

Technical Advisory Committee
Nebraska Department of Education
April 24, 2013

Nebraska Department of Education, Lincoln, NE 3:00-4:00 pm (CST)
V-TEL Videoconference Meeting

Video Conference Locations:

- Nebraska Dept. of Education, 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln NE, 6th floor, V-tel room (NDE Statewide Assessment staff and Harwood)
- 45 Columbus Ave., New York City, NY (Camara)
- 500 ACT Drive, Iowa City, IA (Sawyer)
- 31 Mount Vernon St., Dover, NH (Gong)
- 6949 So. 110th ST., Omaha NE (Poole)
- 1126 NW 29th St., Corvallis OR (Auty)

3:00 PM Welcome and Introductions- Valorie

3:05 PM Approve Minutes – Brian
Minutes Attached

3:05-4:00 PM Update: Nebraska State Accountability [NeSA]-Writing 2012-2013 Valorie

The 2012-2013 NeSA- Writing testing window took place January 21 through February 8, 2013. The test engine on the writing test caused some formatting errors for students in grades eight and eleven. NDE did receive reports of considerable frustration on the part of some students due to the formatting. The on-line issue was not resolved over the course of the three-week window. For the evaluation of the essays, Data Recognition Corporation [DRC] created a training packet and trained the DRC graders for a “fifth domain,” in which the essay evaluators indicated for each essay if a formatting error appeared. The “fifth domain” did not contribute to the essay’s score but merely serve as identification of essays that had formatting errors. Graders were directed to evaluate the essays without penalizing students for any formatting errors, and if any grader had a problem in evaluating a particular essay due to formatting errors to pass the essay to a team leader. “Presentation” is not a domain by which essays have ever been evaluated on NeSA-Writing. The percentage of essays that received a flag from both graders indicating formatting errors is 45.3% at eighth grade and 42.6% at eleventh grade. The following decisions have been made by NDE:

- To release the NeSA-Writing scores.
- To indicate on the score release reports and on the State of the Schools Report that formatting issues occurred in the on-line engine at grades 8 and 11.
- To **not** include the NeSA-W status scores for grades 8 and 11 in Nebraska Performance Accountability System [NePAS].
- To **not** include the NeSA-W scores in improvement for grades 8 and 11 in NePAS for the 2013 State of the Schools Report.

Documents Attached

- DRC Training Packet
- NeSA Writing 2013 – Formatting Analysis by Bill Auty
- Sample emails from school districts

Question: Have any TAC members had a similar experience in testing that could inform this situation, where students experienced frustration due to the on-line engine not performing correctly? What suggestions does the TAC have for informing districts and the public about the situation with the writing scores? What recommendations does TAC have in regard to using the 2012-2013 scores in comparison to the 2013-2014 scores to measure improvement? Would the improvement in school district scores for grades 8 and 11 in 2012 and for grades 8 and 11 in 2014 be a acceptable measure of improvement? Grade 4 scores for improvement would compare 2013 and 2014. Have TAC members had experience with procedure for payment for the on-line services to a company where such a situation arose that could inform NDE's decision on payment?