

**The State of Florida**

**Moderator: Holly Edenfield**  
**December 13, 2011**  
**9:00 a.m. ET**

Operator: Good morning. My name is (Darla) and I will be your conference operator today. At this time, I would like to welcome everyone to the Race to the Top status update part two call. All lines have been placed on mute to prevent any background noise.

After the speakers' remarks, there will be a question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question during this time, simply press star, then the number 1 on your telephone keypad. If you would like to withdraw your question, press the pound key. Thank you.

Ms. Holly Edenfield, you may begin your conference.

Holly Edenfield: Good morning, everyone, and thank you for joining us for part two of our state project update. Hopefully you were on yesterday and found it helpful and if not we, welcome you to today's webinar.

Today we are covering two assurance areas; standards and assessments and great teachers and leader. But, if you did miss yesterday, both presentations will be posted on our website in the next few days.

A few housekeeping notes, we will take questions at the end and also I will be beginning to compile a new FAQ document from the questions that are asked. And so those will be posted online and we'll keep updating those with the questions that you send us via email that all districts would benefit from.

So, we'll be starting that up again, feel free to send questions to me via email or ask them on today's call. I do request that you do not use the chat feature on WebEx today and just queue up to ask a question by phone.

So, the first few slides should look familiar, especially if you were on yesterday, but in case there are new people, we always want to remind everyone, circle folks back to why we're doing this and remind them of our theory of action.

As you know it's centered around investing in human capital to improve student achievements and we know that you all have taken great strides this year in particular to make that happen.

Here's a list of our three state-wide student achievement goals. These should be very familiar to you and we are making progress on them. The first one is doubling the percentage of incoming high school freshman that do all three of these things; graduate from high school, enter college, and earn a year's worth of college credits.

The second goal is to cut the achievement goal in half by 2015 on NATE exams. And the third one is to increase the percentage of students that are proficient on NATE; two are beyond the highest performing states and that was at the time of our application, the highest performing state.

Here's a look at our budget. Of the \$700 million dollars, 50 percent on the right half – application for formula funds. The left side of the chart is the way that the state budget is divided up to support (LEA)s. So, 90 percent of the state 50 percent goes back to districts, either directly or indirectly.

Here's a list of our implementation committee. Many of you are on these or have followed the work of these committees and they have done some really exciting things in year one of our grant. Six began meetings and all eight will be meeting in year two through the end of the grant. So, again, just wanted to make sure you were aware of these and to thank you for those who are participating.

Now, I'll turn it over to Mary Jane Tappen to talk about the standard portion of our project. Mary Jane?

Mary Jane Tappen: Good morning, everybody, and thanks for participating in this web cast. I want to quickly just show you our standards assessment outcomes and what our goals are in this area. We would like to thank all of you for increases in the area of STEM.

You can see that our original goal was to annually increase enrollment by 3 percent. You have surpassed that and are making great increases as is shown with a 14 percent increase in enrollment in accelerated course work in the areas of STEM, and a 7 percent increase in the career academy enrollment. So, we want to thank you for that and we see continued progress in those areas.

For the common core state standards projects we have eight projects that are listed here and in the next slides I'm going to go over each one of them. The common core instructional tools for teachers, many of you know this as CPALMS. The contract (inaudible) this was a competitive (RFP) and Florida State University was awarded this contract.

So, CPALMS will continue to be our standards teacher tool. The common core are already on CPALMS and this will be the site where teachers will be able to access formative and interim assessment items. We will add the levels of complexity for the common core, learning progressions that support lesson study done in your schools, and also the development of lesson study toolkits and teacher use of data to improve instruction.

The teachers standards tool, or CPALMS, is part of the department's single sign on project. So, by the end of race to the top, you should be able – your teachers should be able to sign on to CPALMS of any of these tools through a single sign on and access the other race to the top tools. One place, same sign on, so we're pretty excited about that possibility in years to come.

The student tutorial, this – you are familiar with FCAT explorer. We are building a student tutorial for the common core that will also include science and specifically biology to help students prepare for the biology EOC. That

contract was signed off on Friday after quite a lengthy period of time going back and forth.

So, the same company that developed FCAT explorer will be developing the student tutorial for the common core standards. Their first set of materials ready for the next school year will include tutorials for algebra, geometry, and biology so that our high school students prior to first semester next school year will have tutorials to help prepare them for the end of course exams.

The algebra and geometry will be based upon the common core, so when we make the transition to (park), those tools will already be ready and students will be familiar with how to use them. They also will include many assessment as FCAT explorer already does for next generation.

