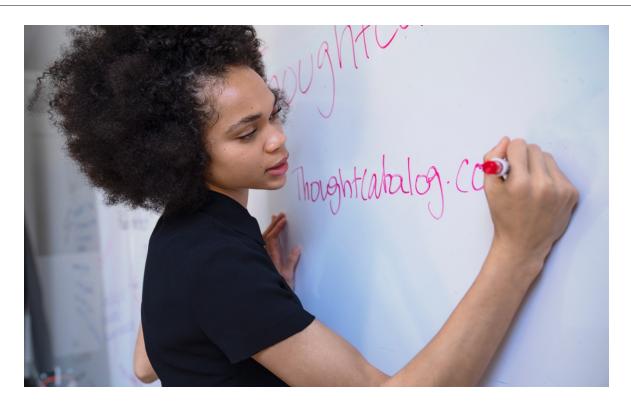# ASSESSING LEARNING

SCHOOL REOPENING TOOLKIT: ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING

This guide is for helping Tennessee districts to create strong district-level plans for assessing student learning during these unique times and to use assessments to define student mastery, to pinpoint what students already know and can do, to precisely identify student needs, and to adjust instructional practices to effectively and efficiently support ongoing learning. In education, we may often feel like there's not enough time for all the learning we hope for our students. When students return to us in the fall, especially after quickly switching to remote instruction in the spring, it will be important to effectively and continuously find out what students have learned and what they still need to learn.

All information in the document is non-regulatory guidance issued for general informational purposes only. This document is not intended to constitute legal advice. Because local school board policy and unique facts make dramatic differences in analyzing any situation, the Tennessee Department of Education advises each school district to consult with the local school board attorney for specific legal advice regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on school operations.

When we need more time in the school year, the best way to get it is to spend less time on things they've already mastered and more time on the specific gaps that students need.

I. Overview Checklists and Resource List

This section has two checklists. The first checklist is focused just on effective implementation and use of the optional "Start of Year Checkpoint" to aid in gauging student mastery from the previous year. The second checklist is to help districts who wish to create an assessment plan for the entire year. This is more like a "choose your own adventure" where districts can use guiding questions to determine which resources will be most helpful.

Each checklist has links to resources within this toolkit. Most of the resources are checklists, protocols, and one-page guides, allowing districts to access only the optional resources they need. The key is to find a way to consistently measure student learning so we can meet students' needs.

Each district is unique, so tailoring and customizing your plans for leading data-driven instruction will be key. To help with district-specific customization and to support each district in the creation of a self-sustaining and effective system for measuring student learning, this toolkit is designed as a library of resources from which districts can find tools that help maintain strong data-driven instruction throughout the year.

Checklist for Effectively Using the Optional "Start of Year Checkpoint"

- ☐ Read the current information available for two key tools for beginning of year benchmarking: OPTIONAL Start of Year "Checkpoint" and OPTIONAL Free Formative Assessment Platform w/TCAP Item Bank & Reporting. Both of these sections have the most current information for these new resources. Keep current with *Commissioner's Update* emails and in contact with your testing coordinators to keep current on logistical details, training resources, and features for both the platform and Checkpoint resources.
- ☐ With the district safety policies and school/district schedules in-hand, use the Checklist: 12-Step Management of Testing Plans and Testing Coordinators to manage appropriate days, plan logistics, and identify protected analysis time for educators to access the data.
- ☐ (Recommended) Choose to administer the "Checkpoint" digitally using the OPTIONAL Free Formative Assessment Platform w/TCAP Item Bank & Reporting, as it has both grading and reporting functionality to save teachers and leaders time.
- ☐ Provide teachers with tools for interpreting the results of the "Checkpoint" including Protocol: One-Page Deep Analysis Checklist and the "Checkpoint" Annotated Assessment Guide when it becomes available.
- ☐ Ensure leaders and teachers together analyze and create a plan using Protocol: One-Page Assessment Analysis Conversation Guide and then spiral needed content into the year-long instructional sequence to align student needs with best content.

Customizable District Checklist for Annual Plans to Measure Student Learning

District Need	Important Optional Actions	Guiding Questions	Possible Solutions and Tools
Balanced Suite of High-Quality District Assessments	1. Acquire/Develop district-led **interims, benchmarks, and/or checkpoint assessments** that are **aligned to the content and rigor** of summative assessments or key student goals.	☐ Can we offer shared, district-led assessments every 6-9 weeks (3-6 shared interim assessments per year)? ☐ Are they aligned to college readiness and state summative assessments and standards? ☐ Do we have a way to measure student progress in each core subject and grade? ☐ If not, do we have, at a minimum, math and literacy for grades 3-11?	☐ OPTIONAL Full-length "Mock" Interim Assessments ☐ Team up with other schools or districts to acquire or develop aligned assessments ☐ Appendix: Additional Tools for Supporting Locally-Developed Interim Assessments
	2. Begin using interim assessments to **set a clear bar for student mastery** by providing educators the assessment upfront as an exemplar that can be used to help identify student proficiency.	☐ Transparency: can teachers see the interim assessments so they can plan a roadmap for teaching & learning? ☐ Where transparency is not an option, have we identified the next best thing we can give them to highlight what student mastery should look like? ☐ Do we have an exemplary set of planning materials that we can use to use as a guide for others?	☐ OPTIONAL Free Online Assessment Platform with TCAP Item Bank and Test Reporting ☐ Join forces with other schools or districts early to get ahead in acquiring strong interim assessments and strong examples of materials that illustrate the standard for student mastery.
District Assessment Calendar and District Assessment Program	1. Create a common district **assessment calendar** that identifies when key district assessments will take place, who/what will be assessed, and when data analysis and action-planning will take place as soon as results are available.	☐ Do we have dates that are they aligned to the sequence of our high-quality instructional materials? ☐ Do we know how we will be able to use them to measure student progress even if we are remote? ☐ Do we have time set aside immediately after each district	☐ Review published summative assessment dates online and add them to your district calendar. ☐ Checklist: One-page District Scorecard to Plan for Data-driven Instruction ☐ Checklist: Steps for Developing a District Assessment Calendar and Systems

2. Clarify key components of **District Assessment plans** and systems.

3. Create a culture around data-driven instruction and the systems and tools that continuously measure student learning.

- ☐ assessment for educators to analyze the results?
- ☐ Do we have systems to get frequent and accurate data of student learning so we can continuously improve?
- ☐ Does the data we collect measure what we hope it measures?
- ☐ How do we build a culture that sees assessment has indispensable to improving outcomes for students?
- ☐ How can we support measuring student learning frequently throughout the year?

