

NCDPI
Building & Scheduling District Benchmarks
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Urbanski: Dan Urbanski
Taylor: Mandy Taylor
Lowe: John Lowe
M/F: Male/Female Speaker

Urbanski: —use, whether you want to have a training of some sort, you want to use this session you can, or if you want to go back and review some of the items or the discussions that we've had here within the next 60 minutes, you're able to do so because I am clicking that magic record button. I promise that everybody who is on this line, or even for those who register that might not be here today because, well, we've had some weather issues over the last couple days. You may not have been able to make this session. Anybody who registered for today's session will get an email from me with materials that we use such as the PowerPoint that I'm working off of right now and then links to a recording. So please do take notes, because it's always good to have your own notes, but know that whatever is up on the screen here, PowerPoint and the webinar will be recorded and sent to you.

All right, also a little housekeeping item, questions, we all have them and we love to hear from you, whatever questions you might have, that's really what this is all about here, so anything that comes up, comes to mind with relation to district benchmarking in Schoolnet, we're going to our best to address those questions for you so you can learn and grow like we do with all these questions.

All right, here is a rough agenda, what we've got on the screen right now, we are going to be talking about how to create and schedule benchmark

assessments in the system. We use the word district, not to keep certain groups or groups out, that's how the system refers to them as district benchmarks. These are going to be your benchmark assessments, whether they're for your LEA, district, or charter school, it's what the systems calls it. I will be walking you through some basic thoughts and tips in the beginning, and then click path training your way into how do I even get to Schoolnet, for those of you who might be new to the system.

And then as I introduced briefly, earlier before, we have Mandy Taylor. She will be talking about how to create a benchmark, how to find items to put on that benchmark, and how to schedule that benchmark. Towards the end when we start wrapping this up in the second half of our session, that's when John will come back in with us and I call it my little nickname or "Passing Notes in Class". Yes, we are sharing, and we want to learn from each other and that is why John is here on the line with us here today, to share with us some of the things that he has learned from his exposure, and he'll talk all about that towards the end.

You do see that there is open Q and A as a formal session towards the end of the webinar. At any point in time, if you do have a question, go ahead and type it in to the questions box of GoToMeeting, the little doohickey up there in the right hand corner of your screen. And those questions, we will be stopping periodically throughout the webinar to address those questions.

All right, with that, and the very last thing of course is wrap up, yes, we do wrap. Actually I'm a very poor wrapper, but that's where we're going to let

Mandy do the wrapping. Are you ready for that, Mandy? Yeah. She's quivering in fear, I can hear it now. She is not a wrap artist, I can hear by that silence, okay.

So today we're going to do a few things and the purpose is that we're presenting this from the mindset that I have yet to create a benchmark and deploy that out in Schoolnet. So for some of you that had this experience in the past, there is going to be some of this review, but we're also addressing this, as I mentioned before, that we're going to have some expert tips and ideas and thoughts that come throughout here. Here are some of the things that we're going to be covering today and I want to just lay this out there so when we get to the session, what Sandy discusses, hopefully it'll all click and make some sense.

When we create a benchmark assessment, it's very similar to a classroom assessment, to maybe a shared classroom assessment, or a school assessment. More or less it follows the same click path of those other types, with the exception of a couple of things that we will be addressing here today. There are certain permissions needed for people to create benchmark assessments. Leadership, if they do have the test item administrator additional permission, they will be able to create a benchmark and see the secure item in our—items in our test bank, so there is—leadership will be able to create a benchmark. Other users can create a district benchmark, and those users could be a teacher, those users could be a staff member of your choosing; that's a local decision, and you'll see on the screen on that middle third bullet point, they will need these two permissions, access to assessment management, and they will also need access test item administrator at the—all of these at the district level. If those, say for instance, a staff member is

maybe a department chair, has access to these permissions, they will be able to create benchmarks and populate them with the secure item bank.

We will discuss in a little bit, and I want to talk about it here in the beginning, and I will make sure it's closed as one of the last lingering thoughts, we are going to create a benchmark as a manual test, not as an Express Test. For those of you familiar with creating assessments in Schoolnet, you do have a quick Express Test option, or building one from scratch. We will be scratching and not expressing. Whoops, I got a little click happy there. Know that the ClassScape items that you are familiar with are now called—are now secure items in the Schoolnet test banks, and only the people that I've mentioned before have access to these test items.

And there's the publisher, so if you are ever wondering, "Gosh, who has access," or excuse me, "Which—did I put the right item in here?" If you just want to do a double check at any point in time, looking at the publisher area of the properties if it has NCDPI_Benchmark as listed on the bullet point there, you know you've come to the right place, you have a secure item that hopefully teachers and our students have not seen before. And you'll see this little, last little note at the very bottom, if you have any questions about permissioning within your environment, contact either your data manager or Powerschool coordinator person, or you can always contact the Home Base support center and they can get you on the right path to benchmarking in the system, or excuse me, access to creating benchmarking in the system.

