,21</p> <p>picking 13:22</p> <p>picture 168:2 173:13 179:4,6 204:17</p> <p>picture-based 188:16</p> <p>pictures 176:1 178:22 179:13 209:19</p> <p>pie 85:15 203:20,21,22 204:10</p> <p>piece 38:4 40:9 76:9 108:11 115:18 116:13 134:10 150:22 152:2 153:11 179:12 189:17 193:20 194:13 220:5</p> <p>pieces 14:22 77:1 78:21 80:14 94:13 157:2 168:22 175:7 186:18 193:19 194:12 210:19 212:11</p> <p>piggyback 60:5 61:4</p> <p>pilot 21:22 43:18</p>	<p>44:5 46:9,17,19 67:8 121:17 230:9 233:22</p> <p>piloted 237:11</p> <p>piloting 43:16 61:19 121:22 130:4 132:19</p> <p>pilots 67:9</p> <p>pitched 225:5 227:11</p> <p>placement 175:11</p> <p>placements 175:12</p> <p>places 194:7</p> <p>plain 172:1,2 181:10 215:17</p> <p>plan 12:7 94:5 118:14 149:22</p> <p>planned 230:13</p> <p>planning 57:6 150:12 230:8,9</p> <p>plans 39:15 47:21</p> <p>play 71:9 108:21 190:11 217:16</p> <p>played 218:22</p> <p>playing 73:16 120:16 135:18 242:11</p> <p>plays 106:8,17</p> <p>Playstations 120:17</p> <p>please 13:16 14:22 15:18 69:20 140:16</p> <p>pleased 50:7</p> <p>plug 154:11</p> <p>plus 8:8 134:6 194:14</p>	<p>pockets 62:20 63:1</p> <p>point 7:9 9:12 10:9,12 15:17 27:13,21 28:6 29:11 30:14 32:13 35:14 37:2 53:13 62:6 64:21 69:20 89:5 93:20 94:2,18 96:9,10 97:13 98:19 110:11 111:2 115:13,16 126:14 127:15 129:3 132:16 139:8 144:20 163:4 170:8 177:16 179:20 184:5 194:11 216:11 219:9 220:6 221:19 227:15,16 228:10 238:5,14,18 240:21 243:10</p> <p>pointed 51:2</p> <p>points 9:4 25:21 27:1 36:19 57:22 96:10 111:5 118:17 134:6 171:13 210:18 238:4 239:15 241:17</p> <p>policies 19:14,22 24:1,17,19 88:11 241:22</p> <p>policy 19:7 32:17 87:18,20 88:21 93:21 114:14,15 115:3</p> <p>political 53:9</p> <p>ponder 56:22</p> <p>pool 158:8</p>	<p>poor 128:13</p> <p>popular 30:8,13</p> <p>populate 80:7 230:20</p> <p>population 25:16,20 27:8,17 29:15 30:4,15 31:5 33:18 41:4 42:20 50:11 51:5,11,14 53:3 67:17 138:1 139:5 155:13,22 160:9 166:5 213:6,8,16 225:3 246:17 247:22</p> <p>populations 2:7 9:7 42:15 45:18 46:17 50:18,22 55:14 61:20 83:9 141:10 156:5,16 182:3 204:22 230:3 233:10</p> <p>populous 247:3</p> <p>popup 48:13</p> <p>portable 71:8 75:15 85:12</p> <p>portions 223:21</p> <p>pose 200:6</p> <p>posed 184:16</p> <p>position 65:5</p> <p>positive 45:4 61:22 96:19 136:17 184:16 195:4 211:15 212:1</p> <p>positively 18:18</p> <p>positives 61:13 62:9</p> <p>possess 190:1</p> <p>possibilities 19:15</p>
---	---	---	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 39

<p>36:11 153:17 243:17</p> <p>possibility 48:11 201:17</p> <p>possible 19:10 45:4 120:14 137:13 232:16 235:15</p> <p>possibly 24:6 220:12</p> <p>posted 14:3 70:14</p> <p>postsecondary 17:21</p> <p>post-test 67:8</p> <p>potential 90:4 147:3 250:13</p> <p>potentially 34:1 107:5 223:2 244:21</p> <p>potentials 89:22</p> <p>power 66:18 143:6 210:21</p> <p>powerful 82:13</p> <p>PowerPoint 222:9</p> <p>PowerPoints 70:8</p> <p>powers 209:5</p> <p>practical 88:10 141:10 154:15</p> <p>practice 2:10 6:19 19:7,15 74:8 95:16 96:11 97:5 105:4 213:7,8 228:14 231:15 236:10</p> <p>practices 19:22 82:9 88:13 89:1 236:8</p> <p>precise 56:16</p>	<p>precisely 238:9</p> <p>precision 155:20</p> <p>predictor 126:16</p> <p>premises 43:8</p> <p>prepared 17:20</p> <p>prerecorded 73:16</p> <p>present 102:21 171:7 190:12 191:21 192:22 201:10 220:12 243:5</p> <p>presentation 20:2 73:12 96:7 120:12 121:15 122:2,5 137:10 142:8 176:18 199:14</p> <p>presentations 108:10 210:2 250:5</p> <p>presented 62:1 72:6 74:2 80:15 154:19 192:7 194:1 221:17</p> <p>presenting 39:4 72:3,11 145:10 195:8 220:15</p> <p>presents 70:21</p> <p>preserving 19:19</p> <p>president 223:22 246:3</p> <p>presumably 221:13</p> <p>pretend 52:9 53:5</p> <p>pretended 53:1</p> <p>pre-test 67:8</p> <p>pretty 50:7 95:7 105:19 152:9</p>	<p>165:10 188:20</p> <p>previous 5:2</p> <p>previously 108:10</p> <p>priceless 245:7</p> <p>primarily 35:9 36:2 48:7 148:13 169:11,19 206:18</p> <p>primary 7:12 36:13 53:21</p> <p>principal 8:2</p> <p>principles 21:20 40:3</p> <p>print 48:10 57:15 217:11</p> <p>prior 79:11 85:21 110:20</p> <p>priority 8:15</p> <p>prism 172:18,20</p> <p>probably 14:4 57:7 66:6 67:20 70:13 76:1 77:19 83:7 92:22 105:19 107:10 123:12 131:9 137:1 138:14 139:7 153:22 184:12 189:8 203:11 206:3 207:11 213:14 221:8,9 241:15 246:19</p> <p>problem 32:21 53:15 64:15,17 72:7 75:11 88:8 103:1 129:8 134:20 152:9 161:11 162:8,10 180:10 186:4 187:16</p>	<p>200:18,19,22 201:13,18,19 202:4,6,8,18 203:17 204:6,21 205:20,22 206:5,18 207:13 209:8 212:3,6 217:6 248:15,17,18</p> <p>problematic 126:1</p> <p>problems 58:20 75:17 84:5,7 85:7,20 88:10 89:16 142:9 162:7,20 168:9 171:7 184:16 188:11 197:1 199:8 200:6 202:7 205:6 222:19 248:5</p> <p>problem-solving 180:3,4</p> <p>procedure 182:13 214:1</p> <p>procedures 24:17,19 43:7</p> <p>proceed 140:6,9 195:15</p> <p>process 24:15,22 43:16,22 51:18 93:9 107:21 108:15 117:7 121:16 122:14 131:6 151:22 156:20 157:21,22 158:1,10,17 160:20 162:18 187:8 228:16,17 233:20 239:13 247:5 248:8</p> <p>processes 18:9</p>
---	--	--	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 40

