OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

SCHOOL SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Next Steps for the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority (IADA): A Conversation with States

December 1, 2023

INTRODUCTION

Adam Schott

Acting Assistant Secretary

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

BACKGROUND IADA

DR. BRENDA CALDERON

AGENDA

- IADA Next Steps
  - IADA Background
  - IADA Participation
  - Comparability Requirements for the IADA
  - IADA Timelines, Planning Status and Application Windows
  - Emphasizing family engagement and clarifying the role of external partners
  - Funding Opportunities for IADA-related projects
  - Call for Assessment Peer Reviewers

WHAT IS THE IADA?

- Authority in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, Section 1204)
- Provides States room to pilot a new assessment while meeting ESEA requirements
- Flexibility from double-testing students
- Currently Louisiana, Massachusetts and North Carolina are approved for IADA

IADA AUTHORITY

Statute & Regulations

- Section 1204 of the ESEA permits the Department to allow State educational agencies (SEAs) to:
  - Implement a pilot of a new assessment system in a small number of schools or local educational agencies (LEAs).
  - **Evaluate** that new assessment system while **maintaining the existing State assessment for the rest of the State**, without **double testing students in pilot schools**. Allows **use of pilot results in State accountability** in lieu of State assessment.
- 34 CFR § 200.104-108 list regulations for definitions, application requirements, selection criteria, timelines, transitions, extensions and waivers.

PARTICIPATION

IADA Participation

- Since 2016, the Department has approved five States (Georgia, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and North Carolina) to participate in IADA.

- Two States (New Hampshire in 2021 and Georgia in 2022) have subsequently withdrawn.

- Applications, peer review notes, ED feedback letters, and each State's annual reports are available at: https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/school-support-and-accountability/iada/.

TAKING STOCK OF IADA

- IES published progress evaluation in April 2023 at: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/2023004/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsflash.

- IADA pilot projects sought to increase the usefulness of assessment data for classroom teaching, but few were ready to try out their assessments within a year of starting IADA.

- After 2 or 3 years of participation, the IADA systems had made limited progress and may not be on track to meet the program's 5-year statewide scale-up.

- States reported challenges hampering assessment development and implementation activities, with the COVID-19 pandemic causing major disruptions.

TAKING STOCK OF IADA

- 2023 Request for Information (RFI). Department sought feedback regarding:
  - Alternative methods to establish comparability of the IADA pilot and the current State assessment.
  - IADA timelines.
  - Other perceived barriers to the IADA.
  - 8,846 comments received.

- Next steps for IADA – Secretary's letter on November 20, 2023. See: https://oese.ed.gov/files/2023/11/23-0431-DCL-IADA-os-approved-11.17.2023.pdf.

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

NEXT STEPS FOR THE IADA

NEXT STEPS FOR IADA: PARTICIPATION

- The ESEA limited to seven the number of States that could be approved under IADA during an "initial demonstration period."
- Given the time since the first state was approved (2018) together with the publication of the IES report, the "initial demonstration period" has now ended.
- **The Department is no longer limited to how many States may be approved.** All interested States may now apply either individually or as part of a consortium.

NEXT STEPS FOR IADA: CLARIFYING METHODS FOR COMPARABILITY

Statute requires*

- Any comparability method must ensure that the pilot assessment **"could express student results or student competencies in terms consistent with the State's aligned academic achievement standards under section 1111(b)(1)"** and **"generate results that are valid and reliable, and comparable, for all students and for each subgroup of students"** compared to the statewide assessment.

- Any evaluation of alignment must consider **both** the State's **content and achievement standards.**

*ESEA section 1204(e)(2)(A)

NEXT STEPS FOR IADA: CLARIFYING METHODS FOR COMPARABILITY

- Evaluating comparability does not require that the proficiency results be exactly the same between the two assessments; because the assessment designs will differ, the assessments' resulting estimates of student performance will differ.
- A comparability evaluation can be based upon:
  1. Evidence of the alignment of both the innovative assessment and the statewide assessment to the content standards; and
  2. Evidence of the consistency of achievement classifications across the two systems.

NEXT STEPS FOR IADA: CLARIFYING METHODS FOR COMPARABILITY

Regulations* provide five methods for evaluating comparability:

A. Administering **full assessments** from **both the innovative and statewide assessment** systems to all students enrolled in participating schools.

