

MS. PRESTON: Good afternoon, everyone. It is a little bit after 3:30, so we are going to go ahead and get started with our webinar today. This is a webinar to receive feedback on the Common Exams and the roster verification process as completed in the '12-13 school year. As we start the '13-14 school year, we here at the Department of Public Instruction wanted to make sure to reach out to various stakeholders and get feedback on both the Common Exams and roster verification that we can use to improve the processes moving forward into the '13-14 school year.

This is actually the second of the feedback opportunities that we are bringing to folks across the state, with the help of partners. We held a very similar webinar for central office staff member, and sought their feedback on Common Exams and roster verification. We're hearing from principals and assistant principals today to gather some feedback. At a later point, we'll also be hosting a webinar specifically for teachers to get their feedback on the Common Exams and roster verification.

I checked the attendee list right before we took the webinar live, and I did not see anyone specifically from the NC Principals and Assistant Principals Association. They were not sure if they'd be able to join today. If they were here, I know that either Dr. Prince or Emily Doyle would bring a warm welcome. We are very appreciative that they were willing to partner with the Department of Public Instruction to host this webinar today and to service a conduit for getting the information out to their members so that you were getting the information that we were having this webinar and that you'd be able to use it to provide us with some feedback.

In terms of who you'll be hearing from today, my name is Jennifer Preston. I'm the Race to the Top Project Coordinator for Educator Effectiveness. But you're mostly going to be hearing from Dr. Robin McCoy, who is the Race to the Top Program Administrator for Standards and Assessments.

Just a couple of quick logistics before we get started. We do have about 50 people on the line right now,

and that is probably going to increase as people join us. For right now, everybody is muted so that we don't have to deal with background noise or anything of that sort.

If you'd like to provide feedback, there's two ways that you can do that. One is that you can actually provide that feedback verbally. If you raise your hand, we can see that on the attendee list, and we will un-mute you. You can then speak into either the phone, or the computer if you're connected that way.

We did that with our last webinar and found that there were some technical problems with that - folks were having problems with their audio - so a second way you can also provide feedback is in written form by typing it into the questions bar on your webinar dashboard. We'll read those comments aloud. We don't want this to simply be where comments are being typed in and we're just taking notes on them, but we know that sometimes you may have a comment based off what someone else says. We want to make sure share the common themes that we're hearing as we move forward.

So at that point we're going to dive right in, and I'm going to turn it over to Dr. McCoy who will start by asking some feedback questions about roster verification.

DR. MCCOY: Good afternoon. It's great to have you with us here. As Jenn said, this particular webinar is a different type than we normally have. In this case, we're not trying to provide you information as much as we are asking for your feedback, and we're going to start with roster verification with the question: "During the '12-13 school year, when you were trying to implement roster verification in your school, did you feel that you had sufficient guidance from DPI and from your district to provide supports to your teachers? And if not, "What would be helpful in moving forward?"

So as Jenn said, if you will raise your hand if you can provide us feedback on this particular question, or if you prefer, type the information into the question bar and we will read it aloud.

MS. PRESTON: All right. It looks like Nicolette Grant has raised her hand so, Nicolette, I'm going to take you off mute and then see if we can hear you. Are you there, Nicolette?

(No audible response.)

MS. PRESTON: All right. Ms. Grant, can you hear us?

(No audible response.)

MS. PRESTON: Okay, she's typed in her comment now.

DR. MCCOY: Great. Thank you, Nicolette. Nicolette is sharing that, "It would have been helpful to have had more time and to have a face-to-face training." So I believe, Ms. Grant, that what you're sharing is that you would have liked more time in terms of an extension of the window that principals had or for the process itself, the whole process. If you could give me some clarification on that, we would appreciate it. Ms. Grant is saying that, "All of our training within the district was through memo," and that is in response to the face-to-face need. In terms of the window time, I'm not sure yet, but we're getting several other comments.

"Written directions were very easy to understand and provided the answer to most questions that I had experienced."

MS. PRESTON: Thank you.

DR. MCCOY: That's in relation to the written documentation that we provided.

Ms. Grant is sharing that, "The window was okay, but face-to-face training would have been helpful as well."

Another comment, "We need specific guidelines on how to include EC, AIG, ESL teachers in the roster verification process. It was not clear." We are definitely working on that. We have heard that feedback.

