MS. PRESTON: Again, thank you for joining us on this Friday morning for our webinar for charter school teachers, principals, and staff members about North Carolina's work around educator effectiveness. I'd like to first let folks that are in the room with me introduce themselves. They are staff members with the Office of Charter Schools at the Department of Public Instruction, many of whom I'm sure you know well. Can you please introduce yourselves?

MS. SWINSON: Lisa Swinson.

MR. MILLER: Good morning. This is Tom Miller. Hope you're all having a great Friday.

MS. PRESTON: My name is Jennifer Preston. I am the Race to the Top project coordinator for educator effectiveness, and I'll be sharing today's information on educator effectiveness with you.

First, we're just going to go over a couple of logistics for the webinar. We are recording it, and we will be archiving it online so that folks who weren't able to join us today can listen to the webinar. We encourage you to share with staff members or colleagues who aren't able to join today.

We do have a fairly large audience, so all participants are muted. If we had folks un-muted, we'd be dealing with a lot of background noise. If you have questions throughout the presentation, please feel free to type them into the questions bar. We'll have time at the end to answer questions, and, if there are any that we don't get to, we will answer them and post a frequently asked questions document after the webinar is completed.

Before we get into the educator effectiveness model and the Common Exams, which is a particular area of focus for today's webinar, I first want to start by setting the context around educator effectiveness. The '12 to '13 school year in North Carolina is most certainly one of a lot of change. We're implementing the Common Core and Essential Standards. There are new assessments that go along with those as a part of the State Testing Program. We are gearing up for implementation of the instructional improvement system, as well as a new student information system that will replace NCWISE. A lot is changing this

year. In the face of all of these changes, why is the State focusing so heavily on education effectiveness? Many of you have probably been classroom teachers and you work in schools. You know probably more intimately than anyone else that all of those other areas - curriculum, assessment, technology - don't matter if we don't have effective teachers in front of all of our children. The teachers that we have working with our kids and the principals we have leading our schools are critical to making sure that we're able to get them the outcomes for students that we all want.

The work around educator effectiveness in North Carolina is also really grounded in the belief that every student deserves an effective teacher in all courses and grades. When we talk later about the Common Exams, we'll be essentially talking about how North Carolina is going to capture growth information for students in areas like social studies and science. The reason we need to do that is because kids deserve effective teachers in those content areas.

I'm sure that many of you on the line are parents, and, as parents, none of us would ever send our children off to school in the morning with the statement that we want them to have good English and math teachers, but it's okay if their social studies and science and art teachers aren't so good. What we need to create in North Carolina is an environment in which we, as parents, would be happy to send our own children into the classroom of any of the colleagues in our school.

Teachers in North Carolina are not going to become more effective without access to high-quality data. We need to be giving our teachers good feedback - specific feedback about what their strengths are and how they can share those with their colleagues - and what their areas for professional growth are, accompanied by the specific strategies that can help them grow in those areas.

Let's just be upfront about what the educator effectiveness model isn't about. It's not about firing our way to a better teaching force. We're never going to get there that way. What we need is an educator effectiveness model that identifies our strongest teachers so that we can learn from them so that they can be the ones who lead professional learning communities, work with our new teachers, and support them

as they make that transition.

We also need a system that identifies those teachers who need additional support, not because we want to automatically dismiss them, but because we want to look at where their areas for growth are and then provide them with support that meets their needs.

Let's talk a little bit about the specific policies and programs that are going to get us to that ultimate outcome. First, I want to share with you a little bit of data that comes from a national study on educator effectiveness. It's called the Measures of Effective Teaching Project. It has been funded for the last five years by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the research arm of the project actually lives in the Harvard School of Education. If you're interested in finding out more about this study, the website is metproject, m-e-t-p-r-o-j-e-c-t, .org, and you can find more information about the study there. It's been operational in five large urban school systems, one of which is here in North Carolina: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. The data that I'm about to share do represent some teachers from North Carolina and learning outcomes for their students.

The MET Project set out to answer a question that, at that time, wasn't related to anything like tenure decisions or licensure decisions. The researchers started with the question: how do we create an evaluation model that gives teachers good feedback and give them feedback from multiple different sources? In their work to find a system that does that, they tried several different combinations of tools. The first thing they did was use an observation tool. We have a statewide evaluation tool in North Carolina, the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System. I know some of you may use different observation tools. We certainly have folks that we know use the CLASS rubric or use rubrics from other places. The Danielson rubric is another good example. What the research study did is, across all the observation tools that are in use in these systems, they looked at the differences in learning outcomes for students depending on how teachers were rated on their classroom observations. If you use classroom observations to identify the top 25 percent of teachers and then you look at the learning gains of their

students, those students are gaining about a month more learning in math than the average student is learning, and that's what the white vertical line running down the center of the graph represents. That's the average gain for students on state math tests. If you look at the students who are with the bottom 25 percent of teachers as identified through an observation tool only, those students are losing about a month and a half of instruction compared to the average.

The researchers said "this is good information, but the goal here is to give teachers more feedback than just reports and discussions that come from their classroom observations." They also administered a student survey, actually the same survey that North Carolina piloted in about 47 school districts this spring. The survey asks students questions not really about teacher popularity, but about the behaviors they see their teachers engaging in, questions like "does your teacher ask you to explain your answers?" "Does your teacher go over questions that you missed and show you how to get the right answers?" Questions like that.

The researchers then combined the results of teacher observation with the perceptions of students and then identified the top 25 percent of teachers. What we now can see is that when you identify the teachers that way, their students are gaining about three months of instruction compared to the average classroom. When you look at the bottom 25 percent of teachers identified in that manner, their students are losing about two months of instruction.

The last method they used was continuing to use observation, continuing to use the survey, but they also adding in a specific student growth component to looking at academic progress over the course of the school year. These are the differences that were picked up.

When you use those three measures and combine them, the top 25 percent of teachers are now the folks whose students are growing about four and a half more months than the average classroom. The students who are with the bottom 25 percent of teachers are losing about three months.

One thing that we know about teacher distribution, going back several years in the research that's been

done, is that teacher distribution typically varies more within a school than it does across schools or across districts. The reality for many of our students is that they ride the same buses to school; they eat lunch in the same cafeteria, and may be in classrooms that are right next door to each other. However, they're in classrooms that are at the polar opposites of this graph: some with a teacher who is helping them make almost four and a half more months of gains, and some with a teacher where that educational experience is going to result in them losing three months of gains.