Those many assessments will be for the common core and for the tested grades in science. Again, the system is scheduled to be up and running for our high school students in algebra, geometry, and biology October 1, 2012, giving them a couple of months of tutorials and time to practice for the first semester EOCs next year.

We look forward to this up and running and by the time we start assessing students in (park), this tool will have been completed and all grade levels will have access to tutorials on the common core in English language arts and mathematics and again, the next generation in science.

Just a reminder, FCAT explorer, that contract also was signed week before last, so any districts that have not been able to log all their students into FCAT explorer, it's available now to you and FCAT explorer includes the tutorials for the next generation sunshine state standards, which students are currently being assessed on.

So, the transition should be a rather smooth one and we look forward to more content being available to your students.

The next project is building English language arts and English language acquisition formative assessments. Formative assessments are classroom

tasks for teacher use to help them differentiate instruction and show evidence of student learning.

The contract is (Pierson). This contract was also finalized last week. We were in the contract mode last week. And we will begin work on that contract this month. (Pierson) will bring teachers together to help build these formative assessments items, grades K through eighth.

Also, the contract includes building lesson study toolkits. As you know, part of race to the top is the requirement to implement lesson study as a primary tool for professional development for your teachers.

These formative assessment items are a good match for use in lesson study. So, the lesson study toolkits for professional development use should be available for the next school year. The items will also be available at the end of race to the top through CPALMS.

Our next project is mathematics formative assessment. Not to confuse you, but if you don't already know, your K through grade three mathematics teachers already have next generation sunshine state standards formative assessment tasks available to them in CPALMS.

What (FCR) STEM will now build is math formative assessments for the common core state standards in grades K through three. So, they will add common core formative assessment tasks to their already built next generation assessment tasks in the areas of mathematics, K through three.

They will also build teacher lesson study toolkits to help support the use of these formative assessment tasks. Again, these are tools for teachers, they are not student assessments but they are tools for teachers to provide evidence of student understanding of the standards so that teachers can differentiate instruction so that all students can be successful.

These tools will all be available in 2012-'13 and this project will be completed by the end of school year 2012-'13.

Our next project is our STEM program for gifted and talented students in rural districts. The contract is through PAEC, the panhandle area education consortium. They are serving the three rural consortiums through this (RFP); it was competitive (RFP).

They will be working with – well, their program is called Florida learn STEM scholars. Some of their goals are to increase the number of identified students in the gifted area in our rural counties and then to support those students with rigorous STEM courses and opportunities, such as research and partnerships with post-secondary institutions. At the end of this project, their project should be able to be replicated in other districts in the states.

The next project is the textbook demand study and highly effective teacher instructional materials report. This contract has been finalized, the contractor is (West Ed) and they are working with infinity.

There are two things that will happen with this study. (West Ed) will analyze our 11th and 12th grade high school textbooks that are most commonly used with the first courses in college textbooks to see if there's a gap in the text complexity or writing requirements in that course work and provide us a report that will help us to better identify our textbook specifications for the future and also let teachers become more aware of the text complexity needs of their juniors and seniors.

Additionally, we'll be building a database where teachers will input what materials they're using so that when we have our highly effective teachers identified, any schoolteacher or principal or district can look up in the database and find out what materials our highly effective teachers are using most frequently in the core areas.

This all will be completed this school year, 2011 and 2012.

And finally, the common core state standards professional development, this will be through a competitive (RFP). We will be writing it this spring to be competed of post-secondary institutions. We'll be developing professional development on the use of all of these tools so that teachers know how to

access them and use them prior to student assessment on (park), the common core state standards.

This professional development tool or the tools that are built in this project will also be used in our pre-service programs so that we'll have a good transition from our pre-service teachers to the district and also the professional development tools can be used by districts professional development offices.

That one will be written and competed for in the future so that all of these tools will be ready for your teacher use and district use in '13-'14.

I'm going to hand it over to Todd Clark, who will discuss with your our assessment projects.

Todd Clark: Good morning. My name is Todd Clark, I'm the director for race to the top assessment with the division of accountability research and measurement. Thank you all for joining the webinar this morning.

This slide kind of shows the five components of the assessment part of assurance area B in our race to the top application and we have slides for each of these five areas. So, we'll go on to the next one.

The largest funded of the five areas that we're working on is a competitive award for a contractor to develop an interim assessment item bank and test platform. The invitation to negotiate the ITN was posted back in April. We had eight companies respond to the ITN. In early November we posted an intent to award and we've had a bid protest.

So, at this point in time we have not awarded a contract for the work to develop the interim assessment item bank test platform. So, we are working on some contingency planning to make sure that we're going to be able to do as much of the scope of work as we can in an expedited fashion.