All right, hopefully this is a review in our single sign on environment as it is today, we do have the ability to log into Powerschool, it should look something very familiar to what I have on the screen right here. You logon to your special URL, you put in your user name and your password, you have a landing page that looks sort of like what I have on the screen right now. This landing page is kind of generic, but you should see a Schoolnet link. Clicking on the Schoolnet button, guess what that does everybody. Hey Mandy, do you know what that does?

Taylor: Does it take us to Schoolnet.

Urbanski: Schoolnet.

M: —[OVERLAPPING] she's right.

Taylor: Can you hear?

Urbanski: On the screen right now, thank you so much for playing along at home, I am going to change presenters and make you the person in charge, so as I do that, just make sure you've got, you're ready to go and you have your Schoolnet instance live. And from here, now I get to have the honor of reintroducing Mandy Taylor, professional lead in region 7, and she is going to talk to us about creating a district benchmark in Schoolnet. Go, Mandy. Go, Mandy. Hello, Mandy, did I hit mute?

Taylor: Okay. Now can you hear me?

Urbanski: Hey, there you are.

Taylor: Okay, yes, I did not unmute myself, sorry. Okay, so when you land on this page welcoming you to Schoolnet, you have some choices. You can look at school and district data. You can also look at classroom level actions where you can look at student groups, you can look at the lesson planner, but where we're going to focus

is under the assessment admin portion, you can see the little hint there about create. And that is what we're going to do today, we're going to create a test.

So as Dan mentioned, we have choice between Express Test and creating a manual test, and we do want to go with a manual test. It's more flexible as far as what you put on there, it's more precise because you choose exactly what you want to put on the test, and of course since it's a benchmark, you want to make sure that the items you're using are secured, and the best way to do that is to create a manual test.

So the first thing that you are asked to do is to name your test. And I'm going to switch tabs for just a minute. There is a quick reference card devoted to naming conventions, and I want to look at the right hand side because this gives you some suggestions about naming conventions, and you may want to come to a decision as a district even about how to name your assessments. So for example, you could include the subject, the grade, the title of the test, and the school year, or maybe the date that you want to give the test. You can include all of that in the name. And then if you find for some reason you have to go back and modify your test, you can then add an M for modified. So that's just a tiny little bit about naming conventions, but the big takeaway is really be thoughtful about how you name your tests.

So there is the name of my test. My name, I'm going to do a math test for grade seven, and today's date. So I'm going to choose my subject. I'm going to choose my grade level. And notice that it says items—number of items, it now defaults to one. I'm not going to give a one question test, however it's easier to

add items than it is to take them away, so I'm just going to start with a one-question test. Notice that my institution says Home Base training district, that's because I'm in the test site, but your institution should be your district. It's already populated to say that I want to give a district benchmark, and now I need to start making some choices.

Restricting content access. Do I want to restrict people from looking at the content of my test, people that do not have—that have the same permissions that I do and would be able to see the test? If I'm not quite sure or if I can't remember what that means, I can hover over the I, and that will give me some information to help me make a choice. I'm going to leave the restrict—I'm going to leave the content open.

On my next choice, I am going—

Urbanski: Hey, Mandy—[OVERLAPPING]

Taylor: Yes.

Urbanski: Real briefly?

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Urbanski: I'd like to take the opportunity to let folks know that they're probably—if they are working on their live production site, they don't see the same options as you do.

Taylor: Okay.

Urbanski: Mentioning this, we're working on version 16.1, and everybody else at home has 16.0.

Taylor: Okay.

Ubranski: So they have the ability to restrict content more or less, yes or no, but now have in the future that should be with the update that we're hoping that will happen at the end of February once benchmarking season has been completed, when we do our next update you will now see those four options, and those are in front of you here. Do I want to restrict it never, always, before the start date, or before and after, only in the middle, you have these options to lock it down where today you do not. So that's something to look forward to in the very near future when we update again. Hopefully once benchmark season is over, end of February-ish, we're going to be changing up to this for the entire state.

Taylor: Thank you for that. Okay, so the next piece about hiding item test—content from the test results. Yes, I actually do, because I do not want my students or parents to be able to see the secure test questions when my test results are delivered, so yes, I do want to hide the content from the results. So I've got some decisions to make about score type, I have three choices but I'm going to leave it at total score. I'm giving a math test, and so I should align my preferred standards document with math. However, I'm going to make a mistake here and I'm going to skip this question and show you how—a different place where you can correct this if you happen to mis-click or make a mistake at this stage.

So answer key only. I can run answer key only if I want to, or I can enable assessment notes. I have three more groups of settings that I can look at. If you are going to use open response items on your test, say for example it's a language arts benchmark, if you are worried that students might get a little formatting happy or may get distracted by the ability to change font size and font color, you

can disable that formatting feature right there. You can make choices about your layout. And for the math for example, if I would like for students to be able to use manipulatives, I can say yes. Or I can leave it here with the default so that each item, it's decided on an item by item basis.

I have some test setting options, so this would apply the whole test. Students can leave comments at either the end of the test or the end of the item. Those teachers can write on the answers sheets, this is an interesting feature, this would be allow students to be able to reflect on their own practice and give you some feedback about how they feel like they did. There is also a place where you can write a description for test. And if you have a test window already entered into Schoolnet, here is where you can link to that specific test window for your test. And then enable printing. And it's recommended that you leave these checked just in case something goes wrong and you need to print out a copy of the test and give it pencil/paper, or if you're planning on doing that from the beginning, this where you would indicate that.

