



Vision

All students in Colorado will become educated and productive citizens capable of succeeding in society, the workforce, and life.

Goals

Every student, every step of the way

ESSA Assessment Spoke Committee October 25, 2106 – Meeting Minutes

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Colorado Department of Education, 201 E. Colfax Avenue, Denver, CO 80203 (Board Room)

Welcome and Introductions

Attendees: Lisa Berdie, Floyd Cobb, Kemberlea Ellis, Lori Goldstein, Tony Lewis, Reilly Pharo Carter, Remy Rummel. CDE staff: Christina Wirth-Hawkins, Collin Bonner.

By Phone: Carol Eaton, Shawna Fritzler, Greg Hesse, Nancy Holman, Cheri Kiesecker, Jacque Law, Timalyn O’Neill, Dan Snowberger, Ilana Spiegel, Kevin Taulman, Johan van Nieuwenhuizen.

Guests: Stephanie Boyd (CDE Assessment Consultant), Marie Huchton (CDE Principal Statistical Consultant), Monica Zuniga (EL educator), Paulina Hanson (EL educator), By Phone: Debora Scheffel (Board member).

- **Review of Committee Minutes for October 11, 2016 and October 20, 2016.**
 - The minutes of October 11 and October 20 were approved as submitted.
- **Discussion of Section F of ESSA Assessment State Plan: Languages Other than English**
 - Assessment State Plan Requirements for Languages other than English
 - Provide the SEA’s definition of “languages other than English that are present to a significant extent in the participating student population,” and identify the specific languages that meet that definition.
 - Identify any existing assessments in languages other than English, and specify for which grades and content areas those assessments are available.
 - Indicate the languages other than English...for which yearly student academic assessments are not available and needed.
 - Describe how the SEA will make every effort to develop assessments in languages other than English that are present to a significant extent in the participating population including by providing:
 - State’s plan and timeline for developing
 - A description of the process used to gather meaningful input on assessments in languages other than English, collect and respond to public comment and consult with educators, parents and families of ELs, and other stakeholders
 - As applicable, an explanation of the reasons why state has not completed development...
- **Accommodations for English Learners**
 - A list of common Accessibility Features currently available in Colorado ELA/Math assessments was presented along with a discussion of the role of “appropriate accommodations” and what they are “not” intended to provide. Specific linguistic accommodations for English learners were also discussed.

- **Colorado Spanish Language Arts Assessment (CSLA)**
 - A Spanish language arts assessment is available in Colorado to eligible third and fourth grade English Learners who have received instruction in Spanish language arts in the last year. Last year the CSLA cost approximately \$1.5 million for development and administration.
 - It was noted that this is not a language proficiency assessment, like ACCESS for ELLs, but rather is concerned with academic content and mastery of standards expectations.

- **Legal Requirements and Office of Civil Rights Precedent**
 - Discussed translation of state assessments into languages other than English in relation to Title VI of The Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d) and the U.S. Department of Justice’s (DOJ) Title VI regulations at 49 CFR Part 21.
 - Discussed drawing from a civil rights precedent of 5% or 1,000 persons, whichever is less, of the LEP population eligible to be served or likely to be affected [by a particular service or product] to identify the languages other than English that constitute “significant extent in the participating student population...” and for which grade specific tests should be made available by the state.

