

Technical Advisory Committee  
Nebraska Department of Education  
Minutes June 30, 2015  
Cornhusker Marriott Hotel Lincoln, NE 8:30 am-3:00 pm Agenda

8:30 AM Welcome and Introductions- Valorie

Approve Minutes of December 9, 2014– Approved

NeSA-Writing Validation –

*Question: Should the Nebraska Department of Education have an independent validation conducted of the NeSA-Writing scoring, or do the current internal DRC processes suffice? If external validation is needed, what recommendations does TAC have for the type and frequency of the validation?*

**TAC determined that the process used by DRC is consistent with best practice and that inclusion of a state verification opportunity is rare among states on statewide tests. Declines in grade 8 and 11 scores in the future might indicate a problem in validity, but current practices by DRC are satisfactory. It was suggested that essays submitted for verification be also considered for lowering score, thus assuring essays that are submitted for verification do have potential to be increased (discouraging educators submitting essays as a “nothing to lose” situation. )**

**AQuESTT Classification Component**

*Question: What recommendations can TAC give as input into the current AQuESTT raw classification component?*

TAC made the following comments or suggestions:

- Use average Z scores instead of scale scores.
- Include number of test scores in report.
- Continue present plan for high school graduation limitation as it does not appear to affect high schools to the degree that they are overrepresented in the lower classification levels.
- Continue to monitor volatility of the classification.
- Continue to report NCLB-required subgroups, along with including the supergroup of students identified as “non-proficient.”
- Make Improvement and growth more visible.
- Continue with decision of Task Force to not use All-Time Best for a graduation measure.

**Question: What recommendations can TAC give as input into the development of the broader AQuESTT classification model for school and district performance?**

**TAC noted that:**

- Classification systems s ever evolving.
- The vision of AQuESTT focuses on indicators beyond assessment.
- There are pieces of the educational process that would be beneficial to incentivize.
- Gap-analysis becomes important—schools are busy and a lot of information is available from schools. The gap analysis would show us where NDE needs more information in order to strategically align the department to better support schools.
- Becoming too comprehensive too quickly creates a communication issue. TAC suggests pilot testing this process with just my level 1 schools this year and learn from that before implementing it with all Nebraska schools.
- It is important ot gather educators feedback, moving forward
- Schools identified as priority schools need to have clue, capacity, commitment.

**Nebraska State Accountability Reading and Writing transition to English Language Arts**

**Questions:**

- *Does TAC have any recommendations on the proposed item types and overall test design?*
- *What is TAC's experience with Text-Dependent Analysis? Can TAC give a recommendation for the lowest grade level at which students can successfully participate in TDA? Can TAC give a recommendation for the lowest grade level at which students can successfully participate in TDA? Online?*
- *Does TAC have suggestions for the proposed third and fourth-grade Test- Dependent Analysis field test or analysis of results?*
- *Third and fourth grade will have a three-year transition rather than two-year transition proposed for grades 5-8 and 11.*
  - O Can NDE maintain the reading scale at grades 3 and 4 for 2016 and 2017?*
  - O Does standard setting have to be conducted in 2017 and in 2018 at grades 3 and 4?*
  - O Are there alternatives to having two standard settings?*
- *Can and should the current scale 200-point scale be maintained over the course of the transition and used for the 2017 NeSA-ELA assessment?*
- *By what method can NDE reasonably predict the drop in NeSA scores in order to better prepare educators, the public, and policy makers?*

**TAC asked some questions about the test designs for English Language Arts and commented:**

- The information on the test design points to a thinner assessment of writing than what NDE currently has. Maybe that's what it is intended to do but what NDE is doing is requiring the longer ELA test in every grade. If NDE scales them together, then reporting them separately gives limited use.
- Case could be made for maintaining the scale.
- Scores could be reported in three domains.
- Number of independent points is too thin.
- It appears students will need more time.
- If unique score points fall under 40, it is cause for concern. 65-80 may be recommended probably since Nebraska is not doing an adaptive test.

- If the writing assessment goes away and the TDA is the only evidence of writing proficiency, consider what impact NDE will see on overall writing instruction and curriculum. What gets tested get the focus of the instruction.
- Some states give little to no feedback on text-dependent analysis task. NDE should map against the domain of the standards.
- If NDE has enough money, do more field tests.
- NDE should worry less about the technology and more about whether keyboarding is being taught.
- Setting standards two times in two years is something NDE should avoid. NDE could do a standards validation. Scale once and then do a validation.

### **ACT/NeSA Regression Analysis**

**Question:** *What recommendations can TAC give as input into the planned regression study of ACT and NeSA scores?*

- Regression is one way to do the study. It's just important to use it for the right purpose.
- Do a correlation study between the two assessments.
- The proposal to report as intervals is a good one. The variations of students around regression is very important.
- NDE would need to show that the schools included in the ACT pilot are representative of the state.
- This study could address student motivation some, but there are other studies that would do that better. NDE might want to design some additional studies to address that.

### **Procedural Change for release of Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA) Data**

**Question:** *Can TAC provide comment on Nebraska changing its process? What might be unforeseen consequences?*

- Release of data is a media event. As it stands now, schools can refer the media to the state. However, by releasing to schools earlier, districts will have to deal with media.
- Make sure districts know the rules and the timeline.
- A statement needs to come out with the release to help districts know how to handle it.