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SUBJECT
  Smarter Balanced Consortium

CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY
  BOR Policy 2:3 – System Undergraduate Admissions

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION
  Beginning in 2012, the Regental system's academic enterprise began work on the development and implementation of strategies required to bring Smarter Balanced Assessments online in South Dakota. These assessments and their related standards in math and in English/Language Arts were being implemented to provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to know and to be able to do at different grade-levels throughout their K-12 experiences. The Smarter Balanced Consortium was established at that time to develop assessments aligned with the standards that are designed to ensure graduates from high school demonstrate that they are college- and career-ready. Participating states at the time agreed that the 11th grade summative assessment will be used for college placement. At an operational level, this means the system has committed to using the results of the assessments to place entering students much as we currently use the result from ACT, Accuplacer and other normed assessments.

  Staff from the South Dakota Department of Education (DOE) were actively engaged in the design of the assessment programs, and as these processes unfolded, university faculty in English/language arts (ELA), math and education helped with the design and delivery of professional development opportunities offered by the Department of Education. Further, faculty responsible for the system's programs in teacher education worked to incorporate critical elements into all programs offered to ensure that graduates are prepared to work in schools offering curriculum based on the Standards and making full use of the Assessments.

  Once fully implemented, attention turned to reporting and determining the best approach for using the assessments as a measure of college-readiness. For example, the new assessments provided a new opportunity to tell groups of students that they appear to be on track to be college ready but they will need to complete an advanced level math class during their senior year. More importantly, this created an opportunity to provide a targeted message to those students who are not on a path to be college ready presenting an option

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INFORMATIONAL ITEM

or set of options they can pursue to address their identified deficiencies during the senior year. In addition to reporting to students, the Consortium worked to develop reports that will go to states, to schools, and to teachers since this student performance data will be useful information for each of these groups. Finally, protocols for reporting results to postsecondary institutions were also developed since this information was designed to inform placement in college-level coursework.

The 11th grade Smarter Balanced assessment has been used to provide each high school junior a statement of work to be completed during their senior year so they will be ready to do college level work when they graduate. For many students, the recommended path will be to enroll in and successfully complete another advanced level math course during the senior year. However, for a significant number of students, this has required additional work in lower level courses covering material that is parallel to the remedial programming offered by the system's universities. Beginning in Spring 2013, the DOE began offering remedial math opportunities through the South Dakota Virtual High School. This offering utilized the Regental system's remedial strategy which is based on the diagnostic Accuplacer linked with Pearson's MyMathLab or MyFoundationsLab. Students enrolled who demonstrate mastery through an end of course retesting with the Accuplacer are then allowed to register in entry level college courses.

As the first set of Smarter Balanced scores became available, established cut scores were developed by the Math and English Discipline Councils within the Regental system and approved at the April 2015 BOR meeting. These were then included in the Math and English Placement guidelines for the system, and work was completed to have the Smarter Balanced scores added to the common transcript.

In late 2016, the Board of Regents and DOE staff began discussing the potential use of Smarter Balanced scores to determine student proactive admission. At the time BOR Policy 2:3 System Undergraduate Admissions did not provide the policy framework that would allow for the admission of high school students just based on their performance on the Smarter Balanced assessment. To address this issue, revisions were made to the current admission policy at the August 2017 BOR meeting. This policy change resulted in South Dakota being the first state to adopt Smarter Balanced scores for admission purposes. Prior to this time, student ACT/SAT scores were used as the primary standardized measure for both admission and student placement, drawing from validity studies developed by ACT, Inc.

In an attempt to evaluate the relationship between Smarter Balanced scores and students' future postsecondary success, data available through the Board of Regents Matriculation Dashboard were used to compare student first year performance and credit taking behaviors once they entered the Regental system the year following high school graduation. For reference, there were 8,765 students in 2015-16 high school graduate data file, and a process was employed to match these graduates against the Regental system's 2016FA census date extract (on first name, last name, and date of birth), resulting in 2,632 students. The data depicted below represents the performance outcomes for this student population.

Table 1 (math) and Table 2 (reading) show the relationship between Smarter Balanced score ranges and student cumulative GPA during the first academic year. Specifically, the tables show the following indicators: student count ("fa" column), in-system retention into 2017SP ("sp" column"), mean completed credits during FY2017 ("cmplcred" column), and mean system grade point average during FY2017 ("gpa" column). Overall, as student performance on both indicators increases, their average GPA also increased with those students earning a 3 or higher on the assessment achieving an average GPA of 2.7 or higher when considering both Math and English scores.

Table 1
Student Outcomes by Smarter Balanced Math Level

Math	N(fa)	mean(sp)	mean(cmplcred)	mean(gpa)
Level 1	326	83.74	18.10	2.19
Level 2	682	89.00	22.65	2.55
Level 3	946	94.08	26.64	2.98
Level 4	441	96.37	28.69	3.33
Total	2,395	91.65	24.72	2.82

Table 2
Student Outcomes by Smarter Balanced Reading Level

Read	N(fa)	mean(sp)	mean(cmplcred)	mean(gpa)
Level 1	78	91.03	18.44	2.18
Level 2	398	87.69	20.28	2.34
Level 3	1,069	89.52	24.13	2.71
Level 4	854	96.14	28.07	3.23
Total	2,399	91.62	24.71	2.82

The data depicted in Tables 1 and 2 above (along with other data comparisons preformed) demonstrate that smarter balanced scores serve as a strong predictor for many student success metrics that are traditionally tracked. As more student data become available, additional analysis will be conducted in the future to continuously assess the predictability of these data points for making both placement and admission decisions in the Regental system.

IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to an increased reliance on Smarter Balanced scores for determining student placement and admission in the Regental system, a brief overview of the assessment will be provided by BOR and DOE staff. Future developments related to share scores across states, and the implications for high school accountability will also be discussed.

ATTACHMENTS

None