- ☐ Template: Worksheet for Effective Interim Assessment Analyses
- ☐ Building a Customized District Assessment Program
- ☐ Checklist: One-page District Scorecard to Plan for Data-driven Instruction
- ☐ Guide: Month-by-Month Guide for District Focus Areas in Using Assessments to Improve Student Learning
- ☐ Example: Testing "Matrix" of District-led Assessments
- ☐ Example: School-level Systems for Data-driven Instruction (flexible for distance learning)
- ☐ Protocol: District Meetings for Focusing on Student Learning (even with distance learning)

Administering District-led Assessments

4. Set up **assessment logistics** for testing schedules that require coordination across classrooms/schools.

5. **Protect time** and schedules for educators to conduct data meetings **to analyze assessment data**

6. Reduce the turnaround from grading and initial analysis with strong **reporting tools**

- ☐ Do we have a plan to administer district-led assessments?
- ☐ Are the assessment logistics focused on helping us use the data? Do they include fast turnaround times for scores and protected analysis times for educators?
- ☐ Do our reporting tools offer the levels of analysis that we need?

- ☐ OPTIONAL Free Online Assessment Platform with TCAP Item Bank and Test Reporting
- ☐ Checklist: 12-Step Leader Checklist for Leading Testing Plans with Testing Coordinators
- ☐ Examples: Condensed Testing Schedules
- ☐ Template: Worksheet for Effective Interim Assessment Analyses

Using District-led Assessments to Save Time and Adjust Instruction

7. Use **deep analysis** to get the most out of assessment results

8. Hold **regular meetings** that prioritize data-driven decisions and planning

- ☐ What should students be learning?
- ☐ Are they learning it?
- ☐ If not, why not?
- ☐ Do we have recurring meetings that make a habit out of using student learning to drive decisions?

- ☐ Turning Assessment Results into Better Instruction with Analysis Conversations
- ☐ Protocol: Assessment Analysis Conversation One-Page Guide

Systems to Support School-led Formative Assessments

9. Make strong **action plans to adjust instruction**, that are precise, efficient, and effective.

☐ Can we remediate this efficiently (in less than 15 min) and effectively (measure student outcomes?

☐ Are action plans precisely targeting the gap identified with strong analysis?

☐ Appendix: Tools to Improve Learning After Analyzing Assessments
☐ Protocol: Assessment Analysis Conversation One-Page Guide

10. Create time and schedules for teachers and leaders to **meet weekly to analyze formative assessment** data and make plans to adjust

☐ Do we have systems to get frequent and accurate data of student learning so we can continuously improve?

☐ Does the data we collect measure what we hope it measures?

☐ Protocol: One-Page Deep Analysis Protocol
☐ Protocol: Assessment Analysis Conversation One-Page Guide

11. Support Teachers/Schools in creating or acquiring **high-quality lesson assessments**, if needed.

☐ Can we measure the learning of each lesson objective?

☐ Do our lesson assessments accurately measure mastery for most of our lessons?

☐ **Are they aligned to standards and to high quality instructional materials?**

☐ Tool: One-Page Criteria for Creating Strong Daily Lesson Assessments
☐ Tool: One-Page Reference for Coaching to Improve Lesson Assessments

Creating a Culture of Growth for Assessments

12. **Track student mastery** over time and provide **reassessment** opportunities
13. Maintaining student **engagement on all formative tasks** whether on-site or remote

☐ How can we encourage student effort and accountability on assessments, even during remote instruction?

☐ Do our lesson assessments accurately measure mastery for most of our lessons?

☐ Are they aligned to standards and to high quality instructional materials?

☐ Guide: Four Ideas for Re-assessing after Re-teaching
☐ Checklist: Measuring Student Learning through Mastery Tracking
☐ Tool: One-Page for Supporting Student Accountability and High Expectations On-site or Remote
☐ Tool: Elementary Example for Encouraging Student Effort during Remote Instruction
☐ Tool: Secondary Example of Encouraging Student Effort during Remote Instruction

III. Best Practices in District Assessment Plans

The key to leading effective use of assessments revolves around creating recurring processes that continually support educators in answering four key questions as they implement high quality materials:

1. What should students be learning?
2. Are they learning it?
3. If not, why not?
4. Now what?

These questions should be asked cyclically as educators make plans for learning using high quality instructional materials, deliver instruction, check to see whether students mastered the content with assessments, identify what key gaps need to be addressed, and adjust plans based on our improved understanding of grade-level content. The key to strong assessment use is to establish systems that become the regular fabric of a district.

*Data-Driven Decisions are a continual **process**, not a moment.*

Key Systems, Skills, and Interactions for Assessing and Improving Student Learning

Each district is unique, so tailoring and customizing plans for leading data-driven instruction will be key. To help with that customization and to support the creation of a self-sustaining and effective system for measuring student learning, here are some systems, skills, and interactions to use.

Systems and Tools	Educator Skills	Key Interactions
• Offer **high quality assessments** that can be shared across schools • Create a system to easily collect and share assessment results • Build a habit for schools to collect copies of assessments and **student examples** for analysis • Implement a simple way for all educators to access and review a scope and sequence, standards, **plans for instruction**, lesson assessments, **exemplar responses**, etc. using high-quality materials • Building in **time for educators to engage in analysis** • **Shared school or classroom structures** dedicated to responding to data • Clear district assessment calendars and tools that set and norm expectations	• **Internalize the lesson** and understand how to measure the learning in each lesson • **Align lessons and assessments to standards** • Conduct effective **student work analyses** • Create **efficient plans** that address instructional gaps • **Emphasize critical pedagogical skills** for a few **high impact remediation** approaches • **Monitoring student learning,** whether present or at a distance • Accessing shared results from reporting tools • **Combine multiple data sources** to inform decisions	• **Professional development** opportunities that develop the needed skills • Clear supportive **plans for smooth administration** of district led assessments • **Recurring** blocks **for teachers and leaders** to meet and **analyze student work** from both formative and interim assessments • Planning and **collaboration time** to make strong adjustments • As needed, opportunities for second-instruction or in-class reteach wthin grade-level content

This toolkit strives to provide resources to aid district leaders to find the tools, resources, or ideas they need to make an assessment plan that is responsive to the district's needs. The following planning resources for a district-wide plan for monitoring student learning all year are included:

