

MS. PRESTON: Good afternoon, everyone, and thank you for joining us for this informational webinar for ESL teachers. We're happy that so many people were able to join us, especially since we know this is a busy week with spring break starting for some folks, possibly even today or tomorrow. Thank you for taking some time from your afternoon to join us.

Before we get started, I just want to check one more time and make sure that folks can hear me. So as we did a minute ago, if you can hear the sound of my voice, please raise your hand on your dashboard so that we know everyone's audio is working. Alright, fantastic. Thank you.

So, just to do some introductions, my name is Jennifer Preston. I'm the Race to the Top project coordinator for educator effectiveness at the Department of Public Instruction. I have several colleagues in the room with me today, some from the Race to the Top Office and some from our Curriculum and Instruction division. We want to make sure that we answer as many questions for you today as we can, as well as share some information about the educator effectiveness work going on in the state. We're going to specifically focus that information on the Measures of Student Learning.

We will be talking today some about the Common Exams, and we'll also be sharing some information about a series of pilot programs that are running throughout the state this spring and will continue to run throughout the state in the fall.

So briefly, the agenda for today: we're going to start off by setting the context and reminding everyone of what we mean when we say educator effectiveness in North Carolina. Then we'll discuss how our evaluation system is in a little bit of a transition period to where it's going to include student growth and provide teachers with really meaningful feedback on their practice.

We'll next talk about the Measures of Student Learning and then spend some time focusing on the different types of Measures of Student Learning that are either already being implemented across the state or are being piloted this spring and in the fall.

One common question we get here at the Department is: “is it a measure of student learning?” “Is it a Common Exam?” “Are those the same thing?” “Are they different?” We will go into a little bit of what the difference is, how they are, in some ways, the same things, and we will have plenty of time at the end for everyone to ask questions to make sure that you leave the webinar with everything that you wanted to know.

Before I get started, I do just want to make one note from a logistics standpoint. We are recording the session today. If you are thinking that you may want to access it later, or you have colleagues that you know couldn't attend today, I've already hit the record button, so we'll be able to archive this for anyone who wasn't able to join us live.

So before we start to talk about measuring student growth and how we do that, it's important to take a step back and remember why we do that. North Carolina does already have a statewide evaluation system for teachers and for administrators, and, for administrators, that covers principals and assistant principals. Some districts in the state have been using these systems since 2008. For other districts, they are a bit newer, and 2010 - 11 was the first year of implementation.

When districts first started using the teacher and principal evaluation instruments, the teacher instrument had five standards. Nothing about those five has changed in the last two years. A significant change has been the addition of a new standard. Effective in the '11-12 school year, the State Board of Education approved the addition of the sixth standard to the teacher evaluation instrument, and that standard is “teachers contribute to the academic success of students.”

For principals and assistant principals, their instrument originally had seven standards. Their standards are based on different types of leadership, so they're not complete sentences like they are for teachers. They're just types of leadership that principals and assistant principals display. Similarly, nothing has changed about their seven original evaluation standards. The change has been in the addition of the eighth standard, which focuses on academic achievement leadership.

As we've traveled throughout the state, held webinars, held in-person meetings, and worked with teachers

and principals to develop an understanding of this system, one of the most important things to emphasize is that Standard 6 and Standard 8 are both measures of growth. I'm sure we can all think, in our heads, of a teacher or a school that has students who may come to a given course or a grade very far behind in their learning. Let's think of a sixth-grade reading teacher whose students come to him or her reading at a second-grade reading level. At the end of the year, let's say those students leave the teacher reading at a fourth-grade reading level. In terms of how the EOG results are going to look for sixth-graders reading at a fourth-grade reading level, we're probably not going to be looking at students making threes or fours. But when we look at growth, the critical piece that's being included in our evaluation system, those kids have made tremendous growth over the course of the year. In fact, they've made two years' worth of reading progress in one year worth of instruction. In this type of model, while proficiency is still something we strive for, it's not what we're looking at. What we're looking at instead is how teachers can take students from where they begin the school year to where they end the school year and if that amount of progress is meaningful for those students.

So that's really where we get to the big question: if we're going to include student growth in our evaluation instrument, how do we measure it? What you're looking at on the screen now is the diagram of the different processes we use to measure growth across all the grades, subjects, and courses in the Standard Course of Study, which, of course, is the Essential Standards and the Common Core State Standards for Math and English Language Arts.

Some of the things on this list are assessments that we all know well because they've been in place in our state for quite a while. So with End-of-Grade or End-of-Course exams in Science, in some years, Math and Reading, we can use those results in grades 4 and up to generate value-added scores, or measures of growth for teachers of those grades and subjects.

The second item on the diagram is our Career and Technical Education Assessment Program. Those assessments have been in place since roughly the mid-1990s, and with our Post-Assessments, we're able to generate value-added scores for teachers of about 48 of our Career and Technical Education courses.