And the last group of features is where you would set to coauthoring capability. February 12, there will be another Home Base webinar that is devoted entirely to coauthoring, so I'm just going to stop there with coauthoring and let you know that this is where you would set that. Okay, before I hit generate test, Dan, do you we have any questions?

Ubranski: Hey, perfect timing. Yep, Lori [ph]. Hi, Lori, how are you? I haven't seen you since last week. Lori writes us, just to clarify, on the restrict content access feature, can teachers with no additional roles preview these items, or is it that if

they have access, I was wondering whether we really needed to restrict benchmarks if teachers can't see them anyway. You know, that's a great question. Right here, right now, in the new version, if you restrict for instance always, it depends on—really, the answer, Lori, is it depends. If I say at no time restrict access, once this puppy is scheduled and assigned to a teacher for instance, they will see the content of the assessment items. If you check before the start date, that means they will not be able to see it until the test starts. If you check the third option, before but after, that means the only time a teacher will be able to see the content will be during the test window, or the start date and end date which could be a week or two.

If I then select, regardless of the user, these people will then see it if you restrict it or leave it open in that window. If you select the bottom, that I always want to have the access restricted, this one is fun, it's new, it's different it's exciting, regardless if it's before the test window, during the test window, or after the test window, teacher and/or students, well, students would, but teachers would not be able to see the content ever. As it is right now in version 16.0, the moment I schedule a benchmark out or assign it out to a teacher, they see the content. There is almost no way we can work around that, and that's why this has been changed. So regardless of their roles and permissions, depending on which option you select here, if I don't want them to see it ever, the always button is then checked. And I do want them to see it, then I would check the one right before it.

Lowe: Dan, just a reminder, in production, there is a check box for restrict teacher access, but it has no functionality.

Urbanski: Yeah. And that's why this was developed really. It does have functionality until I schedule, which to your point John, in other words, yeah, there is no functionality. Because once I make this available, everybody gets to see it. So this hopefully now will these items secure going forward even though in the last year people have been already able to see the content. Going forward they will not be able to see the content if I choose.

Now one caveat, you'll see that Mandy has, it might be under the information tab, other users with the additional role, so I have a staff member or a teacher with the access to test item administrator, if they do have the access to this, they will see this the entire time because I have theoretically given permission for people to help build and see the assessment. So other leaders with my permissions or people that I've given elevated rights, they will see this. So take this down that rabbit hole for just a brief moment. If I had a team of people in my district who are teachers help me create an assessment, and I gave them the extra permissions of test item administrator, and access to assessment manager, they're having a good time with me creating the assessment, but if I did not want them to see it come time, maybe they only work on 5 questions and they didn't see the other 50, I would have to take that role—those roles away from, or those permissions away from those teachers or staff members to ensure that we they do go to proctor a test, they do not see the items—the content of the items.

So Lori, type back to me, does that make sense? Did I address it, hopefully? Hopefully that helps answer the question there for you. If you have any questions, anybody on this line about this, we do have a webinar that was

recorded in August, I think it was taken down but I think it's coming back up pretty soon onto the archive list, that discussed all the different scenarios of permissions. And I'm going to go ahead and put copy of that when I send this out to my email later on today, or actually probably tomorrow when I send everybody, I'm going to include a link to that webinar, because it discusses specifically elevating the rights of staff and teachers to create benchmarks, and some of the things and considerations you might be thinking about, or want to think about as you are, you know, coming up with that scenario. If it does happen there, what are some of the, you know, the click path and permissions as well as cautions for doing so. So I'll make sure you get a copy of that in this email I send out tomorrow.

All right, other than that, Lori said yes, she is excited. She is ready to move on and so am I. So, Mandy, back to you.

Taylor: Okay. So we're going to generate our test. And now we're at the stage that says test details. So again, working down the page, here is my test name and test number which might be a handy item if you ever need to search for your test it's, you know, it's unique to this test. So if you can't remember the title, you'll have the number.

Next we have the test stages. And it's important to realize where we are and what the test stages are. So right now we're in the private draft stage, which means that I, as the creator, am the only person that can see the test at this point. The next step is public draft, which means anyone with my same level of permission can see and even edit the test. Once I move into ready to schedule,

everything becomes locked. All my test content, all my test properties, everything is locked and I can't make any changes. I don't have to schedule the test, it can stay in the ready-to-schedule phase until I have a definite testing window. Once I have a definite testing window, then I would move to schedule, and in-progress and completed are just exactly what they mean.

Lowe: Mandy, just a *make note* for users, you can't ever move backwards in test stages.

Taylor: Thank you. Yes. And we're going to talk about how to make any additional edits if you get to ready to schedule and realize that something is wrong, but it will not be moving backwards, you're right.

