



**Using Interim Assessments
to Appropriately Measure
What Students with
Disabilities Know and
Can Do: Advisory Panel
Takeaways and NCEO
Recommendations**

NCEO Report 427



NCEO

National Center on
Educational Outcome:

Using Interim Assessments to Appropriately Measure What Students with Disabilities Know and Can Do: Advisory Panel Takeaways and NCEO Recommendations

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May 2021

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Lazarus, S. S., Hinkle, A. R., Liu, K. K., Thurlow, M. L., & Ressa, V. A. (2021). *Using interim assessments to appropriately measure what students with disabilities know and can do: Advisory panel takeaways and NCEO recommendations* (NCEO Report 427). National Center on Educational Outcomes.



The Center is supported through Cooperative Agreements (#H326G160001) with the Research to Practice Division, Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education. The Center is affiliated with the Institute on Community Integration at the College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota. The contents of this report were developed under the Cooperative Agreement from the U.S. Department of Education, but does not necessarily represent the policy or opinions of the U.S. Department of Education or Offices within it. Readers should not assume endorsement by the federal government.



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Executive Summary

The National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) held a virtual meeting of an Interim Assessment Advisory Panel in February, 2021 to identify issues and make recommendations for state departments of education about how to enable all students with disabilities, including students with the most significant cognitive disabilities and English learners with disabilities, to participate in interim assessments in ways that yield valid inferences about what they know and can do. Advisors noted concerns and gaps about current interim assessments and their uses, suggested what should be, and proposed practical considerations for a better interim assessment system for each of five areas: (a) Participation; (b) Accessibility; (c) Role of academic standards; (d) Technical issues; and (e) Data use, interpretation, and reporting.

Based on the advisors' discussions, NCEO proposed seven recommendations for states and districts that use (or are considering use of) interim assessments.

- **Obtain data on the participation of students with disabilities in interim assessments, and develop a plan for analyzing those data.** It is essential to examine participation rates and discuss these in ways that inform decision making.
- **Provide high-quality alternate interim assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.** For alternate interim assessments to be worthy of administering, it is vital that they are high-quality assessments that measure what they are intended to measure, provide meaningful and useful data, and are engaging to the student.
- **Provide a wide range of accessibility features and accommodations, including accommodations for students with sensory disabilities (e.g., braille, graphic organizers, sign language interpretation, etc.) and English learners with disabilities (e.g., glossaries, translations, etc.).** Students with disabilities, including those with sensory disabilities and English learners with disabilities, need to be able to access interim assessments in ways that allow them to meaningfully show what they know and can do.
- **Provide guidance on the provision of accessibility and accommodations.** State education agencies (SEAs) and local education agencies (LEAs) need to engage with vendors to develop guidance and policies on accessibility and accommodations.
- **Provide transparency on the degree of alignment (or lack of alignment) to grade-level academic content standards of both general and alternate interim assessments.** Documentation of the alignment of the assessment to grade-level academic content standards should be publicly provided. Requests for proposals (RFPs) and requests for information (RFIs) should require vendors to show how general and alternate interim assessments map onto a state's grade-level academic content standards.

- **Provide documentation and evidence that interim assessments are properly designed to evoke the intended cognitive processes when administered to students with disabilities.** Documentation and validity evidence (e.g., think alouds, cognitive labs) should be provided to confirm that students with disabilities are demonstrating the assessments' intended cognitive processes.
- **Provide publicly available guidance on the appropriate and inappropriate uses of data in formats that meet the needs of intended audiences.** Guides and reports that are created should consider the needs of intended audiences (e.g., district and school leaders, teachers, policymakers, parents, and families). Appropriate and inappropriate purposes and uses of data from each interim assessment should be publicly documented.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	iii
Overview.....	1
Background Information.....	1
Process	2
Structure of this Report.....	3
Summary of Advisory Panel Members’ Discussion and Takeaways.....	4
Participation.....	4
Accessibility.....	6
Role of Academic Standards.....	9
Technical Issues	10
Data Use, Interpretation, and Reporting	13
Recommendations.....	15
Conclusions.....	17
References.....	18
Appendix A: Interim Assessment Advisory Panel Meeting Participants	19
Appendix B: Meeting Agenda	21
Appendix C: Breakout Group Facilitator Guide.....	25
Appendix D: Proceedings Summary.....	31

Overview

The National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) held a virtual meeting of an Interim Assessment Advisory Panel on February 16 and 17, 2021 to tap into the panel members' collective knowledge about using interim assessments to support valid interpretations of what students with disabilities know and can do. The Interim Assessment Advisory Panel was composed of individuals with expertise in interim assessments and students with disabilities. They represented psychometricians, researchers knowledgeable about students with disabilities, state education agency (SEA) assessment and special education leaders, local education agency (LEA) leaders, and parents. See Appendix A for a list of the advisors, as well as a list of other meeting participants.

In this report, **interim assessments** refer to assessments that are administered several times during a school year to measure student progress. They may be commercially produced or developed by groups of states or other organizations. Other terms that are sometimes used to describe these assessments are local assessments, district assessments, and even formative assessments (although interim assessments rarely provide formative information).

The meeting purpose was to develop and disseminate guidance to state departments of education on how to enable all students with disabilities, including students with the most significant cognitive disabilities and English learners with disabilities, to participate in interim assessments in ways that yield valid inferences of what they know and can do. A specific goal of the meeting was to have the advisors discuss the issues related to this purpose. NCEO believed that these discussions would lead to the identification of current gaps or issues, suggestions for what should be, practical considerations, and some recommendations for policies and practices. Takeaways from the meeting and recommendations created by NCEO could inform state departments of education in their efforts to support improved measurement of what students with disabilities know and can do. Guidance from states can, in turn, inform decisions of districts and Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams, and ultimately improve the measurement of student outcomes.

Background Information

Interim assessments are used for a variety of purposes. Some of these include:

- To measure growth or progress
- For instructional decision making
- To predict summative assessment performance

- To measure whether a student meets a grade-level goal

Additionally, widespread interest is expressed by states and districts about the possible use of interim assessments to measure learning losses that may have resulted because of COVID-19 school closures and inconsistent distance learning. Some states also are interested in potentially using either commercially-produced or state-developed interim assessments as a replacement or supplement to state tests used for accountability during this and other times. However, little attention has been given to how to include some students with disabilities in these assessments in ways that produce valid results and support valid interpretations of those results. Further, there are federal requirements that all state- and district-wide administrations of an assessment must have an alternate assessment, so states that adopt interim assessments will need to implement approaches that are appropriate for students who participate in their alternate assessments.

