

**AESRP Meeting**  
**Friday, May 7, 2010**  
**9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon PDT**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**Present:** Marcia Arganbright, Walt Blomberg, Ralph Brown, Allan Bruner, Kelly Carlisle, Jim Conaghan, Laurie Glazener, Dee Hahn, Kathy Hall, Susan Iversen, Jana Iverson, Amy McQueen, Kehaulani Minzghor, Ken Peterson, Bob Rayborn, Bob Reeves, Michelle Zundel, Art Anderson, Analicia Santos, Brenda Morton (for Linda Samek) **Visitors:** Ron Smith

**Facilitators:** Derek Brown, Tony Alpert, Barbara Wolfe

- I. Introductions, Overview of the Agenda, and Approval of Minutes:** Barbara introduced Derek Brown, new Assessment of Essential Skills Manager at ODE, and explained that Tony would be joining the meeting in about 30 minutes. After reviewing the agenda, Barbara asked for corrections or additions to the minutes. Kathy Hall moved and Allan Bruner seconded that the minutes of January 8, 2010 be approved as submitted. The motion was approved.
- II. Update on the Assessment of Essential Skills Toolkit:** Barbara reported on the launch of the Assessment of Essential Skills Toolkit and the favorable response so far. Members of AESRP commented positively on the final product. One training has been held via Web-Ex and another Web-Ex session is scheduled for May 13 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.
- III. Plans for a Legislative Policy Option Package:** Derek explained to the group that ODE plans to submit a Policy Option Package (POP) requesting additional funding next biennium to support the assessment of the essential skills needed for the implementation of the new diploma requirements. After giving a general overview, Derek turned the discussion over to Tony, who had joined the meeting. Tony walked the group through the various elements included in the proposed POP. Responses from the group were as follows:
  - i. Members expressed high concern about adding more grades for writing assessment because of the impact on schools.
  - ii. The group was positive about plans for ODE to develop some secure prompts which could be used for local work samples and about the plans to increase the number of trainers available through a trainer-of-trainers model.
  - iii. Strong support was also expressed for systems that would address task validity and rater reliability.
  - iv. A number of comments were made about plans to develop an auditing system. The group talked about this as a process evaluation and encouraged ODE to consider bringing in outside expertise to assist in developing the system and to exert some quality control during the early implementation. Tony assured the group that AESRP would have a significant role in that development process and in selecting any outside contractors.
  - v. Once the POP has been finalized internally, it will be reviewed by stakeholders and will be e-mailed directly to AESRP members for review.
- IV. Report on Plans to Develop Secure Prompts for Assessments of Essential Skills:** Barbara reported briefly that, although ODE is requesting additional funding through the POP to create and field test secure prompts, that efforts are underway to develop a few secure reading tasks for use next year.
- V. Review of Test Administration Manual Appendix C for 2010-11:** Derek led the group through a brief review of changes to the language in the TAM appendix related to the Assessment of Essential Skills. The document had been sent to the panel earlier for review. Discussion focused on the section about documentation and particularly the statements that “*Districts may develop local policies to determine whether to retain additional evidence beyond student scores. Although it is not required, ODE strongly recommends that districts develop such a policy to ensure that sufficient evidence is available in the event of a student appeal.*” The group urged ODE to clarify

this issue and to provide model language for such policies, possibly by working in partnership with OSBA's policy staff.

**VI. Math Standard Setting:** Tony told the group about plans for setting new achievement standards in August based on the new Mathematics Content Standards. This will likely have an effect on the cut scores for proficiency in the Essential Skill of Applying Math and AESRP will be asked to weigh in on this at the appropriate time.

Tony reported on a variety of studies that are being examined in light of this effort, including the First Year Study which looks at the performance of college freshmen in beginning math classes and aligns their performance with their OAKS scores to determine a score that predicts at least a 70% chance of passing the course with a C or better. He also talked about the NAEP and PISA test items that were embedded in OAKS this year to allow ODE to draw comparisons to those assessments.

Another analysis looks at the degree to which a "passing" score on OAKS one year predicts success in future grades. In addition to all the impact information from these studies, the standard setting process will use a standard bookmarking procedure where participants select items from a booklet that they believe correspond with the expected standards for the grade level and content. Kathy Hall commented that the correlation to college performance is not always accurate because the methodology in college level math courses is so different from that used in high schools. Kathy suggested, and the group concurred, that ODE should look at courses from Math 65 up to Math 111 as part of the First Year study. All of the issues around standards in the Essential Skill of Math will be high priority issues for AESRP next year.

**VII. Common Core Standards and Common Assessments:** Tony discussed two national efforts in which Oregon is participating. One involves the development of Common Core Standards, which are currently linked strongly to NAEP standards. Oregon and other states have concerns about this connection, but are also interested in being part of the process to help in the design.

At the same time, efforts are underway to develop common assessments that could be used across the nation. Some funding was set aside for state consortia to become involved in this work. In December, Tony invited other states to join a coalition on the common assessment issues which has now evolved into 13 governing states and 33 member states. Oregon is one of the governing states in the Summative Multi-State Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers (SMARTER) coalition. The coalition is relying on the performance assessment work of Linda Darling Hammond of Stanford University who is very supportive of the SMARTER work.