We also know from existing research on teacher quality that our kids who have access to the least effective teachers typically continue to have access to the least effective teachers. Kids that are in those classrooms in orange - where they're losing so many months of instruction - hat's typically their reality year after year after year. For those folks who are on the line who work with high school students or even middle school students, you can see how we get the students that are so far behind in so many of their critical reading and math skills. I was a high school teacher, so this is an area I feel particularly passionate about.

What North Carolina is trying to do is take what's been learned in that research study. Certainly, if other states have tried things and they haven't worked, we don't want to make the same mistakes. We want to try to learn from our colleagues. We're trying to create a system that includes multiple data points and multiple ways of viewing teacher performance. Some of the work on the educator effectiveness model has already been completed. Some will continue to be put into policy over the course of the '12-13 school year; I'm going to quickly walk through those elements.

Standards 6 and 8 have already been added to the North Carolina educator evaluation system. We'll talk a little bit more about them in just a minute. There was an interim weighting for Standards 6 and 8 for the '11-12 school year as we sort of integrated the model into our existing evaluation system, and the Board will be deciding on a more permanent model to use in '12-13 and beyond.

The Board has also put into policy the idea of an educator status, which allows us to do something we

haven't done in our evaluation system before. What we've always been able to say using our evaluation system previously was that teachers were proficient on Standard 1, developing on Standard 3, accomplished on Standard 4, etc. What does that really mean as a whole? We never had a language to use to talk about that, and now we do: an educator's overall status of effective, highly effective, or in need of improvement. With that language in policy, what the Board will be working on this year is what happens to our teachers who are in need of improvement. What kinds of growth plans do we need to have? What kinds of professional development do we need to put into place to help them improve their areas for growth?

We are also, this year, beginning implementation of the Common Exams or the Measures of Student Learning. These are how we're going to be capturing growth information on students in grades 4 through 8 in English Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, and Math. What you can see from the slide is that there are some content areas not covered by the Common Exams, and they're listed under the fourth bullet. We are working on some ways of measuring growth in K to 2 and looking at some potential options for grade 3, where we have EOG results for students, but we don't really have any data on where they started to do a growth calculation. We also have the areas with performance-based standards; when I say performance areas, we're talking about World Languages, the Arts, and Healthful Living.

The ways that we'll be measuring growth in these content areas listed under the fourth bullet are going to take us longer to develop, and they will not start until the '13-14 school year. The Common Exams, which is where we'll focus a lot of our time today, are starting in the '12-13 school year.

These are the teacher and principal evaluation standards. For teachers, nothing has changed about the first five. The language has stayed exactly the same, but we do now have the sixth standard, which is that teachers contribute to the academic success of their students.

For principals and assistant principals, they have their seven original evaluation standards, all focusing on different types of leadership, and they also have an eighth standard, which is called academic

achievement leadership.

The most important thing to take away from today's webinar is what's on the screen right now. This is an area on which we here at the agency need as much help in communicating with our teachers as you can give us. Standards 6 and 8 are both about student growth. They are not about student proficiency. That is a big shift for all of us in education, particularly as we know about No Child Left Behind, ESEA, and other reforms that have been heavily, heavily focused on student proficiency rates.

The effectiveness model that we are trying to create needs to be one in which teachers who work with our low-achieving students and make gains with them, even if those gains don't result in proficiency, are rewarded for their hard work. Let's say there is a seventh-grade Reading teacher who has students who come in reading at the third-grade reading level. Let's say, at the end of the year, those students are reading at the fifth-grade reading level, two years' worth of gain in one year of instruction. That's incredible growth. Those students are still not going to score 3s and 4s on the seventh-grade reading EOG. They're just too far behind. What's going to be used in the teacher's evaluation is the growth piece, the two years of growth made over the course of one year.

The Board has added some language to our policy around teacher evaluation to clarify exactly what it means to measure growth and to use growth in teacher and principal evaluation. Back in the spring, they approved the use of EVAAS as the statewide growth model. It will be used for principal evaluation, teacher evaluation, and, beginning in the 2012-to-13 school year, we will also be using EVAAS school-wide growth as part of the school accountability model so that when we talk about growth across all areas, we're using the same consistent model.

In terms of which assessments are used to produce EVAAS scores, there are really four options for the '12-to-13 school year. End-of-Grade and End-of-Course assessments have traditionally been used in EVAAS to produce value-added scores, and that will stay the same. We've also been able to work with the team at SAS to produce value-added scores for our CTE Post-Assessments. The new Common

Exams that are being administered across the state this year will be used to measure value-added for those teachers. EVAAS takes in the data points from all of those assessments and ultimately produces the teacher-growth value, oftentimes called teacher value-added data.

Before we move on to talk about the Common Exams, I want to pause here and just make a couple of points about the educator evaluation system as a whole and how it does or doesn't apply specifically for charter schools. I'm sure we have some representatives from charter schools that accepted Race to the Top funding on the webinar today. Charter schools that accepted Race to the Top funding are required to use the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System to evaluate all of their teachers and they are also required to use that system in the online form by completing self-assessments, professional development plans, observations, and summary rating forms in the online McREL tool.

The use of the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System is also required with any beginning teachers who plan to convert their Standard Professional 1 teaching license to a Standard Professional 2 teaching license after their first three years in the classroom. That applies whether you're a Race to the Top charter school or not. That's simply something required for your new teachers that want to have the State Standard Professional 2 teaching license.

Lastly, a bit about the sixth standard. The sixth standard is now a required element of the evaluation system, so there really isn't an option to use only Standards 1 through 5. If you're using the Educator Evaluation System, it now includes all six standards.

I'm going to get into more depth about the Common Exams because there are definitely lots of questions about them. I want to walk you through some information about them, let you know where you can find resources on the web, and then begin to take questions about the assessments or any other part of the educator effectiveness model.