Because there is so much interest in using interim assessments, there is an urgent need for guidance to support states and districts as they make decisions about the use of interim assessments to measure progress of students with disabilities as well as to inform instruction, predict performance, and measure learning loss. The Interim Assessment Advisory Panel discussions summarized in this report were to help NCEO develop recommendations for states. The recommendations will also benefit those states that already use some form of interim assessments to measure progress as part of the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs’ Results-Driven Accountability (RDA) system.

Process

Fourteen advisors participated in the meeting. Additionally, six NCEO staff members, five NCEO partners, and three consultants attended the meeting. NCEO staff, partners, and consultants gave presentations that provided background information, facilitated advisor discussions, and provided meeting support. Seven participants from the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) attended the meeting as well.

To prepare for this meeting NCEO supported a scan of the interim assessment landscape. It focused on the publicly available documentation supporting the appropriateness of these assessments for students with disabilities (Boyer & Landl, 2021). It also compiled information about how interim assessments were being used by states for OSEP RDA accountability (Lazarus et al., 2021). These sets of information were shared with advisory panel members prior to the meeting.

The Interim Assessment Advisory Panel Meeting was held for five hours on each of two days (see meeting agenda in Appendix B). The first day of the meeting alternated between presenta-

tions and breakout discussions. (The Facilitator Guide for the breakout sessions is provided in Appendix C). Advisors considered the needs of three groups of students throughout the meeting: students with disabilities in general, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and English learners with disabilities.

During the second day of the meeting, facilitators supported the advisors as they discussed the issues and created takeaways. Using the meeting takeaways, NCEO developed a set of recommendations for states.

NCEO provided advisors with a framework to help organize their thinking about interim assessments for students with disabilities (including those with sensory disabilities), students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and English learners with disabilities. The five components of the framework, and the general question for each component were:

- Participation: *How can we better understand current interim assessment participation practices?*
- Accessibility: *How can we better understand current accessibility policies and decision-making processes?*
- Role of Academic Standards: *What are the standards-based issues that need to be considered when using interim assessments to measure what students with disabilities know and can do?*
- Technical Issues: *What are the technical issues that need to be considered when using interim assessments to measure what students with disabilities know and can do?*
- Interpretation and Use of Data: *What needs to be considered for the interpretation and use of data for students with disabilities from interim assessment?*

After the meeting, NCEO summarized the advisors' comments and then sent them back out to the advisors to review and suggest revisions. Based on this summary, NCEO produced a draft of this report, which advisors also reviewed before publication.

Structure of this Report

This report summarizes both the overview information provided to meeting participants and the advisors' discussions in the form of takeaways. NCEO staff developed summaries of the presentations from notes taken during the presentations and from the presenters' slides (see Appendix D for a summary of the proceedings). NCEO also developed summaries of the facilitated discussions from notes taken by note takers. These are reflected in the next section of

this report. The advisors were encouraged by a facilitator to comment and discuss freely, with assurances from NCEO that the final report would not attribute any particular comment to any specific advisor. This led to frank and open conversations.

Summary of Advisory Panel Members' Discussion and Takeaways

Interim Assessment Advisory Panel members expressed concerns about the quality of interim assessments and their use. They were concerned that many of the commercially available interim assessments had incomplete evidence to support the validity of their intended interpretations and uses. This led some advisors to question whether students with disabilities should be included in them, and whether an alternate assessment should be developed for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Despite these concerns, the discussion during the meeting focused on the five topics in recognition of federal requirements for the inclusion of all students with disabilities in state and districtwide assessments, either in the general assessment, with or without accommodations, or in an alternate assessment.

This section first presents the legal background that framed the advisors' discussion about each of the five components of the framework. This is followed by a summary of the advisors' discussion. The discussion summary for each component is organized into three parts: (a) Current Concerns or Gaps; (b) What Should Be; and (c) Practical Considerations for a Better System.

Participation

Federal laws require that all children with disabilities be included in all state and districtwide administrations of interim assessments. This includes students who need appropriate accommodations to participate in the general assessment and students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who may need an alternate assessment, as well as English learners with disabilities. Regulations for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) state:

A State must ensure that all children with disabilities are included in all general State and district-wide assessment programs, including assessments described under section 1111 of the ESEA, 20 U.S.C. 6311, with appropriate accommodations and alternate assessments, if necessary, as indicated in their respective IEPs. (Sec. 300.160(a))

If an interim assessment is used for federal accountability, the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), reauthorized in 2015 as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), also apply. ESSA requires the inclusion of all students in assessments used for accountability (Sec. 1111(2)(B)(i)(II)). For English learners with disabilities, participation requirements

are reinforced by several civil rights laws and court cases (e.g., Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, *Lau v. Nichols*, 414 U.S. 563 (1974)).

Advisors identified several current concerns or gaps, what should be, and practical considerations for a better system.

Participation—Current Concerns or Gaps

- Many students with disabilities may be excluded from interim assessments, especially students with sensory disabilities, due to insufficient accessibility features and accommodations.
- There is a lack of public data on the participation of students with disabilities in interim assessments.
- There are no known alternate interim assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.
- If students with disabilities are excluded from interim assessments, the resulting data will not be representative of all students.
- If some students with disabilities are excluded from interim assessments the data may be less useful for many purposes (e.g., measuring progress, instructional decision making, accountability, etc.).
- Students with disabilities are more likely to be excluded from interim assessments, and thus may be disproportionately denied access to classes or courses that use such assessments to determine eligibility for enrollment.

Participation—What Should Be

- All students with disabilities should be able to participate in interim assessments with needed accessibility features and accommodations.
- Alternate assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities should be available for all state or districtwide assessments.

Participation—Practical Considerations for a Better System

- All state and districtwide administrations of interim assessment should include both a general interim assessment with appropriate accessibility features and accommodations, and

an alternate interim assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to access the general assessment even with accommodations.

