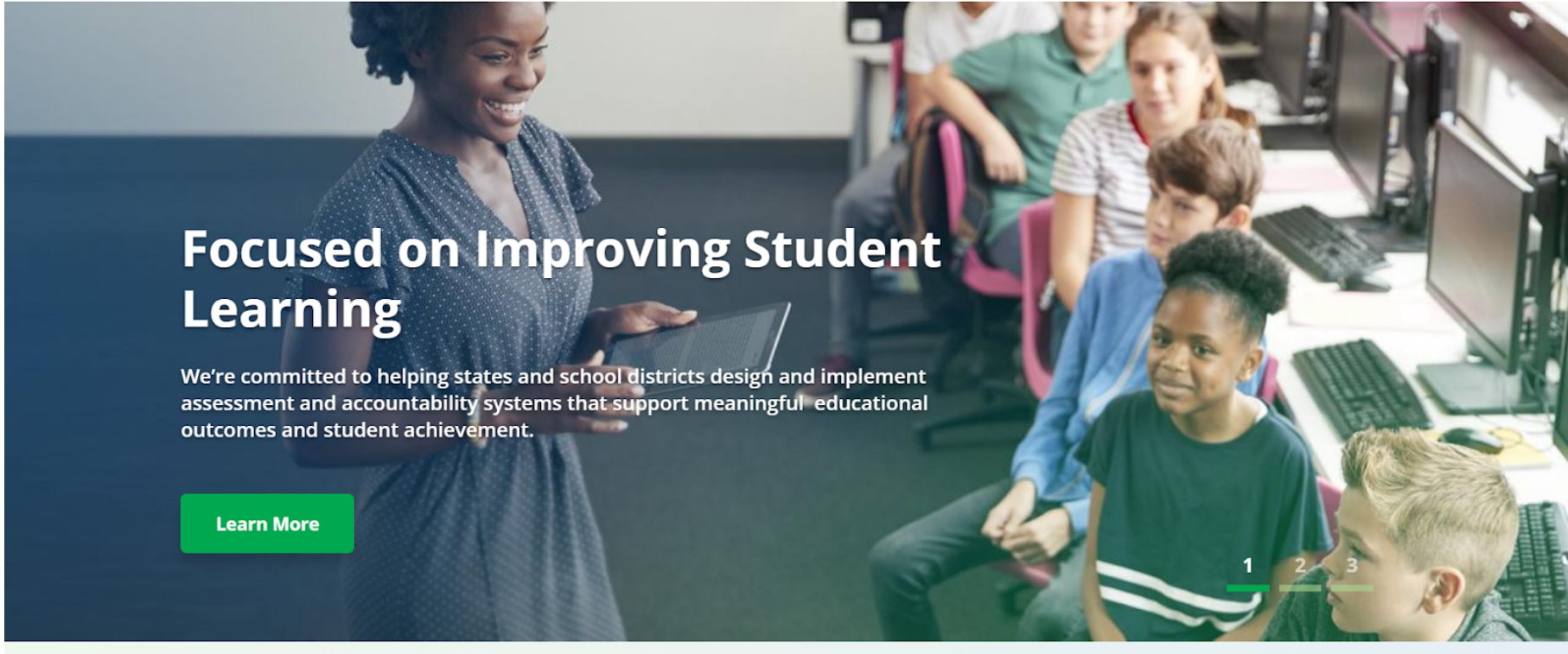# Accountability Interrupted: Guidance for Collecting, Evaluating, and Reporting Data in 2020-2021

Chris Domaleski, Michelle Boyer, and Carla Evans
Center for Assessment

Reidy Interactive Lecture Series, August 20, 2020

The **National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, Inc.** (The Center for Assessment) is a Dover, NH based not-for-profit (501(c)(3)) corporation. Founded in September 1998, the Center's mission is to improve the educational achievement of students by promoting improved practices in educational assessment and accountability.

Overview

COVID-19 Response Resources

ESSA Accountability

Innovative Assessment and Accountability Systems

Comparability

The Center's COVID-19 Response Resources

State and district leaders are facing multiple concerns in response to widespread and potential long-term school closures due to the growing threat of COVID-19. The concerns are broad and consequential. Leaders are rightfully prioritizing the safety and welfare of students and the community. We have been inspired by the dedication and resourcefulness of leaders who are ensuring essential services, such as meals, are provided as well as facilitating innovative approaches to support remote learning.

