Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP) Performance Level Descriptors Review & Feedback Discussion

Virginia Department of Education
and
Behavioral Research & Teaching
University of Oregon

Meeting Goals & Agenda

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Goal 1: Review nature/purpose of Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs), including their development, alignment to VESOLs, & how they're used in standard setting

Goal 2: Discuss committee feedback

Agenda:
(1) Review PLDs

(2) Discuss Committee Feedback — *Reading, Math, & Science*

(3) Q & A and Wrap-up

What Are PLDs?

- Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) outline expectations for student performance at each achievement (performance) level based on the Virginia Essentialized Standards of Learning (VESOL) as assessed by the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP).

Achievement (Performance) Levels for VAAP

- *Pass/Advanced*
- *Pass/Proficient*
- *Fail/Does Not Meet*

Purpose of PLDs

- Provide clear, concise, concrete behavioral descriptions of what students should know and be able to demonstrate to achieve a given performance level

- Connect the range of knowledge/skills described in the VESOLs to performance expectations on the VAAP tests

- Yield a "profile" of a typical student in each VAAP performance level (for a given content area and grade-level)

Three Major Functions

1. Convey to parents, teachers, and public the profile of what a typical student at a given performance level knows and can demonstrate via the VAAP (e.g., useful in score reporting)

2. Support meaningful interpretation of standards-based student performance on VAAP (e.g., useful in IEP discussion/reporting)

3. Support standard setting by providing a qualitative description of the content- and skill-based performance expectations for each performance level as a basis for examining VAAP test items (e.g., critical for determining cut-scores)

VAAP PLD Development & Alignment with VESOLs

- VESOL largely defines middle column (i.e., profile of typical student performing at ***Pass/Proficient*** level)

- Performance expectations increase in last column, guided by VESOL complexity continuum (i.e., profile of typical student performing at ***Pass/Advanced*** level)

- Use of *"some"* (*Proficient*) vs. *"many"* / *"most"* (*Advanced*) reflects nature of demonstrating standards-based performance expectations and standard setting:
  - VAAP reflects a sample of academic content from the VESOLs
  - PLDs offer a "profile" so that educators from diverse backgrounds can evaluate VAAP items and determine cut scores between performance categories

- Performance expectations decrease in first column (i.e., profile of typical student performing at ***Fail/Does Not Meet*** level)

PLDs and Standard Setting

Standard setting is a systematic process of judging the test performance required (cut score) to achieve a particular performance level

- PLDs used to create a common understanding of what "_does not meet_", "_proficient_", and "_advanced_" mean in terms of VESOL

- Without PLDs, educators' understandings of these terms would be specific to their own experiences (rather than based on VESOL-driven performance expectations)

- Committee diversity (here and in standard setting) in terms of region, content/pedagogical expertise helps yield professional judgments

PLDs and Standard Setting (cont.)

Thus, it is crucial that PLDs are directly informed by the grade-level expectations expressed in the VESOL, so that students' performance on the VAAP and their performance level classification are all clearly in sync with what students should know and be able to demonstrate .

## *VESOLs → PLDs → VAAP cut scores*

Discussing Committee PLD Feedback

Resources for Today

1. ***PLDs*** –– Separate Word docs for each grade / content area
   - *Reading* = Grades 3-8 & HS
   - *Math* = Grades 3-8 & HS
   - *Science* = Grades 5, 8, & HS
2. **VESOL** –– vesol-2021-2022.pdf

Guides for Selecting & Discussing Feedback

- Are the PLDs understandable and useful for all stakeholders?

- Do the PLDs clearly differentiate among performance levels?

- Are the PLDs focused on standards-based (VESOL) learning?

  - Are they clearly aligned with VESOL, without adding, subtracting, or altering content in ways that stray from the standards?

- Are they phrased with respect to what students *should be able to do*, not what they *cannot* do?
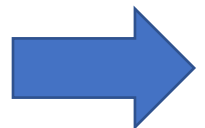
  Add'l feedback will help us correct & further refine PLDs

Reading

Reading "Recipe" (cont.)

Potential Revision of *Fail/Does Not Meet* for Grade 3 Reading:

Given sentences ~~of 5 words or fewer~~ read to the student or that the student reads, the student may be able to correctly:

- identify a letter name, letter sound, or word,
- answer a comprehension question,
- identify an element such as an event, idea, or step,
- identify a character, or
- identify a setting.

Reading "Recipe" (cont.)

Potential Revision of *Pass/Proficient* for Grade 3 Reading:

Given sentences ~~of at least 6 words~~ read to the student or that the student reads, the student ~~is generally able to~~ correctly:

- identifies and understands the meaning of some words,
- answers some comprehension questions,
- identifies some elements such as events, ideas, or steps,
- identifies some characters, and
- identifies some settings.

Reading "Recipe" (cont.)