B. Administering **full assessments from both the innovative and statewide assessment systems** to a **demographically representative sample** of all students and subgroups of students.

C. Including **as a portion of the innovative assessment system items or performance tasks from the statewide assessment system** that have been previously pilot tested or field tested for use in the statewide assessment system.

D. Including **as a portion of the statewide assessment system items or performance tasks from the innovative assessment system** that have been previously pilot tested or field tested for use in the innovative assessment system.

E. An **alternative method for demonstrating comparability** that an SEA can demonstrate will provide for an **equally rigorous and statistically valid comparison** between student performance on the innovative assessment and the statewide assessment.

*34 CFR §200.105(b)(4)(i)(A through E)

NEXT STEPS FOR IADA: CLARIFYING METHODS FOR COMPARABILITY

- The Department does not expect that a State will have established comparability of IADA and the current State test at the time of the IADA application.

- In its application, a State **must describe a plan** to evaluate comparability once the IADA pilot is implemented.

- A State does not need to have comparability at the scale score level.

- Focus on consistency of achievement level classifications given that the IADA pilot will be used in accountability determinations along with the current State test.

EXAMPLE OF AN ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF COMPARABILITY (FROM AN IADA PILOT)

- In New Hampshire's IADA pilot, the State used "non-concurrent" comparability.
- Compared the results on the current State grade 3 reading/language arts (R/LA) assessment with results of the same students taking the grade 4 PACE R/LA pilot.
- Compared the _achievement level_ match across tests and years.
- The State focused on:
  - Consistency of expectations for the same students, while expecting some growth from one year to the next.
  - Positive, moderate correlations between the State test and PACE.

See https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/iada/nh-annual-perf-rpt1819.pdf, page 117 for non-concurrent validity comparisons of the New Hampshire PACE pilot with the New Hampshire statewide assessment.

EXAMPLE OF AN ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF COMPARABILITY (NON-IADA)

- ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(H): Nationally recognized, locally selected high school assessment
- States demonstrated comparability between the **statewide assessment** and the **nationally recognized assessment** by examining (a) alignment for both assessments and (b) consistency of achievement classifications for both assessments.
  - MS, ND, and OK have been approved to permit an LEA to administer a nationally recognized, locally selected high school assessment in lieu of the statewide assessment.
  - See critical element 7.3, in the *Guide for Assessment Peer Review* https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/saa/assessmentpeerreview.pdf.

NON-IADA EXAMPLE, CONTINUED

For this type of comparability evaluation, States must demonstrate that the nationally recognized high school assessment:

- Is **equivalent to or more rigorous** than the statewide assessment, with respect to
  - The coverage of academic content;
  - The difficulty of the assessment;
  - The overall quality of the assessment; and
  - Any other aspects of the assessment that the State may establish in its technical criteria; and
- Can produce valid and reliable data on student academic achievement with respect to all high school students and each subgroup of high school students that are comparable to student academic achievement data for all high school students and each subgroup of high school students produced by the statewide assessment at each academic achievement level.

NEXT STEPS FOR IADA: TRANSITIONING ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS

- A State may want to consider establishing an **initial** set of academic achievement standards on the innovative assessment that are comparable to the statewide assessment for use during the IADA period.
- At the same time, the State may also build new academic achievement standards on the innovative assessment to which the State would transition once all students in the State are taking the innovative assessment.
- This would permit the State to have comparable results during the IADA period but permit new academic achievement standards that perhaps better reflect the new assessment design.

NEXT STEPS FOR IADA: ENGAGEMENT AND EXTERNAL COLLABORATION

- Educator and family engagement is a key aspect, throughout the process of conceiving, planning, building, and implementing innovative assessments.

- Clear and ongoing communication is critical between educators and families about how an IADA assessment relates to other tests students have taken is critical.

- Communicating assessment results with families in easily understandable and actionable ways is essential.

- External partnerships are encouraged, but not required. There is no requirement that a State secure a contract with an external vendor before applying for IADA.