In this model, states would use both computer adaptive and constructed response items in the assessment. Some constructed response items would be computer scored using artificial intelligence with a human "read-behind," while others would be human scored. Additionally, the model includes 1 or 2 performance-based assessments that take 1 – 2 class periods to complete.

Adoption of the Common Core Curriculum is a requirement for the grant. Materials are being developed and will be sent to AESRP members for review within the next few weeks. Plans are for implementation of the assessment system in the 2014-15 school year, which aligns with Oregon's standard procedure for providing advanced notice to districts of changes to the tests. Tony reported that speaking and listening are included as components of the English Language Arts assessments and that reading is more contextualized than in many tests.

In response to concerns from the group about sustainability, Tony said that many private foundations are interested in getting involved with this project, including the Gates Foundation. Currently, the direction is toward computer adaptive tests with performance assessment, but not at the level first proposed by Linda Darling Hammond. AESRP will continue to receive information on this activity and responses to the proposals will be part of next year's work for this group.

**VIII. Status Update on Adding Accuplacer to the list of Approved Assessments:** Steve Slater reported that ODE has been in contact with the College Board about including the Accuplacer test on the list of State Board approved assessments for the essential skills of reading and math. Accuplacer is used by a number of community colleges and state universities as a placement tool for incoming freshmen. It may also have potential utility for our purpose of determining proficiency on the essential skills.

Steve said we are in a similar place to where we were with SAT and PSAT about 18 months ago. We have made initial contact and will follow-up to see if the College Board can produce an alignment between the Accuplacer test and our content standards. If the content lines up sufficiently, then we could begin a process of linking Accuplacer to OAKS with the College Board conducting the linking study and ODE supplying the OAKS data. The rule of thumb for a positive correlation between instruments is at least .75. A proposal should be ready for AESRP by our fall meeting. Members supported the plan and mentioned that many alternative programs also use Accuplacer as their students move toward placement in community college programs.

**IX. Potential Writing Assessments for Approval for Demonstrating Proficiency in the Essential Skill of Writing:** Barbara provided the group with a list of potential writing assessments prior to the meeting. The tests listed all have a direct writing component and are connected with vendors who also have reading and writing tests on the approved list. The procedure would be similar to that with reading and writing: vendors would be asked to provide a correlation to Oregon's content standards and scoring rubric. If the connection is strong enough, ODE would work with the vendor to establish linkages through student scores. Michelle Zundel moved that ODE proceed to contact the vendors and begin the process for the correlation; Marcia Arganbright seconded. The motion was approved.

**X. Local Assessment Criteria – Planning for next year's work:** Derek shared a draft document with the group which lays out some specifications for evaluating assessments. In the course of discussion, Tony pointed out that the development of local assessments by local districts should only be undertaken by districts, ESD's and consortia that have the resources and capacity to do this rigorous work. Some districts who have created local formative assessments might want to use a suite of these assessments for summative assessment of the Essential Skills.

Tony clarified that the *local assessment option* differs from the *local performance assessment*. The panel pointed out the need to develop clearer nomenclature around these very similar sounding topics. He also emphasized that all districts may undertake local performance assessments, also called work samples, using state scoring guides.

ODE has provided and will continue to provide guidance to assist districts, ESD's and others in creating local performance assessments of sufficient rigor to demonstrate proficiency in the Essential Skills. Ultimately, the local assessment criteria may be useful in analyzing state and local work samples and linking to data-driven decision-making.

**XI. Discussion of issues and needs for Essential Skills of Reading and Writing:** Derek led a discussion about needs in local districts as part of planning for AESRP's work next year. Panel members urged ODE to develop a "glossy brochure" about the Assessment of Essential Skills that could be distributed to districts. This brochure should use plain language to communicate in a manner that can be shared with school personnel, parents and other community members. It would be helpful to include visuals that might assist in understanding the system. Such a brochure might also be helpful to districts and ESD's when providing in-service training to principals and other school leaders. In developing or distributing this information, it would be helpful for ODE to work with Oregon School Public Relations Association (OSPRA), an organization of communications experts who work together and support one another in communicating statewide and local issues.

The group also raised concerns about the capacity of districts to track each student's progress and whether districts have begun to develop such systems. It would also be helpful to disseminate information to districts about the use and misuse of OAKS. Even though students are allowed 3 testing opportunities per year, when students are not academically ready for the assessment they would likely

benefit from more instruction rather than another OAKS session. The panel encouraged ODE to improve communication about best practices and use of OAKS.

A final question arose about language in OAR 581-22-1131 which allows districts to grant students credit based on demonstrated proficiency or mastery of recognized standards. Among the choices for determining proficiency is "Successfully passes an appropriate exam designed to measure proficiency or mastery of identified standards (knowledge and skills)" (OAR 581-22-1131 sec 4b). Tony clarified that the OAR provides protection and clarity because credit can only be awarded in the subject area tested.

**XII. Meeting dates for 2010-2011:** Barbara presented proposed dates for next school year's meetings and requested to hear from panelists as soon as possible if anyone discovers a state-wide conflict with any of the dates. Proposed dates are as follows: Thursday & Friday, October 14 & 15 in Salem; Friday, January 14, 2011 via Web-ex; Friday, April 29, 2011, location to be determined.

**XIII. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon PDT