The best way to think about the Common Exams is to think about them as a library. If a student goes into a library and she has a particular research question she’s trying to answer for a class, she doesn’t take out

every single book in the library. She picks the books she needs to get the information, that's what she uses. It's a good analogy to think about the Common Exams in the same way. There's no requirement that every single one of these assessments be administered across the board. What districts, and in this case, charter schools, need to do is look at their teachers, look at what courses they're teaching and what students they're teaching, and then make decisions about which of these exams they need to take out of the library, so to speak, and administer to students.

Before we talk about those administration decisions, I first want to focus on three reasons why this workis happening at the state level. Why are these statewide Common Exams, and why isn't this something that's being done more at the local level? There are three key reasons for this.

The first is that North Carolina does, in fact, have a statewide evaluation system. If you have friends or family who teach in other states, you probably know that that's fairly uncommon. In a lot of states, districts have their own evaluation systems. Because we do have a statewide system and statewide End-of-Grade, End-of-Course, and CTE Post-Assessments are used as part of that model, we need to also have statewide Common Exams so that the system stays consistent no matter whether we're talking about teachers on the coast or in the mountains.

A second reason to have Common Exams at all is that the Board does believe that teachers should have a Standard 6 rating that's based on the growth of their own students. Again, looking at how some other states are approaching the system, there are some places where teachers are evaluated on school-wide growth and school-wide growth alone. In North Carolina, that's an interim measure. It's really only until we get to a place where a teacher's evaluation is, in part, based on growth with their kids in their content area. That's the fairest system to work our way toward.

Lastly, when we think about capacity, especially in light of budget cuts over recent years, we know that our districts simply don't have the resources to do this alone. Designing fair and valid assessments for this kind of purpose requires pyschometricians, statisticians, test-measurement specialists, and districts

can't afford to hire those staff members. What we are doing here at the Department is using our staff members that work on the State Testing Program as the infrastructure, but the work is really being driven by 800 teachers who, since October of 2011, have been involved in working with us to design these new Common Exams. We'll talk a little bit about how they've specifically been involved in a few minutes. There are two principles for administration of the Common Exams, and, for those of you who are a little bit more visual, this same information is also in a graphic on the next slide, so we're hopefully meeting everybody's learning modes!

The first principle is that, across North Carolina, every English Language Arts, Science, Math and Social Studies teacher in grades 4 through 12 should have a value-added score. We are making assessments available and adding them to the state assessments that we have such that, with some exceptions, we should have value-added scores for all of those teachers.

The second principle is that teacher growth values will be calculated based on all the students a teacher teaches, and, when multiple assessments are required, all the data generated through the assessments. The easiest way to think about this principle is to use some examples.

So if we look at the first part, teacher-growth values are calculated based on all the students a teacher teaches. Let's think, for example, of a high school math teacher, and let's say that high school math teacher is at a high school where they use the block schedule. In the fall semester, the teacher has one section of Algebra I and two sections of Pre-Calculus. In the spring, let's say this teacher has three sections of Pre-Calculus. If we used only the results of the State Testing Program, essentially the Math I assessment, to look at that teacher's impact on student learning, we would be leaving out five-sixths of the students that the teacher has actually taught. Those Pre-Calculus students wouldn't be represented anywhere in the teacher's growth value. That's a system that really isn't fair to those students who certainly deserve to be represented, or to that teacher who may do a fantastic job teaching the Pre-Calculus standards. In that case, when the Pre-Calculus Common Exam is administered to those five

classes of Pre-Calculus students, those results, and the student results on the EOC, can be used to make a better measure of how the teacher is impacting the learning of students.

For the second part of the principle, when multiple assessments are required all data will be used, is typically easiest to think about with a fifth-grade self-contained teacher. That fifth-grade self-contained teacher is giving students the Science EOG, the Math EOG, and the Reading EOG. Because the teacher taught all of these content standards to the students, data from those three assessments will be combined to produce the overall teacher-growth value.

As I mentioned, for folks who are a little bit more visual, we've also taken those very same principles and embedded them within what we're calling a decision tree because it can be a tool for a teacher, principal, or support staff at a district level to think about which teachers need to administer the Common Exams and which teachers don't. So let's walk through this tree using those two teachers we just talked about as examples.

So first, let's imagine that we are that high school Math teacher teaching five sections of Pre-Calculus and one section of Algebra I. We ask ourselves the first question: does the teacher administer an End-of-Course, End-of-Grade, or CTE Post-Assessment to all of his or her students? For that Math teacher, the answer would be, "No, I'm giving the EOC to one group of my kids, but I'm not giving anything to my five sections of Pre-Calculus."

So I then ask the second question, does the teacher instruct a course or a grade where there is a Measure of Student Learning available? There is a Pre-Calculus Common Exam, so the answer to that question would be yes. The teacher has now arrived at the bottom of the decision tree: yes, there is a state requirement to administer the Measure of Student Learning in that case.

Let's also walk through the decision tree with that fifth-grade self-contained teacher in mind. So the teacher would ask himself or herself, "Do I administer an End-of-Course, End-of-Grade, or CTE Post-Assessment to all of my students?" The answer for that teacher is yes - times three. "I'm giving them

three EOGs, and so I really reached the end of the decision tree already. Because all of my students are taking at least one EOG, there's no state requirement to administer a Measure of Student Learning in that situation."

I want to share some resources that are available for districts and for charter schools. These have all been posted to our educator effectiveness website. I'll show you the address for that in just a couple of minutes. The Department has developed an implementation guide that walks through the logistics of the Measures of Student Learning, including deciding which students need to take them and outlining areas for district flexibility. There are also administration timelines about which assessments are available when. There are assessment specifications available; for those of you who have worked with the State Testing Program before, the Department always makes available assessment specifications. These documents take a look at the standards being covered in a course and then let teachers know how heavily each standard will be weighed on the assessment, as well as which types of questions they can expect to see for each specific standard. Those documents are available for all of the high school Common Exams that are rolling out this year, and we'll soon have them available for middle school and upper elementary school as well.

There is also a Guide to Measuring Student Growth that has been divided into content-specific sections. If I am Social Studies teacher, and all I really want to know is how this works for Social Studies teachers, I look at the table of contents, flip to the page about Social Studies, and can find the specific information I'm looking for.

We've also developed a local planning template, and I want to just make a couple of quick notes about this. The local planning template is something that we made after we got requests from districts to do so, and what it really does is put, in one place, the questions that a district or a charter needs to ask themselves about their systems for education evaluation and testing to ensure that they've got all the plans in place for administration of the Common Exam. It is not a required document. We're not collecting it

from anyone. We don't even having an expectation that all districts will use it. It's an optional resource that's out there.