Deciding Where to Focus
1. Checklist: One-page District Scorecard to Plan for Data-driven Instruction

District Assessments and Assessment Calendars
2. Checklist: Steps for Developing a District Assessment Calendar and Systems
3. Example: Testing "Matrix" of District-led Assessments

Supports for Executing District Plans
4. Guide: Month-by-Month District Focus Areas in Using Assessments to Improve Student Learning
5. Example: School-level Systems for Data-driven Instruction (flexible for distance learning)
6. Protocol: District Meetings for Student Learning (adaptable to distance learning)

Types of Assessment Referred to in this Toolkit

- Benchmark: Any assessment used to measure proficiency towards grade level expectations at a specific time during the year (e.g., fall, winter, spring).
- Diagnostic: Administered at the beginning of a learning period to provide information about students' knowledge and skills prior to learning. Diagnostics are designed to determine individual strengths and needs. Some diagnostics can be designed to identify the need for intervention (i.e. a Universal Screener) and/or assess prerequisite content for upcoming learning.
- District-led Assessments: Assessments (often interim assessments) where the district has discretion on the selection, creation, and/or administration to drive decisions in response to student learning.
- District Assessment Plan: Describes the collection of assessments and the timeline for administration customized for the district. Together, these assessments should provide summative, formative, diagnostic, and interim data.
- Formative Assessments: The broadest category of assessments, formative assessments are used to adjust instruction to improve student mastery during the learning cycle. These assessments measure student learning throughout the year so educators can determine if students are making progress and how best to adjust instruction. They can be formal or informal and include appropriately aligned classroom tasks. For the purposes of this document, formative may also refer to interim (and benchmark) assessments as well, since these assessments should be used to inform instructional decisions.
- Interim Assessments: These are more formal assessments that occur 3-6 times per year and measure mastery aligned to the standards and summative assessments. These are critical for districts, so they can make informed decisions during the year to improve student learning. Interims are often benchmarks, because they can be used to identify student learning progression relative to what is expected at a given point. A benchmark is a meterstick for checking progress at a given point in time, which may include the beginning of a year or course.
- "Mock TCAP" Interim Assessment: "Mock" Assessments will be complete blueprint-aligned assessments that are fully representative of a TCAP summative assessment, but can be administered earlier in the school year to help adjust instruction by proving an assessment that is more authentic to the standard expectations found in the TCAP assessment. For more information see the section OPTIONAL Full-length "Mock" Interim Assessments.

- <u>"Start of Year Checkpoint"</u>: A free and optional benchmark that can be used at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year to gauge student mastery on key standard-aligned skills that are most essential to access current year standards, as measured through performance on few important transitionary standards from the previous year's content. It is not a replacement for a Universal Screener but could be used in addition to one. For more information on this, see the section OPTIONAL Start of Year "Checkpoint".
- <u>Summative Assessments</u>: Measures student learning at the end of a learning period (i.e. semester/year/course). State-level summative assessments include TCAP and TCAP-Alt assessments. Other summative assessments taken by Tennessee students include postsecondary readiness and entrance exams such as ACT and SAT, and early postsecondary course exams, such as AP, IB, Cambridge, Statewide Dual Credit and Industry Certification exams. Districts can also have summative assessments to measure student learning in other subjects (such as final exams).
- <u>Universal Screener</u>: A universal screener is a brief assessment of academic skills administered to ALL students to determine whether students demonstrate the skills necessary to achieve grade level standards. Universal screening can serve as a benchmark for measuring the improvement of a group, class, grade, school or district and to identify students in need intervention. See the Special Populations Reopening Toolkit and the RTI[2] Framework for more information on these tools.

IV. Free District Resources for Assessing Student Learning

As outlined in our strategic plan *Best for All*, the department is committed to ensuring all Tennessee students will have access to a high-quality education, no matter where they live. This commitment includes providing free, optional, high-quality assessment tools and resources to districts during the 2020-21 school year.

The shifts in our education landscape as a result of COVID-19 have made access to these formative assessment tools *even more important* as schools and districts have faced prolonged, unexpected school closures and are facing unforeseen challenges with academic programming and navigating an uncertain budgetary landscape. Students have missed academic instruction, and it is critical that educators and schools are able to reliably benchmark progress and receive actionable data for the coming school year.

To support districts in addressing these challenges, the department is committed to providing several free, optional tools for the 2020-21 school year, as part of our innovative assessment initiative. Additional information about these optional assessment tools and the formative assessment platform will be released as information is made available. District testing coordinators will receive bi-weekly updates each Monday on progress and formal releases will be included in the weekly *Commissioner's Update for Directors*. If you have additional questions, please contact DT.Support@tn.gov.

OPTIONAL Start of Year "Checkpoint"

This suite of optional assessments will be developed from actual TCAP items and aligned skills found in previous grade/course standards that are ***most essential*** for students to engage in on-grade level content. They primarily focus on key transitionary standards that highlight the most essential skills for accessing content for the current year. They will be available for grades 3-8 and end of course (EOC) in Math and English Language Arts (ELA).[1] These checkpoints are intended to benefit districts looking for information on student performance at the beginning of the year and can supplement (but not replace) district universal screening practices.

- Incoming students could take the optional checkpoint to measure their previous year's learning. This means that a 7th grade student would take the checkpoints that measure 6th grade ELA and math. Their 7th grade teacher(s) would receive detailed student data on standards that more aligned with a **student's readiness to engage** in the content for the year. (Note: checkpoints will not cover every grade-level standard from the previous year. They are not a perfect measure of all a student's needs, but intended to provide relevant information related to prior year mastery so that targeted support could be included in that year's grade-level content instruction.)
- Designed to be administered within a standard class period, these checkpoints will be **aligned** to the Tennessee Academic Standards using actual TCAP items but will be **significantly shorter** than TCAP exams. For even greater flexibility, some of the checkpoints will have modules for administering them across multiple days or for increasing the amount of time students have to complete them, as desired. This will help ensure flexibility for educators and schools.
- Checkpoints will be available to be administered in the mode most convenient for educators, **via paper and online**, increasing flexibility for districts. Multiple scoring options (such as students taking the assessment on the computer, scanning student responses with a camera, or hand-grading answer choices) will be available for educators to quickly receive information without having to wait on anyone else for scoring.

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[1] Science and social studies will not be available for these checkpoints. These tests do not have questions that have been through the standard-setting process and there are not enough questions to create these resources this year.