207:7 processing 77:17 produce 72:15 126:21 155:2 produced 166:3 produces 167:22 productive 249:14 products 15:15 72:16 professional 18:10 236:17 professionals 109:22 122:6,10 158:12 proficiency 10:8,11 41:5,7 58:22 59:3,9,19 90:9,10 97:21 112:8 134:1,3 173:21 183:3 190:14 proficient 63:6 99:11,12 190:6 profile 71:8 75:16 76:20 79:21 89:8 182:19 185:6 227:2 profiles 170:2 181:18,19 182:2,9 243:17 program 4:18,19 6:7 7:13,22 15:2,9,11 51:8 73:18 79:7 80:5 programs 48:6 49:9 75:14 81:12 149:1 165:2 244:14 progress 2:9 13:2	46:15 142:12 231:10 249:18 progressing 63:14 progression 63:18 128:8,9,11 186:17 198:20 progressions 38:12 63:5 128:4,6 146:3 158:22 prohibitive 211:3 project 8:10,12 15:11 47:11 70:18 134:13 148:19 234:20 projects 21:22 142:6 promise 138:11 promising 10:19 promote 15:4,11 37:17 38:9 prompt 249:5,7 prompts 72:4 249:12 pronounce 241:7 pronunciation 232:7 proof 203:8 225:6 proper 48:15 123:9 133:9 170:3,4 181:21 properly 43:20 44:14 46:20 60:20,21 91:6,7,10 properties 184:18 proportions 156:2 proposal 47:5	93:12 proposals 233:7 proposed 24:11 110:13 proprietary 81:9 protect 139:19 protest 136:19 prototypes 232:5 provide 5:8,14 14:14 21:1 36:7 45:20 66:18 79:9,19 82:13,15 101:20 102:12 103:6 120:6 128:19,20 153:5 190:8,10,15 203:1,4 204:3,13,14 217:18 221:15 240:21 247:17 provided 21:3 161:9,15 214:13 215:12,15 provides 64:15 70:22 76:22 83:2 providing 18:17 101:17 137:12 143:18 148:7 242:12 provision 226:11 proximity 134:4 183:4 psychometric 153:15 psychometrician 154:10 229:22 psychometrics 230:4 public 1:5 2:20	5:1,19,22 12:13,16 13:6,8,10,16 14:10 15:14 16:19 26:3 27:18 69:14,22 70:3,14 149:21 183:22 229:9,22 240:22 241:8 251:10 252:1 publish 146:4 Puerto 168:4 pull 80:6,10,21 105:12 160:16 172:19 175:5 221:2 pulled 173:9,10 pulling 80:12 237:12 purpose 15:4 17:16 18:12 139:20 143:9,10 153:14,19 177:14,15 purposeful 26:2 purposes 5:13 37:10 141:10 143:8,22 182:3 194:10 purpose-setting 217:3 push 38:17 117:6 pushed 129:14 puts 128:22 putting 97:9 111:20 226:18 <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> <hr/> QTI 79:16,18
---	---	--	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 41

<p>81:21 82:1 quartile 166:13 question 14:14 31:15 34:16 35:6,16 37:4 40:14 42:2,10 43:11,12 45:11,15 47:7 48:3 49:12 53:22 59:13 64:14 65:22 71:5 87:7 88:3 94:19 95:22 108:5,8 124:13 125:10 129:4,18 135:22 142:13,20,22 143:4,12 144:3 151:5 152:16 175:16 177:16 179:15 194:1 195:17,19 201:7 220:7,10,12,21 221:3 223:2 224:14 225:1 227:8 230:6 242:17 245:14 questions 11:2 13:10,18 14:1,2,5,7 31:12 32:11 35:19 49:19,22 50:7 56:22 57:8 58:9 61:2 62:5 68:14,17 70:6 82:18,21 83:11 87:17,18,21,22 88:16,19 93:21,22 94:1,6,10 108:21 111:4,13 113:7 129:15 135:19 140:16 141:6 150:4 152:16 153:7 173:19</p>	<p>177:19 183:18 184:3 186:8,11,12 192:21 218:1 219:8 222:3,4,11 223:5 250:8 queue 194:13 quick 4:20 52:1,2 129:22 145:21 149:19 172:9,12 227:19 quickly 71:10,20 81:7 235:10 quiet 169:13 quite 3:9 65:12 156:20 165:13 207:3 212:2 247:18 Quizno's 12:2 <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 10px auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">R</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 10px auto;"/> Race 1:3 4:19,20 7:12 15:2 70:8,10 231:16 racetothetop.asses sment@ed.gov 14:20 250:9 radioactive 178:11 Raimondo 241:8 244:12,13 raise 31:15 83:10 134:5 138:2,5 188:22 205:21 206:2 raised 50:1 57:22 66:4 raises 125:10 152:19 153:7 154:15 raising 14:7</p>	<p>115:14 rally 249:8 ramp 177:12 random 104:11 Randomized 102:19 range 6:11 15:5 18:15 19:8 20:16 21:11,12 33:19 34:10 60:14 66:10 116:14 160:2 172:5 rapidly 22:7 rate 206:2 rates 34:9 rather 32:18 48:10 65:15 99:5 101:15 105:5,6 140:2 145:7 171:21 185:11 190:12 192:19 197:13 200:1 238:13 ratio 200:16 201:11 rational 184:16 rationale 107:3 reaching 167:10 245:19 react 130:19 reaction 86:13 reactions 50:1 readers 36:17 181:15 readiness 2:6 6:16,17 8:4,9 reading 7:19 11:8 28:8 84:12</p>	<p>105:22 116:6 141:5 151:7 152:12 204:13,18 206:17 208:2 214:11,12,16,19 218:10,11 220:10 221:11 222:8 reads 84:9 85:14 ready 20:18,19,21 59:7,12,16,21 214:7,21 real 150:2 160:21 197:16 212:6 235:10 242:15 reality 68:1 80:6 159:14 realize 44:22 45:9 46:18 69:3 139:6 realized 157:21 248:22 realizing 105:1 real-life 188:11 199:7 212:3 228:14 really 5:13 7:16 15:12 23:15 24:3 25:12 32:1 34:2 37:7,16 38:2,7,11 39:7 40:8 45:2,9 46:5 51:20 53:5,6 54:20 56:22 58:4 61:22 62:1,5,13,19,21 63:2,3,5,9 66:5 67:12,22 72:18 75:2,9,17 78:6,16 79:2,18 81:3 83:19 84:5 86:9 88:17</p>
--	---	--	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 42

89:10,15,17,19 92:8,9 93:5 94:20 101:12 105:13,16,19 106:18,21 110:16 113:14 114:18 115:7,13,14,15,2 1 116:2,11,12 117:6,20 118:18 119:2,19 123:1,13 124:13 131:3 133:16 137:20 142:18 143:20 149:20 152:8,15 154:17,20,22 155:19 157:10 158:12,18 162:8 165:7 176:13 182:16 197:19 206:9 211:13 217:5 219:9 223:4 226:8 228:7 229:1,19 231:5,12,20 233:18 235:1,17 236:10,19,21 237:1,4,7,12,14, 16,17,22 238:1 239:7,13,14,15 240:8,9,16,17 241:20 242:11,16 243:20 244:16 245:2,12 246:11,15 249:6,8,16 250:1 realm 211:17 real-world 4:6 118:19 184:15 195:9 reason 7:1 47:17 121:6 171:14	172:15 173:15 180:4,8 reasoned 117:7 reasoning 207:7 217:7 reasons 174:7 182:8 222:21 Rebecca 2:17 12:22 35:2 38:16 40:5 60:4 86:14 93:1 94:18 130:17 132:5 150:21 213:2 229:19 242:4 Rebecca's 77:19 127:14 151:3 186:13 recall 228:1 receive 49:3 54:6 99:4 103:7,9 104:3 received 8:6 27:16 141:6 142:13 receiving 103:8 104:4 recent 27:14 106:9 198:9 recently 83:17 114:12 154:7 recess 68:21 recessed 140:21 recipients 101:17 recitation 142:9 recognize 41:11,14,20 55:13,15 56:14 62:16 63:9 141:16 219:3 243:9	recognized 42:22 239:12 recognizes 53:19 55:9,10 recognizing 43:4 recommendation 229:11,14 recommendations 88:22 249:17 recommended 24:2 recommending 18:16 reconfiguring 207:9 reconvene 140:21 record 14:3 80:15 212:18 252:8 recorded 225:22 recording 226:7 252:6 red 165:22 redefining 50:22 redesigns 46:20 redo 133:3 reduce 37:13 47:21 94:16,21 95:12 162:3 reduced 19:5 163:11 164:12 166:13,20 167:4 252:7 reducing 111:8 126:13 160:18 161:20 162:5 163:6,12 189:21 reductions 167:13	refer 42:14 55:8 reference 238:14 referring 42:20 210:1 refine 133:3 refinement 24:14 refinements 203:14 reflect 6:18 19:14 123:3 reflected 142:2 reflection 56:7 67:13,22 68:1 reflective 72:16 refreshable 74:4 85:9 refugee 31:3,7 51:7 regarding 56:11 96:16 216:21 227:3 regardless 32:9 129:19 regards 35:19 regions 109:12 register 70:16 187:21 Registration 14:12 69:9,12 70:2 140:17 regular 27:18 32:2 34:6,10,11 84:3 131:16 165:21 167:11 168:6 240:1,5 reiterate 121:15 relate 77:6 105:3
--	---	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 43