In terms of implementation options, the administration of the high school Common Exams this fall is optional. The original plan was that all districts and charters that are going to administer would have to administer in the fall semester. After hearing concerns from the folks, especially out in the West, about how soon that would be given their calendars, it's now an option for the fall. To date, I have heard from two charter schools that are going to go ahead and administer the assessments this fall as well as in the spring.

For districts or charters that choose to administer the assessments this fall, they have a second choice they can make, and the second choice is about how they want to handle Geometry and Algebra II. Geometry and Algebra II are being taught in multiple ways across the state as we transition to the Common Core and as we support a series of pathways for high school math. There is some flexibility around that because, in the spring, we'll be releasing some new options for these courses. For districts or charters that have transitioned completely to the Common Core, there will be those assessments available in the spring. If you need more information about that specifically, you can either contact me or there's also information on the web posted about the different assessments and what standards and pathways they would all align to.

One important point about administration in the fall is that if the assessments are administered, the results do count for the teacher's sixth standard rating.

Next thing I want to do is highlight some areas of district or charter school flexibility. The first is around administration mode. For places that feel like they've got the devices and the bandwidth to administer online, it's an option with the Common Exams. We're not supporting that from the Department level, but we do have some districts across the state that have said "We run our own assessment program online for our benchmark assessments. We're going to take these questions, we're going to drop them in our system,

and we're going to administer all of it online." We probably have more districts that are going the more traditional way - paper textbooks and students bubbling in their responses on answer sheets.

We also have heard from some systems that are being pretty creative and using sort of a hybrid approach. In that approach, students have the test book on a computer or an iPad to scroll through and read the question, but they're actually responding on a paper answer sheet. It's kind of a hybrid that's a good way to minimize the amount of copying that's done, but still has the student answers captured on an answer sheet that's scannable.

The date of administration is also an area of flexibility, really because of the third bullet. These exams are all 90 minutes long, which means that they can fit in a traditional block schedule for a high school. If a district or charter would rather administer this assessment during the last week of class, they can do that. They don't have to administer it in a testing week when students have those big four and five hours of chunks of time to take the state assessment.

There's also flexibility around using the results of these exams in the student grade. With the EOCs, of course, there's Board policy that it has to count for at least 25 percent of a student's grade for a course. There are no policies like that around the Common Exams.

There's, of course, also flexibility around which assessments are administered. Districts are using that decision tree that we discussed a few moments ago. For charter schools, there is additional flexibility. If you're not a Race to the Top charter school, you may be deciding that you're only going to administer these with your beginning teachers because you are interested in helping them make that step from an SP1 to an SP2 license.

Lastly, secure administration is another area where there's some flexibility. We want to be careful how we discuss this because, of course, the administration of these assessments has to be secure. But we know that, if our end goal is secure administration, there may be different paths to that that aren't exactly the way we do our state tests. One example of flexibility that districts are taking advantage of is the

requirement that there not be a proctor. A lot of systems are administering these the same way they administer our CTE Post-Assessments: teachers switch classes and administer to each other's students. Maybe as the ninth-grade World History teacher, I'll administer the Earth & Environmental Science test while my Science teacher on the ninth-grade hall will administer my World History test. The need for proctors has been eliminated.

Let's talk a little bit about logistics, specifically for charter schools, before we get into some common questions that are asked about these Common Exams. Charter schools are going to be partnering with the folks at TOPS at NC State University for implementation. Charter schools will do the same things as districts: they will call our answer sheet vendor or go online and order the number of answer sheets that they need based on what courses they're offering and how many students are in those courses. The answer sheets will get shipped to TOPS at NC State University, where they will be pre-coded using the information that's in NCWISE. That's to eliminate students having to bubble-in every letter of their name or having to bubble-in birthdates, teacher names, and things of that sort. There will be a contact at TOPS who will stay in close communication with you to make sure that everything is going smoothly for that - that she's pulling the right information out of NCWISE - so there will be a lot of communication back and forth.

Those pre-coded answer sheets will then be shipped to your school for administration. After your students have taken the assessments and responded, they will get shipped back to TOPS for scanning, and then the results will be made available to you as soon as the scanning process is done.

I mentioned that I have heard from two charter schools that are going to administer this fall. We'll certainly be working closely with those two on any feedback they have on that process and how we can improve it for the spring, but that is the current plan for how logistics will work. The assessment books themselves will be available in the same way they're made available to districts: through the secure shell at our accountability division here that DPI manages. Just like for the traditional school districts,

whoever has access to that secure shell at your charter school pulls down the assessments and then makes copies if you're going to do paper/pencil administration or loads them onto an online system if you're going to administer that way.

Before we start taking questions from the group, I want to walk through some common questions that we know we always get whenever we talk about these exams and the educator effectiveness process as a whole. One question is always about who designed these tests and how they have been designed. They've been designed using the same basic process as the state assessments. It's a good solid assessment design process. We start at the beginning by mapping out what the assessments are going to look like, generating a lot of items to build those kinds of roadmaps, reviewing items and forms, and moving through to final production. Where this program has been different from the state assessments is that over 800 teachers from across the state have been involved. There were 14 charter schools that nominated teachers to participate in this process and those teachers have, in fact, been active participants.

We do have involvement of our psychometricians and test-measurement specialists here at DPI because we want these to be fair, valid, reliable assessments, and so they're doing some of the very same types of analysis that they do with the state test, for example, looking for poor-performing items. An example of a poor-performing assessment item is one that really doesn't differentiate, so either all the students get it correct or all the students get it wrong. Those are the kind of items we flag and actually pull out of the results before we ever send any information to SAS to generate value-added scores.

There also have been a lot of questions about a lack of teacher knowledge around what's going to be on these assessments. We do want to point out that this is a really important link because that's where those specifications are available. They do outline for teachers what standards will be assessed, how heavily they'll be assessed, and what kinds of questions will be on them.

