

## Assessment of Essential Skills Review Panel

Meeting Minutes  
October 14 - 15, 2010

### Thursday, October 14, 2010

**Panel Members Present:** Art Anderson, Peggy Blair, John Bouchard, Ralph Brown, Allan Bruner, Kelly Carlisle, Jim Conaghan, Lori, Cullen, Laurie Glazener, Dee Hahn, Kathy Hall, Susan Iversen, Todd McKee, Amy McQueen, Brenda Morgan, Kehaulani Minzghor, Analicia Santos, Steve Slater, Michelle Zundel **Visitors Present:** Kathleen Vanderwall, Holly Carter, Jim Leigh, Winnie Miller

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

### I. Introductions, Review of Agenda and Housekeeping:

Derek Brown called the meeting to order and asked members of the panel to introduce themselves. He then reviewed the agenda and asked Tony Alpert, Director of Assessment to update the group on current issues related to essential skills.

Tony reported that state general funds have been severely cut due to the budget shortfall. Budget cuts for state agencies will be posted soon. O AIS will have a 25% cut. This will result in fewer services to assist districts in implementing new requirements. Staff will employ a variety of strategies, including use of technology such as web-ex, to provide as much assistance as possible

However, Tony also reported that the largest increase in student performance on high school reading test occurred last year and that some schools had 10% or higher increase in percent of students meeting standards. This is very good news with the diploma requirement for proficiency in reading approaching for this year's 11<sup>th</sup> graders.

Finally, Tony gave a brief overview of the status of the Common Core Standards and Common Core Assessments. Oregon is part of a consortium developing assessments that will likely be implemented in 2014. The State Board of Education is expected to adopt the Common Core Standards, although it is not yet clear when that adoption will occur.

### II. Review of Minutes

Derek asked the group to review the minutes of the May 7, 2010 meeting. Laurie Glazener moved and Kathy Hall seconded that the minutes be approved. The vote was positive to approve the minutes.

### III. Report on SAT Writing connection to OAKS Writing

In order to accommodate Tony's schedule for the day, two agenda items were re-ordered. The SAT Writing assessment was moved to the morning and the math standard Setting was moved to the afternoon.

Steve Slater provided the group with an overview of the SAT Writing Assessment, a 25 minute essay response to a prompt along with a multiple choice section on writing and language. The results of the two sections are used together to create a score on the 200 to 800 standard SAT scale.

ODE had asked the College Board to provide an alignment study between their writing assessment and the Oregon English Language Arts content standards for writing and the OAKS writing performance assessment. The group reviewed that document and was satisfied that the tests are congruent.

ODE then worked with the College Board to identify 10,000 common student scores. Steve ran a correlation between the OAKS scores which are on a 10 – 60 scale and the SAT Writing scores which are on a 200-800 scale. The correlation between the two tests was .544, which is at a moderate level. This level of correlation may be due to the time lag between when students took OAKS test as sophomores and the SAT as late year juniors or seniors.

Following discussion, the group asked Steve to do a pass/no pass correlation and return with the data this afternoon.

In response to a question about multiple choice writing items, Tony explained that even though Oregon piloted a multiple choice writing component on the OAKS test the last 2 years, it would not continue that effort. To fully implement a combined direct writing and multiple choice assessments would require putting the multiple choice writing items on a scale similar to reading and math. This would require a huge effort for district IT staff to adjust their data systems which are set up on the 10-60 scale. Since the Common Core Assessment will most likely be implemented in 2014, the cost of making the change does not seem reasonable for the benefit gained.

Steve walked the group through the executive briefing on Linking the SAT and OAKS Writing Scales. He explained that he looked for the SAT score that most closely matches the score of 40 OAKS, and found it matches at 477. To round for SAT which sets scores at each 10 point gap, 480 would be the closest SAT score. He also pointed out that 477 is the national average for SAT writing.

The group then asked Steve to bring back additional information in the afternoon to help the panel in making a recommendation.