<p>157:18 160:4,10 related 5:20 19:15 38:13 42:5 43:12 48:3 49:12 61:11 62:1 123:21 127:12 159:12 162:1 190:2 208:15 218:7,15 219:22 235:21 238:16 248:11 252:10 relates 33:2 89:5 156:10 relation 159:13 relationships 71:17 147:17 relative 252:12 relatively 71:20 99:12 156:2 relaxed 188:16 release 149:20 releasing 115:16 relevance 100:7 relevancy 100:13 relevant 77:20 98:11 100:12 103:10 111:5 163:12 217:8 218:16 220:16 reliable 1:5 9:2 10:21 13:13 15:6 19:12,21 68:8 156:17 248:12 relocated 154:8 remarks 2:3 3:2 136:18 remedial 8:21 remember 122:3</p>	<p>163:7 reminders 14:21 250:4 remove 187:19 rendered 75:8 repeat 234:5 replace 223:21 report 62:21 143:7 144:13 145:4,18 230:20,22 reporting 18:9 20:1 63:1 80:21 142:20,21 143:3,21 145:13 146:11,17 149:7,17 150:13 160:10 230:18 reports 144:9,16,18 145:11,12 146:12 149:9 represent 8:8 54:7 142:18 160:3 207:13 representation 43:13 44:12 73:19 117:4 127:19 129:11 200:15,17 233:19 245:10 representational 40:5 73:6 77:21 117:21,22 118:4 147:22 representationally 54:6 representations 73:15,21 77:9,18 127:16 128:4 169:7,10,16</p>	<p>201:16 representative 31:20 240:11 representatives 4:3 23:13 represented 132:19 160:7 175:21 representing 17:1 56:19 represents 118:8,10 203:3 request 241:5 require 47:14,20 127:19 required 39:7 requirement 6:8,9 7:12,17 requires 153:15 research 2:10,18 3:22 4:5 10:18 13:1 18:11 19:14 22:1 25:7 45:22 55:18 61:9,21 73:3 91:15 93:7,12,22 94:3,5 95:6,16 102:5,6,13,15 103:1,5,12 106:14,17,22 107:5,8,16,17 110:12,22 111:5,10 112:4 130:15 135:10 151:1,3 230:7,9 242:2 research-based 235:4 researched 105:13 researcher 229:21</p>	<p>241:12 resettled 31:7 Resettlement 51:7 resides 80:17 resolve 4:14 6:3 11:3 34:15 57:10 97:14 129:4,5 resolving 57:15 resource 224:13 resources 38:1 respect 120:10,12 136:22 146:10 respond 129:7 144:3 171:6 174:15 225:10 responded 161:3 response 66:19 72:4 74:10 86:13 120:20 136:16 150:15 155:17 161:6 172:7,22 173:1,2 182:22 205:13 206:11 207:2 220:12 responses 72:15 80:15 232:6 responsibilities 57:9 responsible 148:22 rest 11:22 50:5 68:15,19 95:1 108:6 restricted 113:15 result 68:7 results 7:21 19:12,21 32:8 37:6 65:18 67:17</p>
---	---	--	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 44

<p>89:20 102:6 107:12 132:20 143:3 144:2 rethink 38:22 64:15 rethinking 94:20 reticence 49:10 retrofitting 32:18,19 returned 21:4 reveal 243:20 reveals 244:4 reverse 77:12 229:16 review 112:22 113:1 135:1 reviews 112:22 rewarded 120:17 RFAs 115:16 RFPs 237:14 Richard 191:16 richer 119:13 Rico 168:4 right-hand 176:2 182:21 risen 27:22 risk 65:8 River 135:21 Roberta 2:5 17:1 20:11 25:15 211:12 role 25:4 71:7 roll 175:21 177:5,7,8 232:8 rollover 174:18 176:3</p>	<p>room 4:2,4 16:5,7 31:17 58:11 69:11 86:6 118:1 217:13 222:16 228:4 229:2,4 237:9 245:12,16 247:10,14 Rooney 2:3,21 4:17,18 25:15,17 35:2 36:20 38:19 40:11 42:7 44:16 49:18 55:6 58:14 60:4 61:3 63:20 68:12 69:2 82:19 86:12 89:3,21 91:2 93:16 104:17 108:4 111:1 112:17 115:10 117:8 119:17 121:12 124:19 129:2 130:17 132:5 134:16 137:17 138:8 139:6 140:11 145:1,19 150:14,16 193:5 228:10 229:6 232:14 234:4 235:9 236:13 238:22 240:20 244:11 246:1,18 249:20 Rosanna 246:3 Rosetta 232:1,3,10 round 52:8 172:4 routine 124:15 rows 201:3 Rs 232:8 RTTA 5:1 6:7 rubric 162:13 rubrics 162:20</p>	<p>rules 39:17 40:3 86:7 run 89:15 rundown 3:12 running 52:2 232:15 Russell 2:9 13:1 38:20 63:22 70:18 71:4 87:16 181:20 208:7,10 210:21 225:12,16 235:10</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">S</p> <hr/> <p>sacred 216:11 sad 236:22 safe 66:6 safety 67:7 sake 97:7 salary 207:10 salt 176:1 sample 167:20 214:13,16,18 samples 243:3 sampling 42:13,14,16 43:13 122:5 216:17 sand 176:1 248:20 sat 108:12 save 137:5 saw 52:10 108:7 145:3 164:18 SBAC 50:12 242:17 scaffolding 222:3</p>	<p>scalable 167:10 scale 66:12,14 100:18 158:6,7 scaling 165:7 scenario 243:2 scenarios 211:2 scenes 206:12,15 schedule 12:9 scheduled 5:7 250:12 schedules 12:10 school 7:19,21 8:1 17:18,20 110:3 143:17 177:22 178:18 198:12 schooling 134:9 246:13 schools 4:8 6:20 21:4 27:18 28:4 31:8 62:22 168:10 230:1 236:11 242:8 244:14 248:13 science 67:2 176:22 scientists 158:20 score 59:17,18 80:16 130:11 142:18 146:20 155:6 230:18,20 scored 162:21 scores 80:16 155:2 scoring 5:5 118:14,15 173:5 232:8 Scott 176:19 177:4,7 screen 85:21</p>
--	--	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 45

<p>92:16,19 124:5 171:18 172:12,13 178:9,12 180:14 207:5 208:5 250:7</p> <p>screens 146:18,19 176:21</p> <p>scribe 106:1</p> <p>script 84:18 114:7</p> <p>se 179:10</p> <p>seamless 77:1 80:1</p> <p>search 70:10</p> <p>second 5:18 12:14 30:21 37:11 53:13 71:13 83:14 98:19 116:13 181:18 229:9 236:7 238:18 243:5 249:4</p> <p>secondary 16:21 17:5 20:21 56:19</p> <p>secondly 135:13 143:22 235:18 247:19</p> <p>seconds 96:3,7 102:21,22</p> <p>Secretary 3:5,6</p> <p>section 114:13</p> <p>sector 71:16</p> <p>secure 69:19</p> <p>Security 12:6 69:18</p> <p>seed 68:18</p> <p>seeing 82:11 188:15 205:3 244:22</p>	<p>seeking 15:10</p> <p>seem 71:18</p> <p>seen 28:22 73:7 136:9,10 196:14</p> <p>segmented 105:22</p> <p>select 42:17 180:17 207:15</p> <p>selection 107:7 180:19</p> <p>self 67:13</p> <p>semantic 203:10</p> <p>semantics 116:7</p> <p>send 157:1</p> <p>senior 3:9</p> <p>sense 6:1 14:6 87:5 119:4 128:7 148:14 159:2 178:5 185:13,21 191:22 223:9</p> <p>sensitive 66:10 68:7 141:14 173:6</p> <p>sensitivity 19:17 114:15</p> <p>sensory 119:6</p> <p>sent 231:19</p> <p>sentence 116:7 179:18 194:9 203:10 207:12,14,15,17 215:19</p> <p>sentences 193:22</p> <p>separate 7:2 53:1</p> <p>separately 49:14</p> <p>September 8:7</p> <p>series 5:6 32:10 92:10,11 123:21</p>	<p>190:2 203:13</p> <p>serious 216:17 225:17</p> <p>seriously 162:14 237:4</p> <p>serve 55:5 143:9 150:12</p> <p>services 27:16 52:7 143:18</p> <p>serving 139:20 140:2</p> <p>session 2:13 38:17 141:5</p> <p>setting 109:2 250:21</p> <p>set-up 176:5</p> <p>seven 29:9</p> <p>several 12:1 14:6 33:10 55:13 144:14 148:20 154:6 169:6 171:16 172:13 174:8 205:6 210:20 219:19 220:13</p> <p>severely 218:2</p> <p>shade 113:5</p> <p>shake 199:10</p> <p>shape 220:19</p> <p>shaped 154:17</p> <p>share 10:16 14:19 51:16 182:9 234:7,8 250:18</p> <p>shared 67:18</p> <p>shares 51:14</p> <p>sharpening 56:22</p> <p>sheet 70:2 101:15</p>	<p>Shelbi 16:19 61:3 153:3</p> <p>she'll 108:8</p> <p>she's 16:1 206:4</p> <p>shift 214:7 231:2</p> <p>shoot 233:14</p> <p>shopping 110:5</p> <p>short 11:21 14:8 68:13 138:11 203:10 232:15 241:16</p> <p>shot 231:18</p> <p>shots 172:13</p> <p>showed 146:14 183:16 189:14 251:5</p> <p>showing 62:18 118:21 124:2 155:13 182:6 207:2 210:18 227:20 238:21</p> <p>shown 174:2</p> <p>shows 27:4 81:17 93:7</p> <p>Shutting 183:17</p> <p>SIF 78:19</p> <p>sighted 74:1</p> <p>sign 14:10 40:7 54:15 69:17 70:3,4 78:3 86:2 223:1,4,5,9 247:2</p> <p>signed 240:21 245:9 246:2</p> <p>significant 35:12 46:11 156:5 167:13</p> <p>significantly</p>
--	---	--	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 46