Thank you very much.

"The clarification of how co-teaching and resource teachers should count towards the student percentage needs to be standardized across all districts."

Another comment, "In my experience, I found that the confusion came in with the percentages --." Oh confusion, I'm sorry. "In my experience, I found that the confusion came in with the percentages when students had a unique situation, for example, homebound or alternative location. More definition is

needed for those situations."

We're going to have another one of our members here with us, Jen DeNeal, help read some of the questions for us, or comments.

MS. DENEAL: Thank you, Robin. Our next comment is, "The timeframe for principal review of roster verification was challenging as it was the busiest time of the year for principals."

There are other comments that, "Getting clear, concise data is critical."

And we have a question here, "Is there any way that PowerSchool could be configured to help with the percentage calculation for those that are not self-contained?"

MS. PRESTON: Just as some follow-up to that - that is something that we are exploring, seeing what information we can get out of Power School on a far more frequent basis than we normally send information to EVAAS. That way, when teachers log in, there may be minor changes they need to make, but some of the big ones, like a student enrolling really late in the year, would already be taken into account in the percentages they see.

MS. DENEAL: Question, "When are we actually using this information for the teachers' Standard 6?"

MS. PRESTON: So the answer to that, unfortunately, is not necessarily as clear as I know folks would like because we are in the midst of submitting a request to the Department of Education to change when the information will start to be used in a teacher's Standard 6 rating. Under the current plan and current State Board policy, teachers' value-added data from the '12-13 school year represents the first of three years of data that they need to have an overall status of effective, highly effective, or in need of improvement. We are asking the Department of Education for the ability to use the best two of three years rather than use a three-year average. The sample we would eventually pull from would be teacher value-added scores in the '12-13 school year, the '13-14 school year, and the '14-15 school year. For some teachers, '12-13 will be one of their best two values, and, in that case, we would use it. For other teachers, their highest value-added scores would be in the '13-14 and '14-15 school years. In that case, the

'12-13 data wouldn't be used. We can't say that this is, for sure, how we'll be moving forward because there are still some approval processes that need to be in place, but is the direction that the State Board of Education has indicated they're looking to move.

We are also planning that, after the initial roll-out, it would go back to three years. The '12-13 school year was a year where everyone had new standards, and we understand that it represents the time of a lot of change. Some teachers thrive on that; they did great things, and will have very high value-added scores in '12-13. But for some teachers, the flexibility to not use that year and use the next two is something that would benefit them.

MS. DENEAL: Another comment saying that, "The (indiscernible) Power School to do some of the roster verification work itself would be very helpful with (indiscernible) population.

We have another comment here, "Teacher attendance consistently figured across the state when a teacher is asked to attend professional development or sponsor a club or organization that requires an absence."

DR. MCCOY: We are also looking at consistent guidelines regarding attendance of teachers, and the fact that daily attendance of a teacher is not what we are really looking at. We're looking at times when it is an extended period of time that the teacher is away from her students and it impacts the daily -- the instruction of those students. So we'll be giving you more guidelines on that for sure.

All right. Let's move on to another question. "Did you find that the roster verification software was easy to navigate? And if not, "What types of problems did you encounter?"

DR. MCCOY: We're not seeing any feedback on that one yet. Here's some. Okay.

MS. DENEAL: Our first comment says, "It was easy to navigate once I understood the process."

"It was very easy to navigate. We hand-calculated and then it was just a matter of entering the data."

"I felt like it was easy to navigate as well."

"Not bad."

"Because we frequently use the EVAAS software, it was familiar and easy to use for this purpose."

"Teachers had a difficult time at first, but once they started the process, it was pretty easy."

"The software was just fine. Not a problem."

"We held sessions with teachers in the computer lab, and that streamlined navigation for administrators and teachers."

"Easy to navigate, but it was a bit tedious."

DR. MCCOY: All right. So it sounds like, in general, that navigation through the software was not a major issue. We do have one more comment, though, that may have a different perspective.

MS. DENEAL: "We do see that at least one school had issues with teacher UID (indiscernible) to previous schools and multiple accounts, which were difficult to correct within the district. That made access difficult with the navigation, but it got better once those problems were corrected."