- SEAs and LEAs should examine their current participation data (in terms of numbers and percentages) to identify the degree to which groups of students with disabilities (e.g., English learners) are excluded from interim assessments. Students who take the state’s alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS) and who also participate in existing interim assessments should be identified.
- Because commercially-provided interim assessments are in widespread use, requests for proposals (RFPs) and requests for information (RFIs) should require interim assessment vendors to provide participation data to the public, including information about participation by student subgroups (e.g., students with disabilities, by category of disability, and if possible, English learners with disabilities, students who take the assessment with accommodations, etc.).
- SEAs and LEAs should ask vendors to provide an alternate assessment, or should develop one, for any state or districtwide assessment to meet IDEA requirements.
- SEAs and LEAs should work with vendors to merge state or district and vendor files in a way that will allow for ongoing documentation of participation in interim assessments.
- SEAs and LEAs should communicate with stakeholders (e.g., educators, parents) and professional organizations (e.g., AERA special interest group on inclusion and accessibility in educational assessments) about why it is important for students with disabilities to participate in interim assessments across multiple vendors and platforms. This may include providing evidence of the benefits to students of participating meaningfully in the assessments (e.g., for instructional decision making, measuring progress, access to services for which decisions are based on interim assessment, etc.).
- SEAs and LEAs should consider providing resources to educators to help support meaningful measurement practices for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

Accessibility

Federal law requires that states (or in the case of districtwide assessments, LEAs) develop accommodations guidelines that address the provision of appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities. According to IDEA regulations:

- (1) A State (or, in the case of a district-wide assessment, an LEA) must develop guidelines for the provision of appropriate accommodations.

(2) The State’s (or, in the case of a district-wide assessment, the LEA’s) guidelines must—

- (i) Identify only those accommodations for each assessment that do not invalidate the score; and
- (ii) Instruct IEP Teams to select, for each assessment, only those accommodations that do not invalidate the score. (Sec. 300.160(b))

If an interim assessment is used for federal accountability, ESSA requirements would also apply. ESSA requires that states make appropriate accommodations available and ensure that their assessments are accessible to students with disabilities (Sec. 1111(2)(B)(vii)(II)).

Advisors identified several current concerns or gaps, what should be, and practical considerations for a better system.

Accessibility—Current Concerns or Gaps

- Accessibility features and accommodations used by some students during instruction are not available for many interim assessments (e.g., braille, large print, text-to-speech, etc.).
- Often there is a lack of clarity about interim assessment accessibility and accommodations policies.
- Vendor approaches to accessibility and accommodations vary, which can lead to inconsistent availability of accessibility features across LEAs.
- There is a lack of clarity about who is responsible for developing accessibility and accommodations policies for interim assessments. For example, LEAs may have their own policies, which may or may not align with vendor recommendations or state policies.
- From the perspective of LEAs and vendors, the costs associated with making assessments accessible and providing alternate forms (e.g., braille, large print, translations) may seem to outweigh the benefits.

Accessibility—What Should Be

- High-quality assessments should be accessible to all students, including (but not limited to) students with sensory disabilities, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and English learners with disabilities.
- Universal design for assessment (UDA) principles should be used to develop interim assessments so that there is little need for retrofitting.

- Validity studies that investigate the appropriateness of accessibility features and accommodations should be conducted and documented by interim assessment vendors.
- Interim assessment accessibility features and accommodations should not differ significantly across LEAs.
- Interim assessments should have a publicly available accessibility policy.
- Educators and IEP teams should receive clear information about accessibility and accommodation policies for interim assessments from SEAs, LEAs, and vendors so educators and IEP teams are not making decisions on the fly.

Accessibility—Practical Considerations for a Better System

- RFPs and RFIs should require interim assessment vendors to provide clear evidence that a wide range of accessibility features and accommodations are available. They should also require vendors to provide evidence that available accessibility features and accommodations support valid results and interpretations for the purposes for which the interim assessments will be used. These accessibility features and accommodations should be appropriate and effective for meeting individual student needs, and allow for meaningful and valid interpretations and uses of the results and scores.
- RFPs and RFIs should require application of UDA principles in all stages of the assessment design and development processes. They should also require vendors to provide empirical evidence of how UDA principles have been applied.
- RFPs and RFIs should require vendors to implement accessibility standards that are compliant with Section 508 of the federal Rehabilitation Act (e.g., Web Content Accessibility Guidelines [WCAG]) in their interim assessments.
- SEAs, LEAs, and vendors should provide guidance and training for educators, including those in preservice programs, on selecting, implementing, and evaluating assessment accessibility features.
- SEAs and LEAs should provide guidance to IEP teams on making accessibility decisions for interim assessments.

Role of Academic Standards

Federal laws require that all children with disabilities have the opportunity to learn grade-level academic content. This includes students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who may need an alternate assessment, and English learners with disabilities.

According to IDEA, all students with disabilities must have meaningful access to content aligned with the State’s academic content standards for the grade in which the child is enrolled.¹ ESSA also requires that students with disabilities participate in academic instruction and assessments for the grade level in which the student is enrolled, and are tested based on challenging State academic standards for the grade level in which the student is enrolled (Sec. 1111(2)(B)(ii)).

Some interim assessments may not be aligned to a state’s grade-level academic content standards. The purpose for which an assessment is being used affects whether it needs to be aligned to grade-level standards. If the intent is to determine whether students are learning grade-level academic content, the interim assessment should be aligned to the standards.

Advisors identified several current concerns or gaps, what should be, and practical considerations for a better system.

Role of Academic Standards—Current Concerns or Gaps

- It cannot be assumed that SEA and LEA leaders understand the challenges involved in adequately aligning interim assessments to the academic content standards students are taught.
- Data from interim assessments are sometimes used for purposes that go beyond the purposes for which the assessment was designed.
- Correlation of some interim assessments with some constructs of importance is not the same as alignment to the standards. The failure to provide well-aligned measures diminishes the value of interim assessments.
- Stakeholders need clarity on the role of academic content standards when an interim assessment is used for screening purposes.

¹<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/guidance-on-fape-11-17-2015.pdf>

Role of Academic Standards—What Should Be

- SEAs and LEAs should clearly understand the purpose for which they will use an interim assessment, and vendors should provide evidence that the assessment selected is designed and technically adequate for that purpose.
- Vendors should be required to make the degree of alignment (or lack of alignment) to grade-level academic content standards transparent for both general and alternate interim assessments. Ideally, alignment evidence would come from an independent source following established standards for professional practice.