We've also released general information on rubrics. It was released at a Curriculum and Instruction meeting that was held on October 19th, and it's also been posted to our website. We have gotten a lot of

requests for us to release the rubrics that will be used in the actual assessments. The reason we can't do that is because every single performance task is going to have its own rubric. If we release the rubrics, we'd really be telling everybody what the questions are, and, of course, in a secure testing environment, we can't do that. There will be an online module released around Thanksgiving that will walk teachers through how to use the rubrics to score performance tasks. They'll actually see some master scorers taking actual student work, applying the rubrics to it, and kind of talking aloud through their process for assessing the work.

There have been some concerns about how the performance items will be graded. The policy from the State is that there has to be at least one grader who is not the student teacher of record and who has the content knowledge necessary to score the item. Content knowledge necessary to score the item is really something you can decide at your school level. As a former high school Social Studies teacher, I can tell you that I probably could have scored middle school Social Studies and certainly any of the high school Social Studies courses, but you wouldn't have wanted me scoring Chemistry or Physics. I just didn't have the content knowledge necessary to do that.

We do know of districts where they are going to be kind of pooling teachers together and bringing them together at a centralized place to trade student work and really get across-district scoring. Partnering with other charter schools is a good option for those of you who are located near other charters.

We also have a lot of teachers saying that they want to grade their students' work because they want to see what the students have produced after a year of instruction. That's fine. The teachers can read. They can score, but they can't be the only one scoring because of the conflict of interest involved in the scores being a part of one of their standards of the evaluation system.

With the exception of the English Language Arts assessments, it is possible to administer the performance tasks early, so maybe two or three weeks before the end of the semester to allow for more time for scoring. The reason that's not an option with ELA is really because of the structure of the test. It's

organized as a reading passage followed by multiple-choice questions followed by a performance task. Because the tasks are linked to the specific reading passage, you really can't cluster them at the end like you can with the other assessments. They are the one exception to that rule.

While scoring work is definitely an area where there's a lot of concern, we do want to hold true the input of our 800 teachers. We brought them together and said, "how do we assess the Common Core and Essential Standards?" In social studies, the standards have moved so far away from when I taught U.S. History and taught this list of battles, this list of people, this list of events, and have moved more toward concepts and themed. The teachers said that, to do that well, you have to have some performance tasks where students can draw on the specific facts they've taught and provide you with an answer to a question around a theme. It is certainly a challenge, but it's one that we're all going to need to work through so that we know these assessments are authentic.

Lastly, there have been concerns - to be open and honest - that these assessments are going to hurt students and that they're going to hurt teachers. For students, this process really shouldn't look any different than traditional final exams they've taken. The difference is that they've now been created by a statewide group of teachers as opposed to the student's own teacher. For them, the actual process shouldn't look or feel any different. If your school really does not want to use these scores as final exam grades for students, there's absolutely no requirement that you do. When you get the score that comes out of our testing scoring program and is sent back to you by TOPS, that's a suggestion. The score that you'll see for students is the percent of items they answered correctly, but if you'd like to take that and set it on a curve, that's another option that you have. Really, that's a starting place to think about a student's score. It's certainly not the one that you have to use.

As we do think about this assessment program, we also want to pull people back to the fact that it's really only fair to base some part of a teacher's evaluation on the growth of their students. They are the reason we're all in this. They are the reason that we have teachers, and so making their growth part of the

evaluation system is a step that's very difficult logistically, but is one that we all feel we've really got to take together.

Some specific notes about these assessments for charter schools. Specifically, as with the evaluation system as a whole, the administration of them is required for charter schools that accepted Race to the Top funding. Because they are part of the evaluation process, they're also required for your beginning teachers that you want to help convert from the SP1 to the SP2 license. Essentially, if you're using the North Carolina Educator Evaluator System, these assessments are part of that system.

After the teacher moves to SP2 license and is then looking to renew every five years, these exams aren't required anymore. They're only required as data that is needed to make that license conversion decision, and then after that it's certainly up to you as a charter school if you'd like to administer some of these assessments even if it's not a requirement for you to. As we've talked to folks across the state, we've had some people tell us, "You know, in fifth grade, our students take a science EOG. We'd really like to give our fourth-grade students the science MSL because that's a really good data point as we think about them going into fifth grade and thinking about how they might score." There is certainly that option. The requirements for charter schools hinge around if you've accepted Race to the Top funding and if you have teachers you're working with to make that licensure conversion.

Before we start to take questions from the group, I just want to point to two places to get more information. Some of you have already been emailing me at our educatoreffectiveness@dpi.nc.gov email address. Usually if you send an email to that address, you will hear back from me, but not always. Sometimes, I have a day off from answering that account, but the goal here is that we, as an agency, make sure that that account is staffed almost 24 hours a day, seven days a week, so that you can get a quick response to your concerns and questions.

If you have not visited the NC Public Schools Educator Effectiveness site, I'd really encourage you to. Earlier in the spring, we got feedback from folks that our website was a little bit scattered when it came to

educator effectiveness. We had information about the Measures of Student Learning in one place, information about the accountability model in a different place, and information about the teacher evaluation system in a different place. If you visit this site, it's now all been pulled together into one place, and it can serve as your starting point to find out about any of the parts of this overall educator effectiveness system.

I'm going to leave that up on the screen in case anybody is writing or copying those down, and I'm going to go to some of the questions that have been asked as we've gone throughout the webinar today. For some of these, I'm already seeing that I may need to ask my charter school experts in the room to help, but I know the first one that I can get.

The first one is, "Perhaps you mentioned this, but how is Standard 6 assessed for non-classroom teachers? The examples specifically mentioned are EC, PE, Art teachers." Those are folks for whom we are still working on some systems for measuring growth. PE and Art certainly fit into the performance standards-type area. What we're doing this spring is bringing some leading teachers from Tennessee to North Carolina to share what they did in terms of an analysis of student work process. They have designed a process that teachers go through where they sample some of their students' work from throughout the year - art projects, musical performances that have been recorded, things of that sort - and they serve as a basis for how student growth is measured. It certainly seems to be the most authentic way to go about doing it with those content standards, and these teachers from Tennessee have actually implemented it in their classroom. They also have that perspective on what really works in a school and what really doesn't work in a school. We're going to be hoping to learn quite a bit from them as we move forward with those specific content areas.