MS. PRESTON: That's something we're also going to be working on with the SAS EVAAS team - account maintenance that can be done in partnership with districts. It's something where they can send to districts a list of teachers with the same name who have multiple accounts. The district can work with us and the SAS EVAAS team to clear that up so we don't have that problem when the roster verification window opens up again.

MS. DENEAL: I'm sorry about that, Jan. I will lean closer to the microphone so that people can hear better.

DR. MCCOY: All right. Let's move to the next question then. We touched on this a tad in the first question, but let's revisit. "Did you find the timeline to complete the process reasonable? And if not, do you have suggestions? Let me say before we begin with your comments that one decision that we have definitely made and will be implementing is that we will be doing roster verification two times a year, one after first semester and one at the end of the year.

A comment has just been put up, "Even for elementary?" Elementary schools would not be required to do it twice a year. This is only for schools that have semesters.

MS. DENEAL: Comment says, "Great."

Question, it says, "What time after first semester?"

DR. MCCOY: We are currently working on our time windows and we are planning to start before the holidays and continue into the end of January.

MS. DENEAL: We have a comment that says, "The timeline was reasonable. I like the notion of verifying the rosters twice a year."

"This year's timeline looks manageable and reasonable."

"No, the entire process was rushed, but good to hear that it will take place twice. The end of the year is just a very difficult time."

"Our district leadership encouraged us to work through the process in a timely fashion. That helps. No last-minute crunch."

We have a question here that says, "What about K-8 schools? We have both year-long and semester-long classes."

DR. MCCOY: We will work with you so that you can make it fit your needs. If a K-8 school needs to do it both as a semester for those students that have semester courses and at the end of the year for the students that don't have semester courses, that is no problem.

MS. PRESTON: As long as you're using the appropriate course codes and indicators when you're scheduling in Power School, that's going to be something that's very clear to us in the data - that we have a middle school that's using a semester schedule and we would know that really without you having even to tell us.

MS. DENEAL: A comment here that says, "It was hard because last year it was during our very busy testing time and summatives, but we do what needs to be done."

Another comment, it says, "Fine. I would certainly work to avoid the last ten days of school."

"I think that now that we know what the process looks like and how to go about it, it should be much

easier."

"Roster verification needs to be available by December 1st to allow for teachers to meet the demands for testing and end-of-semester procedures in January."

DR. MCCOY: All right, thank you very much. Another question, "What situations did you encounter where it was not clear to you how or if teachers should complete the instructional availability and/or instructional responsibility field?"

MS. DENEAL: Comments on ESL teachers, inclusion teachers, ESL, AIG teachers, homebound teachers, AIG pull-out teachers, and then I see a couple of comments about long-term subs. OdysseyWare teachers. I see reading specialists as well.

Oh, we have a confession, "I tried to work through this without fully reading the explanations. After going back and reading the directions thoroughly, it was pretty clear for my school. No problem." Thank you for your honesty. We will not tell anyone who you are.

I'm seeing, TD, ESL, alternative setting, the appropriate amount of EC versus general education.

"Every school in the county was a little different. There were different scenarios. It needs to be more clear."

"The long-term subs, teachers who left the school prior to the end of the year."

"EC teachers who pulled students out on an as-needed basis."

"When students are seeing two reading specialists and also have a classroom teacher for reading, tutors and homebound students."

DR. MCCOY: All right, thank you. To reinforce those comments, we have received that feedback and are working with our EC, ESL, and AIG folks to get input, and we will be creating scenarios and guidelines that will make your jobs easier this year, we feel. So thank you for that feedback.

All right. Next question, we are -- which we actually have already addressed. We are planning to have two roster verification windows this year, one after first semester and one at the end of the year. Do you

feel that this is a good idea? Let us know if you think there is a problem with that, because the feedback that we're getting from you today is that that is something you would like us to do. If you have a reason why you think it's not something we should do, please be sure to let us know.

MS. DENEAL: So we have a comment. It says, "That's a great idea. The issue would be if it runs into the EOC testing window or as teachers are preparing for final exams."

A question, it says, "Will this only be for high school?"

DR. MCCOY: As a follow-up on "will it only be for high school," the testing windows that we come up with apply to any of the teachers that would be doing roster verification.

MS. DENEAL: Okay. Another similar question - same kind of thing. A comment says, "Yes, however, if a teacher leaves at midyear, someone needs to do this teacher's roster verification."

