

IELLAAC Notes for May 18, 2010
At the Illinois Resource Center, 10am to 3pm

Following introductions, notes from the December meeting were reviewed and approved.

The committee members shared experiences and concerns from the 2010 state assessment cycle.

A request was made for guidance from the state regarding suggested ways to add breaks as accommodations, and to grant explicit permission to districts to examine the test booklets before testing for the purpose of planning extra breaks.

A request was made for data from the state indicating the kind of ELL accommodations that were provided according to the ACCESS proficiency level of the student tested. It was noted that such an analysis would be complicated due to allowing multiple accommodations.

There was a discussion of material lost before being scored by MetriTech and possible remedies that might be applied in future testing cycles, including poly-mailers, expanded use of freight shipping, box-level inventory sheets, and improved packing instructions.

It was discussed whether the screener should be re-administered in cases of lost materials. This can be done for instructional purposes, but not for transition.

There was some discussion regarding the progress of the Alternate ACCESS and the dilemma of special education students who cannot provide responses to one or more language domains because of a disability. Such students, currently, do not have any way of showing readiness for transition. Existing laws may conflict on this issue. To some extent, program models may need adjustment for this population.

There was a motion passed by the committee, to recommend that ISBE collect English Language Proficiency (ELP) screening results in the Student Information System, including for those who are not LEP. The results should include the score and proficiency level, and be entered before a student leaves the district.

The state presented a table depicting the MODEL and W-APT score ranges and proficiency levels. It did not include Pre-K screening due to the proposed rule change regarding that process.

The committee discussed the proposed rule change that is before the State Board regarding Pre-K, ELP screening. The committee understood the burden of screening, but generally thought the proposed change to be too broad and problematic.

A motion passed that Judith Yturriago give testimony at the State Board meeting on Friday May 21, 2010 urging the Board to require that ELP screening be a valid and reliable process. Otherwise, Pre-K ELLs are at risk of not getting the services that they need.

It was noted that other states, like Texas, require a specific level of academic achievement on the regular state test, in addition ELP test performance, before allowing student to transition out of services.

The committee would like more longitudinal data regarding academic achievement of the ELL population, and would like the state to track transitioned ELLs over time with SIS.

The state reported that the results of the Special Study conducted in December of 2009 were mixed, but that more targeted analyses may yet reveal important findings.

The committee is concerned that the common core standards do not well address the needs of special populations. One early issue will be a common definition of English Learners among consortium members.

Committee members express hope that the common assessments will really implement Universal Design, include bilingual glossaries, move away from multiple-choice items, and take advantage of electronic technology to improve measurement.