For some of our courses, even though we have Post-Assessments, we weren't able to generate sound value-added scores. What's happening in those courses is the administration of a pre-assessment. That actually started this school year, the '12-13 school year, when students started their CTE courses in the fall. A growth measure from pre- and post-assessment results gives us a different look at growth than when we use a prediction model, like EVAAS uses for the End-of-Grade or End-of-Course exams, but we're still looking at a measure of growth, which is the important thing.

So before we start to talk about what's new, the last four rows on the diagram, it's helpful to have a conversation about what the difference is between a Measure of Student Learning and a Common Exam. A visual way to think about this for people who are visual learners is that the Measures of Student Learning is really a big umbrella, and under that umbrella is any assessment, or process, or any way that we look at student growth. Sometimes it is with one assessment at the end of the year, so an End-of-Grade or End-of-Course test is a Measure of Student Learning. Sometimes it's through combining pre- and post-assessments like with some of our CTE courses.

Common Exams, which we'll talk about in a minute, are one of the Measures of Student Learning, and so are the other areas on the screen: grade 3, our K-to-2 literacy measures, and Analysis of Student Work. So, hopefully, that helps to clear up the confusion around those two terms. A Common Exam certainly is a kind of Measure of Student Learning, but there are also other measures than just those Common Exams that are being implemented this school year.

So for the remainder of my presentation today, I'm going to focus on these four Measures of Student Learning because these are the four that are brand new – the ones that everybody is still feeling out and still having a lot of questions about. So we'll start with the Common Exams.

One of the toughest parts about the Common Exams from an administration point of view has actually been dealing with the fact that districts have a lot of flexibility with the exams. The state assessment program has traditionally been one that is pretty rigid; it doesn't have a whole lot of room for district flexibility. All students have to take the exams, for example. But, with the Common Exams, there are

some big areas of flexibility for districts, and one of the biggest areas is around which assessments have to be administered.

To help districts make that decision, we've made what we call a decision tree - a visual diagram where we start at the top and ask a series of questions to ultimately get to the bottom of the decision tree, which is whether or not there's a requirement to administer a Measure of Student Learning. The easiest way to explain the diagram is actually to walk through it as if we are a particular teacher in a particular kind of course.

So, first, let's imagine that I am a fifth-grade self-contained teacher, and I have my kids all day from the minute they come in the morning until the minute they leave. They do go out for electives, for specials, but I'm responsible for teaching them Reading, Math, Science and Social Studies. Because I'm a fifth-grade teacher, at the end of the year, my kids actually take three EOGs. They take Reading, they take Math, and they take Science. So now let's work through the decision tree.

The question I'm asking myself is do I administer an End-of-Course, End-of-Grade, or CTE Post-Assessment to all of my students? The answer is yes. My kids are actually taking three state tests. So, for me, there is no state requirement to administer a Measure of Student Learning. In fact, the only one that would have been possible for me to administer would have been fifth-grade Social Studies.

Now, what we're outlining here in this decision tree is the state requirements that serve as a minimum for administration. There are some districts in North Carolina that have decided that they're going to administer the assessments whether or not the State requires it. There are districts that say, "You know what? We want to know how our kids are doing in Social Studies, so even if that fifth-grade Social Studies teacher isn't required to administer the Social Studies exam, we're going to administer it anyway because that's data we want as we think about our instructional program."

So now, let's go through the decision tree imagining that I am a high school Science teacher. Let's imagine that I'm on a block schedule, and, first semester, I teach three classes, and, second semester, I teach three classes. Let's say that, first semester, I teach one class of Biology and, for the remainder of

first and second semester, I teach Chemistry. I'm teaching five classes of Chemistry and one class of Biology. So now let's ask the question that's at the top of the decision tree. "Do I administer an End-of-Course, End-of-Grade, or CTE Post-Assessment to all of my students?" My answer is actually no. I do to some of them - to that one group of kids I'm teaching Biology to - but I don't to any of my Chemistry students. That then prompts me to ask a second question: "Do I teach a subject, grade or course where there is a Measure of Student Learning?" The answer there is yes, so I've arrived at the bottom of the decision tree; there is a state requirement for me to administer that Common Exam in Chemistry. This example actually illustrates the principle behind the administration of the exams and really behind including student growth in teacher evaluation results. It wouldn't be fair to me as a teacher or, frankly, to my students, if out of six classes I teach, only my one class of Biology was reflected in my growth value and included in my evaluation.

What about those hundreds of kids to whom I teach Chemistry? We can't ignore those kids. We don't want to set aside those kids. Those kids need to be taught well and make growth as well. So that's where this idea of starting at the top of the decision tree, thinking about which groups of students we have existing assessment information for, and which ones we don't, helps with the decision around which tests have to be administered.

When we talk about the Common Exams, we ask some of the basic questions: the who, what, when, where and why. What is this Measure of Student Learning? The Common Exams are set forms of assessments that are administered in grades 4 through 12 in English Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, and Mathematics. We do not have any Common Exams under grade 4, and we only have Common Exams for courses where there is not an existing state assessment. So, for example, there is no Biology Common Exam because we already have a Biology EOC.