<p>167:15 signing 74:5 85:22 225:20,21,22 244:17,18,21,22 sign-up 14:11 69:22 siload 237:9 similar 20:15 26:11,18 79:1 164:18 165:9,10,14 166:9 167:7,11 171:10 182:9,10,11 Similarly 73:14 74:9,21 simple 84:12 133:13,21 188:21 195:2 201:22 simpler 189:21 simplest 220:17 simplified 73:11 77:8,10 simplifying 126:7 simplistic 125:19 126:17 simply 36:12 54:14 60:14 233:3 simulation 213:7 simulations 86:21 simultaneous 63:5 248:21 simultaneously 75:17 singing 228:19 single 66:5 99:19</p>	<p>102:16 116:8 117:18,19 124:21 125:2 136:6 152:16 162:6 184:20 187:3 211:1 Sireci 13:2 44:17 105:17 119:18 136:13 187:15 188:10,21 228:17 229:19 sit 109:10 sits 85:12 sitting 132:9 205:13 situation 36:4 130:12 149:7 175:13 215:13 223:22 224:1 six 30:2 98:7,9 size 48:12 58:3 92:18 99:8 sketch 205:13 skill 126:17 180:22 208:20 skills 116:15 158:22 160:3,5 162:1 170:16,17 171:9 172:1 185:10,22 189:21 190:1,14 208:3 skin 226:15,19,21 skip 164:7 slice 150:7 slide 31:22 134:22 222:9 slowly 53:14 63:11 small 8:4 27:11</p>	<p>28:11 47:14 51:5 97:12 139:5 172:18 194:4 239:12 smaller 167:22 222:12 Smarter 2:5 5:15 6:2 7:15 8:5,11,19 9:20 10:13,15 11:3,13 13:11 16:12,14 17:10,14 18:13 19:7 20:5 26:8 31:16 47:2 49:21 52:18 53:3 57:3 94:4 111:12 125:15,20 128:16 129:5,18 152:5 230:6 246:20 247:3 250:16 251:2 Smarter-issued 114:12 Snoopy 225:13 snuck 69:11,16 socioeconomic 149:16 softer 169:14 software 224:19 Solano-Flores 13:4 42:8 55:7 91:3 121:13 130:19 139:10 199:22 200:4,11,14 202:12,14,17 213:1,5 215:6,22 216:2,8,14 223:12 227:7 232:18 245:1 solicit 15:15</p>	<p>solicitation 93:11 solution 82:14,15 88:12 141:12,13 175:6 180:16 226:8 248:15 solutions 88:22 94:1 142:4 189:10 solve 82:15 134:20 186:4 196:17 197:15 200:19 205:6 248:21 solved 57:4 207:13 248:5,7,17 249:1 solving 180:10 184:15 206:18 Somasundaram 16:18 112:18 193:8 196:3 somebody 186:17 247:13 somehow 206:15 someone 63:13 69:17 121:1 134:21 135:17 224:16 225:8,19 somewhat 29:9 66:13 somewhere 144:17 son 146:6 son's 146:8 Sony's 120:15 sorry 35:3 36:20,22 89:3 93:16 98:7 177:1 193:4,7 205:17 sort 63:10 65:18 67:14 68:5 87:6 115:16 130:4</p>
---	--	--	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 47

<p>141:9 167:18 196:9,10 212:10 249:6</p> <p>sorting 85:4</p> <p>sound 133:21 140:4 217:7</p> <p>sounds 89:9 207:20</p> <p>source 67:19 163:1 165:9,13,17 166:18 167:1,16 197:7,8,11,13,14 ,17 198:13</p> <p>sources 103:12,13 124:12 164:13</p> <p>Spanish 30:8 51:13 56:2 216:16 232:2 246:13,16 247:2</p> <p>spatial 147:17</p> <p>speak 29:3,6,7,16,17,1 9 30:9,17 44:6 52:11 54:14 99:15</p> <p>speaker 53:21</p> <p>speakers 41:8 56:2 144:13 174:10</p> <p>speaking 63:13</p> <p>speaks 51:12</p> <p>special 4:10 27:16 45:18 52:6 108:11 126:20 130:3 135:6 137:15 141:15,20 143:19 168:5 233:10 241:12,13</p>	<p>specialists 122:12</p> <p>specialized 158:20</p> <p>specific 23:4 27:6 33:4 54:1 64:21 68:17 78:21 79:19 119:8,9 121:14 138:20 160:2 168:21 184:22 200:1 223:18 240:10 247:17 248:2 249:17</p> <p>specifically 71:7 114:16 119:5 156:7,16 171:6 222:4 225:11</p> <p>specification 247:21</p> <p>specifications 114:13 122:18,20 123:7,8,17 131:4,10,14,21 134:18 135:10,11 216:21 234:3 248:3</p> <p>specifics 132:18</p> <p>specified 213:22</p> <p>specifies 214:5</p> <p>specify 76:17 185:10 215:3</p> <p>specifying 77:22 78:17</p> <p>specs 132:10</p> <p>spectrum 6:13</p> <p>speech 27:8 73:16 176:8,11 217:16,17,19 222:7,10 223:14</p>	<p>224:6</p> <p>spend 27:19 68:15 95:1 96:3,4 124:14</p> <p>spending 188:2</p> <p>spent 28:2 94:14 133:5 142:2</p> <p>spin 128:22 136:17</p> <p>spiraled 167:19</p> <p>spirit 154:19</p> <p>spoke 29:13</p> <p>spoken 30:6</p> <p>spot 152:5</p> <p>spots 176:7</p> <p>spread 62:20</p> <p>spreadsheets 115:4</p> <p>squared 84:17</p> <p>stable 80:19</p> <p>staff 23:13 44:6</p> <p>stage 132:4</p> <p>stages 121:22 163:16</p> <p>stand 215:7</p> <p>standard 11:8,9 24:2 28:18 38:11 71:8 74:14 75:3,9 81:9,10 116:13,17,19,20 138:5 151:7 152:12,13 155:14 158:13 160:6,8 161:22 162:2 163:9 166:10,12,19 167:2,4,15,22 184:10,14 185:1,3</p>	<p>186:18,20,21 187:7 196:7 197:12,13,20 198:14 199:6,13 212:10 213:10,16 214:2,11,17 219:9 223:15 224:7 238:12 249:7</p> <p>standardize 9:8 83:2,6</p> <p>standardized 44:21 243:2</p> <p>standards 6:11,12 9:17,18 11:14,16,17 21:12,13 28:11,21 38:6,8,13 57:17 60:19 62:2 71:16 78:5,7,8,11,15,1 6,19,20 79:1,7,15 81:5,16 112:6 113:2 117:5 152:11,14,21 153:6 157:13 171:5 172:5 199:5 213:16,22 218:21 233:21 234:18 237:16,17,21 238:3,20 239:22 240:7,12 248:4 250:15,17,22</p> <p>standing 32:13</p> <p>standpoint 187:12,13</p> <p>start 12:8 13:22 15:22 31:11 39:9 43:4 45:5 46:21 69:3 79:5 82:7</p>
--	---	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 48