How to Access Start of Year "Checkpoints"

The department will be providing the checkpoint assessments through the **Formative Assessment Platform**. Districts would need to opt-in to the platform in order to access the assessments in one of the following ways:

- **Option 1: Districts can deploy the platform to all educators and students digitally (recommended)**. This will allow educators to assign specific assessments to their students and give the assessments online. Checkpoints will be automatically scored (except for constructed response essays) and educators will have near immediate access to their students' results.
  - Students with access to appropriate devices will have the ability to log-in and complete assessments at home, at school, or at an alternate location, as determined by the district.
- **Option 2: Districts can deploy the platform to educators, who can log-in and print paper copies** of the assessments. This allows educators to administer assessments without individual student device access and may provide flexibility where technology coordination may be a concern. Educators can use the platform to grade answer documents automatically or may hand-grade with the ***Annotated Assessment Guide***.
- **Option 3**: Districts can deploy the platform centrally in order to download PDF copies of the assessments and **provide paper assessments to educators to administer to students**. In this scenario, educators would be responsible for grading student responses.

All districts will be provided information on how to access the formative assessment platform as soon as implementation of the statewide platform is complete this summer. To ensure your district is receiving the most up-to-date information, please ensure your current district testing coordinator's (DTC) contact information is updated via this survey. DTCs will be receiving information in bi-weekly emails and monthly webinars.

"Checkpoint" Annotated Assessment Guide

Each Checkpoint will have an instructionally focused annotated assessment guide with detailed information about each question and guidance on interpreting students' overall results. The department is currently developing the guides to include:

- **detailed information about each question**, including standards alignment, difficulty, and explanations of correct answer choices.
- **focused explanations of common misconceptions related to student errors** to assist educators in pinpointing and addressing their students' needs from the prior year into grade-level content.
- **guidance on interpreting overall individual results,** which can support conversations with parents and students about standards mastery, goal setting, and student-focused next steps.
- **guidance on interpreting standard-level reporting,** which can assist educators in identifying classroom trends, and identifying whole-group, small-group, or grade-level embedded next steps.
- **instructions for evaluating students' constructed response essays**, including grading rubrics, supporting anchor papers, and guidance on how to interpret overall checkpoint scores with essays.

OPTIONAL Free Formative Assessment Platform w/TCAP Item Bank & Reporting

The department has heard the request from Tennessee teachers desiring a free, optional formative assessment platform that will house formative assessments, start of year checkpoint exams, and **currently released TCAP items**, for easy access by all teachers throughout the year.

- The platform will allow educators to create their own assessments, using Tennessee standards-aligned questions developed expressly for TCAP.
- It will allow for the creation and administration of these assessments via a **printable PDF or an online testing experience.**
- **Online testing will provide automatic grading and reporting capabilities,** and the same look and feel of actual TCAP questions for future online assessments.
- This platform is scheduled to be available in **early August.**

How to Access Free Online Formative Assessment Platform and TCAP Item Bank

All districts will be provided information on how to access the formative assessment platform as soon as implementation of the statewide platform is complete this summer. To ensure your district is receiving the most up-to-date information, please ensure your current district testing coordinator's (DTC) contact information is updated via this survey. DTCs will be receiving information in bi-weekly emails and monthly webinars.

The department will be building the assessment bank from previously released TCAP questions, as they are available, into the formative assessment platform. Educators who have access to the platform will have the ability to search for specific questions via grade level, subject, and standard. When a question is selected, educators will be able to:

- print a PDF copy of the question to administer to students via paper.
- add the question to a locally created classroom assessment which can be printed via PDF and administered to students via paper.
- add the question to a locally created classroom assessment to administer to students online (either at home or at school).
- see detailed information about the question, including difficulty, standard alignment, and correct and incorrect answer rationales and typical student misconceptions and next steps.

Additional Access within the Online Learning Tool

In addition to the formative assessment platform and TCAP item bank, the department will also have sample TCAP questions in the state's online platform, *Best for All* Central (BFA Central). As educators are searching for resources on a given subject area or specific standard, they will be able to see sample TCAP questions aligned to that standard to demonstrate student understanding and mastery. These sample questions will include instructionally supportive annotations including supports to help identify the student conceptual understandings necessary to successfully answer the question or common student misconceptions related to student errors. These annotations will be embedded within the standards-aligned content and resources, such as sample lessons, activities, and student work. More information about the *Best for All* Central (BFA Central) will be released prior to the start of the school year.

OPTIONAL Full-length "Mock" Interim Assessments (IA)

To update and improve upon our previously released practice assessments, the Mock Interim Assessments will be complete blueprint-aligned assessments that will **mirror the current TCAP summative assessments**, as well as provide accurate scaled scores and performance bands that will **estimate** each student's performance[2]. Yielding much better information for educators than a practice exam, these assessments are

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[2] Authentic scale scores will be available for Math and ELA. Social studies and science will be available in future years, after the standard setting process has occurred.

scheduled to be available **by the end of the fall semester** (mid-semester for EOC courses) for optional administration to students as a mid-year or spring checkpoint.

- The Mock IAs will be based on a previous year's TCAP test[3], allowing the state to provide immediate results without the need for shipping documents to an external vendor for scoring.
- They will be developed to be identical to an actual TCAP administration, providing a more authentic practice testing experience for students prior to a summative exam.
- Like all free and optional innovative assessments provided by the state for this school year, the IA will be able to be administered via paper <u>or</u> online, increasing flexibility for districts.
- The online assessment will have the same look and feel as the TCAP. This can provide students with valuable practice for possible future online testing.
- To support instruction, each item will be released with full item analysis to assist educators in pinpointing student misconceptions within standards to support efficient re-teaching, review, or remediation.

How to Access Mock Interim Assessments

The department will be providing the interim assessments through the **Formative Assessment Platform** in the same format and deliveries as described in the section <u>How to Access Start of Year "Checkpoints"</u>. As listed above, all districts will be provided information on how to access the formative assessment platform as soon as implementation of the statewide platform is complete this summer. To ensure your district is receiving the most up-to-date information, please ensure your current district testing coordinator's (DTC) contact information is updated <u>via this survey</u>. DTCs will be receiving information in bi-weekly emails and monthly webinars.

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[3] Score interpretation for Sci and SS will be provided and mock interims will be based on modifications to current practice assessments.