We do – the scope of work as written includes developing assessment items for the (catenaries) that you see listed. For common core, that includes English language arts and mathematics, K-8, plus algebra I, geometry, and algebra II. And then to Florida's next generation standards for science, social

studies, and Spanish, and you can see the specific grade levels and courses listed on the slide.

Another part of the award for this contract was to develop an interim assessment that's progress monitoring similar to the (fair) award that would be for mathematics. The plan is to have items available for districts to use in academic year '12-'13 and the platform available in '13-'14.

We have a grant of about \$20 million over three years to develop assessments and assessment items for what the grant called hard to measure content areas. These awards have been made, they were made back in the summer of this year. We had four school districts that are serving as the fiscal agents for these seven awards and you can see the content areas and the districts posted on this slide.

Right now these districts are working with other districts and with educators from around the state to develop item specifications for assessments in these content areas. Our plan was that in the near term we would be able to use the interim assessment item bank and test platform to store the items that these districts are working on for the hard to measure content areas. We are looking at some contingency plans to have a way to store items securely while the big protest is being resolved.

We are also, as part of race to the top, Florida is participating in international assessments that includes the TIMSS, PIRLS, and PISA. The TIMSS and PIRLS testing is for grades four and eight and the schools that were selected to participate in those two assessments have already done that. They did so in the spring of 2011. The results from TIMSS and PIRLS will be provided to us in the spring of 2013.

PISA is an international assessment that's given to 15-year-olds and Florida has approximately 65 schools that have been selected to be participants in the PISA exam. District superintendents have been notified, if you have schools in your district that have been selected to participate in PISA and we're in the process now of collecting data relative to who the school coordinators are going to be.

The PISA will be administered to 15-year-olds in the fall of 2012 and we will have results back in spring of 2014.

As part to the race to the top award to Florida, we have hired five content experts; you can see their names and email addresses provided. Right now they are working very closely with the districts that are working on the hard to measure content areas.

Once we get the grant awarded for the interim assessment item bank and test platform, they will be working closely to review items that get added to that bank, and also to work closely with school districts to figure out how to add items and to use the item bank as part of their district assessment.

Last slide is for funding that's in the race to the top award to the state. We are going to update the interim reading assessment (fair), which is currently aligned to our next generations standards, will be aligned to common core. Right now we're waiting basically because the consortium that's working on state-wide group consortiums called (park) that are working on assessments will be coming up with item specifications and it makes sense for us to be able to use those item specifications that (park) develops as we update (fair). So, that is coming soon and you can see the availability posted on the slide.

If you have questions, you're obviously welcome to ask them at the end of this webinar and also feel free to email me if you've got questions and we'll put those on the frequently asked questions that Holly has.

At this time I'm going to turn it over to Kathy Hebda.

Kathy Hebda: Thanks, Todd. Good morning, everyone. Beginning on slide 21 you see the list of great teachers and leaders projects for the race to the top grant. I'm going to go into those in a little more detail as we go through the slides.

Some of those you are very familiar with, others focus on grants to partnerships with teacher preparation institutions, and others are forthcoming. Like I said, I will give you some more details on those and the status of those as we go through the slides.

Slides 22 and 23 look fairly daunting. Those are all the outcomes for the great teachers and leaders section of the grant and if you notice the outcomes, if you read through those, and any of you that are working in human resources or human capital right now in the school districts are not surprised by how long this list is.

If you notice, they're really policy outcomes and they are things that relate to our practices in human resources at the state level and the district level and how we expect those practices to be different by the time the grant is over with.

As Holly mentioned at the beginning of the presentation today and yesterday, we wanted to make sure we put all of those in one spot for you so you can see without having to look through pages and pages of our applications where we think we're headed and what you're working so hard on.

And as you look through some of those you'll notice you've already met some in your districts. So, the progress and the work has been remarkable since we were awarded the grant and we congratulate you on that.

If you look at slide 24, in addition to outcomes in the great teachers and leaders section which focuses on changes in policies and strategies and things like that for supporting great teachers and leaders, we have actual performance measures that we have to meet in the grant.

The ones we've included here relate to, again, policies. So, in addition to expecting that districts will have changed policies in a certain way based on what the grant required, we actually had to set targets on the percentage of participating (LEA)s for school districts that would actually meet those policy goals by a certain point in the grant.

The first set that you see, the first three that are grouped together, really have to do with the implementation and the changes you've made, revisions to your teacher and principal evaluations and how those change over the life of the grant.