Role of Academic Standards—Practical Considerations for a Better System

- Both general and alternate interim assessments should include measures that are aligned to grade-level academic content standards and coherent with curriculum and instruction.
- SEA and LEA staff who select assessments need to have a good understanding of how standards, instruction, and assessment all work together.
- RFPs and RFIs should require vendors to show how both general and alternate interim assessments map onto state grade-level content standards, as well as correlations between performance on the interim assessment and performance on state standards-based assessments, if the purpose of the interim assessment is prediction.
- SEAs and LEAs should consider providing resources (e.g., trainings and support) to help improve the link between teaching, learning, and assessment.

Technical Issues

The U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) conducts peer reviews of states’ assessments used for accountability. According to [*A State’s Guide to the U.S. Department of Education’s Assessment Peer Review Process*](#) (U.S. Department of Education, 2018):

The purpose of the Department’s peer review of State assessment systems is to support States in meeting statutory and regulatory requirements under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), for implementing valid and reliable State assessment systems. Under sections 1111(a)(4) and 1111(b)(2)(B)(iii)-(iv) of the ESEA and 34 CFR § 200.2(b)(4) and (5) and (d), the Department has an obligation to conduct a peer review of the technical quality of State assessment systems implemented under section 1111(b)(2) of

the ESEA. Assessment peer review is the process through which a State demonstrates the technical soundness of its assessment system. A State's success with its assessment peer review begins and hinges on the steps the State takes to develop and implement a technically sound State assessment system. (p. 4)

The federal peer review process is used for state summative assessments used for accountability. The peer review process results in assessments that are technically stronger. Historically there has sometimes been less emphasis on the technical soundness of interim assessments, but as they increase in profile and are used for new purposes, there is recognition that it is important to consider technical issues for these assessments. Frequently cited evidence of technical adequacy includes item statistics, reliability and measurement error, differential item functioning, factor analysis, linking and equating, and correlation studies. Particular attention needs to be given to validity evidence for interim assessments.

Test scores should have the same meaning for a student with disabilities as they do for other students. In order to draw valid inferences from an assessment, it is important that an assessment produce valid interpretations for the purpose of the assessment. The fairness and equity of an assessment, the comparability of different forms (including alternate formats such as braille), the appropriateness and effect of various accessibility features and accommodations, and other issues related to the validity of score interpretations and uses all merit evaluation and documentation.

Advisors identified several current concerns or gaps, what should be, and practical considerations for a better system.

Technical Issues—Current Concerns or Gaps

- There are sometimes gaps between the claims vendors make about the validity of using their interim assessments for measuring what students with disabilities know and can do, and existing documentation.
- Students with disabilities often are not included in studies that are conducted to provide information about the technical characteristics of an assessment, including the validity of score interpretations and uses.
- Interim assessment data are sometimes misused to attribute gains in performance to mastery of the standards-based content from year to year.

Technical Issues—What Should Be

- The needs of students with disabilities should be considered at the beginning and throughout the assessment design and development process, improving the extent to which all students can access the assessment tool.
- Validity studies that include students with disabilities should be conducted.
- Vendors should be required to show that their assessments are properly designed to evoke the intended cognitive processes when administered with the use of the appropriate accessibility features or accommodations.
- The assessment development process (e.g., item development, pilots, field testing, reviews, etc.) should be made more transparent and presented in appropriate formats so educators know and can communicate the trustworthiness of the assessment, including how accessibility features were addressed during the development process. Validity evidence for the accessibility features should be documented and made publicly available.

Technical Issues—Practical Considerations for a Better System

- Interim assessment vendors should use the [*Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*](#) (AERA/APA/NCME, 2014) when developing assessments and providing evidence of technical adequacy and validity.
- The needs of students with disabilities, including (but not limited to) students with sensory disabilities, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and English learners with disabilities, should be considered throughout the interim assessment development process.
- SEA and LEA RFPs and RFIs should require vendors to provide detailed information about the technical elements of the interim assessments they are considering purchasing, including evidence (e.g., via the use of think alouds or cognitive labs) that the assessments are eliciting performance on the intended constructs from students with disabilities, including (but not limited to) students with sensory disabilities, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and English learners with disabilities. Detailed information on the technical and validity elements of alternate interim assessments should also be required.
- Public confidence in interim assessments can be improved with transparency. Knowledge of the assessment development processes would allow SEAs and LEAs to communicate with stakeholders about the validity of assessment results, interpretations, and uses, the reliability of scores, and the assessment and the accessibility features and accommodations options available for groups of students with disabilities.

Data Use, Interpretation, and Reporting

Data from interim assessments are used for many purposes, and have both intended and unintended consequences. When using assessment data, considerations include context, data quality, intended purpose, data limitations, and consequences. If there is public reporting of interim assessment data, data also need to be reported for students with disabilities.

IDEA requires that if a state or a district publicly reports assessment data for students without disabilities, then it must report assessment data for students with disabilities to the public with the same frequency and in the same detail. This includes reporting on participation and performance in regular and alternate assessments, as well as the number of students participating with accommodations. A state is eligible for IDEA funding only if it provides assurances to the Department of Education that it takes the following steps:

(D) REPORTS.—The State educational agency (or, in the case of a districtwide assessment, the local educational agency) makes available to the public, and reports to the public with the same frequency and in the same detail as it reports on the assessment of nondisabled children the following:

(i) The number of children with disabilities participating in regular assessments, and the number of those children who were provided accommodations in order to participate in those assessments.

(ii) The number of children with disabilities participating in alternate assessments described in subparagraph (C)(ii)(I).

(iii) The number of children with disabilities participating in alternate assessments described in subparagraph (C)(ii)(II).

(iv) The performance of children with disabilities on regular assessments and on alternate assessments (if the number of children with disabilities participating in those assessments is sufficient to yield statistically reliable information and reporting that information will not reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student), compared with the achievement of all children, including children with disabilities, on those assessments. (20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(16))

Advisors identified several current concerns or gaps, what should be, and practical considerations for a better system.