So next I have a band where my test items are, so you can see that this is a one-item test. But I don't want just one item. So I can come here and add additional items to my test. And notice how the icon changes. So now I'm actually looking at content for question four, but I don't want to start at the end of my test, I want to start with question number one. So I can click on it and now you see I'm looking for items for question number one. So I can choose any kind of item type, but remember, I'm creating a benchmark. And if the ClassScape items are my secure benchmark items, I need to look those up in item central. So for your benchmark tests, you're going to go to Item Central.

So now that I'm in Item Central just like most everything with Schoolnet, there is more than one way to access this. I can do a search, and you're actually better off doing an advanced search because that opens up your filters. So now I can filter by publisher because I know that NCDPI published a set of questions specific to benchmarks. So if I search by NCDPI_Benchmark, I now have a set

of—so this where I’ve gotten into a little bit of trouble, right, because there is my standards document. I need math for my test. And I need seventh grade. So these are all benchmark items that I can now search in Schoolnet to add secure items to my test. And that was just searching by publisher. But there is actually an easier way to do this.

I’m going to go back to my previous page, and now I’m going to come down to these tabs. I have three different tabs, Items, Passages, and Rubrics. I’m searching for Items. And if you look at what I can browse by, I can actually browse by just benchmark items, which means those are items that are secure to this level of permission that teachers do not have access to. So immediately I see that I have benchmarks, and I have three answer choice, I have three items, four answer choices, I have three items. Remember, I am in the demo site, so the number of choices that I have for items is much, much less than what you will see, you will see many more. But this is just a demo site, so I only have three items. I do want to choose four answer choices. Notice now that my choice has pinned, and I can actually come back and search again. I’ve clicked grade, and it’s going to tell me how many items I have in each grade, and again, remember, these are small numbers because of the demo site. I want my seventh grade item. And now I’m going to view my results. So here is my items for my—[STATIC]

Urbanski: Hey, Mandy, can you hear me? I don’t if anybody else can hear me, I just lost sound.

Lowe: I can hear you, Dan.

Urbanski: Can you hear Mandy?

Lowe: I cannot hear Mandy.

Taylor: Yes.

Urbanski: Oh, there you are.

Lowe: We had a gap.

Taylor: Oh. I'm sorry, okay. What was the last thing you heard?

Lowe: Here we are.

Urbanski: You said welcome everybody. No, it was right when you showed this item, where you started explaining some of the detail of the item itself.

Taylor: Okay.

Urbanski: So pretend that you were just looking at this item to be added to your test.

Taylor: All right, sorry about that. Okay, so now that I've looked at this item—so now when I'm here, it'll tell me what type of item it is, it's a hotspot item, I can only—only need to make one answer choice. I can see, you know, just the technical details, properties, item statistics. If you're—or I can preview it if I'm going to do it online. So I've looked at this, I like it, I'm going to use it in my test, I check the box here, and I add items to test.

Okay. Before I get into the next phase, do we have any questions?

Urbanski: Nope, you're good. But I would like to remind our audience at home, if you have questions, type them into that questions box and we'll get back to you.

Taylor: Okay, thank you. So you see that it says test detail here, so now any time that you see a button that says return to test detail, this is where it is going to take you. You have your test name, test number, you're reminded of which stage you're in, and

you actually have a button where you can move to the next stage. And again notice it says Make Public, so you're moving forward.

So I have a couple of test actions that I can do. And it's a good practice to preview the online test if you're going to give it online, but also previewing the online test gives you a way to see the test in its whole form, and just another way to kind of verify that you're happy with the content. You can work with co-authoring, you can work with scheduling, if there are any associated resources, any rubrics or anything that you need to add there, you can add them at this point.

So remember, you see how on this right hand side it says it's not aligned to the preferred standards document. I made that choice on the very first screen, and you do not have to go all the way back to fix any errors that you see listed on this right hand side. You can come to the test properties box on the left, if I can scroll all the way down, it says edit. So now I can edit my properties, and I can fix the mistake that I made, and I can align to the proper standards document. If it will load. Okay.

So now, I can fix my mistake, and save my changes. And now I don't have any more errors for my test item. I do however have blank items, I want to clean that up. So under customize test, you see that I have an option to delete multiple questions at once. So now I can get rid of any questions that I don't like. I have to scroll back up to the top and hit delete. I have some other options under customize test. I can change the answer choice patterns; if you're using the proficiency option, you can look at your score groups, and then I can also change my question numbers if I would like to. Again, if I decide I need more items, I can click add

item and it will take me back to Item Central where I can add items. Any questions? All right.

We're going to go to the next stage in our test. We're going to make it public. So you see I've—my test stage has now changed. I looked at it, it's beautiful, I'm happy with it, I'm ready to schedule. So you get a nice reminder that once you are—move to this stage of the test, that you will no longer be able to make changes to the test. So as soon as I do that, I realize that I've made a mistake. If you make a copy of the test, and in that naming convention if you put an M for modified, you can—you will be back to the public draft stage so that you can make change and get everything exactly the way that you want it, but it's working with a copy of the test, not with the original test. So you're not going backwards, but it will give you a way to—it's a work-around if you schedule it and then realize you need to make changes.

