**Nebraska Technical Advisory Committee Meeting**

**Nebraska Department of Education**

**October 3-4, 2023**

**8:30-4:00**

**8:30 a.m. Welcome & Introductions (Trudy**

Present: Chad Buckendahl, Josh Fields, Christy Hovanetz, Jeff Nellhaus, Linda Poole

**8:45 a.m. Approve Minutes (Chair, Chad Buckendahl, Document 1)** Minutes approved

**8:50 a.m. Dr. Maher, Nebraska Commissioner of Education [not recorded]**

Discussed state board of education expectation of him regarding statewide assessment. Guidance from TAC:

* Identify purpose and goals of accountability and statewide assessment (from Maher: what do we need to do and what should we do)
* Identify the desired outcomes from accountability and what systems of measurement can be put in place to collect data for outcomes – provide support to the districts that are at a lower performance level
* Identify the role of the state in providing testing options – minimal or more engaged
* Streamline system to provide what is required – listen to districts
* Think about systems rather than system

**9:20 a.m. Dr. Derek Ippensen and Dr. Shirley Vargas**

*Document 2: PowerPoint: 2023 Classification and Designation Business Rules*

* *What are the consequences of changing the Status cut scores?*

**TAC:** Every state that has seen changes in status cut scores, they have adjusted the accountability system to reflect the change. Do not want a system that over identifies districts. Run the numbers to see how many schools this impacts. If changes are made, be transparent.

* *Are these processes and procedures clear?*

**TAC:** If districts given the data file, would they be able to follow procedures to arrive at same decisions? Consider whether districts can replicate it. It would be helpful to clarify terms so board of education can understand. Go back to the basic on federal requirements, especially post-pandemic. There isn’t agreement on what the indicators should be. Only indicators can agree on: reading, math, science and growth. Post high school measures is a “hot topic”. Challenge for these is making value judgements on career choices made by students.

* *What feedback do you have for us regarding these rules?*

**TAC**: States change assessment when they change accountability systems. Run the numbers to see what changes happen. Evaluate the impact of changes in the systems. The field needs a broader understanding of how they can impact the system. Use common language and communication to make accountability more user-friendly. Would more schools be identified for support if you didn’t focus on the 5%? This is the time to make a more transparent accountability system.

* *What questions do you have regarding these rules?*

**TAC:** How do schools demonstrate growth? **NDE** 1 point

**10:30 a.m. Break**

**10:45 a.m. NWEA**

*Document 3: PowerPoint: Proposed Data Forensic Analytic Procedures for NSCAS*

* *Are these proposed analytic procedures psychometrically sound and reasonable?*

**TAC:** Questioned why using p-value rather than Rasch metric since it is less sample dependent given this is a computer-adaptive test. Ensure if items are flagged there is a reasonable path to follow regarding how to address the concerns. It is also dependent on sample characteristics. The analyses of distribution changes, rapid response analysis to identify potential scores that may need to be invalidated, and the item drift analysis make sense. Suggestion: monitor what some of the newer methods for adaptive testing are due to the nature of the test. The vertical scale could allow you to make some assumptions of how a student moves from year to year across the scale.

* *Are there additional analyses TAC would like to recommend?*

**TAC:** Perhaps do additional analysis as to why numbers of examinees and mean fluctuate as they do in last two weeks of testing and which students are involved. School choice of testing week impacts this measurement. Look at trend data (completing this work again 2023-24) to identify trends in larger districts by grade level and content. As a policy consideration, perhaps the elementary does not need seven weeks of testing window. Also consider looking at those who take a very long time to respond, rather than just rapid responses. May indicate a different concern like proctors helping students. How does the adaptive nature of NSCAS Growth play a role in these analytics? Clarification that only on-grade level items are part of the analysis cited. Suggestion: monitor what some of the newer methods for adaptive testing are due to the nature of the test. The vertical scale could allow you to make some assumptions of how a student moves from year to year across the scale.