So a comment says, "If we do this for middle school and elementary school, it may be confusing because now you're talking about half-year data."

DR. MCCOY: Let me clarify. The only time we will do it twice a year is for those situations where there are two semesters -- so a fall course and then a spring course. If that does not exist, the school will only do the once-a-year verification at the end of the year.

All right. Now, let's move on to feedback regarding the Common Exam. The first question that we would like your feedback on is "Should the common exams have constructed response items or should they include only multiple-choice items?"

MS. DENEAL: One comment - it says both.

The person is writing, "Only multiple-choice."

DR. MCCOY: As you're sharing your feedback, we'd love to know your thinking on that - if there's a particular thing you would like to add to help us understand your perspective on it. We would appreciate that.

MS. DENEAL: A couple more responses for both. I see one for multiple-choice only. See another

response for multiple-choice only.

So we have a question, it says, "Why is the number of constructed responses not uniform?" We just lost the rest of that question. Sorry.

MS. PRESTON: So the question was, "Why are they not uniform?" and the person who sent that in wrote that, "Social Studies students ran out of time, but in some other areas, they only had a few constructed response and they had more time to answer."

The answer for that question - just to provide one – is that assessments need to be designed such that students can answer all the questions within the administration time period. The reason why some assessments had more constructed response items and fewer multiple choice items than some others is because that's what the teachers who helped us design the assessments said they needed. Social Studies, which the person referenced, is actually a good example. When we have Social Studies teachers writing items and designing the Common Exam, our social studies standards, which are more thematic, require, at least in a teacher's eyes, constructed response questions. You increase the number of constructed response, decrease the number of multiple-choice, and hopefully are assessing all the content standards in a meaningful way. But if students can't answer all the questions, that may mean we have to take a look at the makeup of the assessment again.

MS. DENEAL: I see a comment that says, "Only multiple-choice because grading is absolutely taxing on teachers at that time of year."

"The constructed response item should have allowed for correct work, but wrong answers."

Another vote for multiple-choice only.

"Constructed response items, I think, are a much more effective way of assessing students; however, with a ten-day and five-day window and no reasonable increase time to accomplish the task, it is difficult."

Another vote for both.

Another comment saying, "Having constructed response items gives good information about learning, but

creates a great challenge during the scoring process due to the lack of staffing or staff in the same licensure areas in small middle schools."

"Constructed response is good, but the State needs to provide consistent answers especially for math. There are, unfortunately, different answers within our county."

Another person saying both.

Comment that says, "That's a difficult question. The scoring of the constructed response items was an atrocious process."

"More constructed response, it's the best way to assess standards," but this person wrote, off the record, scoring is an issue.

This person writes, "However, the exams are not balanced or fair. For instance, World History constructed response questions were too specific. The questions need to deal with themes in history."

"Multiple-choice only."

This person says, "I agree that both should be included."

Another comment for both, that the students need the practice."

(Indiscernible) multiple-choice. "Students need to learn to express themselves."

"Both as long as the teachers are not responsible for the grading of the constructed responses."

Some more comments that, "Social Studies students are running of time, but the constructed responses are critical to access knowledge."

People said they had to pull their teachers from instructional time to go grade the MSLS.

A person says, "Both, but the person scoring the work should have appropriate training so the responses are scored fairly across the state."

DR. MCCOY: It seems that all the comments we're seeing are very much along those same lines, so we'll move on to the next question. And that is "What should be the State Board of Education required weight of the Common Exam in a student's final grade?"

MS. PRESTON: I think this needs a little bit of background. The State Board of Education has not made a decision about the weight of the Common Exam in a student's final grade, but they have asked the Department to bring them policy to approve that it would count. There would be a requirement that the Common Exams count in the student's final grade, and they will also be voting on a percentage. So they've sort of made the decision already that it will count. What we're hopeful you can help us with is not only just suggesting a weight, but maybe suggesting your rationale for the weight you're recommending.

MS. DENEAL: So we're seeing a couple of votes for 25 percent. The rationale for one of those is that it is an exam grade.

Another recommendation says, "ten percent of the final grade."

This person says, "Same as the EOC. Are they talking all levels?"