The ones at the bottom really focus on the other part of the grant that says you need to use results from those evaluation systems to make other policy decisions on how you support teachers and retain them and things like that.

And as you can see, those performance measures ramp up over the life of the grant so that we would hope that all participating (LEA)s meet those performance measures. But, we did give ourselves some wiggle room as these were actually formulated before the passage of (736).

Let's talk about the projects for a few minutes, starting on slide 25, one that you are most familiar with; value added model for student growth. There are a couple of bullets on this page that I wanted to call your attention to. The third one down talks about working on value added models for algebra I and the Florida alternate assessment and how the student growth implementation committee is going to meet again beginning in January.

This actually might be at the beginning of February but we're working on a meeting time for January, so that the student growth implementation committee can continue their work. As you know, they recommended to the commissioner of education a model for a value added model for measuring student growth (inaudible) evaluations that would work with FCAT data.

Their next task is to continue working on state-wide assessments and look at a model for algebra I. Our contractor has already been running data on that, so we think we'll be well-prepared to provide the student growth implementation committee with good information so they can continue to make good decisions and recommendations about models for statewide assessment going forward.

We're also working with folks in exceptional student education on a model for Florida alternate assessment; they had already begun that work on their own for purposes of school accountability and we're piggy backing on that work so that we can have something that aligns with that model for individual teacher and principal accountability.

The other rule that I would call your attention to is second from the bottom, rule development. As a result of senate bill 736, which you know aligns very

well with race to the top and codified a lot of what you were already working on in race to the top we have rules to develop.

And one of those has to do with the value added model. We are required to – the state board is required to adopt the actual value added model calculation in to rule, and then we're also required, as you know, to set statewide standards – performance standards – for each of the performance levels highly effective, effective, needs improvement, and unsatisfactory, related to student growth for teacher and principal evaluation systems.

And the plan, as we discussed previously at (inaudible) and other meetings, is that we need to adopt a basic form of that rule soon. We're shooting for a January or February state board of education meeting that codifies the actual calculations value added, and then go right back into rule development so we can work on the statewide performance standards using value added models that would go into effect for the '12-'13 school year and forward.

So, be on the lookout for notices of rule development. We'll certainly forward those things to you through the race to the top contacts lists so that you're well aware of when those things are coming up and you can provide us your input on those rules.

On the next slide, evaluations systems consultants for (LEA)s. Another one that you're very familiar with, you've spent a lot of time at redevelopment and redesign academies last spring on teacher evaluation systems and you know we have our kickoff meetings for principal evaluation system redesign on January 30th and 31st.

That will be held in Orlando. I'll provide you all the details and exactly the location and room number and all those sorts of things, so please plan on an Orlando location for that.

You'll notice on the bottom under other notes some related activities. There is some technical assistance that you all have requested because of 736 to have some more information on non-classroom instructional personnel evaluations.

How can you improve instructional practice section for guidance counselors, library media specialists and those folks that are so key to our school operations and students' performance? We've been working with the state supervisors in these areas and student services and they are working with individual work groups around what these evaluation systems could look like when they're improved and we'll be ready to provide you with some technical assistance, likely through webinars, so everybody can attend, in the early part of February. So, you can look forward to that as well.

Finally, on a related note – we'll touch on this again later in the presentation – in relation to teacher and principal evaluation, we've had lots of questions about learning goals as used in instructional practice and studying learning targets when it comes to those teachers who don't have statewide assessment results. Perhaps 11th and 12th grade teachers, first and second grade teachers, what learning targets look like in student growth and evaluation systems.

And so, we're going to have a community practice meeting that we're working on setting up for March 1st and 2nd. So, if you'll save those dates and we'll get you more information. That one-day meeting will focus on learning targets and learning goals.

Next project has to do with financial consultants for districts to revive compensation (inaudible). I know that this is a hot topic moving forward now that you've done all the hard work on, at least initially, revision your teacher and principal evaluation systems. You're looking forward to you being able to implement performance (K) salary schedules down the road.

So, we have two things of note here. We're going to hold a community of practice meeting in June on this topic, another one day meeting. And then that will serve as sort of a kickoff meeting for technical assistance that you'll be receiving next year that we have planned under the grant to provide you with consultant services to look at your compensation systems, model compensation systems, look at your individual budget and help with budget reviews. That technical assistance will be coming to you starting next summer.

And that competitive procurement is under development right now.

On the next slide, slide 28, we have another set of outcomes and this focuses on largely in your area changing staffing plans and us issuing grants that support you being able to have more available to you, highly effective teachers and principals especially in hard to staff subject areas and high need areas.