All right. So I know my testing window, so I'm going to go ahead and schedule. Again, I see just some basic information it reminds me of which stage I'm at, it tells me that it's not set—scheduled, and then it hasn't—my data hasn't been collected. All right, so start date pops up a nice little calendar for you. It automatically gives you one week for a testing window. Your third choice is a score due date. So the score due date has to do with maintaining test security. So I'm just going to put the 23rd. Do I want to prevent students from accessing the test results until after the end date? Yes, I would like for everybody to know their scores after everyone—after the window is closed, so I'm going to click yes. And this goes right back to your score due date. If you were using ScanIt sheets, after

the test has been administered, after the window closes on the 22nd, I have one day that if I click this box, I'm only going to give one day to allow the ScanIt sheets to be scanned. So, prevent the scanning of answer sheets after the score due date?

Yes. My score due date is the 23rd, so that's a very quick turn-around time. But what that does is that it, you know, keeps the test a little more secure.

Urbanski: But you can choose any date for that score due date after the end date, right?

Taylor: I believe so. So I can click the—[OVERLAPPING]

Urbanski: Because if I just wanted to give them a little more time, perfect, okay. Excellent.

Taylor: So the online test options, if you are administering this online, a few things to remember, namely, the online path code. Yes, so the online path code is customizable. However, if you do customize the test code, be aware that once you use it, it's done. You cannot reuse the same test code. So just a little reminder there, you cannot reuse a test code if you customize it. I don't want—

Lowe: Mandy, I'll interject about test codes, we tend to just take out I's, and ones, and O's, and zeroes, and just let the random generation, and just replace those letters, just so there is no confusion when the students type it in.

Taylor: Nice. That's a very good point, thank you. Just play [ph] this test to take for on the student homepage, if you want them just to view that this is an upcoming test, you can do that there. If you want to have them get a feel for what it's like to take a timed test, you can enforce the time, or set a time test here. So you've got some different choices.

And now for the assigning piece. You can see you have three choices—
assign to students, recommend to teachers, or recommend to schools. And it tells

you right now—there is assigned, it's unassigned. If you look at assignments and you come down to the accept quick assignment, it tells you what the quick assignment is, 61 courses, mathematics, grade seven, in all schools. If I click recommend to teachers, notice that my quick assignment doesn't change. And if I click recommend to schools, it does. Okay, so what's the difference?

When you click assign to students, you are assigning the test to a set of students, and because the word assign is there, that is going to require that teachers administer this test. So I think that the analogy that Dan likes to use is teachers are sitting in the conference room and the principal walks in with a set of tests and says, "Here is the test and you will give this test to our students."

Whereas with recommend to teachers, this is a potential test that teachers may use, it's just something recommended. So the next day the principal may walk in the conference room with this stack of tests and say, "Here is a test that may help you gather more information about our students, you can give it if you would—if you wish to."

When you get to recommend to schools, that is recommending the test to school level test administrators who can then assign the test to a teacher or a section. So again, you're assigned just to a set of students, and because it's being assigned, students are going to have to take it, it's a required test, recommending to teachers it's a potential test that is there for teachers to consider using.

Recommend to schools, it is going to be recommended to a school level test administrator who can then assign to a teacher or a section.

So we're going to look at recommend to teachers. I'm going to accept the quick assignment. Well, it said all—so, oh, I'm getting ahead of myself, okay. So here are my results, everything has been changed, and now it tells me—61 courses in all schools. Okay, I'm not sure about this, so I'm going to look at the view edit—view assignment summary. (I'll get my words out here in a minute.) This tells me every course that is going to see this test, have the choice to take it because, remember, I recommended it. I know that some of these classes aren't at the middle school. So I need to do a little bit of editing. I'm going to edit my assignment. I want to limit by school. So now when I look at my selected schools, I see that I have an elementary, and I don't want an elementary school, so I'm going to check it to remove it. And just for demonstration purposes, I'm going to check these as well. Now, I have to come back and actually tell it to remove the selected. And now I see that I have this assigned just to my middle schools. I'm done. I'm done, but my computer is still processing. And it's still processing. Okay, so while it's processing, do we have any questions, Dan?

Urbanski: Perfect, I was just going to interject. While that's processing, Dawn [ph] wrote a note earlier, when the students are taking a test online, will their grades automatically populate to the PowerTeacher gradebook, and the answer is—it depends. Grades typically are not populated on benchmarks into a teacher's gradebook since there are district benchmarks and scores go to the district, but you do have that option if you create a classroom assessment. And under the scheduling options that Mandy was mentioning earlier, after you put your test window date, there is an option in your, it's not here in our demo site, so this is

not connected to a PowerSchool, but when a teacher creates an assessment, a classroom assessment at his or her level, they will have a little radio box, or a little bubble to check—do you want this to populate out to the PowerTeacher gradebook—yes or no? Make that selection, and if it's yes, it will then automatically update the gradebook.

Lowe: Dan, I'll interject. If they're creating school assessments or shares assessments, they need to be really careful with that button, because it will share to everyone's gradebook who has access to shared assessments. And that's not what they really want. So really, populate the gradebook is for classroom assessments.