#### **IV. Other Standardized Tests under Consideration for Recommendation to the State Board**

Barbara Wolfe reported briefly on efforts to set up a study with Accuplacer, another College Board product, used as a placement test in reading and math by many community colleges and Oregon University System schools. The College Board has not yet provided content correlations for reading and math. Efforts will continue to get the College Board to respond and staff will report back to the panel in January.

#### **V. Technical Report on Procedures Used to Set Cut Scores on Standardized Tests**

Derek asked the panel to review the technical paper, **Setting Cut Scores on Standardized Tests: ODE's Process to Align Commercial Tests to Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) Tests** section by section, asking questions and making comments during the process.

Following discussion, Kathy Hall moved to accept the Technical report with a revised transition requested during discussion around following the initial recommendations by AESRP for technical procedures. Allen Bruner seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

## **VI. Review of Mathematics Achievement Standards Review**

Tony provided an overview of the recent math standard setting process. He described the panel who reviewed math items and the process they used. Panelists were asked to review actual test items in an ordered item booklet organized from low to high scores at each grade level. The panelists were seeking the difficulty levels that best matched the achievement level descriptors for that grade.

The AESRP panel discussed a concern about a recommendation by the standard setting panel to raise the required score for high school from 236 to 237. One possibility would be to have 2 different standards, One for students (236) to meet essential skill requirements and one for schools (237) used for AYP calculations. In most responses from stakeholders, it seems best to have them be the same.

Tony reminded the group that the role of AESRP is to focus on the essential skill requirements – not to make recommendations about effects on AYP.

Ralph Brown moved that AESRP recommend to the State Board that they maintain a high school achievement score of 236 on the OAKS Mathematics Assessment. The motion was seconded by Allen Bruner and approved.

The group then held further discussion around recommended cut scores at other grades. Meeting the standard does not currently provide good preparation for students to continue to meet the standard at subsequent grades – especially as they move closer to high school. ODE staff used the current required score of 236 to determine the cut score at each grade level that best predicted a 60% probability of meeting the high school standard. With new requirement for high school graduation of 3 courses at Algebra 1 or higher, it is important to be sure students are getting the math background in elementary and middle school to be ready for classes at that level in high school.

Tony reviewed past practices in the standard setting cycle. In 2006 ODE discovered that because of minor changes to the content standards in 2002 which were reflected in the state assessment, we were out of compliance with USDOE requirements. In order to have the OAKS assessments approved for NCLB, ODE was required to re-visit the achievement. As a result, ODE conducted a large standard setting procedure for reading, math, science and ELPA in December 2006.

Recently, new math content standards were adopted in 2007 and 2009. As a result, math achievement standards had to be reviewed to assure alignment. That task has been completed pending State Board adoption.

## **VII. Revision of Mathematics Problem-Solving Scoring Guide**

Jim Leigh provided background on reasons why it is time to revise the scoring guide in relation to content standards, the amount of time that has passed since the scoring guide has been in wide-spread use, and past concerns about the traits of accuracy and verification.

Revised scoring guide contains many changes to differentiate it from earlier version. So far, OCTM Professional Development Cadre has worked with ODE staff from both EII and OAIS and teachers to review the scoring guide. Recently they have collected some student tasks and held a preliminary scoring session. OCTM is also offering training sessions in various locations around the state from November through March on the new scoring guide.

Jim explained that he is looking to AESRP for comments and review now and ultimately endorsement of the new scoring guide. Plans are to take the scoring guide to the State Board of Education in December for first reading and then for final adoption in March. Field test plans include collecting more student work samples and scoring them so that a comparison of student scores on a work sample to scores on OAKS assessment can be run and inter-rater reliability verified..

### **VIII. Discussion about including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate tests on approved test list for Essential Skills**

Barbara introduced the topic of adding AP and IB tests to the approved assessments for reading and mathematics essential skills based on their approval in a variety of other applications and the routine granting of college credit for specific scores attained on the tests. The group reviewed a handout sheet showing the number of credits granted by various Oregon universities based on scores achieved on various AP and IB tests.