For EC, AIG, and other areas, it’s hard to give one answer because there are so many different ways that those teachers support students. If you are, for example, a school that is using a true co-teaching model where there's a regular education and an EC teacher in the room together teaching the course, then both of

those teachers are responsible for the learning of all the students. We know, though, that in some places, it's more of a pull-out/push-in model in which the EC teacher is providing intervention for maybe a couple of days a week or consultative services; those are situations where we're still working on developing some ways to look at growth.

The next question is, "If you are a charter school that did not take Race to the Top money for career-status teachers and the charter chooses to use another evaluation system, can these teachers continue to update their license with an alternative evaluation system?" My understanding of the process is that once the teacher has made that SP1 to SP2 conversion, the renewal decision is actually based on the recommendation of the charter school. You could certainly make that recommendation on the basis of another evaluation system that you've decided to use. The North Carolina system really just has to be there as you're working with those teachers to make the licensure conversion.

MS. SWINSON: The charter schools need to make sure that they have a licensure renewal plan with the licensure department, and you just need to make sure that you're following that plan. It needs to be a current plan, and if you're not sure if your plan is current, then please feel free to contact your consultant, and we'll be able to get you that information.

MS. PRESTON: The next question I think is pretty similar to the one we just answered: "What about charter schools that renew career teachers' licenses? It seems like the evaluation is required for renewal even for career teachers so even charter schools that have license renewal plan would also have to participate." So again, as we just mentioned, after that initial licensure conversion is made, for renewal, it can be made on the basis of whatever evaluation system you've decided to use, and the administration of the Common Exams wouldn't be required for those folks.

Our next question: "Who mandated that MSLs are required of all beginning teachers seeking conversion if the school does not accept Race to the Top funds?" The Measures of Student Learning are part of the North Carolina Educator Evaluation system. They are the way that we're collecting data to use for the

sixth standard ratings for those teachers that teach those content areas. They are required for beginning teachers because the evaluation system is required and they are squarely a part of that process, not an additional project or program outside of the evaluation process.

Next one: "For clarification, did you say that the new high school EOC exams do not have to be entered as 25 percent of the year grade?" That's a great thing for me to clarify if I didn't state it clearly. The same requirements for the End-of-Course assessments that have been around previously - the 25 percent of the final grade - those are still in policy. The results from the Common Exams do not need to be used for student grades; if they are used for student grades, you can select the percentage that you'd like to use. You're not required to have the 25-percent rule.

Next one: "If you cannot use an alternate evaluation system and must use McREL for teachers to update their North Carolina license, are MSLs required?" If you are electing to use the North Carolina Evaluation System as your evaluation system for teachers even after they've made that move from a beginning teacher into SP2 licensure, then yes, the assessments would be required because they are part of that system.

Next one: "We are a very small charter school does not receive Race-to-the-Top funding. Does this change any rules or procedures for us?" If you're a small school, we encourage you to take a look at the schedule and the way that your teachers are teaching. What you may find is if you don't have a very large faculty, students are with teachers for multiple subjects, and if one of those subjects has is a state assessment like the self-contained fifth-grade teacher we had as an example, there may not be a need for you to administer the assessment. Ultimately, the size of the charter school doesn't have any impact on the Race to the Top rules if you're receiving that funding, or, if you're not, on the state policies around evaluation.

We have a question here from a K-to-8 school: "Grades K through 6 are self-contained, so are Common Exams required since the teachers are administering the EOGs?" In that case, no, they would not be.

Your K-through-6 teachers -- well, your 3-through-6 teachers would be administering the Math EOG and Reading EOG to their students, and that would be enough data to calculate a teacher value-added score. The administration of the Measures of Student Learning wouldn't be required for those teachers in your school.

"So if the teacher doesn't reach Reading and Math, then we would be looking at a situation where it might need to be administered." I'm assuming that the term self-contained, depending on how you're using it, would mean that the teacher has the students all day and is covering all the content standards with them. If you are using that in a different way, like they are contained for certain content areas, then that's where the decision tree would really need to come into play.

"Do you have any indication how long it will take to get the scores back from TOPS? My school is choosing to use these scores as final exam grades and would need scores to figure out final grades prior to graduation." We are planning on that process being nearly instantaneous - as soon as they are received at TOPS. We are working with them on the expectation that the scanning takes place that day and that the results are communicated back to the school that evening. We do know, especially with high school students, when you're getting close to graduation, whether it's mid-year graduation or spring/summer graduation, getting that information very quickly is going to be important, so we are trying to keep that in mind as we work through the processes.

We have a question here about the hard copy of the webinar and if it will be posted. I will definitely be posting the slides on the Educator Effectiveness site, and I'm happy to also share with the staff here to have it posted on the charter school site so that you will have two places that you can access them.

Okay, we have one question here, "We are using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills this year to monitor growth. We have one teacher who is transitioning to SP2 this year. Can we use the ITBS results to populate Standard 6, or do we need to have her administer a Measure of Student Learning?" As we work through this process over the next couple years, this is definitely an area where there are some challenges.

The Educator Effectiveness model requires three years of data for a teacher before the teacher gets an overall status of effective, highly effective, or in need of improvement.

The 2012-to-2013 school year is year one, so no one in North Carolina is going to be affected until we actually finish the '14-15 school year. If someone teaches consecutively for three years, '14-15 would be the earliest year that we'd have three years of data. The interaction between licensure and overall stratus won't happen until that point. So if you're making an SP2 recommendation for someone this year, as in '12-13, the process really isn't in play yet because you're not going to have three years of data for that teacher and, therefore, that teacher won't have an overall status of effective, highly effective, or in need of improvement. It's that overall status that is going to interact with licensure. We want to be looking at a comprehensive view of how teachers are doing, not just how their students are growing academically, but how they're rated on their first five standards as well.

"What if you're a Race to the Top charter school and your teachers are linked to Reading and Math EOG data, do you have to administer the Common Exams set for elementary-aged students in the spring?" As long as all of the students a teacher teaches are linked to the Reading or Math data, then the Common Exams would not be administered. It's important, though, to look at how your elementary school kids are scheduled with their teachers. If you have, for example, an elementary school teacher who has two sections of Math, maybe you're kind of departmentalizing your elementary school instruction, those students are taking the Math EOG. They're fine, but if there is a group that comes in at some point in the day for just Social Studies instruction, the administration of the Social Studies Common Exam would be required. If it weren't required, then those Social Studies kids would not be represented in the teacher's growth value. But in elementary schools that are doing really the kind of traditional elementary school setting where the kids don't change classes and are with the same teacher every day, the Common Exams really don't come into play.