We only have Common Exams for areas in which there are state standards. Many of you may teach elective courses. It's particularly common in Social Studies and English, but even Science or Math electives. Your district or your school maintains those content standards, but we at the Department don't

have them. We're only talking about Common Exams where there is no state assessment already and where we have state content standards.

These exams are the same across the entire state, so a student in Wilson County takes the same assessment as a student in Asheville City, and they do include both multiple-choice items and performance tasks. By performance tasks, it's important to note that we're not talking about document-based questions or four- or five-paragraph essays. Rather, we're talking about the types of questions that students may write a paragraph in response or sometimes even draw a diagram for Science or Math. With the Common Exams, we will be looking at using EVAAS to generate value-added scores for teachers. The results that teachers who administer Common Exams will get from EVAAS will look very similar to the kinds of results teachers who have EOCs and EOGs are used to getting in the system.

Over this coming summer, the summer of 2013, the SAS Institute will be partnering with DPI to analyze the results of the assessments. They are brand new. First semester, when we looked at the results, we found that every Common Exam administered, except for one, had a very high reliability value, really passed that external test that statisticians use to look at whether assessment results are fair and valid. For the one assessment that didn't, we have to keep a close eye on it in the spring. If any of the results of these exams prove not to be fair and valid, they simply won't be used to generate a value-added score, and we'll have to all think about sort of Plan B. If a set form of an assessment isn't the way to measure growth for that content area for some reason, what is? The one thing that neither SAS nor the Department nor the State Board wants to do is use any assessment results that aren't fair and valid to determine value-added scores for teachers.

In terms of who participates in the Common Exams, we've talked about this a little bit already. There is that decision tree to determine which exams must be administered, but, of course, districts have the flexibility to administer any exams they'd like that are not required, particularly if they like more information about their instructional program.

So, for timelines, there are 35 Common Exams being administered during this current '12-to-13 school

year. The number 35 is actually a little bit higher than what I would call the true number because, within that number, there are about eight math assessments that are options for districts. Depending on what pathway you've chosen, how you're transitioning to the Common Core for math, we had to develop a menu of math options, and the district picks one to administer to students. It's not that students will be taking multiple assessments themselves.

There will be nine additional Common Exams added next year. One of those nine is for Discrete Math, and the remainder are the high school Social Studies electives that have state standards, the more common electives where the state actually maintains the content standards.

This past fall, administration of the high school Common Exams was optional, but there were 39 school districts that decided to go in for a semester and administer the assessments. In all, a little over 86,000 exams were administered, which gave the districts a lot of good information on how students were doing, and also gave DPI the chance to really review the assessments before spring administration.

A great advantage to having some districts volunteer to do fall administration is that we were able to make changes to the exams for spring administration. Something that's really going to improve this experience for everybody - for teachers, for students, for school administrators - is both the systems that administered in the fall and the systems that are joining us for the first time this spring.

To just briefly go through what those changes were, for the high school English Language Arts exams, for both English I and English III, as well as English IV, the exam length has been shortened. We heard pretty much across the whole state that those exams were too long for students to complete in the amount of time they had been given, so they have been shortened. There were also two high school Math assessments that seemed to be a little bit long for students, not quite as long as the English assessments, but still long enough that we went through and removed a few items from two of the high school math assessments.

There was a request to add more specificity to the scoring rubrics, which the Department has added wherever we can add specificity. Just to provide examples of where that's possible and where it's not, it's

easy to think of a short-answer question in Chemistry or Math where there is one correct answer. It's .07.

It's NaCl. There is one answer to the question. When we think about content areas like Social Studies, it's necessary for DPI to leave the scoring rubrics a bit more broad. The new Social Studies standards are so heavily based on themes and not content that my district's curriculum may tell me to teach ten reformers from the Progressive era, and, in the district next door, a Social Studies teacher is teaching ten completely different reformers. If the question is identify two reformers from the Progressive era and analyze the impact they had on social conditions, my students can answer that question just as successfully as the students next door, even though they're going to have different answers.

In cases where districts have made curriculum decisions that allow them to further add to the scoring rubrics, for example, a system that has said our Social Studies teachers teach these ten reformers for the Progressive era, then that's a case where a district can add some specificity to the rubrics that, quite honestly, the State simply can't because we don't have a prescriptive curriculum for those content standards.

We also made some revisions that are intended to help with just sort of the logistics of the progress, so the textbooks are going to look at a little bit different second semesters to make them a little bit easier for students to use. Also from the logistics point of view, we've also changed the administration scripts of it so that they're more clear for teachers. And we are working right now on revising the scoring module.

We released in the fall a scoring module that was intended for high school teachers who are administering the common exams because they were the only ones administering in the fall. With upper elementary and middle school exams being administered this spring, the scoring module is being revised to also include examples from upper elementary and middle school courses and grades.