NEXT STEPS FOR IADA: CLARIFYING TIMELINES

- A common theme in the RFI comments was that the timeline for IADA implementation is too aggressive and that States needed time to prepare an IADA design and discuss with stakeholders.
- States and stakeholders have also mentioned that having receiving Department approval early in their development process (before they have an IADA ready to administer in schools) will help States in their internal discussions.

NEXT STEPS FOR IADA: PLANNING STATUS

- Planning Status – Starting this year, the Department is offering an initial "planning status" phase for any interested State.
- A State can submit a request to enter IADA planning status whenever it would like to do so.
- Does not replace the existing peer review of a full application, which still must occur prior to the State administering its IADA pilot in lieu of the statewide assessment.
- A State interested in entering planning status would notify the Department of its intent to plan and develop a full IADA application.
- Planning status is not a necessary precursor to submitting an IADA application – it is entirely optional.

NEXT STEPS FOR IADA: PLANNING STATUS

- A State interested in Planning Status does not need to have completed a full IADA application with a fully developed pilot design.
- The State will be asked to submit:
  - A short summary or overview of its initial approach or design;
  - Goals for the IADA pilot; and
  - Proposed timeline for submitting an IADA application.

NEXT STEPS FOR IADA: CLARIFYING TIMELINES

- By statute, the Department can initially approve States for IADA for **five years.**
  - We may provide **an additional two-year renewal** period after the first five-year demonstration period.
  - After the two-year renewal period, the statute permitted the Department to grant **"the time necessary to implement the innovative assessment system statewide."** (ESEA section 1204(j)(3))
- Within those statutory requirements, the Department will work closely with **each State** to support implementation.
  - In some cases, we understand this may take more than five, or even seven, years.
  - We are committed to working with each IADA State, provided it continues making progress.

NEXT STEPS FOR IADA: CLARIFYING TIMELINES

- To assist your planning, the Department is establishing two regular submission windows for complete IADA applications.
- The Department will offer two application opportunities per calendar year:
  - **May** – The first Friday in May (for review and approval prior to the upcoming school year – e.g., approval in May 2024 will be for the 2024-25 school year).
  - **December** – The first Friday in December (for review and approval in the spring prior to the upcoming school year – e.g., submission in December 2024 will for the for the 2025-26 school year).

NEXT STEPS FOR IADA: CLARIFYING TIMELINES

- The statute requires a peer review of the IADA application.
- To prepare, we need advance notice of how many States intend to apply. We will ask State to provide an intent to apply 45 days prior to the due date.
- Following the peer review, we will provide feedback and may ask the State to clarify parts of its application.
- The Department must provide a decision on all IADA applications within 90 days of the application deadline.
- A State must receive approval from the Department prior to administering the IADA pilot in lieu of the statewide assessment in LEAs or schools.

NEXT STEPS FOR IADA: FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- The 2020 and 2022 Competitive Grants for State Assessments (CGSA) competitions provided grants that support IADA planning and implementation as well as other grants that support State development of new assessment designs.
- The purpose of the CGSA program is to enhance the quality of assessment instruments and assessment systems used by States for measuring the academic achievement of elementary and secondary school students.
- All of the CGSA statutory uses of funds are well aligned with IADA; we encourage States to propose ideas that align with IADA in their future CGSA applications.

NEXT STEPS FOR IADA: FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- Between the 2020 and 2022 CGSA competitions, the Department funded 13 projects ($35+ million in total) that involve either innovative assessment planning, development, or design and implementation.
  - See HI (IADA planning), MA (IADA implementation), TX, NE, LA (IADA implementation) CGSA awards in 2020; HI, LA (IADA implementation), NE, MT, MO, NY, KY, NC CGSA awards in 2022; abstracts at https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/school-support-and-accountability/competitive-grants-for-state-assessments/awards/
- Congress appropriated $20.9 million for CGSA in fiscal year 2023; a competition is forthcoming later this school year. More information will be provided as it is available.

OPEN CALL FOR ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEWERS

- The Department is always seeking additional experts to serve as a peer reviewer of State assessment systems, IADA applications, and CGSA applications.
- Please share with all interested parties.
- Applicants must submit a short application describing experience, interests, and possible conflicts along with a CV or resume.
- See https://oese.ed.gov/files/2023/09/Assessment-Peer-Reviewer-Checklist-2023-24.docx.

QUESTIONS?

Thank You!