Data Use, Interpretation, and Reporting—Current Concerns or Gaps

- Data from interim assessments are sometimes used for purposes for which they were not intended to be used.
- Stakeholders (e.g., LEAs, school-based staff, parents, IEP teams) are often unaware of data limitations and contextual factors when using interim assessment data for decision-making purposes.
- Although some interim assessments may be accurate at predicting performance on summative assessments for most students, those with disabilities are often excluded from the assessment development process. These students are often excluded from participating in the assessments due to lack of accessibility. Also, some students with disabilities are included in interim assessments, but due to lack of appropriate accessibility features and accommodations or alternate assessment, their test results are not a valid measure of what they know and can do and are not accurate at predicting performance on summative assessments.
- SEA staff often are unable to provide accurate guidance to stakeholders about the use of interim assessment data because of the wide variety of interim assessments from which LEAs can choose.
- Interim assessment data often are used to draw conclusions across multiple interim assessments without attention to differences in scales, number of achievement levels, and the labels used for those achievement levels.
- Vendors and LEAs sometimes link their interim data to statewide summative data even though this may not be appropriate.

Data Use, Interpretation, and Reporting—What Should Be

- Vendors must be clear about and publicly document the limitations of interim assessment data, as well as the appropriate purposes and uses of data from each assessment. They must publicly document inappropriate uses and discourage the use of data in unintended or inappropriate ways.
- SEAs, LEAs, and vendors should routinely include information about data limitations and contextual factors in reports.
- SEAs and LEAs should adopt policies that require the use of multiple pieces of evidence when making high-stakes decisions.

Data Use, Interpretation, and Reporting—Practical Considerations for a Better System

- Test users (e.g., SEAs, LEAs) and vendors should engage in purposeful coordination and collaboration to ensure appropriate data use, interpretation, and reporting.
- SEAs, LEAs, and vendors can build confidence in interim assessment score reports by including information about both the appropriate and inappropriate interpretations and uses of the reported data as well as data limitations, and by showing they used a thoughtful, deliberate process for developing the reports.
- Vendors should provide guides to understanding assessment results to educators, families, and other stakeholders. Interpretation guides and other materials should use language appropriate for the intended audience.
- SEAs should post resources on their website that show how interim assessments fit into the larger assessment system.

Recommendations

Based on takeaways from the Interim Assessment Advisory Panel discussions, NCEO proposes the following recommendations for states and districts that use (or are considering use of) interim assessments.

- **Obtain data on the participation of students with disabilities in interim assessments, and develop a plan for analyzing those data.** Currently, limited data are publicly available on the participation of students in interim assessments. It is essential to examine participation rates and discuss these in ways that inform decision making. States and districts should learn more about the participation of students with disabilities in interim assessments. Questions to ask include: Are some students with disabilities excluded from interim assessments (e.g., students with IEPs; students in separate settings, etc.)? Are students in some disability categories less likely to be included in interim assessments (e.g., students with visual impairments or blindness, students who are deaf or hard of hearing, etc.)? Are results used appropriately for students included in interim assessments?
- **Provide high-quality alternate interim assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.** Federal laws require that there be alternate assessments for all state and districtwide interim assessments. For these alternate assessments to be worthy of administering, it is vital that they are high-quality assessments that measure what they are intended to measure, provide meaningful and useful data, and are engaging to the student. See *Alternate Interim Assessments for Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities*

(Browder et al., 2021) for additional information about alternate interim assessments, and processes that could be used to develop them.

- **Provide a wide range of accessibility features and accommodations, including accommodations for students with sensory disabilities (e.g., braille, graphic organizers, sign language interpretation, etc.) and English learners with disabilities (e.g., glossaries, translations, etc.).** Students with disabilities, including those with sensory disabilities and English learners with disabilities, need to be able to access interim assessments in ways that allow them to meaningfully show what they know and can do.
- **Provide guidance on the provision of accessibility and accommodations.** SEAs and LEAs need to engage with vendors to develop guidance and policies on accessibility and accommodations.
- **Provide transparency on the degree of alignment (or lack of alignment) to grade-level academic content standards of both general and alternate interim assessments.** Documentation of the alignment of the assessment to grade-level content standards should be publicly provided. This will assist potential users in making decisions about whether an assessment is appropriate for a given purpose, as well as increase public confidence. RFPs and RFIs should require vendors to show how general and alternate interim assessments map onto state grade-level content standards, as well as correlations between performance on the interim assessment and performance on state standards-based assessments if they are used for predictive purposes.
- **Provide documentation and evidence that interim assessments are properly designed to evoke the intended cognitive processes when administered to students with disabilities.** Documentation and validity evidence (e.g., think alouds, cognitive labs) should be provided as evidence that students with disabilities, including (but not limited to) students with sensory disabilities, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and English learners with disabilities, are demonstrating the assessments' intended cognitive processes.
- **Provide publicly available guidance on the appropriate and inappropriate uses of data in formats that meet the needs of intended audiences.** The limitations of interim assessment data should be publicly documented, as well as the appropriate and inappropriate purposes and uses of data from each assessment. This information should discourage the use of data in unintended or inappropriate ways. Guides and reports that are created should consider the needs of intended audiences (e.g., district and school leaders, teachers, policymakers, parents, and families).

Conclusions

There is widespread interest in using interim assessments for many purposes, including using them for instructional decision making, to monitor progress, to measure learning loss, and to predict success on a summative test. These assessments are currently used as part of OSEP's RDA accountability system. Many State Systemic Improvement Plans (SSIPs) include interim assessments either as the State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR) or as a measure of progress in the evaluation plan. Some states are also interested in using interim assessments as a replacement or supplement to summative tests used for ESSA accountability.

Federal laws require that all state and districtwide interim assessment administrations include an alternate assessment, yet there currently are no alternate interim assessments. Federal laws also require that accommodations be provided for students with disabilities who need them, but many interim assessments do not offer a full range of accommodations, especially those that would enable students with sensory impairments to participate in the assessment. There is often a lack of transparency about whether an interim assessment is aligned to grade-level academic content standards, as well as whether these assessments are properly designed to elicit the intended constructs and cognitive processes when administered to students with disabilities.

More work is needed to ensure that interim assessments provide valid information on what students with disabilities know and can do. Because so many states and districts use interim assessments—and more are considering using them—there is an urgent need for validity evidence for each of their uses and additional guidance on how states can effectively use and implement these assessments and provide training for districts and schools.