So next, we're going to move into grade 3 and talk a little bit about how we'll measure student learning in that grade. Starting with the next school year, the '13-14 school year, at the beginning of the year, students are going to take a form of the third grade End-of-Grade assessment, and they're going to take it at the beginning of the year. It's not really the same thing as the third grade pre-test that we used to do;

the third-grade pre-test, when we had it before, was actually almost a second grade End-of-Grade exam. When students take this test at the beginning of this coming school year, it's actually a form of the third grade assessment. They're just going to take it at the beginning of the year.

Given that we're moving to a place where our General Assembly has required very strict retention requirements for third grade students, we really did feel it was only fair to give teachers all the information we could about how those students need to be supported during the school year. We also felt it was important, early on, to give kids exposure to what that End-of-Grade testing experience is like. For some of them, when they sit down and take the End-of-Grade exam at the end of third grade, it's the first time they've been in that type of situation to sit and bubble and have to work quietly. We want to make sure that they have that exposure earlier on so that it's not quite so shocking to them at the end of the year and doesn't really throw them off on an assessment that now has some pretty serious consequences for them.

By administering this third grade End-of-Grade assessment at the beginning of the year, we can also measure growth for third-grade teachers. It becomes really a pre- and post-test model. With everything that I'm talking about here for third grade, it's definitely important to emphasize that this is only looking at reading. We will not be administering any Math End-of-Grade assessment at the beginning of the year. With the General Assembly focusing on literacy, the only assessment we've really been given permission to administer is a reading assessment at the beginning of the year.

In terms of who participates, all third-grade students do. Now, of course, "all" always has some exceptions for students who have exemptions from exams, but this isn't like the Common Exam where there's that decision tree and districts are deciding whether or not a certain third grade classroom needs to take the grade 3 End-of-Grade assessment at the beginning of the year. All the traditional testing policies apply, but it is generally a test that's intended for everyone to take.

And as I mentioned, this will be up for full implementation in the '13-14 school year. Our Accountability Services division will be primarily implementing that assessment. I know they're working right now on

guidance, administration manuals, and teacher manuals. We have the actual assessment itself ready to go, and they're now really just adding on that layer of administration assistance to make that go smoothly at the start of the school year.

So that's how we're handling third grade. Next, we're talk about K to second grade students. This is something that is being piloted this spring, and I'll talk a little bit more about the pilot in a minute. What we are planning to do as the Measure of Student Learning for K-to-2 students is take the mCLASS: Reading 3D Program that, starting next year, every school will be using with their K-to-3 students, and add a step to it. It's something that teachers are already doing, it's something that teachers have already been trained on, and it's something that there's already funding for the devices and the software. It just seemed like a smart step to add on to this program rather than create something new from scratch.

When we talk about using the mCLASS: Reading 3D Program as the Measure of Student Learning, what we're looking at here is only the students' ability to comprehend text. For those folks who are familiar with the Reading 3D Program, there are really two types of measures that are done. We measure DIBELS for students, and we also do what's called a TRC, where we're really assessing their ability to read and understand text. The only thing that we're going to be using in this Measure of Student Learning is that ability to read and understand text, essentially the results from the TRC part of mCLASS: Reading 3D. It's also important to know that the Department has not and will not collect any formative data that's gathered during the year. The only thing that the Department collects to look at growth of students is the Beginning-of-Year measure and the End-of-Year measure. All the progress monitoring that teachers do along the way to develop good instruction for kids is data for that teacher. It's not data for the state to use for anything. We're really only pulling that Beginning-of-Year and End-of-Year measure so that we can look at growth.

There are three processes being piloted this spring to decide which one is the best to use for this purpose. Some districts are administering what's been called the “business-as-usual” administration mode, and that's kind of what it sounds like. They participate in mCLASS: Reading 3D almost as if they weren't in

the pilot right until the very end. The one thing that does change is, in the “business-as-usual” condition, after students take the TRC at the end of the year, there's also a 90--second comprehension check that's administered, and that's essentially checking whether or not the reading level that was reported for the student seems to be accurate, that there wasn't some kind of fluke that happened while the student was taking the original TRC.

In the “alternate administration,” the process for mCLASS looks the same throughout the entire school year until we get to the end of year. In the “alternate administration,” someone other than the student's teacher of record is the one who administers both the End-of-Year TRC and the comprehension check. The “hybrid administration” is kind of a mix of the two. When we get to the end of the year, the student's teacher of record administers the TRC and someone other than the teacher of record administers the comprehension check. The data from piloting these three processes will really help the Board to make a decision around what is the fairest way to use this measure. There's plenty of evidence from lots of assessment programs that shows that two things can sometimes happen when teachers assess the work of their own students. Sometimes teachers are harder on their own students that they should be. The reverse is also true, especially with younger students, when teachers can see that there's a lot of effort going on on the student's part. Sometimes teachers can elevate how students are actually doing. Inserting this other adult, this non-teacher of record, into the process may end up providing us with more valid, reliable results.