- **Numbers and Percent of English Learners by Language Group**
 - When considering numbers and percentages of English learners, it is important to specify the difference between “important” versus “significant extent”. Another factor is the difference between “spoken language” versus “written language” and also the student’s “home language” (language spoken primarily at home) versus “academic language” (used at school for instruction). For instance, a student may speak his native language at home but learn to read and write only in English.
 - The numbers of English learners in Colorado for the top 12 home languages of students in grades K-12 were presented in a PowerPoint presentation. Pulled from the 2015-2016 Student October Count data collection, the table included the number of English Learners (NEP and LEP students only), from each language group and the associated percentages of each language group in relation to all English Learners and to the total student population. Spanish accounted for about 84.8 percent of the English Learner population across grades K-12 and about 10.3 percent of the total student population. The second through twelfth highest language populations each accounted for between 0.3 and 1.4 of the English learner population and 0.04 and 0.2 of the total student population.
 - The state provides accommodations for English learners, including the following L1 accommodations:
 - Fully translated/transadapted Spanish assessments in content areas other than ELA (a Spanish language assessment is available for eligible students in grades 3 and 4).
 - Word-to-word glossaries (available to students of all language backgrounds when taking the assessments)
 - Translated directions (available in the top 10 languages of the PARCC consortium for CMAS ELA and math assessments)
 - Local translation of assessments for students who speak languages other than English or Spanish and who have received instruction in that language in the last year (provided locally by districts/schools)
 - **Committee Discussion**
 - Provide the directions in a variety of languages (top 10): Would there be someone in the district who could adequately read an unfamiliar language – even if only for directions? CDE reviews all elements of the assessments, including reading of the directions; there are limited resources at CDE to properly review a variety of languages.
 - A comment was made that the testing environment should reflect the instructional environment. For example, a student receiving science instruction only in English would likely not be familiar with scientific words presented on the assessment in a language other than English, even if that language was spoken at home. Reading assessment directions in a native language may be challenging if directions in the classroom are not typically made in the native language.
 - A suggestion was made to hold testing until a student reaches a certain level in ACCESS. Last year, districts made determinations about whether or not to test first year in U.S. English learners.
 - This is an important issue because of the impact it has on accountability and teacher evaluations.

- It was asked, “What responsibility does the state have for smaller numbers and percentages of students with non-English home languages but that are concentrated in a single or small group of districts?” Would like more data at the district or school level.
 - **Decision Point:** No decision was made regarding the committee’s recommendation for which languages Colorado should consider “significant extent” in terms of languages other than English that are present in the participating student population. Awaiting further data.
- **First Year in U.S. Accountability** (presenter was Marie Huchton from the Accountability and Data Analysis Unit)
 - **Federal Statute 111(b)(3)(A): Testing 1st Year in U.S. ELs**
 - **“recently arrived English learners who have been enrolled in a school in one of the 50 States in the United States or the District of Columbia for less than 12 months may choose to—**
 - (i) **exclude—**(I) such an English learner from one administration of the reading or language arts assessment... and (II) such an English learner’s results... for the first year of the English learner’s enrollment in such school for the purposes of the State-determined accountability system...” **OR**
 - (ii)(I) **assess**, and report the performance of, such an English learner on the reading or language arts and mathematics assessments... in each year of the student’s enrollment in such a school; and (II) for the purposes of the state accountability system—(aa) for the first year of the student’s enrollment in such a school, exclude the results on the assessments... (bb) include a measure of student growth on the assessments... in the second year of the student’s enrollment in such a school; and (cc) include proficiency on the assessments... in the third year of the student’s enrollment in such a school, and each succeeding year of such enrollment.”
 - **Decision Point**
 - Starting last year, local districts could decide which actions to take on excluding or assessing their first year in U.S. students. Through their actions of testing newcomer ELs in 2016, the majority of districts appear to be indicating they want informational ELA data for 1st year students, growth results reported for accountability during the 2nd year, and ELA achievement results reported for accountability in the 3rd year.
 - Under ESSA, there needs to be a state-wide policy regarding this issue.
 - **ESSA requires consistent decision making across the state regarding first year in U.S. English learners taking the English language arts assessment.**
 - **CO could:**
 - Require all first year in U.S. English learners to take the English language arts assessment
 - Exempt all first year in U.S. English learners from taking the English language arts assessment
 - Develop consistent guidelines regarding which first year in U.S. English learners would take the English language arts assessment and which would not.
 - Current year ACCESS for ELLs proficiency assessment results are not available in time to register students for the CMAS assessments.
 - **Committee Discussion**
 - The effect of taking an English assessment on the individual NEP student varies.
 - A suggestion was made to exempt all NEPs but allow parents to opt-in their NEP student.
 - A district may be incentivized to encourage all NEPs to test because of the increase in “growth” that is shown in the 2nd and 3rd years.
 - “Hoppers” – how to handle the date in the U.S. for students who travel back and forth; difficult to determine consecutive time in U.S.
 - Body of Evidence: What qualifies as appropriate body of evidence to decide who should or should not take the assessment? The WIDA Screener, local teacher observation, nationally normed district/school assessments? A suggestion was made to provide a flow chart of possible inputs.
 - Important to have family participation in the decision.

- The next meeting will be held on November 14, 2016, 12:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.