<p>83:13 86:20 91:3 95:9 140:15 143:5 148:5 188:5 210:5,10 211:3 213:9 215:1 230:14 231:17 232:4 236:4 245:16 249:11 started 67:15 71:21 154:22 187:22 243:14 starting 31:12 119:21 134:5 starts 29:2 state 5:2 9:14 10:18 16:15 17:12 23:13 32:20 34:11,12 35:7 44:21 50:4 52:5 61:21 62:19 78:14 79:7 81:11,12 83:16 86:6 112:21 stated 57:3 222:21 statement 217:3 states 8:8 9:8,11,21 18:3,5,6 29:19 30:4 33:19,21 34:14 47:12 52:5 57:11,13 58:6 61:6 67:16 83:3,6 84:9 85:1 86:1,3 87:19 90:13 97:6 102:11 112:3 144:7,11,15,16 148:19,20 149:5,20 152:18 239:10 250:19 state's 145:22</p>	<p>States 1:1 30:19,22 31:4,6 51:9 198:10 246:12 statistics 67:21 status 64:6 92:6 step 11:7 26:1 162:12 206:3 steps 57:1 68:6 95:9 142:4 151:22 162:9,13,16,19 183:7 192:15,17 206:6 247:17 Steve 13:2 44:16,17 54:3 105:17 119:17 133:2 134:16 187:14 189:8 208:8,9,11 229:17 232:14 Steven 65:17 67:11 Steve's 208:12,20 209:6,22 stick 204:5 stimulate 72:11 stimulus 66:19 87:5,6 226:11 stitching 79:5 stole 27:4 Stone 232:1,3,11 stop 195:15 store 209:12 stories 146:4 story 46:13 62:17 92:1 strategic 131:2 132:3</p>	<p>strategically 184:17 212:14 strategies 18:16 194:3 street 12:2,3 72:1 112:16 strengths 56:10 134:11,12 181:21 182:10,11 188:8 stressful 168:12 strong 107:3 151:22 strongly 181:22 236:11 structure 22:11 46:3 76:22 116:7 131:22 162:18 175:3 196:10 202:4 207:10 222:3 223:21 224:8 structured 53:15 structures 117:21 118:14 175:4,9 179:7 struggle 26:14 struggles 221:11 struggling 6:2 22:8 36:16 58:19 205:11 student 6:15 8:3 17:22 20:4 21:18 35:19 48:18 50:17 51:12 53:21 54:9 56:10 58:2 63:12 72:2,10 73:6,13,19 74:16,20 79:9,22</p>	<p>80:2,6,16,22 84:13,15,16,19 85:11,13,17,21 92:6 99:10 109:3 110:20 114:2 115:9 120:8 121:1 126:11 127:8,13 128:2 129:7 132:7 133:8,10 146:13 147:4,16 151:2 161:12 163:20 164:1 168:8 171:1,2 178:4,7 179:10 181:1,20 183:2 185:6 186:5,7 187:2,7,12 188:7,12,14 190:1,5,13 191:14 194:21 197:10 198:9,11 199:4 202:16 203:17,18,19 204:5,6,7,11,12, 16 207:21 208:19 210:6 212:17,18 215:12 218:3 221:7,9,10,13,14 225:3 226:15,22 230:16 student-led 110:4 students 6:14,16,21 7:6,8 8:17,20 9:3,5,19 10:22 11:6 13:13 15:7 18:15,21 19:3,8 20:17 21:5,14 22:15 23:17 24:6,10,18,20 25:13 26:4,9,17 27:5,12,18,19</p>
--	--	--	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 49

28:1,7,12,13,15, 16,18,19 29:3,12,19 30:7,17,21 32:5,14 34:4,6,7,11 35:9,11 36:1,5,16 37:7 38:15 39:2 40:16,20 41:3,4,6,13,17,1 8,22 42:3,5,6 43:1,19 45:19 46:1 47:14,16 48:1,11,12 49:3,7 51:15 52:11 53:3,17,18 58:6,7 60:1,2 61:12 62:2,7,8,14 63:1,11,17 64:20 71:1,2 72:5,10 73:22 74:1 78:9,12 80:9 81:1 82:9 84:1,2,3 85:3,5,19 86:18 90:3 92:2,4,14,17 93:2 96:12 97:1,3,10,18 98:11,12,15,17 99:11,12,16 100:10 101:12,19 103:5,8,14,18 104:2,4,6,7,12,1 3 105:5,6 106:3,11 107:8,10,22 109:1 110:1,3,8,14 112:1 113:3,11,21 114:1,9,10	116:9,15 119:3 121:5,6 124:4,17 126:20 129:14 130:3 132:19 133:2,9,17 134:12 138:21 140:3 148:8,14 149:3,15 150:3,5,12,13 153:8 154:7,21 155:6,8,22 156:3,6,9,12 159:5,9 160:21 161:2,3,14,22 162:7,17 163:21 164:2,6,15 165:1 167:8,10,14,20 168:5,11,13 170:3,15 171:6,9 172:5,16 174:3 175:14 178:12,16 179:4 180:10,15 183:10,11 189:7,12 192:19 193:15 194:8,19 198:9 203:4 204:4 208:13 210:20 211:16 212:5 213:9,12,20 220:8,16 224:18 230:19 240:17 241:13 243:2,16 244:8 246:11 student's 19:9 21:17 72:20 112:8 126:16 127:11 147:6 161:11 227:1 Students 1:5 17:20 33:13 164:22 170:7 182:9 studied 105:16	124:9 studies 43:18 44:5 49:4 92:10,11 93:9,13 102:4 107:18 123:21 137:15 154:14 230:13 234:1 stuff 35:12,21 76:1,2,3,4,16,19 82:4 86:21 145:14 169:13 176:13,15 177:3 184:20 192:21 229:20 234:8,12 236:18 style 80:13 215:9 216:22 subcontent 66:4 subgroup 32:9 42:5 subgroups 49:13 95:18 105:6 147:5 164:18 subject 193:9 194:1 subjects 104:11 submit 14:9 69:6 subpoint 31:1 subskills 38:13 186:16 substantial 142:12 167:7 substantially 49:7 substitute 211:5 substituting 209:19 success 17:21 115:19 146:14 168:16	successful 139:12 168:17 170:22 sufficient 217:8 suggest 121:14 133:5 134:13 169:4 170:13 179:22 180:7 181:5,6 182:1 suggested 65:17 suggesting 175:15 217:18 221:22 236:8 suggestion 36:3 145:7 214:22 229:13 235:1 248:2,6 suggestions 247:17 250:2 suggests 103:21 147:11 suitcase 75:22 82:6,7 suitcases 75:21,22 suite 116:14 160:4 182:11 187:1 200:3 summarize 65:6 summative 7:11,18 153:13 180:9 194:10 summer 139:15 sun 86:8 super 67:1 84:18 Supervision 239:19 supplementary 169:18 supplements
---	---	--	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 50

<p>144:18 supply 194:18 195:2 support 2:8 5:14 6:19 8:3 21:1,8,18 36:9 68:22 77:22 78:2 81:20 82:1 89:1 174:20 203:4 209:21 212:20 219:20,21 supported 175:22 177:4,6,9 178:16 supporting 71:9 174:22 supports 81:22 109:5 Suppose 131:3 supposed 43:19 71:5 79:3,8 103:7 104:9,13,14 185:4 233:8 sure 7:7 9:7 10:2,20 15:18 16:1 25:8,13 31:9 32:8,14,22 34:5,21 43:17 51:22 59:10 72:20 88:22 92:3 93:18 95:13 97:18 98:2,10 99:9 101:3 102:16,17 104:12,18 105:19 111:9,22 113:9 114:22 115:19 121:21 123:3 124:15 129:21 130:3 134:14 144:16 148:21 160:6</p>	<p>170:21 172:4 191:11,13 204:22 219:3,4 220:14 221:16 236:17 245:18,20 247:9 surprised 41:6 surprising 29:18 survey 45:11 sweaters 139:15 switch 95:9 111:2 208:4 sworn 252:5 synthesize 57:6 synthesized 227:4 system 6:10 7:16 18:14 24:21 28:14 31:10 41:11 63:11 74:17 75:6 76:13 79:4 80:7 81:6 84:1 90:16 95:21 120:6 121:3 127:4 136:21 137:5 139:17,19 148:6 182:20 198:15 230:15 240:15,16 systematic 117:7 systemic 83:7 systems 3:18 5:17 6:3 10:4,5 26:11 37:12 42:22 43:9 73:15 75:9,14 79:2,3,9 82:12 91:1 112:14 231:5 236:5 242:19</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">T</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"/>	<p>tab 209:18 table 2:7,14,15,17 4:22 11:10 12:13,15 14:1 15:14,18 25:16 26:21 31:15,20 34:21 53:11,19 68:21 119:2,15 132:9 141:3 150:15,18 151:14,21 152:3 179:12 201:11 228:12 244:17 245:18,21 250:1,2 tabular 203:2 TAC 22:16 tackle 8:5 206:19 tactile 78:1 85:10,11,12,13,1 6 tag 210:3 tagged 210:13 tagging 75:3 tags 75:7 77:17 tail 167:21 tailor 39:11 80:14 tailored 73:12 80:11 tailoring 82:8 taking 28:18,19 50:14,21 51:19 53:3 129:7 137:11 212:11 219:21 239:5 talk 9:1 12:14 13:21 14:5 15:21 17:9 33:3 43:11,16 50:6</p>	<p>53:17 54:2,22 62:11 70:18,19 71:15,16,21 82:20 83:11 87:19 95:4,8 105:8,11 108:17 119:14 125:14 126:1 127:20 134:21 139:8 146:13 153:10 154:4 157:20 164:21 168:19 169:14 173:22 181:13 195:1 196:5 199:17 202:15 210:22 222:22 223:4 241:4 talked 21:2 32:20 63:3 72:8 106:9 108:10 110:13 130:2 142:19 153:11 159:19,21 171:3 181:19 212:14 235:11 237:5 talking 26:22 33:11 35:13,14,21 36:15 38:6 40:5 45:18 52:3,22 54:4,20 73:8 75:13 77:19,20 82:16 83:3 86:17 92:12 94:12 95:2,9 104:22 115:7 116:4 118:18 119:3,5 125:16 131:16,17 132:15 134:19 136:6 137:20 138:6,16,20 139:6 142:3,21</p>
--	---	--	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 51

