Assessment Validation in the Midst of Change

Presentation for the Reidy Interactive Lecture Series (RILS)

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The Only Thing Constant is Change…

Recent changes in K-12 assessment programs:

- 16 states changed assessment programs

  - 10 changed from Common Core assessments to custom assessments or SAT/ACT;
  - 6 are making changes to their existing assessment programs;

- 12 states changed testing vendors;

- 8 states transitioned from paper-and-pencil to online assessments; and

- 5 states shortened their tests.

Source: Survey to 21 states by CCSSO in April 2018

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The Only Thing Constant is Change…

Other assessment changes:

- New science and/or social studies assessments;

- Removal of performance tasks;

- Shift from untimed to timed tests;

- Change to 100% machine scoring;

- Added writing tasks; or

- Transition from end-of-course model.

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Why Change?

- Shorter testing time

- Faster score reporting

- Assessment results need to serve multiple purposes:

  – inform instruction or interventions;

  – measure student progress;

  – determine readiness for college and careers;

  – evaluate teacher effectiveness; and/or,

  – use in school accountability.

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Need for Speed

Months vs. years for transition to new program

- determine assessed content standards;

- develop item/test specifications and blueprints;

- construct new test forms;

- specify administration policies;

- define and implement scoring procedures;

- establish performance standards; and,

- design and generate score reports and interpretative guides.

Need for Continuity

- Common requirement for new assessment program: *maintain trendlines.* Implications:

  – Comparability of benchmarks or cut scores (e.g., % of students attaining proficiency in ELA or mathematics.)

  – Comparability of reported scores (e.g., scores on vertical scale for ELA or mathematics.)

- To support the validity of either comparability claim, a validation process that evaluates and compares key aspects of the old and new assessment programs is needed.

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A Common Approach: Standards Validation

Similar to standard setting

- Operationalization of performance level descriptors (PLDs)

- Representative of panel of subject matter experts

- Established procedure to recommend cut scores (e.g., Bookmark, Body of Work etc.)

- Multiple rounds of judgments

- Informed by empirical data and committee discussions

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A Common Approach: Standards Validation

Key distinctions

- A priori indication of existing cut scores ("benchmarks") to panelist

- PLDs for new assessments written based on PLDs from the old assessments

- Impact data for old and new assessments are shown

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A Common Approach: Standards Validation

Challenges and Considerations

- More time consuming and costly.

- Potential inconsistencies in recommendations within and across panels.

  - Implications for interpretation and communication of new cut scores, potential challenges in scaling.

  - One solution is the limit the type or amount of adjustments that the committee can make. However, restrictions could lead to pushback and mistrust.

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Another Approach: Expert Comparability Review

- Design and implement an expert review process to critically evaluate the changes between the old and new assessment program.

- Example: *PARCC Quality Testing Standards and Criteria for Comparability Claims* (QTS)

  - Developed to evaluate comparability claims for states transitioning from the consortium to custom state assessments that continue to license PARCC content

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PARCC's Comparability Review Process

- Two levels of comparability claims: "scale score comparability" and "benchmark comparability".

- Overarching questions for comparability review process:

  - *If a student taking the state's summative assessment with PARCC content took one of the PARCC flagship test forms, would he or she obtain the same scale score?*

  - *Would he or she receive the same designation in terms of college and career readiness?*

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PARCC's Comparability Review Process

Four areas evaluated in the comparability review process:

- Test Design – "What is on the test?"

- Administration – "How is the test given?"

- Scoring – "How is test performance determined?"

- Reporting – "How are test results communicated and interpreted?"

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PARCC's Comparability Review Process

Steps in the comparability review process:

1. A state interested in making PARCC comparability claims collects and submits evidence about its assessment with PARCC content.

2. Independent reviewers evaluate the state's evidence and recommend the level of comparability claims that is supportable.

3. The state receives constructive and actionable feedback as well as ongoing technical support.

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Expert Comparability Review

Challenges and Considerations

- Qualification of expert reviewers

- Focus on evidence needed to support the comparability claims

- Collection of evidence from new assessment program

- Timing of review and feedback

- Comparability review is not the same as peer review

  - "Necessary but not sufficient"; compliance vs. constructive support

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Assessment in Transition: Guardrails Needed!

Discussant Comments

Dr. Lauress Wise

Senior Researcher, Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO)

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Can you relate to this?

How you feel….

How the field feels…

Let's Talk!

- What changes to the assessment programs are taking place (or about the take place) in your state?

- What aspects of the previous assessment do you need to maintain in the new assessment? Why?

- What are the plans and challenges for ensuring the validity of assessment outcomes in the new assessment program?

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Expert Respondent

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Thank You!

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RILS Brief: *Assessment Validation in the Midst of Change*