As I mentioned, in terms of looking at growth, we're using only the Beginning – of- Year and End-of-Year results, and it's a methodology similar to EVAAS that will be used to measure growth. Rather than a prediction model, like with our End-of-Course or End-of-Grade assessments, it's more that pre-post model that we're using for some other content areas.

With, of course, exemptions for students who don't participate in mCLASS: Reading 3D, this process is generally intended for all K-to-2 students, so just like grade 3, there's no district flexibility on whether this teacher will participate, this teacher won't, those types of questions.

Just in case you're interested, you can see on the screen the list of districts that have agreed to partner with us in that pilot program. We are very excited that they have decided to join us. They will be completing the pilot this spring so that we can analyze that data over the summer and then fully implement that process in the '13-14 school year.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Number one question about grade 3 test, "What will be the criteria for a district to decide to take the third-grade (indiscernible 15:30:53)."

MS. PRESTON: I'm just going to repeat the question because I'm a little bit closer to the speaker. The question was about how would districts decide whether or not to administer the third grade End-of-Grade assessment at the beginning of the year.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right.

MS. PRESTON: That will be considered part of the State Testing Program, and it will not be optional. It will be required for all districts, and that's really tied to the Read to Achieve Act from the General Assembly.

All right. So next, we're going to move on to Analysis of Student Work. We'll probably get some more questions here because this is the process that we are going to be piloting this fall with ESL teachers, so we'll talk about that a little bit more when we get to it. But first, just some background information.

What is this measure of student learning? The process of analyzing student work is something that we are piloting this spring, and, in a nutshell, the process involves teachers collecting artifacts of student work over the course of the year, assessing them against whatever rubric they use to assess the photograph, the sculpture, the assessment, whatever it may be, and then the artifacts are submitted in an online system and they're reviewed by another teacher in the state. This process is really not one assessment that students take at the end of the year. It's really a process that is designed for areas where the standards are very heavily performance-based. You'll see on the screen in just a minute that this is the way we'll be measuring student learning for Healthful Living teachers, teachers of the Arts, and World Language teachers. They are the first to participate in the pilot this spring.

The other thing we know is true about those teachers is that they are the folks that typically have varying instructional time with their students. It really would not be fair to expect the same amount of growth from a music teacher who sees her students every day for 45 minutes and one who sees her students once every other week for 45 minutes. Now, in both cases, those kids are going to grow if they have a good teacher, but it's not going to look the same. There has to be a process that recognizes that and allows flexibility.

We also know that, particularly in the Arts, the kind of supplies that teachers have access to may change the kind of assessments they administer to their students. We at DPI couldn't say that every student is going to do this type of art project because we don't know that every teacher has what they need to have students do that project. Especially in areas where teachers have limited instructional time, what they may do with the Standard Course of Study is pick a couple of standards to focus on and this process also allows that flexibility for those teachers to indicate what they've spent their time teaching.

We really depend on technology in this process because we're going to need to use technology for this last step of the process where there's a blind review by another teacher in the state. With these content areas, what we need to do in having a teacher review student work from another teacher is depend on the content knowledge of our folks in the field. There may be one Latin teacher in a school district, and that person may actually be the only Latin teacher for all the counties in the entire region, but no one other than a Latin teacher can look at the work of those students and judge the amount of progress that has been made. When we have an online system that really makes all the teachers in the state into a big professional learning community, a Latin teacher six hours away can actually be the one to log online and look at the work of that student.

In terms of how growth is measured, there are really two steps to this process. Again, this is being piloted, so it's subject to change based on the results. When teachers are uploading their student work artifacts, they are assessing it themselves. Where did the student start? Where did the student finish?

The teachers are also doing blind review, so when I am looking at that Latin portfolio from across the

state, I don't know the name of that teacher. I don't even know what school district that teacher is in, so that really keeps any of the biases out of it that may come into play if I knew that teacher and either was friends or perhaps didn't particularly like that teacher. Blind review eliminates that for us.

In terms of who participates, we're looking at that on the screen right now. The first round of people who are going to pilot this measure are teachers who have students in the Arts, World Languages and Healthful Living. In the fall, we're going to launch sort of a second phase of the pilot with what we've learned from the first phase. We'll be including students who are learning the Extended Content Standards, the students who typically take the EXTEND 1 assessment, and students in Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate classes, who actually have different standards than the Standard Course of Study, so we need to develop a separate process. Lastly, we will be including students who are receiving ESL instruction.

In terms of a timeline with the pilots that we have going this spring, there are about a hundred teachers involved. Based on the results of that pilot, we will be able to fully implement this process for the Arts, World Languages, and Healthful Living in the '13-14 school year. We'll have to look at the results of the Fall 2013 pilot in order to decide when the rest of the teachers would come on board with that. It may be the beginning of the '14-15 school year.