143:1 154:13,16 156:15 172:2 174:1,2 176:12,13,17 186:14 198:8 216:13 224:1,2 225:19 231:16,17,22 237:9,20 241:21 talks 189:6 197:7 tapping 162:3 target 87:15 138:1 160:9 238:11,12 243:12 247:22 targeted 19:6,10 181:12 targets 175:17 238:16 task 38:3 57:14 114:1,21 118:18 124:6,10 131:10 153:3 170:15 175:19,20,21 183:1,18,19,22 184:20 185:16,18 186:18 214:15 218:14,16,18 220:10 238:12 239:12 248:11,19 249:4 tasked 250:16 tasks 18:8 20:7 57:9 113:17 118:19 123:3,5,13 124:13,17 132:1 153:2 171:14 172:4,14 179:21 180:1 186:6 190:10,15	taught 170:20 teach 194:8 198:21 teacher 8:2 108:22 193:13 230:17 teachers 60:9 80:22 112:12 119:22 120:2 147:11 148:8 149:8,10 150:1 168:10 170:19 teaching 7:22 17:22 108:22 232:3 team 20:13 22:12 25:2 108:14 122:8 131:5 218:17 teams 115:20,21 116:11 148:21 213:18 tease 112:7 technical 5:14 22:16,18 23:1 87:22 88:3,8,12,22 93:21,22 237:6,8 248:5 technique 175:15 194:8,10 technologies 18:17 19:18 148:20 226:9,14 technology 2:8 5:3 18:7 19:3 21:6,9 22:6,9,10 24:4 25:5 58:1,8 66:18 67:4 68:22 82:20,22 90:1,20 91:4 108:11 125:1 137:11 146:10	148:13,16 168:22 169:4 171:13 227:5 232:11 243:14,20 244:4,6 250:15,17 technology-based 21:7 24:5 technology-enhanced 113:17 153:4 technology's 150:11 template 162:17 200:5 209:7,16,17 210:12 211:4,7,8 214:5 223:14 templates 131:22 211:6 213:15 223:13 231:5 tend 222:20 tennis 76:4 tense 131:17 term 39:2 132:16 termed 25:19 terms 4:4,6 29:19 33:4 39:11 51:1 56:15 64:2 67:16,17 74:8,18 134:6 142:19 144:19 152:9,20 159:13 165:9 170:17,22 171:1,2 196:13 197:17 202:19 203:17 219:20 223:13 234:12,22	238:17 247:22 test 18:8,22 19:19 25:12 28:15,20 42:18 43:17,21 47:16 48:14 54:18 55:22 56:3,4,6 72:9,20 75:5,6 76:13 80:11 91:22 92:1,5,19,22 93:8 101:21 105:22 110:7 113:1 114:7,22 115:9 118:7,9 119:20 120:12 121:17 124:15 125:4,8,9 126:15 129:16 130:11 137:2 146:20 150:2 152:20 153:8 165:20 166:3 167:22 174:11 192:20 195:21 197:9 208:8 244:22 245:15 247:1 249:7 250:19 tested 60:2,18 66:1,16 67:5,6,17 246:7 testimony 252:4,5,8 testing 39:11 42:11,15 43:14 46:9 48:6 60:17,18 65:12 67:10 70:20 83:1,9 94:8 97:12 99:15 100:19,21 101:11,13 117:1 120:10 125:22 126:5 130:7
---	--	---	---

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 52

<p>135:14 136:3,15 137:13 138:2,4 232:7</p> <p>tests 5:4 35:7,8 44:22 46:11,19 90:8,14 91:16 93:15 125:11 126:2,3 130:8 140:9 143:6,7 181:13 233:8</p> <p>test-taker 217:21</p> <p>Texas 30:1</p> <p>text 35:9,13,20,22 36:2,13 60:15 84:12 85:14 86:21 88:7 106:1 148:2 152:13 169:12,15 170:5 172:22 173:7,12 174:19,20,21 177:17 187:19 188:12,15 189:9 209:21 210:4 214:12,13,18 216:6,11 217:18 219:8 221:2 222:5,18,20 223:19,21 245:10</p> <p>text-based 73:20</p> <p>text-to 73:16</p> <p>thank 3:6 4:11,16 20:10 25:15 31:19 42:7 44:15 49:17,18 56:21 58:12 65:4 68:14 86:10 95:17 96:1 108:3 111:1 112:18 121:13 140:10,13,19 150:16 177:21 196:3 205:9</p>	<p>211:12 221:19 228:11 229:6 230:2 232:12,19 234:5 240:20 241:10 242:4 244:11,15 246:1,18 247:7,10,11 249:19,21 251:12</p> <p>thankful 6:4</p> <p>thanking 45:5</p> <p>thanks 4:17 35:1,2 44:16 68:20 71:4 86:11 89:21 105:17 115:10 117:10 140:12 145:19 168:18 203:15 208:6 229:19 232:14 234:4 235:9 236:13 240:19 249:20</p> <p>that'll 127:9</p> <p>that's 4:15 5:12 7:1,3,9,12 8:21 9:10 10:11 11:12 16:10 22:13 24:9 25:12 26:5 27:16,21 28:3,11 29:10,13 33:8 34:15 37:16,21 40:8 44:13 46:3,22 47:19 48:9 53:4,9,10,15 61:9 65:9 67:18 68:12 70:5 72:4,11 74:22 76:6 77:2 80:17,19 81:5 83:18 85:8,13 87:6,12 88:7</p>	<p>95:7 96:8 97:5,15,20 99:17 104:16 105:3 108:20 109:7,10 118:7,12 122:2 123:20 125:19 126:7,15,17,18 129:17 130:2,5 133:3,6 135:14 136:21 139:16,20 141:21 143:14,15 146:1 152:22 153:6,9,18,22 154:11,18 160:6 163:9,18 164:8 166:9 168:1 170:2 172:16 174:17,21 177:6,20 178:10,15 179:4,9 182:10 184:1 188:4,21 194:9 195:22 196:7,22 197:2,5 198:20 201:16 204:1,21 205:4 207:1 210:3,14 211:3,6,20 212:7,8,20 218:9,15,16,17,1 8 219:6 221:17 224:13 226:17 228:6 229:4 232:12 234:11 235:4,19 237:22 239:18,19 240:16 241:7 250:6</p> <p>theme 65:9</p> <p>themselves 26:11 79:14 152:15 170:5 209:10</p>	<p>theory 120:20</p> <p>thereafter 252:7</p> <p>thereby 18:17</p> <p>Therefore 100:2</p> <p>there'll 230:22</p> <p>there's 8:8,14 10:4,6 12:2,3,4 15:1,17 25:8 26:12,19 27:11 29:12 30:3,9 43:4 44:4 47:13 48:12 49:10 53:22 55:16 56:9 61:8,14 64:13,18 65:7,13 66:6 71:15 72:18 73:1,15 74:4,6,10 77:6,11,16 78:6 81:8,15,20 82:2 83:6 86:1 87:22 88:2 91:17 92:3 93:7,20,21 94:13 95:6 106:1,7,12 107:16 109:14 110:18 116:1 119:8 120:22 124:11 131:14 135:5 141:12 142:11 143:11,12 152:17 154:9 160:10 164:3,4,9 165:15 166:6,10 171:14 173:14 177:2 178:15 180:7,12 195:4 198:6 199:1 209:21 212:11,13 216:17 221:1 224:14 225:6 228:19 230:12</p>
---	--	--	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 53

