

Determination of School and District Readiness for Online Assessment

Technology has transformed the way we communicate. Our children are growing up in a very different world from the one their parents experienced.

For example:

- 63% of teens text daily
- About 25% of teens (ages 12-17) own a smartphone (77% of this group own a cell phone)
- And almost 8 out of 10 teens say they've helped an adult do something online that the adult could not do him- or herself

Harnessing the power of innovation for the good of our schools is not just a novel enterprise. The nation's health and prosperity depend on it. By leveraging technology, schools can customize instruction and ensure that children who need extra help get it.

With the help of technology, we must now begin to address those expectations [for all students' success] in innovative ways. Education is not a one-size-fits-all enterprise. Just as every child has unique needs, so does every teacher, every school, every district and every state. While real progress has been made in wiring our classrooms and equipping them with new technologies, we have yet to see a profound transformation in the way we deliver education (US Department of Education, 2008).

In order to support the integration of instructional technology into all classrooms in Illinois, ISBE has developed a tool and process to determine the technology readiness of all schools and districts to implement online assessment as well as instructional technology.

Guiding Principles for Determination of Technology Readiness

- ISBE has set a goal to increase online instruction and online testing in order to prepare our students for college and careers in the 21st century.
 - In light of this goal, our first objective is test at least 60% of our students online with the PARCC computer-based assessment in 2014-2015.
 - We envision that each year thereafter, we will test more students online until we have very close to 100% of Illinois students online in 2016-2017.*
- In order to achieve this goal, yet allow districts/schools the most flexibility, we are expecting that schools will test at least 2/3 of their grades eligible for online testing (based on capacity as determined by process outlined below).
- Schools not testing all grades online are expected to increase online testing by at least one grade level per year until they reach 100% of their students testing online.
- To accommodate individual schools within a district
 - High schools may test
 - Both English III and Algebra II/Integrated Math III online
 - One subject online and one subject on paper
 - All paper – as determined by ISBE capacity review process
 - Grades 3-8
 - Each grade level must test all students using the same delivery mode (either computer-based or paper-based)

- Various grades can test online or with paper within a school as long as a single grade is not split between delivery modes
- If all grades are not testing online the default assumption will be that the highest grade(s) will test online unless otherwise determined by the school

Technology Readiness Support

- ISBE has put into place a tool, I-TRAx, that provides schools, districts and the state with a determination of technology readiness for both instruction and assessment
- The I-TRAx system has been pre-populated with data from the PARCC Technology Readiness Tool (TRT) and other relevant information previously reported to ISBE

I-TRAx Details

- Pilot was conducted prior to implementation
 - LTCs and select districts participated
 - Adjustments were made to system based on pilot participants' feedback
- Launch statewide occurred on August 25, 2014
- Schools/districts had 3 weeks to revise, enter or upload their data
- Aug. 25 to Sept. 14

Procedures for Determination of School/District Technology Readiness

1. All districts/schools will review and accurately update the I-TRAx technology survey to provide key technology information
2. I-TRAx provides schools and districts with an estimate of their readiness to assess all eligible students online and readiness by grade level
 - a. LTC's and Net Specs will provide support for I-TRAx data input
 - b. Schools and districts can access reports and input various scenarios to determine local needs
3. Using the I-TRAx data, as well as other information, Student Assessment staff, in consultation with technology staff, will make recommendations about each school's capacity to deliver online assessment
 - a. Schools and districts will be informed of their recommended capacity
Schools are strongly encouraged to use "proctor caching" to ensure valid assessment environment for their students
4. Schools who have a limited capacity to test online may select which grades will be assessed online; the default practice will be to assess the highest grades first
 - a. Example: A K-6 elementary school should test grades 3, 4, 5, and 6, but they only have enough computers to test two grade levels. The school could choose to test grades 3 and 4, but if they made no selection the ISBE assumption would be that they would test grade 5 & 6.
5. Schools/districts may request a review of the recommendations
 - a. The reviews will be handled by Student Assessment Division Administrator or designee(s)
 - i. Student access and reasonable scheduling should be the focus of discussions and decisions

- ii. Transition to online has a short window and maximizing the use of current technology should be emphasized and understanding that the transition to online must begin, schools with capacity would need to test at least one grade
- iii. Schools without capacity to test a single grade will need to submit an updated technology plan that outlines how they will meet capacity challenges within two years
- iv. Reviews are based on technology and logistical challenges **not** student/adult related opinions towards online testing

*Exceptions are made for any students whose documented accommodations require the use of a paper test