We do have some LEP coordinators who are already helping to think about how this pilot might look for ESL teachers in the fall, and so we hope that many of you will be willing to sign up and be a part of this work when we send out the call for people to participate. We really want to make this process one that is true to how our students learn and what they're learning. While it's certainly difficult, collecting student work, looking at student work, we really believe this is a chance to take our authentic assessment of what kids know and are able to do to the next level.

So this is actually the slide I'm going to leave up unless I have to go back to another one just for clarification. Any time you, a colleague, teacher, whoever, have a question about educator effectiveness, we ask you to send it to the email address that's on the screen. We do have a 24-hour response time for

emails that are received in that email account, so someone will be back in touch with you very quickly to let you know what the answer to your question is. We also have an educator effectiveness website that has information about everything I've shared today, but also about EVAAS, and the teacher evaluation process, and it has a resources page that's full of FAQs, one-pagers, things like that that are typically helpful for folks trying to develop a better understanding of this area of policy.

So with that being said, I'm happy to take whatever questions have been coming in from folks.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: All right. We have two questions so far. The first question, "Will mCLASS be modified for ESL (indiscernible 15:38:33) students the current way it works with (indiscernible 15:38:37) does not reflect what the student is actually cognitively capable of?"

MS. PRESTON: So we do have an entire division here at DPI, the Division of K-3 Literacy, that works primarily with the mCLASS: Reading 3D Program. I will definitely make sure to pass that comment along to them. Just for anybody who couldn't hear, the question was about if there will be any modifications made for ESL students who are participating in the Reading 3D Program.

The one thing we do always remind people about, really with any of our assessments, is the difference between what might be considered a proficiency level and growth. In the Reading 3D Program, for example, students are typically categorized as a certain color level, so they can be red, yellow, green, etc. Red, not surprisingly, is at the bottom: our students who are struggling. It's possible for a student to score in the red category at the beginning of the year, score the red category at the end of the year, and still make growth if, within that category, they've made progress in their reading level. It's really the same thing as our End-of-Grade assessments. We definitely do have students who coming into the school year and we would expect them to get a one. At the end of the school year, they do get a one on the End-of-Grade exam, but their scale score has increased tremendously. That's one thing we always encourage people to think about. I will specifically check on if there are any plans to further modify that program to meet the needs of the ESL students.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Another question, "How about ESL students in ESL sheltered classes,"

for example, ninth grade, with the ESL teacher/student growth be measured by EOC or by this pilot program?"

MS. PRESTON: So if an ESL teacher is serving as the teacher of record for a course, like English II or English I or something along those lines, then the growth of the students on whatever the assessment is, whether it's a Common Exam or an End-of-Course or End-of-Grade assessment, would be how growth is measured for that teacher. The Analysis of Student Work process is really to meet the needs of ESL teachers who are providing consultative services, helping support students across a series of content areas, not the folks who are actually listed in NCWISE as the teacher of record and are the primary person providing instruction. There may be teachers who are in different categories within the community of ESL teachers, but we also know that folks have a lot of diverse situations they work in, so that's only natural.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There is a follow-up question, "How about an ESL teacher -- how would an ESL teacher be evaluated especially when there might be multiple ESL teachers that (indiscernible 15:41:31) same students?" For example, (indiscernible) some students might need excessive services.

MS. PRESTON: So in that situation, where there are multiple teachers working with one student, the Analysis of Student Work process would be what we would use there and the kinds of evidence that teachers would submit, the work that they collect for students, would be based on whatever content area they're supporting or whatever set of skills they're supporting. So, with a new student, if maybe I'm responsible for really supporting that student on ELA and Social Studies, the work I collect from the student is going to reflect those two content areas, and maybe my colleague who is more responsible for Math and Science and would collect evidence of how the students progressed in those content areas.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't have any other questions at this time.

MS. PRESTON: Okay. So we don't have any other questions coming in, but we have plenty of time left, so please type those questions in so that we can get them answered for you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And if you would like to be un-muted to ask questions in person, please

let us know and we'll be more than happy to un-mute you.

MS. PRESTON: Sure. If you'd rather ask questions over your mic rather than typing them, just let us know and we will come in and un-mute you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Here's another question. "Would ACCESS scores be considered at all?"

MS. PRESTON: That's one of the things we'll be exploring in the pilot. One of the things we are considering for the pilot, although a decision has not been made, is requiring that those scores be one of the artifacts submitted in a portfolio. They certainly don't have to be the only one. We would want there to be other evidence as well, and what we may end up doing in the pilot is having some teachers submit that as their required artifact and have some teachers not have that requirement. Then through analyzing the work that's submitted, and also surveying the teachers, we'll be able to see if they think that adding those scores enhances the process or if they feel that that's something where teachers should have some flexibility. So, for right now, I can't give a definitive yes or no except that it's something we'll definitely be exploring in the pilots.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: One more question. "(Indiscernible 15:43:40) multiple teachers?"