231:9 235:18,21 239:15 241:1 246:5,12 251:8 they'd 14:19 84:19 105:10 162:9 188:1 189:1 251:10 they'll 9:18 they're 5:16,17 6:3 8:18 9:7 10:3 11:3 16:8 20:19 23:14 32:15,16 39:6 40:2,3 46:19 51:4 53:2,6 54:9 63:5,18 67:18 72:13 87:20 94:7,8,10 100:12,16 105:2,14 110:7 112:14 114:7 115:16 120:17,18,19,21 125:12 126:3 135:7 142:21,22 150:1 159:21 165:3 170:20 172:14 174:12,14,16 175:14,20 176:10 178:5,17,20 181:4 188:2 190:1 198:3 207:8,9 217:22 220:17 230:19 236:2 237:9 242:11,12 246:22 249:12 they've 61:10 62:15 64:7 67:2 72:17 109:4 173:12,13 247:6	thin 55:1 third 5:1,21 30:21 31:5 38:4 51:12 71:14 88:9 122:16 141:18 147:2 185:17 206:3 246:1 Thirdly 243:14 247:21 thoughtful 119:1 250:1 thoughts 14:14,19 49:22 115:1 229:8 thousand 173:18 thousands 40:1 three-dimensional 113:6 three-step 206:5 three-tenths 47:15 threshold 153:16 throughout 25:11 46:14 68:19 228:16 233:20 throw 134:20 Thurlow 9:14 31:19 89:4 104:19 227:19 239:2 thus 49:7 tie 230:18 tight 163:15 236:22 tiles 175:5 till 11:20 timeline 163:15 timelines 236:22	237:2 timely 21:3,5 tinting 77:12 Title 58:22 59:1,4,10 60:1,2 today 3:16 7:1,11 9:1 10:1 11:19 17:1 20:6 26:22 38:5 45:7 46:10 56:20 69:13,21 70:8,12 77:20 105:7 122:3 125:6,7 127:1 130:2 136:7 152:3 156:15,22 160:12 170:1 181:19 230:2,5 244:15 246:6 250:14 251:5 today's 10:14 70:7 ton 173:18 tone 3:21 tool 75:5 212:16,21 tools 18:9,16 48:20 149:1,2,18 182:12,22 184:17 207:4,14 212:13 top 1:3 4:19,20 7:13 15:2 18:4 30:7 54:17 70:9,10 176:2 178:15 179:3,12 226:19 231:16 topic 32:1 38:18 63:21 93:17 111:2 131:13 185:18 topics 23:4 37:18	68:17 71:11 250:13 toss 58:11 total 147:16 189:16 touch 207:1 219:1,22 222:19 touched 71:11 222:17 touching 219:5 tough 57:19 68:3 87:7 towards 129:14 track 6:17 20:18,22 121:9 180:21 243:18 trade-offs 25:12 traditional 48:16 50:17 51:19 108:22 109:8,17 167:21 179:17 210:6 238:14 traditionally- labeled 50:22 train 89:14 242:18 trained 108:15 training 108:21 109:21 124:16 trait 136:2 transcript 70:12 250:4 transcription 15:20 transcriptionist 16:1 transfer 198:15 transformative
---	---	--	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 54

236:15 transition 90:15,21 transitioned 18:6 transitioning 174:1 translate 141:13,20 144:14 223:7 226:2 246:22 translated 73:9 77:7,10 114:7 translations 144:19 traveled 75:20 tray 187:22 208:22 treated 130:13 treatment 37:18 tremendous 28:22 tremendously 56:1 trial 155:1 249:1 triangle 80:19 trick 133:15 tricky 225:19 tried 144:4 tries 88:4 trouble 8:22 188:12 true 21:16 52:14 129:10 142:18 223:6 252:8 truly 110:20 try 4:13 11:11 12:8 14:1,6 15:14 45:2,12 57:20 65:6 67:9 71:10 72:10 83:11	92:21 105:12 139:13 140:14 152:10 153:5 192:20 196:17 197:18 205:19 207:3,11 232:16 235:14,17 237:4 trying 39:8 51:19 55:1 63:7,18 64:8,17 68:9 75:1 84:17 87:4 118:9 127:10 151:8 155:2 178:13 184:8 185:21 186:2 188:9,10 190:17,18 195:3 196:20,22 200:9,16 202:22 204:20 205:18 206:16 211:13,19 213:21 248:20 TUDA 155:1 turn 4:21 16:13 17:8 49:20 70:17 95:15 109:3 139:8 150:20 154:2 turnaround 156:14 turned 14:2 160:14 161:5,6 TWG 22:19 23:2,6 TWGs 22:18 37:19 twice 248:6 twofold 167:18 two-or-three-step 205:22 two-way 45:10	72:1,18 112:16 type 27:5 89:22 104:10 109:19 110:21 120:9 124:6 137:4 173:2 185:6 186:5,7 188:8,12 190:10,12,15 202:8,16 207:21 235:5 types 22:2 47:20 48:2 71:15 74:2 77:7 78:3 81:5 82:1 113:15,17 128:3 138:15 153:1 210:20 238:21 typewriting 252:7 typical 149:9 Typically 198:21 typing 36:13 <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 10px auto;"/> U <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 10px auto;"/> U.S 1:9 2:4,22 55:14 ugly 51:10 ultimate 129:17 ultimately 80:20 UMass 45:22 uncertain 183:5 uncertainty 43:5,7 93:7 underlie 237:22 underlies 38:7 underline 194:7 195:20 underlined 177:6 underneath	183:12 underscore 133:13 134:18 understand 41:14 44:2 45:19 46:2 53:20 54:1 72:5 110:9 112:2 116:12 117:20 134:1,2,3,8 135:10 138:16 146:7,16 147:20 148:1 162:8 179:2,5 185:14 191:3 199:15 203:5 207:12 208:20 215:13 219:10,11,14 220:9,16 227:7 understanding 15:13 21:17 22:22 25:19 33:13 43:19 50:11 92:15 133:1 137:21 148:3 161:9,11,16 171:8 179:11 180:5 181:1 191:4 223:15,16 234:14 understandings 183:14 understood 42:14 87:14 135:15 underway 142:5,7 uneven 117:3 unfair 99:2,4 101:17 unfortunately 53:14 97:5 163:13
--	---	--	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 55

<p>unidimensionality 136:4</p> <p>uniform 9:10</p> <p>unintended 96:14 99:1</p> <p>unique 147:3,6</p> <p>unit 201:5 207:6</p> <p>unitary 51:4</p> <p>United 1:1 30:19,22 31:4,6 51:9 198:10 246:12</p> <p>units 68:2</p> <p>universal 22:3 40:17 42:3 48:4 61:15 62:4 128:22</p> <p>universally 40:15</p> <p>universities 22:1</p> <p>university 2:11,16 12:21,22 13:3,4 21:20 37:1 40:12 42:9 44:18 47:9</p> <p>unless 118:5 136:8 162:17,18 223:2 231:17</p> <p>unpack 116:13</p> <p>unpackage 76:14</p> <p>unpacked 237:16</p> <p>unpacking 82:7</p> <p>unrelated 218:15</p> <p>upfront 26:7 63:2 94:16 111:14 118:15 138:6</p> <p>upon 14:14 26:17 247:3</p> <p>upper 167:5</p>	<p>up-to-date 3:22</p> <p>urban 155:1,3,4</p> <p>urbans 166:4</p> <p>usability 92:11,13 93:4 123:22</p> <p>useful 20:1 37:9 64:3 65:7 87:16 88:18 98:11 143:14,22 147:10,11 158:2 180:6 235:4 250:14</p> <p>users 139:18</p> <p>usual 131:17</p> <p>usually 42:21 44:12</p> <p>Utah 16:17 83:16</p> <p>Utah's 83:16</p> <p>utility 37:6</p> <p>utilize 61:16 173:19 175:7</p> <p>utilized 110:19 212:18</p> <p>utilizing 175:8</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">V</p> <hr/> <p>vacation 75:21</p> <p>valid 1:5 9:2 10:21 13:12 15:6 19:12,20 32:8 38:9 47:4 66:5 68:8 72:21 89:19 98:20 100:16 101:22 156:17 233:9 248:12</p> <p>validity 37:5,8 93:6 98:20 102:13 103:3 124:13 132:21</p>	<p>153:15 155:18,19 230:8,13 242:6,13 243:7</p> <p>validly 118:8</p> <p>value 117:1 189:3</p> <p>valve 67:7</p> <p>vanilla 193:17</p> <p>variable 103:13 161:7</p> <p>variance 163:18</p> <p>variants 126:13</p> <p>variation 91:18 205:7</p> <p>variations 64:8 128:18,20 181:17 205:5</p> <p>varied 199:3 242:7</p> <p>varies 92:5</p> <p>variety 41:18,19 59:8 77:14 81:22 97:19 128:3 144:8 160:3 174:6 208:14 243:16</p> <p>various 21:1,7 36:9,17 74:10 128:10 134:7 143:17 144:22 167:9 174:4 182:2 184:9 195:8 238:17</p> <p>vary 56:1,5 199:14 201:12 202:6,8 210:15 221:22 222:1</p> <p>varying 157:14</p> <p>vast 27:17 28:7</p>	<p>vein 36:1</p> <p>vendors 23:14</p> <p>verbal 14:10 70:3 73:14 77:22 119:10,11 205:12 210:2</p> <p>verify 67:9</p> <p>Vermont 16:16 50:5 51:5,7 125:14</p> <p>versa 89:18</p> <p>version 73:9 77:10 79:18</p> <p>versions 73:9,11</p> <p>versus 63:13 74:1 112:9 149:14 153:13 185:16 204:2 220:8 221:3</p> <p>via 252:6</p> <p>viable 20:22</p> <p>vibrate 15:1</p> <p>vice 89:18</p> <p>video 146:1,8 147:13 226:6</p> <p>Vietnamese 30:11</p> <p>view 83:22 108:19</p> <p>viewed 105:2</p> <p>viewpoints 15:5</p> <p>vignette 187:17</p> <p>Viji 16:17 112:17 115:10 128:13,16</p> <p>Viji's 193:5</p> <p>violate 118:5 127:9</p> <p>violated 118:17</p>
--	---	---	--