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Appendix A

Interim Assessment Advisory Panel Meeting Participants

Advisory Panel Members

<p>Alison Bailey Professor and Division Head Human Development and Psychology University of California – Los Angeles</p>	<p>Trinell Bowman Associate Superintendent for Special Education Prince George’s County Public Schools (Maryland)</p>
<p>Derek Briggs Professor and Chair Research and Evaluation Methodology Program University of Colorado</p>	<p>Diane Browder Professor Emeritus University of North Carolina at Charlotte</p>
<p>Stephanie Cawthon Professor and Strategic Advisor (former director) National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes University of Texas at Austin</p>	<p>Chris Domaleski Associate Director National Center for the Improvement of Education Assessment (Center for Assessment, NCIEA)</p>
<p>John Eisenberg Executive Director National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE)</p>	<p>Jody Fields Director IDEA Data & Research Part B Data Manager DESE Special Education University of Arkansas at Little Rock</p>
<p>Lynn Fuchs Professor Department of Special Education Vanderbilt University</p>	<p>Suzanne Lane Professor Educational Measurement and Statistics University of Pittsburgh</p>
<p>Eloise Pasachoff Professor and Associate Dean Georgetown University Law Center</p>	<p>Ricki Sabia Senior Education Policy Advisor National Down Syndrome Congress (NDSC)</p>
<p>Vince Verges Assistant Deputy Commissioner Division of Accountability, Research and Measurement Florida Department of Education</p>	<p>Markay Winston Assistant Superintendent (Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment) Monroe County Community Schools (Indiana)</p>

NCEO Staff

<p>Andrew Hinkle Education Program Manager</p>	<p>Sheryl Lazarus Director, NCEO</p>
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Kristin Liu Assistant Director, NCEO	Chris Rogers Research Fellow
Kathy Strunk Education Program Specialist	Martha Thurlow Senior Research Associate

NCEO Partners

Fen Chou Program Director Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)	Susan Hayes Senior Program Associate Special Education Policy & Practice WestEd
Bill Huennekens Associate Director AEM	Kate Nagle Senior Program Associate Special Education Policy & Practice WestEd
Carol Seay Technical Assistance Provider AEM	

Consultants

Michelle Boyer Senior Associate Center for Assessment (NCIEA)	Erika Landl Senior Associate Center for Assessment (NCIEA)
Rachel Quenemoen Consultant	

U.S. Department of Education

David Egnor Project Officer Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)	Susan Kirlin Monitoring & State Support (MSIP) Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)
Donald Peasley School Support & Accountability (SSA) Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE)	Christine Pilgrim Monitoring & State Support (MSIP) Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)
Angela Tanner-Dean Monitoring & State Support (MSIP) Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)	Susan Weigert Research to Practice Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)
Jennifer Wolfsheimer Monitoring & State Support (MSIP) Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)	

Appendix B

Meeting Agenda

Interim Assessment Advisory Panel Meeting

Agenda

February 16-17, 2021

Tuesday, February 16

11:00-noon	Welcome and Opening Remarks Sheryl Lazarus (Director, NCEO) David Egnor (Project Officer, OSEP) Christine Pilgrim (MSIP, OSEP) Donald Peasley (OESE) Everyone
noon – 12:15	Meeting Overview Sheryl Lazarus (NCEO)
12:15- 12:30	Meeting Processes and Specific Areas that Need to be Considered to Ensure that Interim Assessments Yield Valid Inferences About What Students with Disabilities Know and Can Do <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participation• Accessibility• Role of standards• Technical Issues (e.g., reliability, validity, fairness, comparability, aggregation across multiple interim assessments, etc.)• Interpretation and use of data Rachel Quenemoen Sheryl Lazarus
12:30- 12:40	Break
12:40 – 1:00	How Students with Disabilities are Included in Interim Assessments Erika Landl and Michelle Boyer (NCIEA)
1:00 – 1:10	Process for Breakout Discussion Rachel Quenemoen
1:10 – 2:10	Advisor Discussion (Breakout Groups)
2:10 - 2:20	Break

2:20 – 2:50	OSEP Results Driven Accountability, State Systemic Improvement Plans (SSIPs), and Assessment-related State Identified Measurable Results Susan Hayes, Kate Nagle, and Sheryl Lazarus
2:50-3:50	Advisor Sharing (Breakout Groups)
3:50-4:00	Summary of Day Sheryl Lazarus

Wednesday, February 17

11:00-11:05	Reflections on Day 1 Sheryl Lazarus
11:10-11:15	Process for Developing Recommendations, and Introduction to Notes Rachel Quenemoen
11:15-noon	Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Notes • Suggestions for Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ESSA accountability and use by states and districts ○ IDEA SSIPs/SIMRs <p><i>Facilitated by Rachel Quenemoen</i></p>
noon – 12:45	Accessibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Notes • Suggestions for Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ESSA accountability and use by states and districts ○ IDEA SSIPs/SIMRs <p><i>Facilitated by Rachel Quenemoen</i></p>
12:45-12:55	Break
12:55-1:45	Role of Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Notes • Suggestions for Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ESSA accountability and use by states and districts ○ IDEA SSIPs/SIMRs <p><i>Facilitated by Rachel Quenemoen</i></p>

<p>1:45-2:30</p>	<p><i>Technical Issues (e.g., Reliability, Validity, Fairness, Comparability, Aggregation Across Multiple Interim Assessments, Etc.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Notes • Suggestions for Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ESSA accountability and use by states and districts ○ IDEA SSIPs/SIMRs <p><i>Facilitated by Rachel Quenemoen</i></p>
<p>2:30-2:40</p>	<p>Break</p>
<p>2:40 –3:25</p>	<p><i>Interpretation and Use of Data</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Notes • Suggestions for Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ESSA accountability and use by states and districts ○ IDEA SSIPs/SIMRs <p><i>Facilitated by Rachel Quenemoen</i></p>
<p>3:25-3:40</p>	<p>Other Suggestions for Recommendation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Notes • Suggestions for Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ESSA accountability and use by states and districts ○ IDEA SSIPs/SIMRs <p><i>Facilitated by Rachel Quenemoen</i></p>
<p>3:40-3:50</p>	<p>Next Steps Sheryl Lazarus</p>

Interim Assessment Advisory Panel

Breakout Group Facilitator Guide

February 16, 2021

Facilitation Notes for the Breakout Group Sessions

Breakout Session Process Set-up

1:00 - 1:10: Rachel Quenemoen shares process for breakout discussion.