**12:00 p.m. LUNCH**

**1:00 p.m. Dr. Jenny Kao, Psychometrics and Research Manager, and Cathryn Still, Executive Director, ELPA21 (Cambium) [zoom presentation]**

*Document 4: PowerPoint: ELPA21: English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century*

The TAC requested clarification on linguistic processes since this was submitted as evidence for Critical Element 3.2. The TAC requested clarification on how they conducted domain correlation matrices (i.e., what is correlated?). Does your data show the exiting EL students perform as well, better, or not as well as their peers who are not ELs? Generally, the former EL does better than the never EL, usually in ELA. Confirmed by another study using OH data. When did you conduct standard setting, has it been revisited or is this something you are considering? All this is connected to original question about the research agenda. ELPA21 is evaluating their cut scores. TAC requested a description of the ALT ELPA. Asked for peer review results for ALT ELPA – will submit in December 2024.

**2:00 Break**

**2:15-3:45 p.m. DRC**

*Document 5: PowerPoint: Nebraska NSCAS-AA Standard Settings and Validations 2023 & 2024*

*Document 6: Nebraska NSCAS Alternate Cut Scores: ELA Standard Setting & Science Standards Validation*

1. *Does the four-step standard setting process still seem reasonable for ELA and math in 2024?*

**TAC:** No concerns. Pay attention to number (i.e., 14-16 participants) and geographic representation.

1. *Should there be any changes to the benchmarks used for future workshops, or changes to the way they are presented?*

**TAC:** Any external data used, like NAEP? Have not, but the general education population was used. Other measures may not be comparable. State’s own data more valuable.

1. *For standards validations, what proportion of the committee should be new?*

**TAC**: See some value for bringing back previous participants. Provide framing for returning participants in that they can change their recommendations given new information. Limit to no more than 50%. Is ok with slightly smaller panel (i.e., 10-12). Still want to have familiarity of content, grade levels, and student population.

**3:45 Next Meeting and Adjournment**

**Wednesday:**

**9:00 a.m. Dr. Trudy K Clark, Nebraska Department of Education**

*Document 7: Education Week: States Eye Assessment Throughout the Year as Frustration with Standardized Testing Mounts*

1. What questions should the department be asking and evaluating as it relates to its statewide assessment program?

**TAC:** What is the State’s philosophy? Think about building the accountability system then figure out the assessment pieces making it more transparent. What are you trying to accomplish? Is it assessment for learning or assessment of learning? How is what you are doing connected to accountability?

1. What are you hearing regarding through-year assessment in other states?

**TAC:** The Center of Assessment is writing articles. The jury is still out on what the federal government will accept for proficiency. Identifying the “why” states are moving to the system and the purpose are key. Consider this as the newest thing. Must be clear on what they problem they are trying to solve.

1. Summative – “at” or “by” the end of the year. Other through-year designs appear to have a “by the end of the year” definition of summative. Are there circumstances that could result in a valid proficiency score for a student from a fall and a winter NSCAS Growth test administration?

**TAC:** There may not be a definitive answer here. Depends on how the federal government interprets “summative”. There are some issues with validating results at the end of the year if a student does not take the test in the spring, but there is a winter test. What does this say about the system? To make that summative judgment, you would need to have the same test and you would need to look for consistency and progression. If the student is not proficient in the fall, but proficient in the winter, would need to look at standard error. Run the risk of determining a student proficient who is not and then the student not receiving supports they need. Standard setting is based on content students had learned for the year.

1. To be a participant, would all students need to test in all three test administrations? Scott Marion & Allison Timberlake mentioned this as a concern, specifically around mobility of students under a through-year design. What business rules should be in place to be sure participation is not a question for federal compliance?

**TAC:** Wherever the student took the test in the spring would have the student as a participant.

1. How should the state’s accountability system be factored into discussions about the design of the statewide assessment system?

**TAC:** Two departments should collaborate to move forward. Think about how growth is defined: what does it mean, how much is enough, is the model sensitive enough to measure it. If Nebraska continues to have a vertical scale that should permit some detection if scale is sufficiently robust. Know that movement along ability continuum is what we want for all students. Options for showing growth: normative (comparing like students – comparing growth percentiles); criterion based and awarding points in an accountability system that are meaningful to students (i.e., increasing their relative position within an achievement level). Districts need to know what performance expectations.

Keep light touch throughout year and if systems are not serving students well, take action to support them. Assessment and accountability are a cycle. The accountability system tells you where there has been success and where there is need for support.