So we have another question from a non-Race to the Top school: "Do our SP1 teachers administer every

subject that has an MSL? For example, one teacher teaches Physical Science, Physics, and the End-of-Course assessed Math course." In that situation, the teacher would need to administer the Physical Science and Physics Common Exams so that all of the students a teacher teaches are included in the teacher growth value.

So we have one question here that I think is just clarification. It says, "Licensure as long as you have a licensure plan." Yes, after you've made that conversion from SP1 to SP2, the license renewal afterwards can be according to the plan that you update and keep on file with the Department.

So we have another question here, "What if a charter did not accept Race to the Top funds, but is using the online McREL system for teacher evaluation? Will we have to do MSLs for academic teachers who are SP2, but do not teach the subject with an EOG, like a middle-grade Social Studies teacher?" That is an area in which we are still in conversations and still working with our attorneys and with the folks here in the charter schools office. We know that there are some charters that have elected to use the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation System even though they're not Race to the Top, and that some of them have expressed interest in continuing to use the system while not using the sixth standard part of it.

"For teachers that are coming from the other state, I believe you said Texas, how can we talk with them or attend meetings that they may have?" Oh, Tennessee, excuse me, yes. We are going to first bring the folks from Tennessee to talk to our own staff here at the Department as we think about a North Carolina process. Then, in the spring, we'll be asking for leaders from charter schools and districts to send representatives to talk with those teachers again so that they can really get that kind of teacher-to-teacher kind of communication. As that event gets a little bit closer, we'll be communicating through the charter schools office and asking you if you have recommendations for who would like to come and participate in those conversations.

"Can a charter school participating in Race to the Top make use of the decision tree this year?" Yes. We would absolutely suggest that you do. As you're thinking about who needs to administer the Measures of

Student Learning and who doesn't, if you're participating in Race to the Top, they are required this year. We would encourage that as a tool to think about which ones you need to administer for which teachers and which students.

The next question is "How many times a year are the MSLs administered?" For high school courses, they will be available for administration at the end of first semester, which, in some places, is November and in some places is January. They also will be available at the end of the year for high school students that have second-semester courses. The end of the year is when the middle school and upper elementary school MSLs will also be available. We know those courses are usually full year. It's pretty uncommon to see middle school students on a block schedule, so those will be available in the spring.

"Can a school use another standardized test, i.e., Iowa, CAT, as opposed to a Measure of Student Learning?" So the Board has not authorized any substitutions, so to speak, of any other type of assessment for the Measures of Student Learning.

"Are Common Exams required for beginning teachers who are tied to EOG data?" That is really a question that depends on how your teachers and students are scheduled. It could be possible, at a middle school where students are rotating classes and working with different teachers, that there's a teacher who has three classes of seventh-grade Social Studies and one class of seventh-grade Reading. The teacher would be administering the EOG in Reading to that one set of students and would be tied to their EOG results, but would need to give the Social Studies Common Exam to the three classes of kids that she sees for just Social Studies. It is possible that a teacher has some ties to a set of EOG data, but that the EOG data only represents a set of kids they teach and not the whole set of kids that they teach.

"Will this webinar be recorded and posted somewhere so you can play back what is being said along with the Power Point?" Yes, we are going to do that. As soon as we get offline with you folks, we'll begin archiving the webinar and then we'll send a link to where you can access the archive to everyone who was registered for today's webinar, whether they attended or not. We'll also send the link out through the

charter school listserv for folks who didn't register, but would be interested in hearing the information. Next question is about directors and principals and how they should be evaluated for renewal. So once we're talking about the renewal decision for licensure, I would think (indiscernible 15:24:34) -colleagues in the room - that the renewal plan that's on file for teachers also covers school administrators as well?

MR. MILLER: Charter school principals do not need to have any administrative license; however, if they are a Race to the Top school, then they do need to be using the online evaluation system. One of your board members would have to have access to the online system.

MS. PRESTON: For directors or principals who are participating in the principal evaluation process and the online system, the eighth standard rating is determined with school-wide growth. Whatever EOGs or EOCs are being administered across your school, those are all aggregated together and are used to determine the eighth standard rating.

"If we teach a subject off grade level, for example, our fourth-graders receive a fifth-grade Social Studies curriculum, can we test using the off-grade-level testing?" Yes, you can, because these are not State Testing Program assessments that we use to meet any federal requirements where there are restrictions about testing off-grade level. You can make the decision to administer the off-grade level assessment to the students. You would just need to indicate to us at the Department that you need to receive that assessment, and there's a process we use as we approach the spring where we'll ask Race to the Top charter schools, "So which assessments are you going to need?" For example, if you don't offer Physics, no need for us to send you the Physics assessment. Just indicate that you need a copy of that one to administer; it's no problem that you assess off grade level.

"If a teacher uses solely writing, can the ELA EOG be a part of her growth score?" The answer really depends on if that teacher is scheduled as the teacher of record for ELA and really focuses on Writing or if there is a teacher record for ELA and then a different teacher teaching a section of a writing course. In that case, that would be considered more an elective type of course because there are no North Carolina

state standards for any type of writing course. It really depends on how the teacher of record is being handled in your particular school.

Next question, "So a K-to-2 teacher without an EOG can be assigned which MSL they need to administer to students based on the need determined by the administrator?" So for K-to-2 folks, we are not developing Common Exams. We're looking at some different ways of using literacy assessment to measure growth for those teachers. The statement is definitely true for fourth grade and up. If they're not administering an End-of-Grade or End-of-Course assessment, then the administrator using that decision tree can make decisions around which assessments need to be administered. For K to 2, we're still doing some work and are going to be starting some pilots in the spring. There won't be anything formal statewide in place for them in the '12-13 school year.

Next question was pretty similar to the K-to-2 question, but it was about specifically beginning teachers who are in grades K to 3 that are making the SP2 conversion this year. As we mentioned earlier, the licensure conversion is going to be based on the teacher's overall status, and the overall status won't be in place until at least '14-15 at the earliest. So as you're making recommendations for licensure conversions during the '12-13 school year, it's going to be the same process that's traditionally been used where they're looking at the first five standards' ratings for proficiency, but the student growth piece really doesn't come into play quite yet.