DR. MCCOY: Do you mean all levels in terms of middle school and high school? If you could give us that feedback, we would appreciate it.

MS. DENEAL: Another vote said that, "It should be uniform across the state" and that their district uses 25 percent for the MSLs.

A person says, "EOGs are not grades in K through 8."

Another question, "Are we only talking about high school?"

MS. PRESTON: That's an interesting question. During this past administration, we did have some districts ask for the ability to determine a final grade for middle school students. They wanted to include that as maybe part of the fourth-quarter grade for eighth-grade students or something along those lines. If what the Board is looking for here is consistency in how the EOG counts and how the Common Exam counts, then that would leave middle school and elementary school off the table. They do not have a policy if the EOG counts in students' grades in elementary or middle school. They only have that policy around the End-of-Course exams.

DR. MCCOY: For the purposes of this conversation, let's talk about EOCs and Common Exams at the high school level.

MS. DENEAL: Another vote for 25 percent.

This person says, "I thought the Common Exams were prevented as not counting against students, but to measure teacher effectiveness only. Did I misunderstand?" This person is writing specifically about elementary schools, which right now we've taken off the table for counting in elementary students' grades. We're seeing some more for 25 percent and ten percent. This person says 25 for high school. "If we go to middle-school grade, maybe only 15 percent in middle schools."

DR. MCCOY: Now, I should clarify that some students in middle school may be taking high school courses.

MS. DENEAL: Right. This person says, "No more than ten percent until we get a good standardized set of rules for the constructed responses. It needs to remain low."

Another vote for ten percent.

This person points out that, "If the percentage is minimal, then students will not take the test seriously."

Another vote for 25 percent.

Another vote for ten percent.

Again, someone else pointing out that if it's not weighted, it won't be taken seriously.

Seeing the same kinds of comments on students taking it seriously.

25 percent again.

DR. MCCOY: Okay. It looks like we are seeing mostly ten percents and 25 percents. If there's anyone who feels strongly about some other percentage, please let us know, and then we will be moving on to another question.

All right. So let's move to the next question about Common Exams. "Did you encounter any problems with the content of the Common Exams? And if so, did you report them to DPI?"

MS. DENEAL: We see a yes and yes.

DR. MCCOY: If we could have some information, too, about what kinds of problems were encountered, it would be helpful.

MS. DENEAL: This person said, "Yes, World History multiple choice was too specific and not thematic."

"The item percentages that the common assessments were supposed to be composed of did not reflect what was actually on the test."

"Yes, there were questions not contained in the curriculum in the middle school Social Studies test."

MS. PRESTON: I do know there was a case where some items were actually removed from the middle school Social Studies test as a result of that feedback.

MS. DENEAL: "The middle school Social Studies tests were also too specific."

This person says, "Yes and yes, information on the test is not reflected in the curriculum, specifically, middle school Social Studies." And like Jenn said, we did receive that feedback and made changes to the test accordingly.

MS. PRESTON: One person remarked, and I just want to take note of this, that they reported their question to the county coordinator and then the county coordinator forwarded it to us at DPI. That's fantastic because that's how we like to see the process working. It's much more streamlined and we can kind of pinpoint where we're hearing concerns. The way we hear about problems is through you at the school level is if your principal is reporting to your district testing coordinator who then can contact the regional accountability coordinator or someone here at the Department centrally. So thank you to Mary for going about that just the right way. We appreciate it.

MS. DENEAL: "There were limited released items as examples of certain curriculum - Social Studies in particular."

"Fifth-grade Social Studies did not seem to reflect the curriculum as we were told it would be weighted."

"The Civics and Economics constructed responses were heavy and did not reflect all the course work."

"We found some had too few questions for an exam period."

"Sometimes we feel that when we report problems that nothing is done."

DR. MCCOY: And you finished with saying that's something we probably don't want to hear. Actually, we want any feedback that you can give us so that we can improve our process. We appreciate that. We want to be responsive.

MS. DENEAL: "We feel that content of the Language Arts problems were routed in the long length of the short five-page passages," short in quotation marks.

DR. MCCOY: All right, thank you. Now, that concludes the specific questions that we had, and we appreciate that feedback. We will be taking all of this feedback and using it as we make our decisions and our recommendations. But before we finish today, we are available to take any other comments that you might have that we didn't capture through our questions.

