

## Small Group Discussion

### 1. **As you consider the work of the Assessment Task Force – what information do you need to prepare for a set of recommendations to the ND DPI?**

What is the purpose of the tests? Descriptions of the different tests (who, what, purpose etc.)  
NC & NIT and Innovation Lag

Tests are to drive curriculum. The curriculum is to drive student achievement needs to be 90% proficient or higher.

To what level can we make a recommendation (remove tests, combine tests, shorten tests, move windows)

What tests best align with college and career readiness standards? This is the “end game” so the yearly assessments needs to align with these benchmarks.

What are the critics saying opposed to Smarter Balanced? Opinion vs. Research

Why are some schools using so many optional assessments and other are not? Their seems to be parent anxiety still about this test.

I would like to see a spreadsheet of available assessments matched to many criteria. The real debate is in the weight to each criteria especially the benefits of developing our own.

Need definitions of abbreviations. Information about the entity or organization that the abbreviations stand for.

At this time, I believe you have provided a great deal of information. I do not feel I need more information to move forward. I would like to now begin the task of discussions that could lead to our recommendations.

Are these tests actually preparing our students for college or the work force? To give all students a chance to succeed how do “we” accommodate those students that do not test well.

Timeline and budget? There was some discussion today about the options of drafting our own ND state tests. Is this really an option given time and the money needed for such an endeavor?

Do these assessments measure readiness? What measures are important?

I would like to hear more about some of the pros and cons from some of the major vendors. We know the weakness of Smarter Balanced what are the strengths and weakness of ACT, PARCC , others?

Develop and articulate our commitments and beliefs about the NDSA. A clear target will help us direct our conversation.

I am interested in learning more about competency based and performance based assessments. I see that many states have gone with ACT and ACT Aspire. It might be good to hear from states that have gone that way.

What options are available to develop a test that can be reviewed by parents? Adaptive test cannot “really” be reviewed.

Clear definition of what purpose assessments serve for each stakeholder. Concise results that determine learning has occurred.

What assessment are redundant in nature to all stakeholders. Is ND willing to pursue federal waiver to access other types of assessments? Look at student success and how assessment interplay mindful of the future. Where federal government ends up with ESEA bill. Guessing at this point, but may change outcomes of task force.

What are the specific options for recommendations? (Ex: combo tests, eliminating, replacing)

A look at reports that are available to parents and schools for the main assessments. See what info/students results look like and how they are/can be used for accountability and student success.

What are our options for a state assessment? Should we decide to choose a different one?

Constitutionality of SBAC, governance of SBAC. A handout on ineffectiveness of standardization. Is federal Title I a law or that we lose funding? What do tests actually accomplish?

You have provided a great deal of relevant information. We can look at all of the assessments, their purpose, and what are the duplications if any. Survey info was very valuable.

I need to know what each stakeholder needs from assessments, but also think that these stakeholders should be weighted to focus on kids first.

I would be interested to know more about N Carolina and New Hampshire and what their assessments entail.

I need more info on the value of what comes from the tests, learn more about the tests or questions, what are our options.

The time that it took for state assessment last spring. Assurances that data comes back to school in a timely manner.

What viable options is the department willing to consider? What are features, drawbacks, limitations of each?

**2. What speakers, organizations or topics would you like to hear from in order to acquire the information necessary for future recommendations?**

Teacher’s panel and student panel most directly affected by these tests.

What teaching materials that are designed to help students achieve a 90% proficient.

Higher Ed wants and needs and Teachers who use the data. Post-secondary – need for reducing remediation (how to prepare students better)

What do home schoolers use as assessments. I believe some groups are holding up this process because they do not understand educational language basics. Can you do a tutorial session on common sense (they are wasting my time)

Vendor presentations

Steven Rasmussen has an in depth critique of the Smarter Balanced.

College Professors in math and English who experience high school graduates coming to college, who need remedial English and math because they cannot read, write nor meet minimum standards.

Representative from one or more states who opted out of Smarter Balanced and PARCC to learn what they are doing and how they plan to assess their students.