The AESRP panel discussed a number of issues including the fact that many students take these tests as seniors and don't get their test results until summer, after graduation has already occurred. However, some students do take the tests as juniors. Additional tests within the AP and IB framework were also discussed. Finally, the panel noted that the addition of these tests is unlikely to help any students meet essential skill standards that they wouldn't already meet through OAKS or other assessments, but agreed that it does provide an additional option, which is one of the Board's and AESRP's goals.

Kathy Hall moved that AESRP recommend to the State Board of Education that Math AP Calculus Tests AB & BC or AP Statistics Tests with a score of 3 or higher and either test offered in Math for IB with a score of 4 or higher be an option for demonstrating proficiency in Applying Mathematics. Michelle Zundel seconded the motion.

Susan Iversen offered a friendly amendment to the motion to include demonstrating proficiency in the essential skill of Reading for a score of 3 on any of the following AP tests: English Literature and Composition, Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, Psychology, United States History, World History, United States Government and Politics, or Comparative Government and Politics examination and a score of 4 on the IB tests English Language assessment. Kathy and Michelle accepted the amendment.

Further discussion followed including the possibility of awarding writing essential skill proficiency for some AP or IB tests.

Ultimately, the group decided to table the motion and return to the topic with the intent of taking action during tomorrow's meeting.

## **IX. Update on the Common Core Assessments**

Tony updated the group on the status of the developing Common Core Assessments. He explained that Oregon is part of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). This consortium proposes using computer adaptive tests with multiple opportunities and an emphasis on constructed response items. In addition, 2 performance assessments at each grade level would be administered and would count toward Title 1 requirements which are similar to current AYP requirements.

By the 2014 -15 school year, OAKS will no longer be an option for reading, math or writing assessments if the SBAC plan is successful.

About 40 states have adopted the common core content standards. Each state that does so must develop an assessment to measure those standards. Being a member of a consortium give us the opportunity to have more extended, performance-based assessments.

Tony said that AESRP has an important role in helping to deal with transition issues from OAKS to the new assessment system as it relates to the Essential Skills requirements.

The current timeline calls for an initial test blueprint by spring of 2011 and an initial accommodations manual by fall 2012. A beta test of the test administration platform is scheduled for spring 2013 and Oregon will likely embed some field test items from the proposed Common Core Assessment in OAKS tests during the 2012-13 school year.

Following the initial administration of the new assessment in 2013-14, standard setting would occur in the summer and the operational test would be in place for 2014-15 with a verification process for the achievement standards in summer 2015.

The State Board of Education will be considering the Common Core Content Standards for adoption at their meeting later this month. If the Board adopts the standards, AESRP will need to begin work on a transition plan beginning at our January meeting.

## **X. Review of OAR's for English Language Learners on the Essential Skills**

Holly Carter, Operations and Policy Analyst in the Assessment office, reviewed two versions of an OAR for English Language Learners. In the initial version, districts were required to adopt a process for ELL's to demonstrate skill in their home language under the circumstances identified in State Board policy. A revised version allows districts to decide whether to adopt a policy to allow ELL students to demonstrate proficiency in their home language.

Discussion followed. AESRP suggested that ODE could potentially help districts to identify resources such as sharing assessments in other languages with other districts or forming consortia to allow sharing especially in some very low usage languages.

## **XI. Resume Discussion of SAT Writing**

Steve Slater returned to the meeting and presented a percentile chart for students that took both OAKS writing and SAT writing. He also ran a correlation between OAKS and SAT writing assessments if they are treated as pass/no pass tests.

Using the pass/no pass method was not helpful because the correlation was reduced to .387. This is probably an artifact of limiting the data used.

The Percentile Study revealed a score range on the SAT writing assessment that ran from 19% to 51% when compared with the score of 40 on the OAKS writing assessment.

After further discussion, Steve agreed to do some additional statistical studies similar to the procedure used for reading and math so that the panel can make a final decision on a score to recommend to the State Board. He will bring these to tomorrow's meeting.

## XII. Adjournment

Derek adjourned the meeting at 4:00 pm with a scheduled time to resume at 9:00 a.m. Friday, October 15, 2010.