Urbanski: Classroom only, right. And right now the way shared assessments work, it give the teacher access to classroom and the ability to create a school assessment. So we're working with Pearson to take that away, or at least have some filter abilities, capabilities that leadership can use. Ideally the feature was supposed to be just having teachers share assessments at the classroom level, so we're trying to make it maybe like an either/or option. Would you like them to share at the classroom level and, or just, you know, school assessment or just one. So right now, yes, John, excellent point. If you create on accident a school assessment instead of a classroom level test, and you accidentally or—no, if you just choose to populate it out, everybody, all these scores could be potentially populated to every teacher's gradebook at that school. All right, Mandy.

Taylor: Yeah, I think we're, and that actually, my computer finished processing, so I'm happy with the way that my assignment works, I can save. I'm probably going to get caught in a proc—oh, look. And notice too, because I set the date for today,

I'm now in—the test is now in progress, so. Okay, I think that wraps up creating benchmarks.

Urbanski: Yeah. I would like to point out, it's hard to go back. I don't think if you hit back arrow will it do this; this was kind of funny, our browser. On the very bottom you'll notice what Mandy did is she had to go back and hit save after the assignment was edited. That's something that's a common area that people will miss. They'll say, "Hey, once I moved out of the selected schools or removed selected schools from my assignment," the system says, "Great, you have these eight schools, what do you want to do with it?" Sometimes people will click on to going back to test detail, and that option was not saved. So always look down at the very bottom of any screen you're on to see if there are any more actions that are required of you. If it is, has a save button, make sure you hit save and you should be good. One way to go back is always to just go back and click on your scheduling button on the left hand side, once you see here in the test detail, I can go back and expand that schedule information to see how I've scheduled it, what dates, to who, and then I can go back and edit. So right there it is 61 courses at eight schools, if that's not what I wanted, I can always go back and edit that.

Taylor: And thank you, Dan, for bringing that up because, worst case scenario, if you have a student who is out and misses the entire testing window, you can adjust your testing window and the scheduling information. And that is a recommended practice over just copying the test and giving the student access to a copy of the test in a later window, because then that—actually that data will not be included in the rest of the data from the original test.

Urbanski: Right, you just want to edit the window, not create a new test just for that student to catch them up.

Taylor: Yes. Thank you.

Urbanski: Excellent. Well, that works for me. And I've a couple of questions that we've been responding back and forth with in the chat box, we've got most everything here. So we're going to transition into the all-star panel, we're going to be passing notes in class. And I am then going to be talking and interviewing with our, you've heard him all long throughout this session, and now I'm going to formally reintroduce John Lowe, Clinton City Schools. John, are you there?

Lowe: I'm here, hello, everyone.

Urbanski: All right. So we've got several people on the line, they're active, they want to hear from you, they're done with me. Why don't you take the microphone? Maybe share with us how long you've been using Schoolnet benchmarking, and some of your experiences, good, bad, indifferent, everything in between. What are your thoughts?

Lowe: All right. We got started with benchmarking just this past semester of this school year, so we're semi-new to the process. A lot of the points we've already made, are important to remember. I think we're through with—if you've heard the stories of access issues, I think we're through with that, it's much improved now. We actually just completed yesterday some middle school CTE post assessments that went beautifully. The results were there for the teachers, they're not fully bought into the process and love it. So any questions you have or anything you want to know about what we've done in Clinton City, bring them on.

Urbanski: So folks, go ahead and type in the chat box. I do have some questions. Just this semester, you've gone through, you've taken some lumps, we know in the fall that we had some stability and/or access issues, take that away because you mentioned, hey, now you're into this next round, what was something that you could share with someone who is brand new that hasn't even gotten to the level where you're at? If you could say, "Wow, I wish somebody told me this six months ago," maybe you could share some of those types of things with us here with our audience today.

Lowe: We were pretty well off. It's very important to go back and review your naming conventions and keep that consistent, maybe even publish a document amongst all your users who will be creating benchmark level tests. I wish someone had told me that that was important at the classroom teacher level at first, because we've got a lot of randomly named classroom assessments, and as teachers use it more, they're going to run into some difficulty searching for previously made tests. But we've remedied that now. So whatever your naming convention is you use for benchmarks, extend that out. And when teachers build classroom assessments, use that consistently throughout your school and/or LEA.

Urbanski: That's a great tip. How does scheduling affect you? Now you saw how Mandy, of course, flawlessly clicks through either sending or all or recommending, how did that go for you learning that portion of, because that's one thing that's solely different, teachers just assign to their students, you have several other options here, talk to us a little bit about your experience with scheduling.

Lowe: Yeah, there's a little tricky part to that when I first trained our curriculum coaches, they kind of missed that, and I maybe have glossed over it too quickly with them, but when you're scheduling and you go down and start to pick assignments to students if you choose that option, make sure you're picking the classed you want on the left, and clicking to select them and move them over to right column, and then going to the bottom, as Dan said earlier, and save. They did one of two things. They either saw the courses and the course list and didn't move them from left to right by picking add selected, and they just clicked saved and ended up with nothing. Or they did remember to move them, and then forgot to save, so then again, they ended up with nothing, so a little bit of extra thought and patience in that step goes a long way so you don't have to go back and edit your schedule and really get the classes you want. But if you take your time and follow the quick reference documents and what we've talked about today, it works really well.

