

**Assessment Task Force Update
Summary of the July 13, 2015 WebEx Meeting**

Submitted July 20, 2015 by the Center for Assessment

The assessment Task Force met via WebEx on July 13, 2015 from 9:00 am to noon. Eighteen of the 26 members of the Task Force were in attendance (see below). One member of the Task Force who has recently taken a position with the Department of Education (Jon Lever) resigned to avoid conflict of interest, reducing Task Force membership to 25.

Scott Marion and Joseph Martineau of the Center for Assessment, LSO consultants, planned and facilitated the meeting in coordination with Brent Young and Deb Lindsey of the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE).

| Members Present | Members Absent |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Sharla Dowding | 1 Dan Coe |
| 2 Christopher Dresang | 2 Stephanie Czarobski |
| 3 Kim Ferguson | 3 Joanne Flanagan |
| 4 Molly Foster | 4 Kevin Roberts |
| 5 Crystal Graf | 5 Sue Stevens |
| 6 Cindy Gulisano | 6 Sonya Tysdal |
| 7 Shannon Harris | 7 Marty Wood |
| 8 Cassie Hetzel | |
| 9 Ellen Kappus | |
| 10 Audrey Kleinsasser | |
| 11 Wanda Maloney | Resigned |
| 12 Kevin Mitchell | 1 Jon Lever |
| 13 Anne Ochs | |
| 14 Mary Charles Pryor | |
| 15 Byron Stutzman | |
| 16 Kathy Vetter | |
| 17 Rebecca Weston | |
| 18 Nicole Novotny Wonka | |

The agenda for the day was as follows:

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| Welcome and attendance |
| Presentation and Discussion of Intuitive Test Theory |
| Presentation and Discussion of Principled Assessment Design |
| Drivers of Summative Assessment Design Decisions |
| Critical Summative Assessment Design Consideration |

Reviewing activities for the July 28-29 meeting in Laramie

- *Choosing preferred group assignments in advance*
- *Defining the scope of the group work on comprehensive assessment systems for feasibility*

This meeting was mostly presentation on issues affecting the design of high-quality summative assessment to prepare the Task Force members to “hit the ground running” at the next in-person meeting in Laramie, WY on July 28-29. The amount of in-person meeting time for the task force is quite limited, so making the most of that time is critical. However, question, comment, and discussion time was built in to express concerns, request clarification, or state a position.

Intuitive Test Theory

The presentation discussed in some detail the pre-reading assignment regarding intuitive test theory. This article presents both physics and assessment in terms of the contrast between theories that laypeople and experts use in these two fields. It identifies several aspects of intuitive physics and test theory that work sufficiently to explain simple phenomena, but that break down under scrutiny and must be replaced by complex theories in order to sufficiently explain complex phenomena.

Principled Assessment Design

The issue of avoiding mistakes of intuitive test theory leads directly into principled assessment design. Principled assessment design addresses a serious current issue in the assessment field in that assessments are often developed and implemented in isolation from a theory of learning, which can have consequential unintended effects, such as students being identified as high-performing when they can perform specific tasks in isolation without being able to combine knowledge and skills to create new solutions to new problems. Advances in learning theory help us better understand how students acquire knowledge, and the recent development of principled assessment design has provided insights into test development and implementation to avoid unintended consequences of current test development practices.

While application of principled assessment design in high-stakes testing is rare, two brief examples of recent application were presented.

Drivers of Summative Assessment Decisions

Before principled assessment design can be implemented, a few foundational pieces must first be in place. First, the learning model must be described. Second, the content standards must be carefully developed to match that learning model (in such terms as progression of knowledge and skill acquisition over time and connections between knowledge and skill). Finally, the intended uses and purposes of the assessment must be described. With these foundations in place, an assessment can be purposely designed to measure the knowledge and skills consistently with the learning model and to support the intended purposes and uses.

While there are other considerable drivers of summative assessment design decisions (such as policy requirements, cost, and testing time), the learning model, content standards, and uses and purposes should drive design decisions to the greatest degree possible.

Critical Summative Assessment Design Considerations

Because they derive directly from intended uses and purposes, learning model, and content standards, the claims we intend to make on the basis of test scores is the first critical assessment design consideration. Most remaining design considerations will have an effect on how well the claims are supported from assessment data. These other considerations include such critical decisions as the information we desire to convey to various stakeholders, alignment of the assessment to the content standards and intended claims, fairness toward all test takers, the types of test items and tasks to appear on the assessment, the level of task contextualization needed to measure the standards, the design of performance tasks, the mode of administration, test security, test timing, and testing windows.

July 28-29, 2015 Meeting in Laramie, WY

In preparation for the meeting in Laramie, Task Force members were asked to email the facilitators their preferred group assignments for work to be done by the Task Force. Task Force members were also asked to weigh in on a proposed scope of the group work on comprehensive assessment systems for that meeting to achieve a feasible set of intended outcomes from that meeting.

Timeline

The timeline for completing the work of the Task Force is as follows:

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Time</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Location</i> |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| July 28-29, 2015 | 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM | Meeting 4 | Laramie |
| August 21, 2015 | 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Meeting 5 | Webex |
| September 9, 2015 | 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM | Final Meeting | Rock Springs |

In addition, Scott Marion and Paige Fenton-Hughes will brief the State Board of Education on the Task Force report on September 23, 2015, and Joseph Martineau and Scott Marion will present to the Select Committee on October 30, 2015.