Additionally, the school closures present substantial assessment and accountability implications and numerous challenges for state personnel. The Center for Assessment is poised to support our assessment and accountability colleagues around the country with technical, practical, and policy guidance and advice. We launched this page to help you efficiently find the resources you need during these uncertain times.

The resources are organized by the major categories of assessment and accountability and reflect the issues we anticipate state and district leaders will be dealing with over the next few weeks through next year. We hope you find these resources useful and if there is a question that you would like to see addressed, please email us or tweet at us. We continue to wish you all the best in these uncertain times.

Featured Resources

- Restart & Recovery: Assessment Considerations for Fall 2020
- Classroom Assessment Learning Modules to Support Re-Entry Fall 2020 & Beyond
- Meeting the Moment: A Novel Format for RILS to Address Implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Accountability

- School Disruption Due to COVID-19 A High-Level Overview of Likely Implications and Options for Assessment and Accountability
- School Disruption Due to COVID-19 A High-Level Overview of Likely Implications and Options for Assessment and Accountability
- Considering Equity Within Accountability Systems in Response to Interruptions in Schooling: Making Accountability Systems Help
- The Outlook for ESSA School Accountability After COVID-19
- Dealing with Fallout from COVID-19 School Disruptions: What to do Next in Assessment and Accountability?
- Program Evaluations under COVID-19
- Rethinking School Accountability for the 2020-2021 School Year

Assessment

- We're All in This Together. Dealing Fairly with Assessment Contracts as Schools Cancel or Suspend Student Testing During the COVID-19 Crisis
- An Assessment Response to Anticipated Learning Gaps. Implications of School Closures on Assessment Needs
- In Search of Continuity of Student Learning After Extended School Closures
- Issues and Considerations that the COVID-19 Pandemic Presents for Measuring Student Growth
- Remote Learning Provides an Opportunity to Rethink Assessment (and Learning)
- Carpe Diem: Evolving Education After COVID-19
- Fall Educational Assessment: The Information You Need and How to Get It
- Summative State Assessments Can Wait!

Center for Assessment

www.nciea.org
→Current Initiatives
→COVID-19 Response Resources

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General Information & Zoom Protocols

- This webinar is being recorded and will be posted on the Center's RILS webpage: https://www.nciea.org/events/rils-2020-implications-covid-19-pandemic-assessment-and-accountability

- **Introduce yourself in the chat—**your name and position

- Use the Q & A to ask questions at any time

- You will be muted until the formal Q & A sections at which time you can use the raise hand feature to be recognized

Welcome & Introductions

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Panelists

Lane Carr

Director of Accountability, Nebraska Department of Education

A. Rae Clementz

Director of Accountability, Illinois State Board of Education

Donna Johnson

Director of Accountability, Office of the State Superintendent of Accountability, District of Columbia

Overview of Today's Webinar

Agenda

1. **Overview of CCSSO Paper "Accountability Interrupted: Guidance for Collecting, Evaluating, and Reporting Data in 2020-2021" (1:00-1:40pm)**
    - Chris Domaleski, Michelle Boyers, and Carla Evans
    - Link to paper available on RILS Event Page. We will include it in the chat.
2. **Panel: State Perspectives (1:40-2:15pm)**
    - Lane Carr, Nebraska Department of Education
    - Rae Clementz, Illinois State Board of Education
    - Donna Johnson, District of Columbia, Office of the State Superintendent of Education
3. **Open Q&A (2:15-2:30pm)**

Introduction

- States annually collect and publicly report a wide-range of information for schools and student groups. Many of these reporting initiatives fulfill ESSA requirements.

- Most ESSA requirements were waived in 2020 due to the pandemic. Most notably, states were not required to calculate new school accountability designations.

- Regardless, states are rightly asking:
  - What information should be publicly reported?
  - How can we determine if the information is useful for the intended purpose?
  - What changes should be made to 'standard' reporting practices?
  - How can we support appropriate interpretation and use of what is reported?

Federal Requirements

- ESSA requires states to prepare and disseminate annual report cards that provide information on performance of schools in an understandable and uniform format.

- Reporting requirements include:
  - Student achievement data based on state assessments
  - State accountability system information
  - Data for the Civil Rights Data Collection
  - Educator qualifications
  - Per-pupil expenditures
  - State performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
  - Postsecondary enrollment rates for each high school

- States have discretion regarding when report cards are issued, but they are urged to provide them before the start o the next school year.

ESSA Waivers

What was waived in 2020 and what was not waived?

