



U.S. Department of Education

Race to the Top Assessment Public Meeting on Creating Valid, Reliable, and Fair Assessments for Students with Disabilities and English Learners

August 10, 2011

Written Public Comment

Name: \_\_Maria Ramirez\_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_NYC Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_

*Please write your comment or question below:*

What supports will the U.S. Department of Education provide the states to upgrade the technology needed for test practice and testing?

Will states be required the use of specific technology (i.e., iPads, laptops) in the same way that are required uniform ELA and math tests/assessments?

Will the U.S. Department of Education allow individual states to unexpectedly change ELL exemptions right before testing administration? Sometimes this happens on a yearly basis. Is there a correlation between testing exemptions and testing accommodations?

How will accurate math test translations be guaranteed (by language) in computer based testing for ELLs? In computer adaptive tests?



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Name: \_\_Douglas Levin\_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_State Educational Technology Directors Association\_\_\_\_\_

*Please write your comment or question below:*

In her opening remarks introducing the PARCC approach to addressing the needs of all students, Ms. Alley of the Arizona Department of Education suggested that states participating in that consortium may administer the PARCC assessment via paper and pencil and not via technology. If true, the intent to develop next-generation assessments for two modes of administration would seem to add complexity, cost, and comparability issues at the opportunity cost of power of technology to dynamically address the needs of all students. In addition, this statement seems to be premature given that the PARCC consortium (in concert with other multi-state assessment consortia) is on the verge of developing and launching a technology readiness tool to assist states, districts, and schools close the gap between their current technology infrastructure and what they will need by 2014-15 to participate in the assessment's first administration. Can a PARCC representative please comment on the accuracy of this statement and the pros and cons of this approach for initial administration in 2014 and over time?



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Name: Kimberly O'Malley, Ph.D.

Organization: Pearson

*Please write your comment or question below:*

In all of these discussions about English learners, we are not focusing enough on reporting. Developing assessments that yield scores for English learners that inform about ELs' learning and progress in English proficiency and academic content is just the first step to information that improves learning for our ELs. If our assessments are to impact student learning, we must communicate information from assessments in ways that can be understood and used by educators and parents of all ELs. Currently, most states report students' performance and progress in learning English separately from students' academic performance and progress. We expect our educators and parents (most of whom are also ELs) to be able to put the scores from separate reports on separate constructs together in meaningful ways. We must do a better job of making meaning of the different scores for ELs. The separate reporting and lack of information connecting scores for our ELs is a roadblock for translating assessment information into instructional and learning decisions.

Some strategies to improve reporting include:

1. Report scores for ELs in one place
2. Report scores over time for our ELs so progress can be understood
3. Report assessment information and interpretive guides in multiple languages (the language of the student and parent)
4. Provide rich interpretive information and training using multiple modes (paper, online, video) about how different scores work together to describe how ELs are learning English and academic content on their paths to college and career



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Name: \_\_\_Karmen Rouland\_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_edCount, LLC\_\_\_\_\_

*Please write your comment or question below:*

How are students with severe cognitive disabilities going to be assessed? What are evidenced-based approaches to this and what are the plans being made?



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Name: \_\_\_ Colleen Anderson \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_ Iowa Department of Education \_\_\_\_\_

*Please write your comment or question below:*

The ELL RFP asks that each consortium of states develop a common set of standards. These standards should define the learner and the anticipated outcomes. Since the states participating in these consortia will crossover to both SBAC & PARCC would it not best serve ELLs to use the same set of standards no matter which ELL Assessment consortia the state belongs? Also, would it not benefit all states to have an independent agency facilitate the development of the common ELL standards, such as what CCSSO did with the CCSS?



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Name: \_\_\_Dr. Rossana Boyd\_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_National Association for Bilingual Education and the University of North Texas\_\_\_\_\_

*Please write your comment or question below:*

Spanish language tests were not addressed but it is crucial to also develop math, science, and Spanish language arts exams in Spanish for ELL students who are at the beginning level of English language proficiency. This is if the student has had formal schooling in his/erh native language.

The tests have to be normed with ELL students in the continental U.S. for validity and reliability.