MS. PRESTON: So the question that was about the multiple teachers was what if there's a situation like a first-year student where a student may be receiving support from multiple ESL teachers. I suggested that, if they're each focusing with the student on a particular set of content standards, then the work they collect to submit through the portfolio process would focus on those content standards.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible 15:44:10) more questions coming in.

MS. PRESTON: Oh, good. Thank you, guys.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: "Should we get our ESL teachers (indiscernible 15:44:17) of collecting artifact (indiscernible) of students? Would there be a checklist for collecting data?"

MS. PRESTON: So the process for the student work portfolio, with the exception of possibly ACCESS results, isn't going to be anything prescriptive for a teacher. When we look at the content areas that we are intending this process to be used for in the pilot this spring, I'm sure you can imagine that we're going

to have some videos of students speaking in another language. We're going to have some videos of dance performances or music performances. We're going to have scanned pictures of pieces of artwork. That doesn't mean that a student work artifact always has to be that complicated. We definitely expect that some teachers may very well upload student-writing assignments. For example, in an AP class, students' ability to write essays is a really important part of what's emphasized there.

So as I mentioned in the pilot, we would be exploring whether or not to require ACCESS results as one of the artifacts, but other than that, we'd really be looking more for teachers to think about how they're supporting their students and then what kind of work really best shows the kind of growth that students have made.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Another question, "If an ESL teacher is a co teacher, would it be correct that they would need to connect themselves to the student they serve (indiscernible 15:45:41)?"

MS. PRESTON: I'm just going to give a little bit of background on that just for people who may not know. So starting at the end of April, DPI is going to be opening a new process that's generally called the roster verification process. It's going to be housed in EVAAS, and every teacher across the state should have an EVAAS account. If you don't, please let us know. It could be that the email telling you how to log in went in spam. We heard about that happening a few times, so we want to make sure everybody has that information. They will log into EVAAS and be presented with a list of kids that, at least according to NCWISE, they are linked to for instruction.

Now, the reason we're doing the roster verification process is we know that sometimes what's in NCWISE isn't who you're actually teaching in your classroom. As an ESL teacher who is a co-teacher, then you participate in that process. If the district has coded you and another teacher as Teacher 1 and Teacher 2, when you log in, you should see the list of kids and you should actually see that the computer system has already pre-set them to being 50 percent your student and 50 percent the other teacher's student.

Now, if you are a co-teacher, but you have not been coded in as Teacher 1 or Teacher 2, it doesn't mean we can't still claim those kids. What it does mean is you're going to have to search for them in a search

feature and then drag them on to your class list. The higher quality the data we get from districts, the better the process is going to work. Even if the process doesn't work perfectly, there's still a way for you to indicate students that you're teaching that may not be connected to you in NCWISE. That process is the same for really any co-teaching environment, whether it's an EC co-teacher or whether it's two regular education teachers who are co-teaching; they should both be able to claim responsibility for students.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: One more question. Oh, questions are coming in. "Our district testing coordinator says that MSL and (indiscernible 15:47:52), and that LEP issues can be taken into account in grading. Do you agree?"

MS. PRESTON: So the State Testing Program only includes the End-of-Grade and End-of Course assessments. The Common Exams are really kind of a hybrid. They're really something new, so I really can't say they're like this test or they're like that. They really are a partnership between DPI and school districts with DPI really taking the lead on the development and districts really taking the lead on the administration, so they are considered to be local assessments.

A couple of examples of flexibility that go along with that, of course, seniors cannot be exempted from EOC exams. With the Common Exams, if the district policy allows for exemption from local tests, they can exempt their seniors from the Common Exams. So I would agree with what the testing coordinator has said, in that case, that they are local exams. Another piece of flexibility that's tied to them is that in terms of accommodations and modifications, students should receive whatever they receive on classroom assessments. So I would say, generally, I would answer that with a yes, I do agree with the testing coordinator's comment that these are local exams.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I think you've already answered this question, "Will the ACCESS assessment (indiscernible)?"

MS. PRESTON: So we have a question about ACCESS, and that is something that we will be looking at in the pilot this fall. We here at the Department really see two ways that that could work: either ACCESS could be required as one element in the student work portfolio, certainly not the only one, or we leave that

flexible for teachers. They can submit those results if they'd like to, or that they can choose to really focus on other types of work. We'll be exploring that in the pilot this fall and then we'll make a decision before statewide implementation.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: "Who will be participating in the pilot program in the fall?"

MS. PRESTON: So that question was "Who will be participating in the pilot program?" And I would say the answer is, hopefully, a lot of you. We haven't yet sent out the call yet for teachers to participate in the process, but, when we do we'd love to have teachers across as many districts as we can. Any time we run a pilot, it's really important to make sure that we have participants from big systems, little systems, medium-size systems because that can sometimes change the infrastructure of things that make the pilot easier or sometimes harder for them. Be on the lookout for some information about that, and we hope that many of you will consider joining us on.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We have one other question, it's a process question. "Do you have an idea how this is going to be compiled? We have some ESL teachers (indiscernible 15:50:57) student. (Indiscernible) student. Is it going to be (indiscernible)?"