Bring Jane Rohhins and Sandra Stotsky to share their perspective of assessments and standards.

Vendor presentations might be helpful in leading to better recommendations as to which test will most meet our needs.

I would like to hear from students in various grades about how they feel about the assessments too many test and are they prepared? College admissions do they give an accurate picture of students and the ability to succeed.

If drafting our own tests is on the table, I need a timeline. If we are going to be looking at other vendors let us start laying them out seeing what they offer.

More from teachers doing the testing. Is there a set of best practices for uniform data?

Smarter Balanced will be great. How about a Chief School Officer from a state using ACT? PARCC?

Let's get some teachers in who know the assessment data and show us what they focus on. Focus on great practices and make that the goal instead of saying what is wrong. Get a panel discussion.

I would like to see the cross walks with common core North Dakota state standards.

John Sauer – I would like more info on the constitutionality of SBAC. I am also confused about the constitutionality of the feds with holding Title funds.

Teachers who use data to drive instruction. Smarter Balance vs. Measured Progress. What New Hampshire and North Carolina are doing?

Classroom instructors who either dislike or like assessment process and benefits or problems encounter. Higher education input on assessments as predictability of college readiness. Input from K-12 interim committee – crossover info.

Maybe hear from a person at each level about their perceived purpose of testing they do (ex: teacher vs. principal vs. superintendent vs. DPI) Also some examples of the reports they use.

Thomas Jefferson education, Ken Robinson, fairtest.org, critics of Smarter Balanced.

Narrow the questions as Wayne suggests.

I truly want to hear from current classroom teachers about what they need in the field.

I would like more information about how ND could create its own assessment. What would be involved, how much it would cost, how long it would take etc. Whether it would be more relevant for ND.

Other vendors besides Measured Progress. NWEA and Renaissance Learning with information about their purpose.

Pitch from Companies. Teacher and Student panel, Higher Ed needs

### **3. Final Thoughts, observation or questions that the NDDPI should consider as we plan for future task force meetings.**

Begin next meeting nailing down the purpose of the test(s). Agreed upon truths.

The results on conclusions of this committee have been pre-determined and the group being guided to the desired conclusions.

Differentiate the foundational stuff is good for some, but not needed for all.

Focus on what this task force is intended to recommend make wise use of our time. What is the question we are trying to answer?

Am about some research about Smarter Balanced or other assessments conducted nationally (maybe mail this info out in advance)

Keep sharing the facts to dispel the myths and bring documentation of research mentioned.

I would like to make a presentation regarding paradigm-using metaphor.

It is frustrating that 3-4 people dominate the discussion. It is time for Common Sense to speak up!

How do we balance best practice with assessments portfolio with local control? We need to focus on whether we are addressing interim tests or state summative tests. This seems confusing still for people in our group.

It is clear to me that nothing is predetermined in favor of a certain vendor, but there is very much a predetermined against Smarter Balanced by some, is it all rhetoric or is more something specific that they know?

Please address the issue of a "few" as they are making the feel of this toxic. This must focus on students not what adults want.

As we have lay the foundation. I think it is time to start talking about the questions we are trying to answer from our assessments. They need to align.

Beware of making our kid's guinea pigs trying new ideas.

We need to minimize testing for students, but still test enough to follow and get results that tell us if students are being taught and learning the ND common core curriculum. It would be great to accomplish a time recommendation from this task force.

I like the idea of identifying the questions/issue. There seems to be various agendas in the room. We need consensus on the issue.

I hope DPI will be willing to look openly at the negative side of state and federal assessing and look at models that are working that go in a opposite direction which is individually focus rather than "group" think on convey or belts.

The irrelevant and suspicious driven questions need to be shut down sooner. They are wasting time and emphasis items that are not relevant.

I am very curious why many people dislike SBAC or is there just a misunderstanding just to get people of the SBAC item that we discuss quite a bit.

I think final recommendation should wait until a new law is passed by Congress.

States that got out of testing.

We need to get past the standards piece and keep moving. Dig deep to the purpose of local assessment.

Keeping at the center of all conversations.... The students.