V. Process for Leading Assessment Administration

Checklist: 12-Step Management of Testing Plans and Testing Coordinators

This is a checklist for supervisors of DTC/BTCs when reviewing assessment logistics plans: these principles hold true for assessing student learning that requires coordination across an entire school or district. This is particularly helpful if a district or school needs to use a modified or new testing schedule to accommodate unusual circumstances, whether for a Start of Year Checkpoint, district interim or formative assessments, coordinated distance learning assessments, or summative tests like TCAP. The key to using this checklist is to complete these 12 steps with the testing coordinator at least one month in advance of any test requiring coordination across classrooms or schools. This will provide adequate time to troubleshoot and provide advanced communication for teachers and families to plan. Meetings using this checklist with your coordinator should recur to match the needs of the district and/or school testing calendars.

1) **Assessment Calendar**: Identify which assessments are to be delivered and make sure the plan includes any needed additional assessments, as appropriate (e.g. for alternative testers, English language learners). If this is for practice or mock exams, does it align with the instructional calendar (i.e. check to see if there are other assessments also occurring during nearby dates like ACT)?
     a.   If YES, move on.
     b.   If no, solve right now.

2) **Space and People**: Number of testing groups, rooms, proctors, and administrators are adequate to accommodate a safe and secure testing environment for students and teachers. This should be compliant with any district social distancing policy. (For TCAP tests, ask for the context for any home school and virtual school testers, as well as adjusted rooms for accommodations.) If assessments are being administer via distance learning, does the plan still provide students with needed accommodations? *Recommendation: if uncertain as to whether technology can deliver required accommodations, provide on-site testing for students who need them.*
     a.   If YES, move on.
     b.   If no, solve right now.

3) **Materials and Systems**: Are there sufficient computers for online testing, calculators, scratch paper, etc. for the kind of test you are administering (e.g. math, science, online)? If students will be sharing resources (like rotating computers or desks), are there procedures for cleaning these resources between use? If this test is going to be administered live but through distance learning (e.g. virtually from students' homes), are there enough devices and people to help support students? Depending on the assessment, is the level of test security appropriate for the test being administered?
     a.   If YES, move on.
     b.   If no, stop.

4) **Data-driven Actions**: [*This step is specifically for non-summative assessments during the school year, e.g. interim assessments.*] How will assessments be collected, graded, reported (e.g. graded through the state-provided formative assessment platform, hand-scored) so scoring and reporting with have a short turnaround so educators can effectively use the data? Do teachers and leaders have protected time immediately after results are available to perform high-quality analysis of student work and create strong plans for instruction?
     a.   If YES, move on.
     b.   If no, solve now.

5) **Prioritizing Learning**: Effects on non-testing students (if any). How will plan this affect learning and instruction for those students who aren't testing? If the plan for the non-testers ensures quality learning, then move on. (Remember to ask what feedback has been received from teachers towards preserving learning. Includes draft of schedule).
   a. If YES, move on.
   b. If no, make sure the vision is communicated (then either solve or delegate solving to another). Remember to run the non-tester plan past some teacher leaders for their input.

6) **Proctors and Testing Roles**: Assignments for proctoring and administering are have people strategically assigned to proctoring during testing that is motivating to testing students, ensures safety and sanitation, and maintains strong learning for non-testers.) If this assessment is allowed to be taken from home, are there still sufficient staff to allow on-site testing for students who need accommodations? Consider all types of testers, including home school, virtual school students, and students who may need different schedules (such as extended time) and accommodations.
   a. If YES, then move on.
   b. If no, solve right now, or delegate another to solve.

7) **Assessment Schedule**: When adjusting school-level schedules, do the times assigned match the needs of non-tester learners and testers alike? Do the times accommodate for extra time for transitions that might include sanitation, social distancing, and other student needs?
   a. If YES, then move on.
   b. If no, stop. (You may choose if you want to help the BTC solve or if they are to solve the issues later and bring them back to you.)

8) **School Operational Needs**: Other administration and non-instructional logistics (nutrition, meals, emergencies, supplies, copies, bus timing, etc.). Consider all types of testers, including home school, virtual school students, and students who may need different schedules (such as extended time) and accommodations. Are all students considered with your current logistics plan?
   a. If YES, move on.
   b. If no, stop. (Choose if you want to help the BTC solve or if they are to solve and bring plans back later.)

9) **Make-up testing:** Repeat steps 1-7 for any make-up testing scenarios that would require coordination.
   a. If make-up testing plan meets above criteria, move on.
   b. If no, delegate to come back with a plan. End meeting.

10) **Student Clarity:** What are we doing to ensure that students will be able to know where to go and what to do without any confusion? (Where/when do I go? what do I do? What do I need? What do I need to know?) Note: Running a benchmark exactly how you run your TCAP administrations is one way to help avoid these issues on the date of a summative assessment. This step is critical when there is testing via distance if no proctor will be able to assist with logging-on, starting/stopping, accessing resources, etc. For using platforms during remote testing, it is best for students to practice independently using the platform on-site where they can get feedback and support before using the tool remotely.
   a. If YES, then move on.
   b. If no, delegate to come back with a plan.

11) **Staff Testing Instructions:** Will communication ensure implementation without any confusion for school staff? (Do I have clear logistics document that communicate where to go, what to do?) Are they all clear on post-testing logistics (turning in materials, cleaning rooms, etc.)? Does the plan include cafeteria and operations staff? Review the communication plan (modes of communication, documents, emails, etc.). *This communication needs to be sent to educators with as much advanced notice as possible, because it will affect how teachers plan*.
   a. If YES, move on.
   b. If no, delegate to come back with a plan. End meeting.

12) **Family Testing Communication:** Will communication with families provide them with the information they need to understand their role with assessment? Do they have a document with clear, concise, and relevant information? Do families have any responsibilities (e.g. sending students with materials)? Note: it is typically not fair to assume that all parents are available to support distance testing, so two-way communication with families and explicit support is a must for any non-staff responsibilities. Review the communication plan (documents, emails, modes of communication, etc.).
   a. If YES, move on.
   b. If no, delegate to come back with a plan. End meeting.

Examples: Condensed Testing Schedules

Below are high level views of possible condensed testing schedules, if a full TCAP testing or Mock Interim testing time needed to occur in only one week, with and without social distancing. Districts and schools may have to adjust based on their building needs, social distancing practices, and type of assessment being offered. Obviously, these kinds of consolidations depend on steps 1-3 in the testing plan checklist.