"Do seventh- and eighth-grade Science teachers who also give the EOG for eight grade need to give the seventh-grade MSL so that they have data on both grades they teach?" Yes, he does, so that the seventh-grade students and the eighth-grade students are both represented in the teacher's growth value.

Next question, "We are at a K-8 charter school. At third and fourth grade, the teachers team-teach. The third-grade teacher teaches both classes ELA, and the fourth-grade teacher teaches both classes Math. Would these teachers be required to do the Common Exam?" If they're teaching Reading to all of the students they see in the course of a day and all of those students are taking the EOG in Reading, then no,

there's no requirement for a Common Exam, and the same thing would be true for Math. If the teacher is teaching Math all day to students at a particular grade level and they're all taking the Math EOG, then there would be no requirement for a Common Exam.

"Will these data follow teachers as they move between traditional LEAs and charters?" According to General Statutes, information on teachers' ratings in the evaluation system is personnel information, and, as such, personnel information does not follow teachers as they move across traditional districts or as they move between districts and charters or even across charters.

"Must Common Exams be administered in K to 2?" So with K to 2, we're still working on developing some processes there. We definitely are not planning to do anything Common Exam-like for K to 2 because the Common Exams are pretty traditional assessments with multiple-choice questions and performance tasks, and that's really not an appropriate way of assessing the learning of younger students. So it's taking us longer to work on something for K to 2 that is going to provide information about growth, but also is going to be appropriate for the age of those students. '13-14 is the year we'll have more information about that.

Next question, "We use MAP and NWEA assessments to measure growth, as well as many other charters and LEA districts. Can these scores be used for the growth standard?" They cannot be used for the growth standard because they are not the set of statewide assessments. Anything that's going to be used for the student growth standard is something that's got to be used across the board in all districts and charter schools. MAP and NWEA are great assessments, great tools for looking at student learning, but because they're not administered across the board everywhere, they can't be used as part of the educator effectiveness model.

Next questions about SP1 teacher who will be recommended for SP2 before the three years is up. Those are folks for whom you will follow the traditional policies and procedures. The reason we're talking about its link to licensure now is because this year is year one of the dataset and that matters for teachers

who you'll be recommending for SP2 licensure after the 2014-15 school year.. They will need to have the data in place, but someone who's going to reach their third year in '12-13 and then you're going to make the SP2 recommendation, use the same process and policies you traditionally used.

"Has there been discussions on using the MSLs as an interim assessment for schools and teachers?" These assessments are being designed as summative assessments to be completed after a student has finished a course or a grade. One thing I would note is that, at the end of the '12-13 school year, all of the forms that we used are going to be released because we're going to have all new forms for the '13-14 school year. If, at that point, you want to use questions from the released form to create interim or benchmark assessments for your school, that would definitely be something that you could use them for.

Thank you so much for the nice comments. I'm happy to do this webinar and answer these questions. I appreciate that.

Next question is, "Will our students have to take Measures of Student Learning for classes taught by virtual teachers through NCVPS?" No, they will not. NCVPS teachers have an entirely different evaluation process. For those of you who use the North Carolina system, you know it's really only appropriate for teachers that are in the classroom and in the school environment. They have a different evaluation system and kids that are taking virtual classes will not need to take the Measures of Student Learning.

We have somebody who had a parent come in and they missed the answer to the question, "Are Common Exams required for beginning teachers who are tied to EOG data?" It really is connected to whether or not the EOG data represents all of the teacher's students. If it does, then no Common Exam is required. If the teacher only has EOG data for a certain percentage of the kids that she or he is teaching, then the Common Exams would be required.

"If a board member at a charter school does not have a UID, how do those individuals gain access to the McREL system in order to complete the charter school principal evaluation?" What we are doing for

board members who need to evaluate principals is creating sort of mock UIDs for them, so to speak, numbers that we agree on with the board member and they agree that will be their way to get in and access the system. If you need to get a board member of yours one of those mock IDs, the person you need to email is Robert Sox, who is at Robert.sox@dpi.nc.gov. You're also more than welcome to email this specific question or issue to me, and I can make sure to forward it to him. If you're looking at the educator effectiveness email on the screen, please feel free to send it there. I'll make sure Robert gets it and then he'll follow up with you and your board member to set up that identification method for getting into the system.

And our last question, "Will accommodations be used for the common test?" Yes, students do need to be provided with classroom accommodations that they traditionally receive. Because the Common Exams are not part of the State Testing process, they really are substituting in for what would have been teacher-made final exams, students should have access to the accommodations that they would get on any other normal classroom assessment. Yes, they do need to get those accommodations so that they have the appropriate ways of accessing the information and answering the test questions.

So it looks like that is everything. I'm not seeing any more come in, but I'm going to give it another minute in case anyone's got something bubbling in their head.

(PAUSE)

Another one that's come in: "Did you say middle school exams are ready for this spring?" Yes. Seventh- and sixth-grade Science Common Exams - we don't need to have a Common Exam for eighth-grade Science because we have the EOG, and six, seven and eight, those grades of Social Studies will be available for administration in the spring.

(PAUSE)

Okay, got one more that's come in. "So MSLs for non-Race-to-the-Top schools are only given by teachers receiving SP1 status newly this year?" Yes. Your first-year teachers should give the MSL so

that when it comes time to make that licensure conversion, they have their three years of data. The people that are SP1 that you're going to be converting before the model really gets working can operate under the same policies that you've traditionally used.

(PAUSE)

Okay, it doesn't look like we have any other questions coming in. If anything does come to mind as you think about the information more and as you or faculty members at your school watch the recorded webinar, please do stay in touch with either your consultants here in the Office of Charter Schools or me at that email address. We really want to make sure that people have their questions answered and that they know the right information so that the system can be one that works for our districts, our charter schools, and, ultimately, works for our kids. Making the school environment a better place for them is ultimately the goal of all the work that we're all doing every day.

So thank you so much for taking time out of what I know are busy school days to participate in the webinar, and we look forward to sharing information with you in an update forum in the next few months. Thanks so much.

(CONCLUDED)

WPU

GLORIA VEILLEUX, TRANSCRIBER