You see what the outcome goals are then again related to policies, procedures and increasing the percentages of effective teachers, especially in those high need schools and subject areas.

The grants that support that begin on slide 29. The first is really two separate grants that fall under this heading; job embedded teacher program grant and a job embedded principal preparation program grant. Both of these have already been issued. The principal preparation program we have one second award that we're in the process of determining.

But, we have awarded to a partnership with UCF and a number of districts for job embedded teacher preparation programs and the first cohort, as you can see, is going to be recruited in spring of 2012 in those school districts that are participating in that partnership. This is really a way to combine the best lessons learned, both from traditional teacher preparation programs and from our district and other alternative certification programs that really focus on increased field experience, as you can see in job embedded training, where the university and the school district work together as partners to support those teachers in their preparation.

The principal preparation program is very similar except that it has one additional twist that we are hoping that it will be a combination of level I and level II certification so that someone can have a streamlined program that gets them all the way to school principal certification program without having to stop in between a level I and a level II.

We have awarded, as you can see, one partnership grant already to FAU, Florida Atlantic University in Broward, and we have a second award to make based on review of remaining proposals that's underway right now.

Another grant that supports this – or project that supports this area and your workforce is increasing diversity and educator workforce project. And this grant has already also been awarded to a partnership with Polk County University of South Florida called project pride. And this specifically is to recruit into elementary schools more minority males and it will be successful with tuition reimbursement and manager support services to folks that are participating in the program and they already have begun recruiting their first cohort to begin in the spring semester of this year.

The next grant that supports this area is the one on STEMS teacher preparation program. This grant is also underway, it's released and the application due date for potential applications from universities will close on February 10th.

And because we've had a lot of success at the University of Florida and Florida State University with the (you teach) program and the complete redesign of math and science teacher preparation programs that involves, this grant allows us to expand those programs in the state so that more institutions can adopt that model and receive that kind of intensive support that the (you teach) provides institutions for that redesign.

The other thing that we've added to this and this is a new feature and we're the first state to do this is that we'll have one of our institutions – part of the competition will be between institutions who already have a (you teach) program in the state so that they can become a support center (inaudible) institutions and an induction center to teachers who have completed a (you teach) program.

The next slide on 32, focuses on outcomes, another set of outcomes related to teacher preparations. There are a couple of projects here that are focused on specific areas of teacher preparation programs and you can see the STEM grants and others flow into these outcomes in teacher preparation and principal preparation.

Another project that really supports teacher preparation and certification is the revision of teacher certification exams. For full alignment – and you know

we're going to be completely aligned with all of our community resources systems by the end of this grant – one of the things we have to do is bring teacher certification examinations into alignment with everything we're expecting for students in K-12 and teachers.

So, to make this happen, we've dedicated some money under race to the top to look at a list – and you can see the list there on slide 33 – of teacher certification examinations that focus on STEM areas or common core state standards to make sure that the content of those exams is fully implementing our next generation standards for STEM and common core standards.

And also to make sure that the instructional practice questions on those examinations are rigorous enough to really look at diagnosis and remediation in those subject areas.

One last project that focuses on teacher preparation is on slide 34. Institutions that provide state approved programs have to do an annual evaluation and that's called an institutions program evaluation plan, or an IPEP.

And what this project does is allows both the state to review an IPEP or an institutional program evaluation plan and an institution who's preparing one, to do that through an electronic system.

The major enhancement to this is not just to electrify the program but also connect it with the data warehouse. Most institutions and the state really want better analysis tools for teacher preparation outcome data and this system is going to help us do that in a way that doesn't require what is sometimes a lengthy and labor intensive process to get data for analysis projects and research studies.

The next slide, slide 35, more outcomes. And now we're focused on professional development. Mary Jane's already talked a lot about professional development and we have a few more things to add to that in the great teachers and leaders section about how – what the quality is of the professional development that you deliver and how effective is it in actually improving students, teacher, and principal outcomes.

There are two outcomes there for (inaudible). Again, based on how well you're doing in delivering and providing folks in your district professional development. Then on slide 36, you see the next project that supports that. And this project's under development – procurement is under development – and now that you have evaluation systems that are revised and up and running, at least in their initial stages, it's important that you have really good ways to link that evaluation data to professional development, both in planning professional development and using that evaluation system data that you get throughout the year to see if your professional development is actually working.

And that's what that project is focused on, so you can look for availability of technical assistance beginning this coming summer on that.

The last two projects, on 37 and 38, are much smaller than some of the other projects we're doing, but nonetheless important. The (commissioners) leadership academy kind of filled a gap in training for folks that are moving from a school level leadership position to really try to take on a district, regional, or state level role.