Example Condensed, Full TCAP testing schedule (without social distancing)

	Morning	Afternoon
Monday	ELA (all tests): Subparts 1 and 2	ELA (all tests): Subparts 3 and 4
Tuesday	Math (all tests): all subparts	Make-up (ELA)
Wednesday	Science (all tests): all subparts	Make-up (ELA, Math)
Thursday	Social Studies (all tests): all subparts	Make-up (all tests)
Friday	Make-up (all tests)	Make-up (all tests)

Example Condensed, Full TCAP testing schedule (with social distancing of 50% capacity)

	Morning (half of the students)	Afternoon (half of the students)
Monday	ELA (all tests): Subparts 1 and 2	ELA (all tests): Subparts 1 and 2
Tuesday	ELA (all tests): Subparts 3 and 4	ELA (all tests): Subparts 3 and 4
Wednesday	Math (all tests): all subparts	Math (all tests): all subparts
Thursday	Science (all tests): all subparts	Science (all tests): all subparts
Friday	Social Studies (all tests): all subparts	Social Studies (all tests): all subparts
Monday	Retests	Retests
Tuesday	Retests	Retests

Guide: Considerations for District-wide or School-wide Testing Coordination

- **Making room:** Space for small group administrations and other assessments will be key. These kinds of measures may take some creative problem solving (e.g. using the principal's office), especially as there are social distancing or other district safety and facility policies.
- **"All Hands on Deck":** Training district staff to support testing can help when an entire district has had closures and more people are needed. Find information on training test administrators and building testing coordinators on the department's LiveBinder website under "Training." Test Security and Accommodations trainings are available virtually and can be administered to your staff on a schedule that works for your district.
- **Conflicts:** Be wary of conflicts with other tests: ACT/SAT, AP, IB, Cambridge, etc. High schools may need to move their testing to align with other testing needs.
- **Online Testing Special Notes**: If technology is not available 1:1 for student/device:
  - ELA grades 3-5 can all be done in one morning or afternoon, if needed
  - Other ELA tests can be spread across two days, but your make-up times will be limited to afternoons (or, in some cases, Saturday)
- **Stick to Best Practices**: Always follow the checklists found in the DTC and BTC guides and go over plans with supervisor (see the Best Practices section for a walk-through of things to consider when making modified or adjusted testing schedules).

VI. Protocols to Turn Assessment into Better Learning with Analysis Convos

Sample Protocol: One-Page Deep Analysis Checklist

Once we've measured student learning, figuring out what do to is key. This protocol works for extracting the most information from any assessment, any question. A full meeting protocol can be found on the next page.

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(1) CREATE OR ACCESS THE EXEMPLARY RESPONSE

We need to know and **see what strong mastery looks like _before we analyze_**. There are examples that can be found in the Online Academic Tool.

- **Open Ended Questions**
  - o Write an exemplar student response
  - o From this, we can create criteria for mastery.
- **Multiple Choice Questions**
  - o What are all the steps students need to be able to take to select the correct answer?

(2) IDENTIFY THE GAP IN STUDENT WORK

Use the exemplar to ID the breakdown in learning. What are the gaps? When/ how/ why did they occur? Assessment Guides can also help here. We want to look for the following trends…

- **Open Ended questions**
  - o What are the most common student errors as a whole class?
  - o What is the gap between the exemplar response high, middle, and low students?
- **Multiple Choice Questions:**
  - o <u>Same-standard questions</u>:
    - ▪ In multiple questions assessing the same standard, did students do significantly better on some questions than on others? What do the differences suggest about student misunderstanding?
  - o <u>Individual questions (item analysis)</u>:
    - ▪ Did most students all choose the same wrong answer? Why or why not? What misunderstanding(s) is/are revealed in their wrong answer choice? Where did student mastery break down?

(3) THREE QUICK STEPS ID THE HIGHEST-IMPACT STUDENT MISCONCEPTION FOR FASTER REMEDIATION

1. To **find the highest-leverage error trend**, <u>compare the frequency of each student error</u>, prioritizing the trends on the "almost there/medium" student work, and clearly state the error.
2. To **unpack the conceptual misunderstanding** that led to the most important error, analyze the student work or responses that show the error and <u>answer these questions in order</u>:
   A. What **DO** the students understand?
   B. Based on what students do understand, why might a student think their error was a reasonable choice?
   C. What specific concept, if they had understood it clearly, would have made them recognize that the error was a bad approach?
3. Put it all together to **check your thinking** by <u>restating the answers</u> to each of the three questions to articulate this sentence stem:

"Students understood [**question A**] but made the error of [**student error**], because they thought [**question B**] made sense. If they had understood [**question C**], they would have avoided the error."

Now you're ready to consider: _What is the key action step the <u>teacher</u> should take to <u>remediate</u>?_

Sample Protocol: One-Page Assessment Analysis Conversation Guide

	Preparation is Needed for Strong Analysis
Prepare Prior to Analysis	□ Where the assessment is available beforehand, **take the assessment yourself**, weeks beforehand in order to have an **exemplar** and answer key ready • Creating <u>criteria for mastery</u> from an exemplar is critical for open-ended questions • *Pro Tip*: It is best to predict what you think students' mastery and struggles will be before seeing their results: this preparation will help you be more insightful and reflective. • *Pro Tip*: On challenging problems note what students need to understand and do to get the problem correct and have this exemplar with you as you analyze. □ **Collect assessments with student work** on them for analysis, immediately prior to analyzing • *Pro Tip*: Simplify your time by finding representative samples of high/medium/low student work. 3-4 of each group of students can reduce the amount of time spent looking at work.
	See the High-Level and High Points
Share Outcomes and Successes	□ Sort results **by mastery** of standards or skills • Note any standards that are most core to the content and how many questions per standard • *Pro Tip*: Keep this list visible when you are reflecting or planning remediation and review □ **Identify and analyze** the standards where the students performed the strongest • Get as <u>specific</u> as possible about what the students did (and didn't) master • Get as specific as possible about <u>what instruction contributed to those results</u> • Plan a future <u>review</u> the mastered content to increase durability of the learning • *Pro tip*: if the question(s) don't assess the breadth of the standard, make sure you do!
	Discover the Gaps and What Made them
Go Deep to Analyze Causes of Gaps	□ **Identify and analyze** the standards where remediation will be required to get them to mastery • Compare errors to exemplar/key and identify <u>most common errors and trends</u> • For multiple questions of a standard, check for differences in <u>mastery across questions</u> • *Pro Tip*: Check if performance on some standards affect each other standards □ Identify the student **misunderstandings that explain WHY** students made the error identified • From looking at the trends and <u>student work</u>, get specific by being clear to **separate** what students DO understand from what they DON'T within each item • *Pro Tip*: Identify the clear understanding that they would need to avoid misunderstanding □ **Connect specific-teacher actions** connected to the misunderstanding (*non-diagnostic tests*) • <u>Reflect on the design of the lessons</u>: Were lesson objectives specific and measurable? Did practice and assessment align with the objective? • <u>Reflect on the implementation of the lessons</u>: did my pacing allow me to adjust for real-time misconceptions? Did I clearly present the material and engage all learners? Did I check for understanding throughout the lessons?
	Plan your Adjustments to Instruction
Plan Solutions and Update Calendars	□ Select **instructional solutions that close the gaps** & spiral content into instructional calendar • Solutions have <u>WHAT, WHEN, & HOW</u> and align to the gaps, woven into instructional calendar • *Pro Tip*: <u>Modeling</u> and <u>Guided Discourse</u> are very efficient and effective group remediation methods—commit to becoming a master at them and save lots of time planning later on □ **Put the plan into your active instructional calendar** • <u>Remediation</u> (content not mastered) & <u>Review</u> (content mastered) are both found in plans • *Pro Tip*: compare upcoming objectives w/assessed standards for remediation & review spiral.