Urbanski: Okay. What about—so you're talking in the online environment, how about anything with maybe the ScanIt sheets, taking paper, pencil bubble sheets, have you used those?

Lowe: We did. Our—we have a school that is only grades 2-3, and they have a limited number of devices that they can leverage, and they were worried about delivering the test online to their third graders, so we chose to print the bubble sheets and the options. It worked really well. You do have to be careful when printing your bubble sheets that you get some of the hash marks on the side of the page within the parameters of the page, there is a quick reference document about that, and an

illustrated example of doing that. If those little five dots are too close to the edge of your page, depending upon your scanner, it won't find them and they won't scan, that could be real fun if you had hundreds of documents that won't scan.

Urbanski: Oh, sure.

Lowe: But otherwise, it was a breeze. I got the documents from the teachers, I didn't have a real scanner, I'm new to this position, but I went over to our aux services and found an old combination printer/scanner someone had discarded and the scanner plating [ph] was perfect, they had never used the scanner part, plugged it in, it's got twain driver, it happened to work really well, and the interface worked really smoothly. So that went well for us. If anybody has questions about that, they're welcome to get in touch with me.

Urbanski: All right, that's great to hear, that's great to hear. Yeah, you know, and just as a side note, as we're talking about this, we've been monitoring very carefully, very gingerly the whole benchmark season that's underway in earnest right now. And just kind of a side report for everybody, yesterday, online, there were over 60,000 benchmark assessments taken in Schoolnet, yesterday alone. In addition, about another 8,000 assessments were bubble, paper-pencil scanned into the system by the end of the day, so we had almost 70,000 benchmarks occurring, or activities related to these benchmarks occurring, 70,000 instances occurring yesterday alone. We have not received one call in relation to students, teachers, schools, or districts not being able to get into the system to take their benchmarks all week.

Actually, during this benchmark season, we have yet to receive call in anything related to what we saw last fall. 70,000 in one day, it was a daily record

for us here at the NCDPI, and for everybody out in the state, to compare against what we were experiencing in the fall when we had the issues that, first, students couldn't even get in to Powerschool, and then hang up issues due to the load and the demand on Schoolnet servers, there was in the low 30,000 assessments trying to be taken at one time per day, so we have almost tripled, more than doubled the amount of assessments that are successfully being opened and completed in a daily basis. And a lot of that is due to the hard work that, or actually we're going to give all the credit to the teams that are working behind the scenes of the deployment team for the Schoolnet here at NCDPI and Pearson; they have leveled the servers out.

Imagine all of the activities were on one server, from someone searching for items, creating a test, taking a test, searching for a report, creating a report, running a report, maybe even building a lesson plan, all of those activities happened, and I'm not a technical super person, but I'm kind of making this part up but go with me here, imagine all of that activity happening on one server farm. The result that we have been working on for the last several months has been to separate those activities, and then spread those activities over multiple server farms. So now there might be one dedicated server area dedicated just for benchmark assessments. Another one completely separate is going to be—is dedicated for teachers searching for lesson plans. So we are looking at this and we're still monitoring, it's not like, hey, this is done and we're walking away. We're still making sure everything is working smoothly, but there has been

notable improvement in the response in this benchmark season versus what we just went through in the fall.

A little side note to that, I'm hoping that it continues. But if it does not, if you have something that's been popping up, whether it's a teacher or student not getting access, or an entire school or district, please, we need to know about that because just because you've had an issue and you might think that everybody else is having the same issue, I just got done saying, we've had not calls. We've had one call in the last week and it was related to a student not being able to get into a test, and that was more due to their network, not due to Schoolnet. And that was changed, fixed, and rectified. Otherwise, we're looking at, wow, this is—from all of our indicators things are a go so far so kind of a little long-winded, but I just want everybody on the line to know that things are looking promising. So if you have not taken tests online, you've taken test on paper and pencil and bubble sheet because of some of the stability or performance issues, we encourage you, take these online and see how they work for you.

Lowe: Yeah, Dan, I'll add to that. I have a couple of teachers who we have in-house at some of our schools, some smart technology student response system, and I've had a couple of teachers who wanted to experiment with those, and we've had great success. They love it, the connection is easy, and they're really excited about that capability as well, especially at schools where they don't have the number of computer labs they would need to actually take the assessments online. It works really well. They print it paper-pencil, the students move at their own pace, key it in with the clickers, and the data is still there. And our teachers love

the data, they love the item analysis and the standards mastery reports. It is something they can immediately see and use to inform instruction.

Urbanski: Oh, that is great feedback. I love it. That means that you're exploring, and practicing, and getting some good success, and hopefully that can encourage others to do so as well as these—we're all learning and growing together really.

I realized we're just right now at about the bottom of the hour, which is our scheduled end time. I would like to just recap if I could, and for those of you that need to scoot, I'm going to be doing some recapping of what we've gone over today and leaving everybody with requests to help me get some feedback here on a survey. So if you do have to leave, thank you so much for attending.