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 56

vision 20:15 208:2 221:10	148:7 150:7 151:10 159:1 163:6 169:6,17 180:12 195:14 199:19 201:13 208:17 216:12 220:7 227:22 228:21 231:2 233:5 234:19 240:10	83:13,15 87:16 203:15 205:9 206:20 218:5 220:22 245:6 Wendy's 86:13 221:22 we're 3:16 6:4 7:1,10 9:1,22 11:1,6 15:10,20 22:7 25:1,5,6,11 26:22 34:5,22 35:3 37:4,7 38:6 39:3,8,12,21 40:6 45:13,15,18 46:4,5,14,18 47:1,3,18 48:21 50:13,21 51:18 52:22 54:20 55:1 57:20 61:12 64:2,5,6,8,16 68:8,11,12,16 69:19 70:19 72:2,7 73:8 74:16,17,18 75:12,13 76:2,6,11,13 77:20 78:8 79:8 80:13 82:11,16 85:1,3 86:8 88:13,14 89:15 104:22 105:1,7 107:12 110:6 111:20 115:12 116:20,21 118:18 120:11 125:7 126:15 127:10,17 128:7,9,15 131:17 137:20 138:3,6,22 139:4 140:13 141:10 146:3,4 147:12 148:15 156:15 169:2 172:7	173:1 174:10,18 175:4,8 176:4,12,13,15 178:9,12 183:6,7,8,18 184:10,21 185:18 197:9 214:8 229:5,6,9,15,16 231:22 232:14 237:20 238:16 241:21 243:18 245:3,5 west 135:20 WestEd 8:13 we've 3:18 5:9 10:8 11:11,16 15:18 20:15 21:2 24:7 25:19 28:22 32:18 54:12 57:1 64:4,20 66:15 67:5 70:6 71:11 72:8 73:5,7 82:19 83:18 84:4,10 85:2 87:4 94:14 105:17,21 108:15 110:13 117:14 121:4 127:7 136:6 154:15 159:21 181:19 182:20 211:14 212:10 214:12 222:11 236:16 239:7,12 244:3 whatever 39:3 40:7 85:16 88:15 108:1 121:6 137:10 150:10 188:1 194:15 201:15,21 202:9 245:4
<hr/> W <hr/>	weaknesses 56:10 182:10 wealth 151:1 wear 31:21 wearing 139:15 Webb 197:5 website 15:1 70:9 250:5 websites 144:17 we'd 69:6 109:15 186:19 214:10 Wednesday 1:8 weeks 67:1 70:13 welcome 3:4,6 141:4 we'll 4:13 5:6,8 11:7,19,20,21 12:12,15,17 13:20,22 14:6 16:10 21:20 24:15 68:20 69:14 70:13 130:11 140:14,17 150:17 214:18 225:11 229:18 236:18 251:4 well-specified 228:17 Wendy 16:17		
visual 77:11 84:13,16 86:22 181:11 203:4 207:4,14 226:11			
visualize 211:19 212:4			
visually 189:15 206:19 215:15			
visuals 86:20			
vocabulary 116:7			
voice 73:16 215:15 217:21 227:3,5			
voices 224:22 225:5,16 227:4,11			
wait 117:12 125:9 177:8			
walk 4:12 249:16			
Wall 12:3			
wallet 187:20			
war 215:13 222:7			
warning 229:15			
Washington 1:10			
wasn't 129:15 142:8 249:6,9			
wave 33:15			
ways 35:19,22 36:8,9 38:14 43:5 59:20 60:10,13 62:10 84:11,21 88:2 94:15 127:5 133:9 141:18 143:4 144:8,20,21			

Capital Reporting Company
 U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011
 Page 57

<p>whatsoever 54:14</p> <p>whenever 45:16</p> <p>Whereupon 68:21 140:20 251:14</p> <p>wherever 76:2 194:7 219:14</p> <p>whether 6:16 40:4,6 45:10 48:12 73:8 79:4 93:22 94:18 98:14,21,22 99:1 109:20 112:4 118:16 120:5 129:19 150:3 153:2 168:11 197:1,6 203:6 205:1 212:18,19 217:7,8 219:13 220:19</p> <p>whip 105:10</p> <p>whoever 213:17 250:19</p> <p>whole 62:17 73:9 78:4 156:17 158:7 164:17 179:10 186:21 187:2 196:10 198:19,21 200:7 209:13 211:18 241:20</p> <p>whom 141:17 150:22 252:2</p> <p>who's 5:10 13:16 32:2 51:12 63:13 65:19 67:5,18 84:13 108:12,22 188:14 203:20 204:5,11 221:7 242:10,11 246:2</p> <p>whose 54:13 252:4</p> <p>who've 242:1</p>	<p>247:10</p> <p>wide 15:5 81:22</p> <p>width 226:5,10</p> <p>Wiener 17:4 56:17 217:2,15</p> <p>Wii 120:17</p> <p>William 6:5</p> <p>Williams 17:2 61:4 108:9 138:11 189:5,22</p> <p>Willy 55:6 83:14 91:2 93:16 119:17 121:12 130:17 134:5 156:10 199:16,17 200:10 203:15 212:22 215:5 223:11 232:17 234:4</p> <p>Willy's 203:16</p> <p>windows 180:4,5</p> <p>Winston 214:14 215:10 217:16 222:6</p> <p>wire 226:18</p> <p>Wisconsin 2:17 13:1 16:19</p> <p>wish 50:5</p> <p>witness 252:4,6,9</p> <p>witnessed 138:19</p> <p>woman 205:20</p> <p>women's 16:5</p> <p>wonder 64:3,18</p> <p>wonderful 32:22 89:9 112:11 140:1 239:4</p>	<p>Wonders 177:3</p> <p>wood 201:4</p> <p>wording 43:20</p> <p>wordsmith 185:19</p> <p>work 4:8 6:6 11:3,12 15:12,15 22:20 23:16 26:14 31:8 38:5 39:15 40:9 43:4 48:6 50:19 55:19 74:5 83:16 87:3 93:1 94:9 95:11 111:10 116:4 120:2 121:20 122:1,15 123:1 129:6 138:6 142:5 151:5 174:3 180:12 190:12 218:7,17 226:18 227:16 228:7 235:18 237:2 239:17,19,20 242:16 244:15</p> <p>worked 157:16 197:5</p> <p>Workgroup 17:14 18:13 20:9 114:20,21,22 153:3</p> <p>workgroups 18:6 37:22</p> <p>working 5:16 6:2 8:19 9:18 10:3 18:20 20:14 22:13,14,18,21 23:10,12,19,22 24:15 25:1,2,3,5,6,7,9, 10 43:8 45:18 57:13 63:5 70:19 94:1 110:1</p>	<p>114:19 137:15 142:11 147:12 153:4 155:4 159:3,5 203:9 206:4 226:7 237:7,8 239:13</p> <p>works 99:19,21 124:6 126:7,18 127:3,5 149:19 225:7 247:4</p> <p>world 54:15 197:16 222:7</p> <p>worried 155:12</p> <p>worries 86:11</p> <p>worry 48:14 158:9</p> <p>worrying 85:18,19</p> <p>worst 122:19</p> <p>worth 8:14 155:5</p> <p>Wow 53:8</p> <p>wrap 12:17</p> <p>wrap-up 247:8</p> <p>wrestled 87:11</p> <p>wrestling 86:17</p> <p>writ 82:20</p> <p>write 11:5 13:17 123:10 131:12 133:14 191:6 207:12</p> <p>writers 123:10 131:11 202:5</p> <p>writing 39:18 40:2,10 45:11 122:13,14 190:14</p> <p>written 69:6 123:12 218:19 231:10 251:10</p> <p>wrong 41:10</p>
--	--	--	---

Capital Reporting Company

U.S. Dept. of Education - Race to the Top Assessment 08-10-2011

Page 58

<p>130:10,11 135:17,21 136:2 150:4,5 162:12 241:8</p> <p>www.ncme.org 231:13</p> <hr/> <p>Y</p> <p>Yahoo 239:1</p> <p>yet 10:9 49:9 89:11 106:5 136:9,10 203:8 207:3 250:12</p> <p>yield 19:20</p> <p>yields 19:12</p> <p>Yikes 111:1</p> <p>York 30:1</p> <p>you'll 12:5 14:12 33:16 129:22 137:5 174:18 177:2 178:14 251:5</p> <p>younger 110:8</p> <p>yourself 36:21</p> <p>yourselves 241:3</p> <p>you've 16:4 31:5,8 66:16 95:13 152:6 179:6</p> <hr/> <p>Z</p> <p>zero 208:7</p> <p>zone 52:8</p>			
---	--	--	--