So again, if you'd like to provide us further feedback, you can either raise your hand or type it into the question bar.

MS. DENEAL: We have a question, it says, "We had several teachers ask who wrote the MSLs."

MS. PRESTON: There was a multi-stage design process that involved two different groups of teachers. The first group of teachers was from 108 out of the 115 school districts, as well as some charter schools. These are folks who applied to work specifically on the project of writing the Measures of Student Learning or the Common Exams. We read applications from teachers, made an initial selection, and then asked central office staff to take a look at the teachers we selected and give us the okay to move forward. Those teachers then came together at an in-person meeting to write assessment specifications, which are where we ask the teachers about the kinds of questions that assess particular standards, like a multiple-choice question or a constructed response question. We also ask them about how heavily the standard should be weighted on the exam. What they provide us in terms of answers to those questions ultimately

determines a blueprint for an assessment. It's essentially kind of a map to how we'll build it.

There was then a second group of teachers that came in, and these are teachers, also from North Carolina, who write items for NC State University. They're the folks who write our End-of-Grade and End-of-Course assessments. The teachers wrote the items in response to what the original teachers said they wanted to see on an assessment, and then once the items had been written, we brought back those original teachers to review the items and say that some were not what they were thinking about, that some needed to be tweaked, or that some were good to go as they were. The resulting pool of items that were reviewed and accepted by the teachers is what was actually used to make the assessments. We do have content experts both in curriculum and in test development working along the process, but in terms of why the test look the way they do - how standards are weighted, the kinds of questions you're seeing - that's really driven by the teachers that helped us to create them.

MS. DENEAL: A comment saying that, "The sooner we get the materials, the easier this will be to organize."

"I feel strongly about making sure that the State comes up with a standardized way to do this because it cannot be up to the LEA. It is too important for teachers not to have consistency -- for teachers to have consistency in this process."

DR. MCCOY: Let me ask, please, because we've talked about roster verification and Common Exams, that if you have a comment such as the one we just read, I'm not sure if you were referring to Common Exams or roster verification or perhaps both, but if you could make sure that we know that from your comments, we would appreciate it.

MS. DENEAL: We have a comment that says, "The five-day window will not be long enough with so many different tests and different lengths at the high school level. Will this be addressed before the first semester?"

MS. PRESTON: So our Accountability Services group is working with your regional accountability

coordinators and your district test coordinators. The five-day window is something that was put into place by the General Assembly, and the way they defined summative assessments is such that it covers all the Career and Technical Education assessments, teacher-made final exams that you may still be giving in courses where there aren't Common Exams, and End-of-Grade and End-of-Course assessments. It's certainly going to be challenging, but we're going to try and work together to share best practices and think creatively about how all the schools across the state can meet this legislative requirement.

A group of assessments that do not have to be administered within that five- or ten-day window is if you have students that you're doing separate setting or read-aloud or something like that, that can be done in advance of the five-day window. Five days is for a semester schedule. We're looking at ten days of test administration for a year-round schedule.

MS. DENEAL: So we have another comment, it says, "We would like greater flexibility in the testing time per day. The only options were 90 or 45 minutes. There was too much time for the constructed response portion and not enough for the multiple-choice. It would be nice to have 30 minutes on the multiple choice and 60 for the constructed response."

A question, it says, "Is there a way to send all of the test materials to a central location for grading rather than depend on the teachers to grade at the schools? The grading would be more uniform and consistent.

MS. PRESTON: This is a question that is one we're looking for feedback on. The idea that was just suggested - sending in all of the constructed response items to, let's say here to DPI, so that we could hire teachers over the summer to be trained and then score them - is something that several people have suggested.

The downside to that, we've also heard from some people, is that the scores would not be back in time to use as part of the students' actual final exam grades, and that even if the students weren't explicitly told that, it would get out. They would know that the constructed response items don't actually count in their grade and then, therefore, might not be as motivated to put in the effort.

So we see some ways in which it's a great idea. We keep constructed response. We bring North Carolina teachers in to grade. But then we also see potential downsides, and so we'd love to hear thoughts that you may have on that tough question. It's going to be hard to answer that one.

MS. DENEAL: A comment that says, "The scoring rubrics are too broad. The lack of specificity made scoring very difficult."