But real briefly, I'd like to just show up on the screen here today, this is what we covered. Remember, it's permission-based. Leaderships would need some elevated access, they need to have access to the test item administrator feature as well as if you are a staff member, that you want to have a staff person create benchmarks, they would need elevated rights, and I will send the link to people in the email to the webinar about how to work with roles and permissions. By all means, if you have any needs or desires or questions about how to do this, our support center is available for you.

Two points here—it's a little bit wordy, but this is for you to take and put into some of your training materials, so I want to leave all the content in there. Remember that the publisher for the secure items are available only to people with the proper access. The publisher name would be NCDPI_Benchmark. We—they are secure, so users that do have the proper permissions, they will not see

these. They might be able to click on a category that says benchmark items, but they would not have any access to that. Always create the test manually, not using Express Test. And the reason why specifically we say that is that if I'm a district administrator, I have access to both banks, I have the classroom item test bank, test item bank, and I have the secure bank. So if I say Express Test, the system is going to randomly pull the first 10 or 50 items that it feels that it wants to give me, it might give me all classroom items or it might give me a mix, and there's a situation that I don't want to have happen on a test, but I might be giving a test to students that have already seen the items before. So always, always, always use the manual test.

These are the item categories I was referring to, and that's what Mandy has been referring to, either benchmark items or classroom items. You also see that there's a category for CTE items, those are in production as well. You can click on the benchmark items if you have permission. Here is the _____ here is what it looks like. The top one shows district item administrator, there is approximately 11,000 items available to me, but if I'm a school or teacher and I do have the permission, they click on the button all they want, but they're not going to get any of the stuff inside.

Classroom item categories, if I just click on all classroom items, there are well over 50,000 items in the bank for us here, the majority of them are going to be of course classrooms, and that's what it looks like just for teachers in—all users have access to this actually.

And then last but not least, some updates and support. You can always go tour our Home Base NCDPI website (<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/homebase/>), and you will have this, when I send a copy of the PowerPoint out to you, you will have these links, but the Home Base NCDPI website has updated information like an archive of all of the bi-weekly newsletters. If you want to have those push all the way to your email box, here is a link that you can use to sign up for the Biweekly Updates newsletter list.

If you need support, contact your data manager or Powerschool coordinator. If that person needs support, they can always file a ticket just by sending a quick email to the Home Base support center. We do these webinars every Thursday from 3:30 to 4:30. And we have one coming up next week for—we are going to be focusing on data and reporting. We're going to be at the district level, and for school administrators as well, how to create custom reports and publish those out to our teachers and/or staff members.

Hey, by the way, at the very bottom of this right here, you'll see that there is a link for the archive recordings. I believe we're up to November. We are getting December published right now; we just have to make sure our transcripts are approved. So our PowerPoint, transcript and links to the videos will be—are always populated at this webinar page here.

And this is where I'm going to have you share with me. For those of you that are still on the line, I'm going to put this—oh, where did she go? There it is. It the chat box, not the question box, but in the chat box, I'm going to go ahead and post this link to everybody. So if you could take a moment for me here, click

on that link, or just type—write it is that you are seeing in front of you, you can just type this URL, share with us a little a bit of your thoughts about today. Did you like it? If so, what did you like? Would like to have it have it improve, give us some suggestions, that's what the survey has for you, the ability the write some of that feedback. It's important because that's I know I can take this to the next level for you. And as always, if you have questions, right now, again, we're just past our allotted time. If you have any questions, I'm here for the rest of the night. I don't have to do anything except for the hit the pillow in my bed at home. If you have any questions, type them into the questions box and I'll make sure those are answered for you.

While you're taking that survey, and if there are no further questions, I'd like to then take this opportunity to thank our panel. John and Mandy, thank you so much for coming today. John, as always, it's great to hear it's the insights. And I have been receiving some chats from some of the members, some people have left us already, but I've had several comments in the chat box sent just to me directly saying, "Thank you so much for having John on the line. I've never heard of that tip before. I'm going to (use that) that tomorrow," as well as some of people have been typing in the questions box. And Ms. Mandy, thank you, wonderful presentation. As always, I enjoy hearing you speak and this was a great one for you as well. Do you guys have any final comments? I take that as a no. It sounds like everybody is—

Lowe: I was waiting on Mandy. I'd just like to encourage everyone that's still here, I see we're down to just a few, but take advantage of the tool. You know, it's got wonderful capabilities that can help teachers move our students forward.

Urbanski: That's excellent tips. That's great. All right, well with that said, ladies and gentlemen, I do not see any other questions in the question box, so I'm going to go ahead and end this webinar for the day. Thank you all for attending. John and Mandy, again, thank you for your participation, and your patience, and your service to the educators of our state. It's greatly appreciated everyone.

Lowe: Thanks, Dan.

Urbanski: All right, so we'll see you all next time.

Taylor: Thank you.

Urbanski: Yeah, come back next week where we're going to be doing custom reporting in Schoolnet, and publishing of those custom reports. Bye-bye everybody.

[END RECORDING]