Potential Revision of *Pass/Advanced* for Grade 3 Reading:

Given sentences ~~of 7 words or more~~ read to the student or that the student reads, the student ~~is generally able to~~ correctly:

- identifies and understands the meaning of most words,
- answers most comprehension questions,
- identifies most elements such as events, ideas, or steps,
- identifies most characters, and
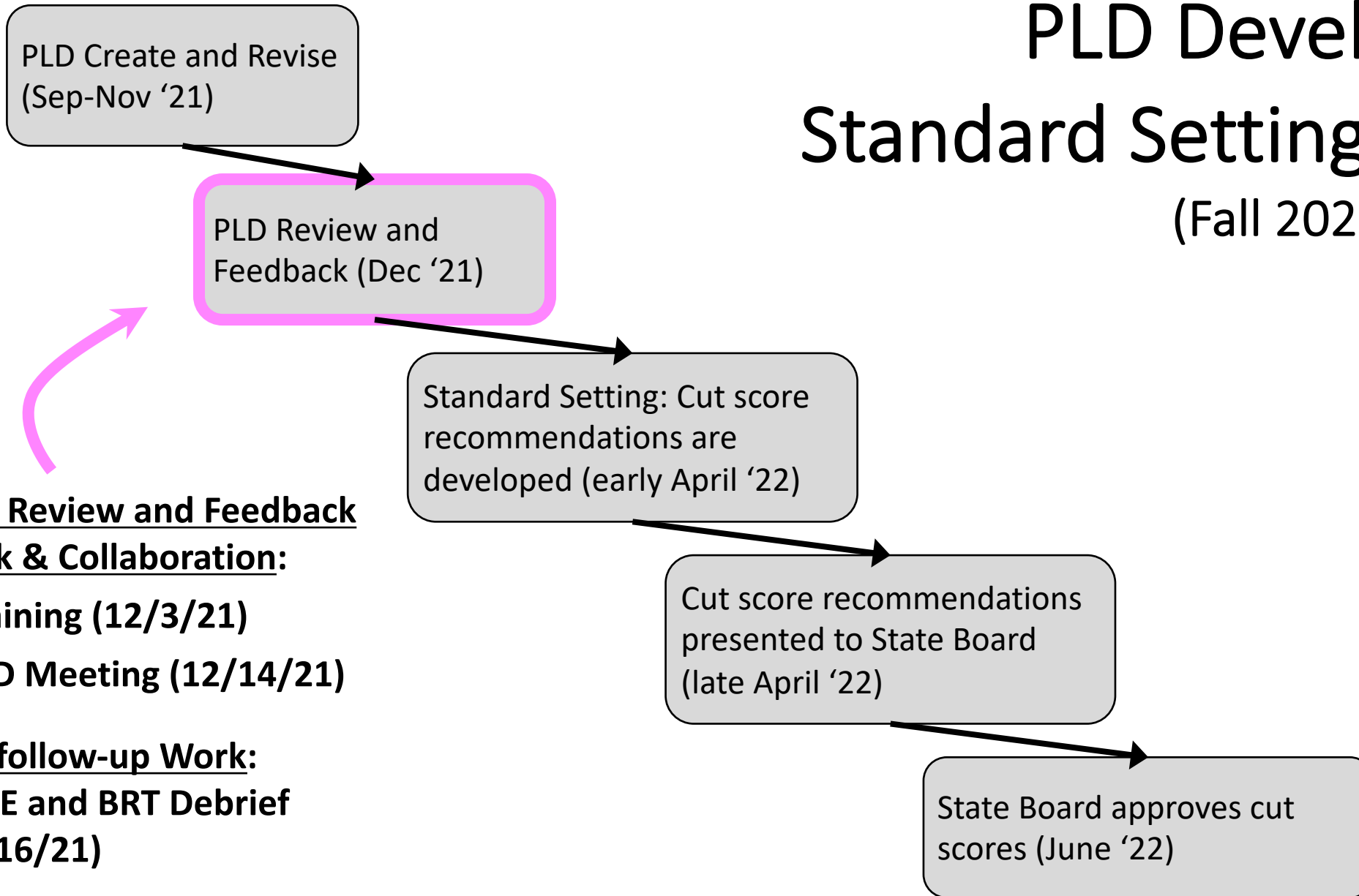- identifies most settings.

Break

Math

Science

Q & A and Wrap-up

PLD Development & Standard Setting Roadmap

(Fall 2021 – Spring 2022)

PLD Create and Revise (Sep-Nov '21)

PLD Review and Feedback (Dec '21)

Standard Setting: Cut score recommendations are developed (early April '22)

Cut score recommendations presented to State Board (late April '22)

State Board approves cut scores (June '22)

Your Review and Feedback Work & Collaboration:

- **Training (12/3/21)**
- **PLD Meeting (12/14/21)**

Our follow-up Work:
VDOE and BRT Debrief (12/16/21)

Do you have any additional questions or comments to share?

Wrap-up

Thank you!! We enjoyed working with you today!

- Look for a certificate of participation in your inboxes.

- VDOE and BRT have documented *all* feedback, discussion, and recommendations, and we will use this information to think critically about and refine PLDs as a basis for standard setting in spring '22.

- Your work is crucial to building a VAAP system that meets peer review and works for students & teachers—giving an opportunity for students to demonstrate proficiency around grade-level performance expectations.