So, this commissioners leadership academy should be up and running this spring. It's not designed to trained hundreds and hundreds of people at a time, it's supposed to be small cohorts of well-selected individuals that have potential to expand their leadership influence. As those procurements are developed and released, we'll provide you much more detailed information about that.

Slide 38, we already talked about community of practice and the meetings that we're going to have this year. March 1st and 2nd save the date for learning goals and learning targets and then a June meeting to kick off some really intensive work around teacher and principal compensation models.

The last project I want to discuss with you to let you know is also underway. In fact, the responses are due to this project, it's a competitive (IPN). We discussed a long time ago we needed an evaluator just to look at great leaders and teachers initiatives. You saw the long laundry list of policy initiatives that

you're implementing in your districts and it's really going to be important for us to know whether or not any of things worked, how they worked, and what our lessons learned were.

And that's what this great teachers and leaders evaluator will do for us and really tell Florida's story and our (LEA)'s story of how we've progressed throughout the race for the top grant.

So, we'll have responses by the end of this month and by January we'll have selected a contractor and executed a contract. And we'll provide you more information as we go along with that.

Holly Edenfield: Thank you, Kathy. That concludes the slide presentation that we have to make, so now we want to hear from you and answer your questions. A quick reminder not to use the chat feature, but please queue up with the operator.

Operator: And at this time I would like to remind everyone if you would like to ask a question, please press star then the number 1 on your telephone keypad. Once again, to ask a question, please press star then the number 1 on your telephone keypad.

We'll pause for just a moment to compile the Q&A roster.

We do have a question from the line of (Shelly Halstead) with (Lake) County.

(Richard Itson): Yes, hi, this is (Richard Itson) in (Lake) County. My question is, you referred to the growth model development for the EOCs, what is the timeframe for having that ready for algebra I and then biology and geometry?

Kathy Hebda: Hi, Richard, this is Kathy. We expect to have algebra I ready before the end of this year. And then we'll have to begin the work on biology after it's first administered in the spring.

(Richard Itson): OK, thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Karen Torres) with Broward County.

(Paul Howchen): Good morning, actually this is (Paul Howchen) and I have three questions regarding the assessment and the item banks. Will the – in some of the previous conversations there were discussions of state developed test forms or state housed test forms, will that still be the case? Will these item banks be usable as EOC items to generate tests for the teacher evaluation in the areas not created by DOE?

And then in terms of (fair), how do we continue to do (fair) when (park) is quarterly assessment? We – I seem to think we'll be doing almost exclusively testing, if that's the case. Thank you.

Todd Clark: Hey, (Paul), this is Todd Clark. I'm going to take your second question first. (Park) is actually – if you go to their website there, we're looking at how often they're going to actually assess students and it's my understanding – and you can check with (Vince Burg) just to verify this – but it's my understanding that the first two assessments that (park) is looking at will be optional.

So, there's a diagnostic and an optional test, so it's only the last two parts of the (park) assessment that will be required and make an assumptive assessment for the students. So, they've scaled back a little bit, I think, to make sure the project is sustainable.

(Fair) will be revised to align to common core standards and again, that will be progress monitoring over time and I think that will still be a valuable tool for districts to have available, but it won't be – you know, I understand your point. Your point is that it would be crazy to be having both (fair) quarterly and (park) if (park) were going to be quarterly. But again, you might want to look at the (park) website; I'm pretty sure they've scaled back and (park) is not looking at a quarterly assessment. So, (fair) would still be a good tool to use for progress monitoring for reading for students.

(Paul Howchen): Todd, the last piece I saw on the optional first two, it was a state level decision as to whether the two would be used or not and, you know, since Florida is the fiscal agent, presumably they'd do all four.

But, is it still a state decision? And I guess the real crux of my question is there a change that we'll be doing both (fair) and all four (park) assessments?

Todd Clark: I don't think we know the answer to that at this point, (Paul). You know, again, I think some of this is still to be determined. So, I'm sorry I can't give you a more exact answer, but I think that's still being worked out.

And then your first question about the item bank once it's in place will have assessment items that districts may use to develop assessments for use as districts may see fit. So, they can be summative, they can be interim. Again, the idea is to provide high quality assessment items that districts use either in a pre-test, post-test format or a midterm final.

The state is not going to require that you use the item bank and it's going to have a tiered level of access so that the majority of questions will be reserved at the district level so that if the district wants to create district wide assessments, that will be an opportunity for them to be able to do that.