Rachel will provide specific details about how the breakout will work, including logistics, time, etc.

Some ground rules for sharing with the group include:

1. Non-advisory participants (NCEO/OESE/OSEP/NCIEA) are generally observers only. However, they may be called upon by the facilitator to clarify or provide supporting information if necessary.
2. Participants will follow standard expectations for group work.
 - o All will be heard
 - o Be respectful
 - o Agree to disagree and move on
 - o Have a parking lot for tangential issues

Materials for each breakout:

- Participants should have all reports/presentations at hand for reference
- Two note takers per breakout session. Each will use the note taker template.
- Panel members will receive a link to a Google doc with the 5 topics outlined via email.

Breakout Session #1

How Students with Disabilities are Included in Interim Assessments (1:10 – 2:10)

1:10 – 1:15: Welcome the Advisory Panel members.

Time is very limited and members have already introduced themselves. Facilitator should politely move group into discussion quickly.

“Welcome everyone. We hope you found the presentation and report informative and useful. There is a lot for us to discuss and our time is limited so let’s jump into it. As Rachel explained, we have two note takers taking notes for us. Advisory panel members should feel free to add any comments to the chat. We’ve also sent panel members a link to a template in Google Docs. If you choose, you can also write your thoughts in the Google doc while we are having our discussion.”

1:15 – 1:25: Participation

- After reviewing the How Students with Disabilities are Included in Interim Assessments report and hearing their presentation, what are your observations about student participation in interim assessments? (Note to facilitator: Delete similar question from subsequent topics if there is not time to address all other bullet points.)
- To what extent are there groups of students excluded in current interim assessments?
- What are the specific considerations for:
 - o Students with disabilities in general?
 - o Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?
 - o English learners with disabilities?

- How does purpose affect considerations for participation?
- What suggestions do you have for recommendations for participation?

1:25 – 1:35: Accessibility

- After reviewing the How Students with Disabilities are Included in Interim Assessments report and hearing their presentation, what are your observations about student accessibility on interim assessments?
- To what extent are there limitations to current accessibility policies and decision-making processes?
- What are the specific considerations for:
 - Students with disabilities in general?
 - Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?
 - English learners with disabilities?
- How does purpose affect considerations for accessibility?
- What suggestions do you have for recommendations for accessibility?

1:35 – 1:45: Role of Standards

- After reviewing the How Students with Disabilities are Included in Interim Assessments report and hearing their presentation, what are your observations about role of standards on interim assessments?
- What are the standards-based issues that need to be considered when using interim assessments to measure what students with disabilities know and can do?
- What are the specific considerations for:
 - Students with disabilities in general?
 - Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?
 - English learners with disabilities?
- How does purpose affect considerations for the role of standards?
- What suggestions do you have for recommendations for the role of standards?

1:45 – 1:55: Technical Issues

- After reviewing the How Students with Disabilities are Included in Interim Assessments report and hearing their presentation, what are your observations about technical issues on interim assessments?
- What are the technical issues that need to be considered when using interim assessments to measure what students with disabilities know and can do?
- What are the specific considerations for:
 - Students with disabilities in general?
 - Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?
 - English learners with disabilities?
- How does purpose affect technical considerations?
- What suggestions do you have for recommendations for technical considerations?

1:55 – 2:05: Interpretation and Use of Data

- After reviewing the How Students with Disabilities are Included in Interim Assessments report and hearing their presentation, what are your observations about the interpretation and use of data on interim assessments?
- What needs to be considered for the interpretation and use of data for students with disabilities from interim assessment?
- What are the specific considerations for:
 - Students with disabilities in general?
 - Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?

- English learners with disabilities?
- How does purpose affect the interpretation and use of data?
- What suggestions do you have for recommendations for the interpretation and use of data?

2:05 – 2:10: Last Thoughts

- After listening to this discussion, do you have any last thoughts or considerations you would like to share that this group has not discussed?

Breakout Session #2

OSEP Results Driven Accountability, State Systemic Improvement Plans (SSIPs), and Assessment-related State Identified Measurable Results (2:50 – 3:50)

2:50 – 2:55: Welcome back the Advisory Panel members.

Time is very limited and members have already introduced themselves. Facilitator should politely move group into discussion quickly.

“Welcome back everyone. We hope you found the second presentation and report informative and useful. As we saw from the first break-out session there is a lot for us to discuss and our time is limited so let’s jump into it. We have our two note takers taking notes for us again. You should also have the note-taking template again so you can follow along. Advisory panel members should feel free to add any comments to the chat. We’ve also sent panel members a link to a template in Google Docs. If you choose, you can also write your thoughts in the Google doc while we are having our discussion.”

2:55 – 3:05: Participation

- After reviewing the OSEP Results Driven Accountability, State Systemic Improvement Plans (SSIPs), and Assessment-related State Identified Measurable Results report and hearing the presentation, what are your observations about student participation in interim assessments?
- To what extent are there groups of students excluded in current interim assessments?
- What are the specific considerations for:
 - Students with disabilities in general?
 - Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?
 - English learners with disabilities?
- How does purpose affect considerations for participation?
- What suggestions do you have for recommendations for participation?

3:05 – 3:15: Accessibility

- After reviewing the OSEP Results Driven Accountability, State Systemic Improvement Plans (SSIPs), and Assessment-related State Identified Measurable Results report and hearing the presentation, what are your observations about accessibility in interim assessments?
- To what extent are there limitations to current accessibility policies and decision-making processes?
- What are the specific considerations for:
 - Students with disabilities in general?
 - Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?
 - English learners with disabilities?

- How does purpose affect considerations for accessibility?
- What suggestions do you have for recommendations for accessibility?

3:15 – 3:25: Role of Standards

- After reviewing the OSEP Results Driven Accountability, State Systemic Improvement Plans (SSIPs), and Assessment-related State Identified Measurable Results report and hearing the presentation, what are your observations about the role of standards in interim assessments?
- What are the standards-based issues that need to be considered when using interim assessments to measure what students with disabilities know and can do?
- What are the specific considerations for:
 - Students with disabilities in general?
 - Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?
 - English learners with disabilities?
- How does purpose affect considerations for the role of standards?
- What suggestions do you have for recommendations the role of standards?

