Operational and Accountability Issues

Chris Domaleski, Center for Assessment

The contents of this publication were developed under cooperative agreement S283B050019 with the U. S. Department of Education. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.
Focus on Questions 5, 17, 27, 28, 29

- How do we identify eligible students?
- What are the relative costs and benefits of assessment development compared to other uses of resources?
- What subjects/grades should be assessed?
- How does the AA-MAS ‘fit’ with the other assessments?
- How do we report results so they will provide the maximum information to teachers and parents?
Participation Criteria (1)

- State must establish participation criteria for IEP teams based on evidence that the student’s disability has precluded the student from achieving grade-level proficiency and the student’s progress suggests the student will not reach grade-level proficiency during the academic year.

- What data sources and methods can inform these decisions?
Participation Criteria (2)

- Analyze extant assessment data to identify prior-performance considerations
  - Define persistently low performance (e.g. student failed to reach proficiency in more than one administration.)
  - Identify performance associated with low probability of success on the general assessment (e.g. fewer than 10% of students scoring below X on the interim assessment reached proficiency on the summative assessment, regression approaches.)

- Identify relationship of other conditions on performance to enhance understanding of key factors
  - Georgia researched the association of characteristics such as disability type persistently low performance

- Decisions are strongest when supported by multiple indicators
Transition Considerations

- Important to establish guidelines for students to transition from the AA-MAS to the general assessment.
- It is possible that students may take the AA-MAS in all content areas or take the AA-MAS in selected content areas and the general assessment in others.

Approaches:

- Establish a policy based on a specific score on the AA-MAS (assumes relationship is established as discussed in Chapter 8, Abedi)
- Use of multiple indicators combined in a profile approach.
  - Establish categories that indicate various conditions under which eligibility to exit may be supported (e.g. scoring at the advanced level on the AA-MAS, course performance, recommendation from IEP committee etc.)
  - Identify the conditions or combinations in which evidence supports transition
Determining the Scope of Development

- There is no regulatory requirement to develop an AA-MAS. The range of options are none to all.

- Three possible perspectives to guide prioritization of implementation:
  - To what extent are the general assessments valid and appropriate for all students?
    - Review blueprints and other test characteristics
    - Examine performance gap
  - Where are the consequences/ stakes the highest?
    - Student: promotion/ diploma eligibility
    - School: NCLB accountability
  - What areas are most feasible?
    - Factors such as format, cost, timing etc. may present different challenges and constraints.
Accountability Considerations (1)

- Most NCLB accountability systems are functionally ‘indifferent’ to the source of proficiency (input). In other words, whatever instrument is used to determine a student’s performance level, the ‘gears’ function without disruption.

- However, we should not assume that the results (output) is unaffected by the introduction of an AA-MAS.

- Suggest purposeful analyses to assess reliability of determinations
Accountability Considerations (2)

- Reliability of accountability determinations
  - Measurement error: Do the assessments produce stable results? Addressed by ‘traditional’ reliability analyses
  - Sampling error: Do school scores fluctuate for reasons not associated with performance?
- Assess the consistency of determinations.
- Confidence intervals, which are the most common mechanism to account for sample variation, may need to be adjusted.
Accountability Considerations (3)

- Impact
  - Are AA-MAS examinees uniformly distributed or clustered in schools?
  - What will be the impact of removing the interim flexibility?
  - Analyses before and following implementation can help pinpoint issues and account for fluctuations. These are strengthened by introducing multiple sources of evidence.
  - Consider both Type I and Type II errors
Accountability Considerations (4)

- Redistribution of Scores
  - USED policy specifies that all proficient scores from an AA-MAS that exceed the 2% limit, must be counted as non-proficient in AYP calculations.
  - The state determines which scores will be deemed non-proficient or ‘redistributed’ and how.
  - Various methods are possible and discussed in the full paper. The most promising approach may involve redistributing based on deviation from expected participation rates.
Decisions about the design and distribution of performance reports directly impact the theory of action that can promote student and school improvement.

Key considerations:

- Accessible to the target audiences
- Accompanied by adequate technical and interpretive information

Features to consider:

- Provide results in graphical format
- Include narratives describing key knowledge and skills associated with performance levels
- Follow a standard format within and across programs to the extent practicable
- Include broad reviews to gauge clarity and effectiveness
- Provide supplemental guidance and training
Contact Information

Chris Domaleski: Center for Assessment
- cdomaleski@nciea.org
- 404-558-8322