The hard to measure awards do include field testing of assessments that will be field tested during academic year 2013-'14. But, the item bank itself with the contractor right now will just – it will have a test platform which will allow districts to be able to create assessments and we'll have some software feedback to make sure we're giving you good advice for actual test development.

But, at this point there are not plans to have an actual EOC, so to speak, as part of the statewide item bank and testing platform.

(Paul Howchen): Will the state developers to be available to review things developed by the district?

Todd Clark: Yes.

(Paul Howchen): OK, thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Liz Bartle) from Lake County.

(Liz Bartle): Hi, good morning. We just have a couple of questions; will there be a value added models core for non-FCAT administering teachers this year? We had kind of heard some rumble that there might be.

Kathy Hebda: Good morning, this is Kathy. We will be providing you information for the teachers who are not reading language arts or math teachers, but who are using – you're using FCAT results in their evaluation systems. We'll be providing value added results for those folks.

(Liz Bartle): OK. Will there be value added models course for the FCAT retakes for the 11th and 12th graders this year?

Kathy Hebda: No information on the retakes.

(Liz Bartle): OK. Is there, like, a window of time that you expect to have those value added model scores available to the districts?

Kathy Hebda: At this point the timeline is July.

(Liz Bartle): OK. Go ahead.

Female: Can you talk a little bit about gap courses and the assessment process and what you know is going on around the state? I think there is great concern in local districts about managing the courses beyond those provided through the state in any format.

Todd Clark: This is Todd Clark. So, as you see – and we've posted this on our race to the top assessment site – we tried to address as many courses as we had funds for and we did that as looking at enrollment.

There is a group of districts that have started working on some additional courses using their (LEA) funds and so they're referring to those as gap courses and, you know, they're using their local funds to develop assessments and assessment items for those other courses.

And obviously we're being supportive of that and we're going to provide, once we get the item bank and test platform in place, we will provide a secure location for them to post and edit the assessment items that they're working on.

So, you know, we're trying to be as supportive as possible, but you know, we would encourage districts, you know, to continue to support that effort.

There's been some question about whether or not there would be additional state funding available. We're looking into that, but I don't have a firm answer at this point.

Female: Thank you. One other thing, you know, a memo came out today about districts potentially being in compliance or not compliant with race to the top requirements and can you talk about the process we might expect if there's any noncompliance by districts?

Kathy Hebda: This is Kathy. The memo I think you're referring to is the one that Chancellor (Stewart) had discussed at the superintendents meeting a few weeks ago and then we also mentioned on the superintendents call this month, and it's now actually out.

Specifically this memo relates to districts who still have not met the deadline for September 30 to submit their revised teacher evaluation system in full and so there are – we have more than half the districts have met that goal already and a number of districts have meetings this month where they're going to finish things up.

But, the original deadline for that was – the first deadline was May 1st, then it was June 1st, then it was September 30th, but the final evaluation is going to include all the student growth pieces and there are still some districts that have not met that under race to the top and our commitment to this grant as a state, which (inaudible) we monitor very closely, has to do with one of the key pieces is implementing the new evaluation system during the '11-'12 school year, not later than that.

And so, what that memo indicates is for those districts who have not met that implementation deadline by halfway through the year, which is essentially January 2nd, after the end of the second quarter, then there will be a suspension of their ability to draw down the race to the top funds until such times they have met the deadline.

So, for example, a district who has not met the deadline by the time we review the documentation on January 2nd, but then turns in the final documentations needed on January 10th, on January 10th their ability to draw down funds is restored on that very same day. The district doesn't lose any money, but there is a suspension of being able to draw down race to the top funds until the deadline is met.

The second thing that memo says though is for a district who never does implement during '11-'12, who never meets the requirement to implement a revised teacher evaluation systems during the '11-'12 school year, that district will lose their eligibility as a participating (LEA) and that would have serious consequences for participating (LEA).

We don't anticipate anybody will be in that status. But, while we were talking about districts who were still not quite finished yet and what would be the consequences that we had discussed a long time ago actually coming to fruition now. We wanted to go ahead and mention that too just so a district was well aware that if the evaluation system was not implemented at all during the '11-'12 school year, they would no longer be a participating district in race to the top.

So, that memo was really focused on that one deliverable.

Female: Thank you for that clarification. That's all we have here from Lake County.

Operator: Again, if you would like to ask a question, please press star then the number 1 on your telephone keypad.

Your next question comes from the line of (Debra Pace) with (Bravard) Schools.

(Pat Shelton): Hi, (Pat Shelton), (Bravard) County. This is for Kathy. Summer of 2012 training in evaluating professional development, can you tell us who is the target group for that training and when will we have the dates for it?