Waived	Not Waived
- Accountability system description - Assessment results and participation rates - Other academic indicator results - English language proficiency assessment results - School quality/ student success indicator results - Progress toward meeting long-term goals and measures of interim progress - Number and percentage of students taking an alternate assessment - LEA and school performance on state tests	- Graduation rate - Data from the Civil Rights Data Collection - Educator qualifications - Per-pupil expenditures - State performance on NAEP - Postsecondary enrollment rates for each high school

Framework to Support Decision Making
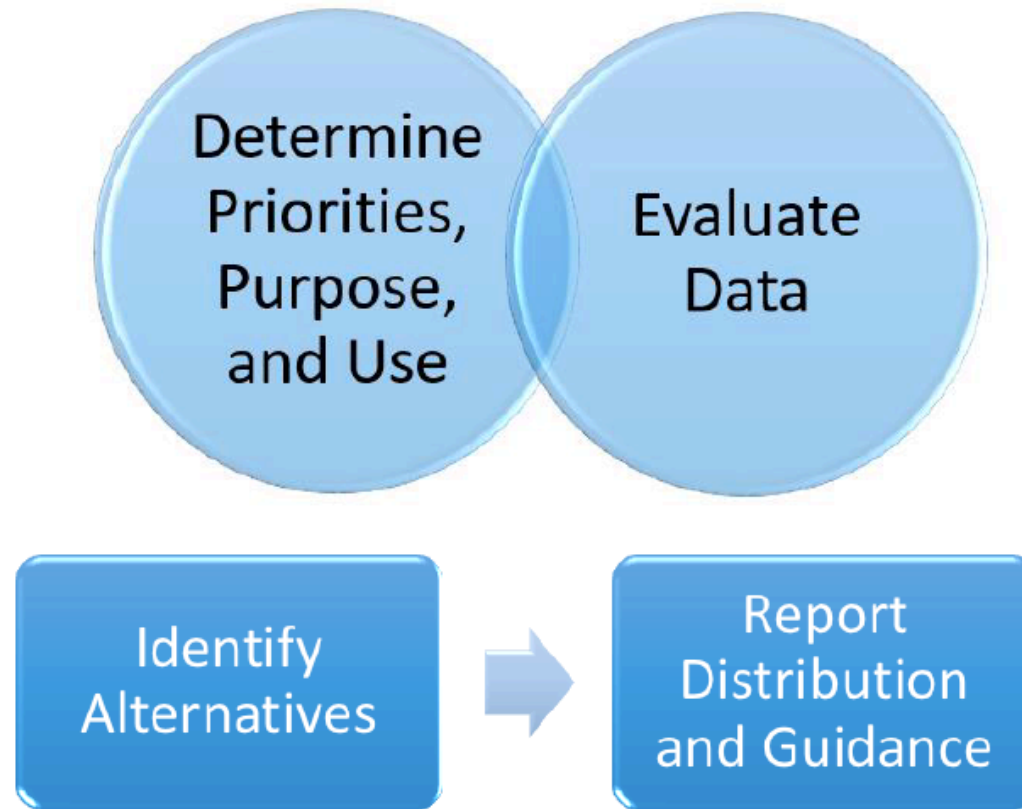
Determine Priorities, Purpose, and Use

	Information is Available and Suitable for Proposed Use Case	Information is not Available or Questionable for Proposed Use Case
High Priority Use Case	Move forward	Further evaluation necessary
Low Priority Use Case	Move forward after other priorities are met	Suspend data collection and/or reporting

Key Questions

- What decisions need to be made with the data? Which are highest priority?

- Who needs the information?

- How will the information be used?

- Are there risks of unintended, negative consequences?

Evaluate Data

- **Completeness:** *To what extent are elements of the data missing?*

- **Consistency:** *Were the data properties altered?*

- **Impact:** *Is it likely data values (e.g., performance) will substantially change?*

- **Practicality:** *Is it feasible and/or reasonable to collect and report the data?*

Completeness

- Do the data represent the full expected range?

- The criterion is rarely is 100%. It may be more appropriate to evaluate completeness in terms of deviation from the standard used prior to disruptions.

- Cases are likely not missing at random. Checks for completeness should include multiple disaggregations.

Example: Assessment File

- Includes all planned assessments (e.g. grades, content areas)
- Includes all districts and schools
- Includes all expected students
- Includes all expected groups and categories in similar proportion

Consistency

- Did circumstances prompt a change in the way data were defined, calculated, or collected?