3:25 – 3:35: Technical Issues

- After reviewing the OSEP Results Driven Accountability, State Systemic Improvement Plans (SSIPs), and Assessment-related State Identified Measurable Results report and hearing the presentation, what are your observations about technical issues in interim assessments?
- What are the technical issues that need to be considered when using interim assessments to measure what students with disabilities know and can do?
- What are the specific considerations for:
 - Students with disabilities in general?
 - Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?
 - English learners with disabilities?
- How does purpose affect technical considerations?
- What suggestions do you have for recommendations for technical considerations?

3:35 – 3:45: Interpretation and Use of Data

- After reviewing the OSEP Results Driven Accountability, State Systemic Improvement Plans (SSIPs), and Assessment-related State Identified Measurable Results report and hearing the presentation, what are your observations about the interpretation and use of data in interim assessments?
- What needs to be considered for the interpretation and use of data for students with disabilities from interim assessment?
- What are the specific considerations for:
 - Students with disabilities in general?
 - Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?
 - English learners with disabilities?
- How does purpose affect the interpretation and use of data?
- What suggestions do you have for recommendations for the interpretation and use of data?

3:45 – 3:50: Last Thoughts

- After listening to this discussion, do you have any last thoughts or considerations you would like to share that this group has not discussed?

Appendix D

Proceedings Summary

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting opened with welcomes and introductions. Sheryl Lazarus, NCEO director, David Egnor, OSEP project officer, Christine Pilgrim, MSIP, and Donald Peasley, OESE, welcomed all to the virtual meeting. Following a high-level overview of the meeting and its purpose, Rachel Quenemoen, consultant, provided a brief history of inclusive assessment. Among the points made during the opening were:

- There is considerable interest in using interim assessments to measure progress of students with disabilities as well as inform instruction, predict performance, and measure learning loss.
- The meeting results potentially have implications for OSEP and OESE accountability systems.
- Guidance is needed on how to enable all students with disabilities, including students with the most significant cognitive disabilities and English learners with disabilities, to participate in interim assessments in ways that support valid inferences about what they know and can do.
- Guidance could support measurement of what students with disabilities know and can do, which can inform state, district, and IEP team decision making, and ultimately improve student outcomes.

A framework was presented to help organize advisor thinking about interim assessments. It included five areas: (a) Participation, (b) Accessibility, (c) Role of Standards, (d) Technical Issues, and (e) Interpretation and Use of Data.¹ This framework was not meant to constrain thinking or contributions.

Two presentations provided background information for advisors. After each presentation, advisors broke into two groups for facilitated discussions. Note takers compiled notes from the breakout sessions so that the advisors could review them overnight in preparation for Day 2 of the meeting. Non-advisors in the breakout sessions were to be observers only, unless they were asked by the facilitator to clarify or provide supporting information. Discussions were summarized in a set of takeaways that addressed current concerns or gaps, what should be, and practical considerations for a better system. The two presentations are summarized here.

Presentation 1. Interim Assessment Practices

Michelle Boyer and Erika Landl from the National Center for the Improvement for Educational Assessment (Center for Assessment) provided a presentation on interim

¹ Following the panel meeting, “Interpretation and Use of Data” was revised to “Data Use, Interpretation, and Reporting” to better reflect the panel members’ discussion of this component of the framework.

assessment practices. They noted that traditionally interim assessment data have been used by teachers and students to support classroom learning. LEAs also have used aggregated results from these assessments to support administrative policy. More recently, emerging from the disrupted schooling that occurred as a result of the pandemic, interim assessment vendors have been publishing “learning loss” studies, and states are exploring the potential use of interim assessments to better understand the impact of COVID.

Dr. Boyer and Dr. Landl conducted a document analysis of publicly available test vendor materials (e.g., marketing materials, accessibility guides, technical manuals and reports) for 13 interim assessments (including several suites of assessments) to learn more about vendor claims about the use of these assessments with students with disabilities (Boyer & Landl, 2021). They found that:

- Availability of accessibility features and guidance varied across assessments and were often incomplete.
- Documentation often implied that an interim assessment was appropriate for students with disabilities.
- Attention devoted to principles of universal design during test development varied greatly.
- No evidence exists in publicly-available materials that any of the vendors conducted cognitive laboratory-style studies with attention to students with disabilities.
- Even when empirical studies had been conducted to establish that an assessment was not biased against demographic subgroups, students with disabilities generally were not one of the subgroups considered.
- No evidence was provided that growth measures derived from the interim assessments would be meaningful for students with disabilities.

Presentation 2. OSEP Results Driven Accountability, State Systemic Improvement Plans (SSIPs), and Assessment-related State Identified Measurable Results (SIMRs)

Susan Hayes and Kate Nagle provided an overview of OSEP’s accountability framework, RDA, which is used to monitor and support states’ implementation of IDEA. States annually submit a State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) to report on a variety of indicators including assessment (Indicator 3). As part of RDA, states develop State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIPs) (Indicator 17), which are comprehensive, multi-year plans designed to improve outcomes for children with disabilities; within this plan, states commit to improving a State-Identified Measurable Result (SIMR) focused on student outcomes. Many, but not all states, specified SIMRs that use assessment data as the outcome measure. Dr. Hayes and Dr. Nagle also shared information about a new 6-year SPP/APR cycle (FFY 2020-FFY 2025).

Sheryl Lazarus then presented a summary of an analysis of how interim assessments are

included in the SSIPs of states with assessment-related SIMRs (Lazarus et al., 2021). A few states included data from interim assessments in their SIMRs; many more states included interim assessments in their evaluation plans as a measure of progress toward the SIMR. States also reported on data limitations in their SSIPs. Identified data limitations included: different districts used different interim assessments making it challenging to aggregate data across districts; some districts that were part of the SSIP cohort did not use any interim assessment; and data systems in the state lacked capacity to handle interim assessment data. Only seven states included alternate assessment data in their SIMRs; all of the states that included the alternate assessment used the state summative assessment as their SIMRs.

Next Steps

Sheryl Lazarus thanked the advisors for their thoughtful discussions. She said that NCEO would summarize the advisors' comments, and then send it to them to the advisors to review and suggest revisions. Based on these, NCEO would prepare a draft report that contained a summary of the reviewers' comments and recommendations. The advisors would then have an opportunity to review the complete report draft. After this review NCEO would make final revisions and publish the report.

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