A question, it says, "Was the EOG checked for biases in relation to gender alignment to the standards and culture?"

DR. MCCOY: All of our test items did go through the appropriate channels to check for all of those things, yes.

We have a comment that says, "There are too many cuts and the whole process needs to be re-thought."

MS. DENEAL: A question here that says, "What are the dates for roster verification at the end of the year?"

DR. MCCOY: The dates that we are currently thinking about begin April 28th for the principal window of one week, and then the teacher window from early May, May 5th or so, until June 1st. Then another two weeks after that for the district office to review them and send them back, if you need to do anything to them, lasting then all the way through June 29th. There should be plenty of time for the whole process beginning April 28th for the first principal review all the way through the 29th. You may remember from this past year that even if it's moved on to the next level, they can always be sent back. So you can think of that total time as being from April 28th to June 29th at the end of the year. We are thinking about the fall window starting on December 2nd and going through February 16th total, again, with the different windows within that.

MS. DENEAL: We have a question that asks, "What are the chances of the Common Exams being placed online as EOCs are?"

MS. PRESTON: It's something that we're certainly moving toward. We are at a place in the State right

now where, if we were to move the Common Exams completely online, districts simply don't have the amount of devices and bandwidth for us to move as an entire state to online administration.

Last year, we did support some districts in taking the items on the Common Exams and getting them loaded into an existing secure assessment platform that they use. The districts that did that typically used whatever provider they use for their benchmarks, so it's a system they use regularly to administer a secure assessment that they have students taking.

We're definitely willing to support districts in doing that again this year and are working to try and get the Common Exams online as an option for districts that may want to do online administration at some point, but can't give a firm date on when we'll be able to commit to them all being there.

MS. DENEAL: We have a comment that says, "The ELA rubrics were not necessarily expecting high-quality writing. So question, is there any plan to revise the rubrics currently being used?"

MS. PRESTON: So we're taking a look at all the assessments from last year. ELA is interesting because there is a little bit of tension in terms of what objectives you're actually trying to assess for the particular question. If you're asking students to identify a literary device and explain how it's used, if you grade them on the grammar or the way that they write their response, you're actually grading them on something other than the content standard.

Of course, we want our students to be good high-quality writers, so it's not an argument against that, but when we look specifically at alignment to content standards, it is possible that a student could give you content information that's correct, but not be expressing it in a very high-quality way. That's a tough thing to balance.

MS. DENEAL: We have a comment here that says, "The one good thing about teachers grading the constructed responses was that it gave us an opportunity for some staff development before and after the grading process. For example, a review of writing in our school."

"I agree, feedback for students and counting is crucial or move MSLs to the midterm with common state

(indiscernible) so it would be ready for grading before the end of the semester so it would count.

We have a question here that says, "Would it be possible for the first-semester roster verification to be completed before the end of the first semester prior to the EOCs being scored?"

DR. MCCOY: The reason why we don't currently have it scheduled that way is because we have so many different schedules across the state and people's resources vary in terms of having time to stop and do those things. The window is created to provide additional time for those who need that time.

However, I'm trying to figure out a way that we might provide districts a little bit more individual scheduling flexibility, so that might be something we could implement.

At this time, we have the windows where the software knows to move the data to the next step, so if we provide too much flexibility, then the software can't move the way it is designed to do. But we appreciate that feedback and will continue to try to make it such that it meets your needs the best we can.

MS. PRESTON: So the next question is kind of a longer description of some problems with the actual administration of the assessment, specifically how it was divided into two sections for districts that wanted the option of administering over two days. Things like this are going to be cleared up a little bit this year with that five-day administration window requirement. We're really not expecting that any district is going to want to break up the Common Exam into two sections and administer over two days. It would really just take two of the five, so we are planning on having just one book that reads through like a test without a break, unless we hear from districts that that's not going to meet their needs and then we'll need to see how we can compromise on that.

DR. MCCOY: It looks like that that is the end of comments that you have share with us, and we are at almost 4:30. We appreciate so much the fact that you spent this hour with us and provided feedback to us. If you have additional feedback after the webinar is over that you'd like to share with us, please don't hesitate to send it to other address that's on your screen right now. We appreciate your feedback today and in the future. Thank you so much.

(CONCLUDED)

WPU

Gloria Veilleux, Transcriber