MS. PRESTON: I'm just going to repeat that question again, just so folks can hear it. There are definitely cases in which an ESL teacher may serve one school, or multiple schools, and serve as many as 60 or 70 students. So one part of the Analysis of Student Work process that's really critical here is that it's only a sample of work from a set of students. That's really where the tension of wanting to design something that's reflective of a teacher's teaching load while not wanting to make an art class really a class to collect portfolio evidence. That's not what anybody wants to do with this process.

So part of the guidance that teachers get when they start the process is about something that we call purposeful sampling, which is essentially ways that teachers say, "Across the kids I support, "I'm going to pick five, six for whom I'm going to collect evidence." As an example, if I'm an art teacher and I teach one class of Art IV, but then I mostly teach Art I over the course of the day, my sample should only include students from my Art IV class. That's not really reflective of the kinds of classes I'm teaching, the

kind of students I'm working with.

We are also exploring the idea of having principals or assistant principals sign off on portfolios before the process begins. If I'm a teacher and the principal logs in and looks at the five students I've selected and, lo and behold, I have chosen number one, two, three, four and five in the senior class as the students I'm going to follow and collect work on, my principal is probably going to have a conversation with me about needing to change that. So, for teachers serving those large number of students, we're certainly not looking at a portfolio for every single child. If that's something that teachers do as a part of their instruction, that's totally fine, but it's not something that we're going to require for this process.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We have kind of a repeated question on (indiscernible 15:53:12) about, "Is it true that LEP issues can be taken into account in grade 8 MSL and (indiscernible)?"

MS. PRESTON: I think I might just ask for a little bit more clarity on that question to make sure I'm answering it correctly. When we're talking about grading, are we talking about grading the constructive response items specifically? The multiple-choice items are really much like our state tests. There is an established answer key. If whomever is asking that question can clarify if you're talking about with grading the performance items, I can answer that a little bit better.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And I'll also ask for (indiscernible 15:53:51). "Will we receive access to this presentation after session?"

MS. PRESTON: Absolutely. I am happy to send it so that our folks here can get it out to their listservs. Anything else, folks? These have been great questions so far. (Pause) Okay. Here we go.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes. "Constructed response items, for example, might be scored --," oh, okay. Yes, "Constructed response items, for example, might be scored with (indiscernible 15:54:37)."

MS. PRESTON: So the rubrics for the constructed response items are very focused on content and not really on structure or grammar or anything of that sort. This was actually a big question we had from districts that administered assessments in the fall. In terms of structure, teachers were wondering if, in responding to a question, students need to write a five-paragraph essay with an opening sentence,

supporting sentence and a closing sentence, to receive credit. The answer to that is no. We definitely have seen some cases where students were doing bullet points in response to a question, and maybe the bullet points weren't even complete sentences, but they contained the content that was needed in the answer.

We actually had a couple of cases where it was really great to see that students were drawing Venn diagrams to answer questions, really showing that someone had taught them how to think and organize their information really well. Teachers are not necessarily looking for spelling, looking for grammar, looking for anything like that in grading these items. They're really looking for content, and if the content is coming across to the scorer and the content is accurate, then the student can receive the full number of points.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Another question, "Will educator effectiveness for ESL teachers be calculated this year (indiscernible 15:55:00)?"

MS. PRESTON: Yes for the folks who are in the roster verification process. If they're the teacher of record for students for a course or they're a co-teacher, then we would be generating the sixth standard rating based on that teacher's individual contribution this year. For the remainder of teachers who are going to use the Analysis of Student Work process, since that's being piloted this spring, those teachers would receive a rating on the sixth standard that's based on school-wide growth. Just like last year, a rating based on school-wide growth is really almost placeholder information until we can work out the processes for those teachers. Most folks have heard about the three years of data required for educator effectiveness. If your rating is based on school-wide data in '12-13, then you haven't started your three years yet. Your year one essentially would be the '13-14 school year, when things are implemented.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No more questions so far.

MS. PRESTON: All right. We'll give everybody a couple more minutes to get their thoughts together and see if we have any more questions come in. (Pause) It is a Thursday afternoon, close to 5, and a lot of you may be off tomorrow, so maybe what the best thing to just do right now is to close out. Please use

the email address. Please give us a call. We really do see educator effectiveness as one of those policy areas where we at the Department have got to work really closely with folks in the field. You know how to do this. You know how it works. You know your students. If you have a concern, something we're missing, something you think we should think about, please let us know because that's really the only way we're going to develop a system that works for kids and teachers, and that's ultimately what we want to have.

So with that, thank you again for joining us, and please let us know if we can assist in any other way.

Have a great weekend.

(CONCLUDED)

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