Kathy Hebda: Hey, (Pat), it's Kathy. We don't have specific dates for you yet because we're still working on the procurement, so once the contract is awarded later this

spring, I think by February is our target date to have that done, we'll be able to tell you by the end of February when you can be anticipating the dates for the summer training.

The target audience for that would be certainly district professional development directors and others in the school district who deliver that kind of professional development and have responsibility for evaluating professional development programs. That's what it's really targeted for.

Now, of course, our protocol standards look at professional development delivery at the district school and individual teacher and principal level. And so our procurement is going to include tools and methods for evaluating the effectiveness of (TD) at all three levels. The initial target audience is certainly going to be the district folks who have that major responsibility.

(Pat Shelton): Thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Cecile Diaz) with Osceola County.

(John Boyd): Actually, this is (John Boyd) in (inaudible) County, can you hear me?

Kathy Hebda: We sure can, (John). Go ahead.

(John Boyd): OK, my quick question is the materials for today's webinar and yesterday's webinar, will they be posted along with the recorded archive of each on the website that we normally go to or is there a new website, because I wasn't able to find yesterday's yet.

Female: Yes, they will both be posted. They're not up yet.

(John Boyd): OK.

Female: We'll have to get our transcript and our recording and then we can post it all together so it will look - hopefully by the end of the week.

(John Boyd): OK. Thank you.

Female: Right.

(John Boyd): That's all.

Operator: Again, if you'd like to ask a question, please press star then the number one on your telephone keypad.

Your next question comes from the line of (Timothy Urban) with Hernando County.

(Laurie Pelido): It's actually (Laurie Pelido) with Hernando County. I have a question. There's currently no minimum number of instructional minutes for let's say an art or a music in elementary school.

Will all students in those courses have to take the same test regardless of whether they're at an arts magnet, maybe getting music five days a week, or they're at a school that maybe gets music a few times a year?

Has anyone discussed that issue?

(Todd Clark): This is (Todd Clark). It's a great question. Thank you.

The idea behind the Assessment Line of Bank and Test Platform is that we will make high quality assessments available for the districts to use as they see fit.

So you're right, there's no minimum instructional time required. We are basing these on the state standards, which are part of required instruction. But the districts may or may not use these. They may have their own assessments that they want to use.

They may have publisher assessments that they want to use. But we wanted to provide some high quality assessments that are standards based that will be

available for the districts to use as they see fit.

(Laurie Pelido): OK. Thank you.

And things like, let's say, art in kindergarten. That test, do we have any idea of a, like a time frame when the whole state will be using an elementary art test?

(Todd Clark): So right now the district that's working on art, visual art, is Miami-Dade. The performing arts is Polk County.

They are writing item specifications, which are due to us in February of 2012. Those item specifications will be posted online so that people can look at them. They will be made available publicly.

The first batch of items related to those based on those item specs are due to the department in summer of 2012. But basically during academic year 2012 and 2013, educators will be using those item specs to develop assessment items.

The assessments themselves are to be field tested per the grant in academic year 2013-2014. So that's kind of the layout of the schedule.

It doesn't mean that we won't be doing some, maybe, item field-testing earlier with districts that would like to volunteer to be able to do that on a case basis.

(Laurie Pelido): And we're talking every fine arts course? We're not just talking high school, correct?

(Todd Clark): We are talking - there was a select subset of courses selected based on enrollment and those courses are identified. If you can send me an email, I'll send you the link. It's on the Race to the Top Assessments website. We have a file that shows which courses have assessments that we are developing.

(Laurie Pelido): Great. But the other ones, I'm saying, that (inaudible) will not be field-tested in 2013?

(Todd Clark): The - you're talking about the ones that we're working on?

(Laurie Pelido): No, the ones that no one's working on. Well, say kindergarten art.

(Todd Clark): Right but ...

(Laurie Pelido): That will not - but we're not - but we're not looking in the near future for something from the state, even test banks for that?

(Todd Clark): So I believe that kindergarten art, those standards are part of the project with Miami-Dade as part of their visual arts program. So they will have material available for field-testing in 2013-2014.

(Laurie Pelido): OK. Thank you.

Operator: And once again, if you'd like to ask a question, please press star then the number one on your telephone keypad. Again, to ask a question, please press star then the number one on your telephone keypad.

And at this time there are no further questions.

Female: Thank you everyone for participating and for your thoughtful questions.

We will post the recording, the transcript and the slides as well as the questions online. And I'll send out an email to my district contacts when that is posted.

Thank you very much and have a great day.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen, this concludes today's conference call. You may now  
disconnect.

END