	• *Pro Tip*: use recurring, efficient review structures (e.g. Oral Drill, "Pepper" in *Teach Like a Champion 2.0*), to become a more efficient planner and effective at making learning durable.
	Plan for Highest Priority Students
Remediate Individuals	□ Look first for <u>trends and common misconceptions</u> by sorting either by performance or by standard: it is much more efficient to remediate small groups than it is to remediate individuals. □ For individual students, <u>set and track goals</u> for mastery to reduce the perceived size of the gap □ Follow **Outcome-Cause-Solution analysis**, where solutions should have **WHAT, WHEN, & HOW** • *Pro Tip*: Partner with other teachers and interventionists to rally around students' needs

Appendix: Tools for District Plans for Assessing and Responding to Learning

Checklist: Steps for Developing a District Assessment Calendar and Systems

This list of steps can support the creation of calendars to support a district vision for high quality assessment use to drive improvements in student learning. These steps help to ensure that a plan for district-led testing can be communicated before the school year starts.

1. Summative test dates for TCAP and other year-end testing—AP, ACT, etc.: Find Tennessee's <u>2020-21 Calendar Online</u>

2. District-led Interim assessments (IAs)
   a. Count total number of instructional weeks from start of school to end of year summative tests
   b. Divide that number by 8 and by 5 to estimate dates for district assessments
   c. Counting 6-9 weeks select dates for district assessments
   d. Adjust the exact dates in alignment with high-quality instructional material scopes & sequences

3. Other District-led assessments, as applicable
   a. For example, if a district is using the same pacing guides for grades and subjects, sometimes there are shared formative assessments.

4. For each district assessment, add the following events around that date:
   a. One week after: analysis meetings and re-teach plans in place
   b. Two weeks after: teachers preview upcoming assessments (add this at the beginning of the year as well for the first assessments)

5. District-selected and District-led Professional Development dates
   a. PD to set district vision and practices on using assessment to drive instruction. This is the kickoff PD for all leaders.
   b. Targeted PD to support teachers' analysis needs (e.g content-specific deep dives) and leaders' assessment analysis needs (e.g. facilitating analysis meetings, etc.). This should be scheduled after each assessment cycle and is included within the district professional development calendar.

For more ideas for a year-at-a-glance areas of focus see the <u>Guide: Month-by-Month District Focus Areas in Using Assessments to Improve Student Learning</u> for ideas and

Sample Guide: Month-by-Month District Focus Areas in Using Assessments to Improve Student Learning

This monthly guide is a tool for district academic officers and principal supervisors that can help to focus the work of setting a strong vision for measuring student learning. The order is more important than the month, for districts who may be ahead or behind these general areas.

Month	DISTRICT-level Focus & Question	Aligned Actions for DISTRICTS	SCHOOL-level Focus & Guiding Question	Aligned Actions for SCHOOLS
June/ July	Set Assessments and Calendar: "Are we setting schools to succeed in measuring student learning?"	*Develop District Assessing and Analyzing Calendar (with time for district assessments, analysis, remediation, and professional development) and acquire/revise/develop district interim assessments*	Vision for Instruction: "Do all leaders have a shared vision for excellent instruction?"	*Prepare school vision for student mastery and instruction with all school leaders.* *Identify how distance learning and assessing would take place if needed.*
Aug	Train on District-led expectations: "Can teachers and leaders meet the district vision for measuring student learning?"	*Offer district professional development to set the vision and district-led practices around assessing and analyzing student learning*	Quality Assessments of Learning for Each Lesson: "Can educators accurately explain all the criteria for student mastery?"	*Leaders should work to ensure that students have the opportunity to demonstrate mastery with quality lesson assessments that teachers can quickly look over.* *Expectations for lesson planning, internalization, and rehearsal must be set.*
Sept	Set the Bar for Mastery: "Have schools seen the our bar for student mastery?"	*The first district interim/unit assessments (or the closest proxy) have been finalized and seen by the teachers (for transparency) so that they can plan for mastery.* *Review Testing Logistics plans with Coordinators.*	Set the Bar for Student Work Quality and Mastery: "Have the leader and teacher normed the criteria for high student mastery?"	*Ensure that teachers have the support they need to have 1) quality lesson assessment exemplars, 2) student outputs that meet grade level expectations, 3) accurate feedback to students.*