- This may include data definitions, business rules, or procedures.

- Changes affect the individual metric and all aggregations based on these data.

- Almost certainly involves more than empirical analyses. One needs to communicate with those involved with the data at all levels.

Example: Graduation Rate

A district changes the graduation requirements, such that all or some credit requirements are relaxed

Impact

- Refers to changes in the distribution of values.

- This can occur as a result of the prior two conditions e.g. incomplete or inconsistent data.

- It can also occur based on circumstances apart from these conditions.

Examples:

Proficiency rates for assessments decline because of limited opportunity to learn

Results from school climate surveys completed by teachers, parents, or students are influenced by conditions related to the pandemic

Practicality

- All data collection and reporting decisions should be subjected to a "reasonableness check."
  - Will collecting the data cause an undue burden?
  - Could reported data be misused in harmful ways?

- This criterion should be regarded as a 'trump card.' If it isn't feasible to collect the data or the risks outweigh the benefits, there is no need to pursue it further.

Bringing it all Together

	Completeness	Consistency	Impact	Practicality	Category
Element 1	✔	✔	✔	✔	Green
Element 2	✘	✔	✘	✔	Yellow
Element 3	✘	✘	✘	✘	Red

Green: It is likely feasible and appropriate to proceed with reporting

Yellow: More information or analyses are needed

Red: It is not feasible or appropriate to proceed with reporting

Identify Alternatives

- **Modify Current Approach**
  - Change procedures for reporting or calculating (e.g. select new 'window' for attendance)
  - Statistical adjustment (e.g. imputation or altering weights to account for missing data). Warning: there are real risks of misunderstanding and misuse with this option. We suggest that states consult with their TAC.

- **Collect New Data**
  - **Understanding Impact**: Data to help SEAs take stock of the previous and ongoing effect of the pandemic related disruptions (e.g. data to understand adjustments made and approaches deployed to support teaching and learning.)
  - **Identifying areas of support**: Efforts to pinpoint the ways in which SEAs can partner with LEAs and schools to address challenges associated with the pandemic (e.g. Are students experiencing food insecurity? Do students and schools have access to technology?)

Report Presentation

- **Tailor the information to meet the needs of the audience**
  - For example, general public reporting may focus on high-level summaries, whereas educators or parents may need additional detail about meaning.

- **Presentation**
  - We advise against using characteristics or metrics associated with accountability, given the purpose is not to classify or rank.
  - Consider presenting information with additional narrative information or visual cues to highlight the intended message or inhibit interpretations that are not supported.
  - For example, if information is not comparable, do not provide a side-by-side display implying trends are meaningful.

Report Distribution: Three Potential Categories

1. **Reports that are explicitly public**
   - Information for the general public, usually available on the state's website
   - Requires considerable support to promote appropriate interpretation and use

2. **Reports that are neither protected nor public**
   - For example, data distributed to district or school leaders
   - May contain more detail and are accompanied by guidance appropriate to the audience
   - However, the information could be released under some circumstances (e.g., FOIA)

3. **Reports that are secure**
   - Data shielded from public release e.g. data that includes personally identifiable information (PII).

Summary of Do's and Don'ts for Reporting

- *Establish use cases and the audience for each*

- *Determine the level of information required*

- *Design for clear communication to avoid misinterpretation*

- *Consider alterative formats or data visualizations*

- *Consider inclusion of related contextual information*

- *Where the potential for misunderstanding or misuse is high, offer supporting training or documentation to the intended audience*

Panelist Remarks

Panelists

Lane Carr
Director of Accountability, Nebraska Department of Education

A. Rae Clementz
Director of Accountability, Illinois State Board of Education

Donna Johnson
Director of Accountability, Office of the State Superintendent of Accountability, District of Columbia

Discussion

- Please use the zoom 'hand raise' feature to be recognized

- Or, you may type a question or comment into the Q & A feature

Upcoming RILS Webinars

Day/Time	Topic	Strand
Aug 21 – 1:00-2:30pm	Calculating Growth	Accountability
Aug 25 – 1:00-2:30pm	Entry/Exit Identification Issues	Accountability
Sept 1 – 3:30-5:00pm	Spring 2021 Summative Assessment	Implications for State Summative Assessment
Sept 2 – 3:00-4:30pm	Outlook for Accountability	Accountability
Sept 16 – 1:00-2:30pm	Considerations for classroom assessment in a remote or hybrid context	Assessment in Support of Teaching & Learning

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