## October 15, 2010

**Panel Members Present:** Art Anderson, Peggy Blair, John Bouchard, Ralph Brown, Allan Bruner, Jackie Burr, Kelly Carlisle, Jim Conaghan, Lori, Cullen, Laurie Glazener, Dee Hahn, Kathy Hall, Susan Iversen, Todd McKee, Amy McQueen, Brenda Morgan, Kehaulani Minzghor, Bob Rayborn, Theresa Richards, Analicia Santos, Steve Slater, Michelle Zundel

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

### I. Call to order and OSBA Policy Update

Derek called the meeting to order and opened the session with a report on the collaboration with Oregon School Board Association around various policy issues. As a result of this collaboration, OSBA is adding some "highly recommended" language to the graduation policy around retention of work samples and appeals process. ODE and OSBA will continue to communicate as issues connected to essential skills may need clarification in local school district policy manuals.

### II. Essential Skills OAR

Derek explained that various conversations with stakeholders have led to some discussions about revising the OAR. Specifically, an issue around early leavers (students who graduate ahead of their predicted graduation class) may need to be clarified. There is a discrepancy between language about Class of 2012 and the year of entry to high school. The change to identifying students by the year first enrolled in Grade 9 was done originally to protect students who delay graduation from facing additional requirements. Now a change may be needed to alert schools to the need to document that early leavers have met requirements for their class year, based on the year of enrollment in Grade 9.

Discussion followed around whether students completing high school early should be held to the same standards as their peers. Derek pointed out that this is potentially another OSBA issue for early graduation policies. Others affected could include transfer students and home-schooled students.

Local school districts are responsible for determining the enrolled grade of entering students, whether they enter from within the district as freshmen in the fall or arrive later through transfer or other means. Once the student's enrolled grade is determined, it is easy enough to back up to find what

would have been the students 9<sup>th</sup> grade year and what requirements are in place for that cohort group.

AESRP recommended that ODE develop clear communication to alert districts to the fact that early leavers are responsible for requirements in place for the class the year they were freshmen. This might be done via a numbered memorandum.

### **III. Roll-out of Additional Essential Skills**

Derek introduced the topic of establishing a schedule for the roll-out of the remaining essential skills as part of AESRP's main responsibility. The question before the group is whether AESRP wishes to recommend the implementation of additional essential skills to the State Board in the near future. If any additional skills are to be required of the Class of 2015, the State Board would have to announce that change by March 1, 2011.

Discussion followed. Several panel members commented on the need to see how the current implementation works before establishing a timeline for other skills. Some concern was also expressed about the ability to assess some of the other essential skills.

Tony suggested that the group look at some logical processes such as having districts agree to try out various approaches to assessing particular ones of the other skills.

The group agreed that it will take a while for the 3 essential skills currently required to become institutionalized. They suggested an analysis of what assessments or emerging technologies exist and which are most construct valid for future essential skills.

Tony said that ODE could solicit some universities to do some analysis of these additional essential skills and potential assessment options. He reminded the group that assessment is more than paper/pencil tests, so we need to broaden our thinking to include more performance assessments.

We could also poll the AESRP panel to determine which essential skills need specific assessments and which need some other form of evidence. For example, civic engagement might be assessed via community service requirements or for schools with senior projects by assuring that all senior projects include some civic engagement.

Theresa Richards, ODE Diploma Project Coordinator, reminded the group that a merger between the currently required Career Related Learning Standards and Essential Skills was supposed to occur in 2012 with the original development of Essential Skills. However, with the delay in implementation of additional Essential Skills, more planning needs to be done on how to accomplish this. It would be a very good topic for AESRP to consider and make recommendations about.

She also reminded the group that Extended Applications, such as senior projects etc. could account for a lot skills, both CRLS and ES.

Derek recommended putting this topic on the January agenda when we can spend some quality time on it. We can examine how the CRLS can be analyzed in context of ES and have that drive the discussion of rolling out the Essential Skills.

### **IV. Essential Skill Support Resources**

Barbara and Theresa walked the group through several new resources available on the ODE website to assist districts in various aspects of implementing and assessing the Essential Skills.