Month	DISTRICT-level Focus & Question	Aligned Actions for DISTRICTS	SCHOOL-level Focus & Guiding Question	Aligned Actions for SCHOOLS
Oct	Culture of Growth around District Assessments: "Are teachers and leaders effectively responding to student work?"	*Offer district interim assessments.* *Leaders are trained to be able to hold effective assessment analysis meetings (with the actual assessments present) and teachers have time and capacity to analyze and improve instruction.* *Partner schools or with external schools or districts to collaborate and analyze student work.*	Culture of Growth for District Assessments: "Can teachers and leaders precisely identify trends in errors in student work?"	*Rollout and Lead Student Work Analysis Meetings:* *• Set Expectations: Introduce the structure and purpose of student work analysis meeting meetings and necessary prep.* *• Create Time: Create opportunities to increase time for leader & teacher prep, coaching, collaboration, planning, and norming around student work.*
Nov	Evidence of Analysis: "Is there evidence that folks are working to meet district vision for assessment analysis and action after the first district assessment?"	*Check and provide feedback around analysis, plans, and any opportunities for reassessing mastery.* *Make sure teachers have access to the next district assessment, and that regular student work analysis meetings are on-going.*	Deepen Analysis of Student Work: "Can teachers and leaders identify errors and then precisely articulate the conceptual misunderstandings that explain student error trends and plan precise remediating to fix and practice the correct understanding?"	*Ensure all teacher have access to expertly facilitated meetings that dive into assessment results, lead by an instructional leader.*
Dec	District-level Data: "Do we have the data on student mastery we need to plan for the next year?"	*Administer district assessments.* *Ensure there is a streamlined method for schools to submit mastery data that propels effective planning for teachers' upcoming until, school leaders' upcoming quarter, and district's upcoming school year.*	Adjusting Instruction for Students: "Do teachers incorporate regular remediation and review into their lessons?"	*Teachers have received support and development in creating on-going remediation & review plans, 2) modeling, 3) guided discourse*

Month	DISTRICT-level Focus & Question	Aligned Actions for DISTRICTS	SCHOOL-level Focus & Guiding Question	Aligned Actions for SCHOOLS
Jan	Instructional Adjustments: "Is there evidence that instruction is being adjusted to meet students' needs?"	*Administer district assessments. Check and provide feedback around analysis, plans, and any opportunities for reassessing mastery.* *Make sure teachers have access to the next district assessment.*	Hone the Skills needed to Adjust Instruction: "Are adjustments to instruction having their intended impact of greater student mastery?"	*Ensure remediation and review plans begin with identifying the specific misconception trends to be more efficient and effective in planning. Ensure these remediation plans revolve around student practice: more important than what we do is what the students do.* *Reassess to track & praise the progress.*
Feb	Strengthening Adjustment to Instruction: "Is there evidence that instructional adjustments are working?"	*Maintain vision and expectations set for regular assessment analysis, and check measures of student learning, especially reassessment of previous content.*	Empowerment by Measuring Trends: "Can students & teachers articulate where they are on track to meet goals and where they need to adjust?"	*Maintain Culture of Positive Urgency: emphasize tracking of student learning and celebrating progress in student mastery and looking for opportunities to celebrate struggling students' progress*
March	Keep the Culture: "Are educators seeing the impact of the vision and keeping momentum in our assessment practices?"	*Maintain vision and expectations set for regular assessment analysis, and check measures of student learning, especially reassessment of previous content.*	Shorten the Feedback Loop for Students: Do all students have an opportunity to get to mastery of the content during first instruction?	*Get Very Precise on the Student Gap to Close when analyzing student work: staff can clearly and accurately state the specific concept needed to close gaps in conceptual misunderstanding.*
April	Supports for Student Learning: "What can the district team do to support closing any remaining gaps for students to be ready for the next year?"	*Find opportunities to support additional learning needs for schools who may have learning gaps that they have been unable to close.*	Closing Student Gaps: "Do adjustments to instructional opportunities close gaps in students' cumulative learning?"	*All Hands on Deck as leaders and all staff work strategically to close remaining student gaps with teachers, model, and/or increase impact with priority teachers. This might include strong teachers, whose students are already on track, supporting students in classes where there may be more learning gaps.*

Month	DISTRICT-level Focus & Question	Aligned Actions for DISTRICTS	SCHOOL-level Focus & Guiding Question	Aligned Actions for SCHOOLS
May	Authentic Exams: "How can we set up our summative assessments to get the most accurate measure of student learning?"	*Execute End of Year Summative Exams.*	Reflection and Reset: "Did students, teachers, and leaders achieve their goals?"	*Execute End of Year Summative Exams.*

Definitions: Helpful Assessment Terminology

These definitions are for supporting new district leaders who may be managing testing coordinators or district testing programs.

a. Administration ("Administration") – Time period in which an Assessment is given.

b. Building Testing Coordinator ("BTC") - Person responsible for test administrations in a specific school.

c. Constructed Response ("CR") - Questions that are open-ended that require the students to write their answers (such as a short-answer or essay prompt).

d. Distractor Rationale ("Distractor Rationale") – A 1-2 sentence explanation of the misconception represented by the distractor and/or the reason why a student may have selected the distractor rather than the correct response. A distractor is an incorrect response option in a selected response Item.

e. District Testing Coordinator ("DTC") - Person responsible for test administrations in a district, oversees building testing coordinators.

f. Equating ("Equating") – A technical procedure or process conducted to establish comparable scores on different versions of a test.

g. Item(s) ("Item"/"Items") – Test questions; may include constructed response, performance tasks, and/or selected response.

h. Item Bank ("Item Bank") – Test question repository and/or archive.

i. Multiple choice ("MC") - Test questions with multiple answer choices where students' select responses

j. Passages ("Passages") – Pieces of text or texts other than what is contained within an Item required to answer an Item correctly.

k. Prompt ("Prompt") – Text that defines the topic for a student's writing. The different modes of writing assessed may include but not be limited to: narrative, expository, informational, explanatory, analytic, opinion, and/or argument.

l. Reliable/Reliability ("Reliable"/ "Reliability")– Reliability refers to the consistency with which a tool classifies students from one administration to the next. It is the degree to which the scores are dependable, stable, and free of errors of measurement which may include inter-rater reliability, internal consistency of standard and total scores, decision consistency, and generalizability estimates of standard errors. A tool is considered reliable if it produces the same results when administering the test under different conditions, at different times, or using different forms of the test. The process of making assessments more reliable across students and contexts is called "standardization", and tests that are fully reliable are called "standardized."

m. Reporting Category ("Reporting Category") – Divisions of the academic standards used in reporting student performance on the Assessments (the State will work with the Contractor in defining these categories).

n. Scale Score ("Scale Score") - A numerical score, based upon the number of Items a student correctly answers, which summarizes the overall level of performance attained by the student. The reported scaled scores are obtained by statistically adjusting and converting raw scores onto a common scale to account for differences in difficulty across different forms

o. Valid/Validity ("Valid"/ "Validity") – Validity refers to the extent to which a tool accurately measures the underlying construct that it is intended to measure. The degree to which evidence and theory support the interpretations of test scores entailed by the proposed uses of tests, including comparability and equivalence across Test Forms and Test Versions and matching to test blueprints and Item specifications.