The panel complimented ODE on providing the resources and made suggestions for some additional support materials that would be helpful. These included some newsletter resources schools could use for communications to parents and additional communication around the Modified Diploma.

#### **V. Demonstration of Willamette ESD Data Collection Project**

Derek introduced Brian Clerc and Robin DeRoche from Willamette ESD who have been working on a data solution for districts in their service area to collect and maintain records on student proficiency in the Essential Skills. He explained that ODE receives questions frequently on what kinds of data need to be collected and how long the data should be retained so this demonstration was scheduled to create a common background for AESRP to discuss the issues.

Brian demonstrated how the data system works, how districts access it, and how it then ties into the required essential skill information that must be fed to ODE at graduation.

#### **VI. Discussion of Sequencing Essential Skill Assessment Options**

Derek introduced this topic by explaining that some schools and districts are confused about whether students must attempt the various options for Essential Skill assessments in a particular sequence. ODE does not require a particular sequence to the test options.

Discussion revealed that the requirement that students attempt OAKS before utilizing one of the other options appears to be more of a district level motivation issue because districts want students to be motivated to do their best on OAKS for AYP results.

The panel recommended ODE communicate with districts about this issue.

#### **VII. Continuation of SAT Writing Discussion**

Steve Slater returned with additional data on the SAT Writing Assessment and the correlation to OAKS writing assessment.

Discussion centered around the choices between 460, 470, and 480 on the SAT and how similarly these possible score levels were identified compared to the manner in which the panel set recommended cut scores for reading and math tests. Steve explained that some basic differences in the types of data and in the tests themselves make it very difficult to replicate the process used earlier.

The group was concerned that in other tests such as ACT Math – the probability of a student meeting the standard on the ACT and not meeting on the OAKS is close to 5%. Many members would like to find a similar relationship between the SAT Writing Test and the OAKS assessment.

Following discussion, Kathy Hall moved and Ralph Brown seconded that the AESRP recommend to the State Board of Education that an SAT Writing score of 460 be adopted as the cut score for demonstrating proficiency in the Writing.

Additional discussion continued, the question was called and the motion failed.



Subsequently, Michelle Zundel moved and Allan Bruner seconded that the AESRP recommend to the State Board of Education that an SAT Writing score of 450 be adopted as the cut score for demonstrating proficiency in the Writing.

The vote was 8 in favor and 9 opposed and the motion failed.

Todd McKee moved and Michelle Zundel seconded that the AESRP recommend to the State Board of Education that an SAT Writing score of 440 be adopted as the cut score for demonstrating proficiency in the Writing.

The vote was 5 in favor and 9 opposed and the motion failed.

The group requested additional information to help them frame issue around the percent of students who would meet proficiency requirements at each score level. Steve said he would bring additional data to the January meeting. A subcommittee was formed consisting of Bob Rayborn, Michelle Zundel, Kathy Hall, Allan Bruner, and Analicia Santos to assist Steve in reviewing the data before the full committee meeting.

### **VIII. Review and Suggestions for Assessment of Essential Skills Toolkit**

Barbara briefly reviewed the group's work last year on the Assessment of Essential Skills Toolkit and asked for suggestions on what the next section, Implementation, should include. The group brainstormed a few ideas, such as a template for an extended application that addresses the essential skills and models of essential skills in content areas other than English Language Arts and math classes. They also suggested some schools that have developed materials such as Colton and Heppner, which might provide some local models.

### **IX. Plans for AESRP work for 2010 – 11**

Derek walked the group through a Milestones document identifying the work completed by AESRP over the last two years and used this as a focus for identifying work priorities for the coming year.

Issues identified included work on the phase-in of additional essential skills coinciding with CRLS work, pulling back on the local performance option in favor of the upcoming Common Core Assessments, and the identification of additional measures for direct writing assessment.

### **X. Adjournment**

Derek thanked the group for their hard work and thoughtful input over the two meeting days. He also reminded members that the next meeting will be on Friday, January 14, 2011 and will be conducted via web-ex. Specific meeting times and an agenda will be sent out prior to the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.