



# SCILLSS QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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## **Introduction to SCILLSS**

The Strengthening Claims-based Interpretations and Uses of Local and Large-scale Science Assessment Scores (SCILLSS) project is funded by the US Department of Education's Enhanced Assessment Instruments Grant Program. As lead state and grantee, the Nebraska Department of Education is working in collaboration with two other state education agencies (the Wyoming Department of Education and the Montana Office of Public Instruction), four organizations (edCount, ACS Ventures, SRI International, and the Pacific Institute for Research & Evaluation (PIRE)), and a technical advisory panel of 10 experts that contribute an essential combination of expertise in principled-design, measurement, assessment literacy, and classroom practices to support the implementation of this project.

### **Project Purpose**

The SCILLSS project aims to strengthen the knowledge base among stakeholders for using principled-design approaches to create and evaluate quality science assessments that generate meaningful and useful scores, and to establish a means for states to strengthen the meaning of statewide assessment results and to connect those results with local assessments in a complementary system.

## **SCILLSS Quarter 3 News & Highlights**

### **What We've Been Up To**

In October 2017, SCILLSS partners continued to develop and refine the local and state assessment protocols and digital workbook on educational assessment design and evaluation. Organizational partners held onsite meetings in Nebraska, Wyoming, and Montana to conduct pilot studies with district staff for the local needs assessment protocol and to discuss connections between the SCILLSS project and state initiatives in science to find areas where the SCILLSS work can inform and complement work happening in each state. The SCILLSS partners also articulated a three-phase principled-design process that will guide the development of the SCILLSS state assessment resources and ensure that project outcomes are achieved.

### **State-specific and Common Theories of Action**

edCount developed and refined one Theory of Action (ToA) process documentation report for each participating state. The purpose of each report is to provide important documentation regarding the purpose of the ToA within a principled-design approach and the process and varied stakeholders the state relied on to develop and refine their ToA. State leads had an opportunity to review and provide feedback for the reports. edCount posted the reports to the SCILLSS website for wider dissemination, and to allow external stakeholders to consider and replicate a similar, generalizable process for development of their own theory of action.

### **Local and State Needs Assessment Protocols**

During quarter 3, ACS conducted onsite and virtual pilot studies in Montana, Wyoming, and Nebraska to elicit feedback to inform revisions to the local needs assessment protocol. ACS also developed an initial draft of the state assessment protocol, which organizational partners determined should expand upon the content within the local needs assessment and complement the specific needs of both the participating states and, to the extent possible, states external to the project.





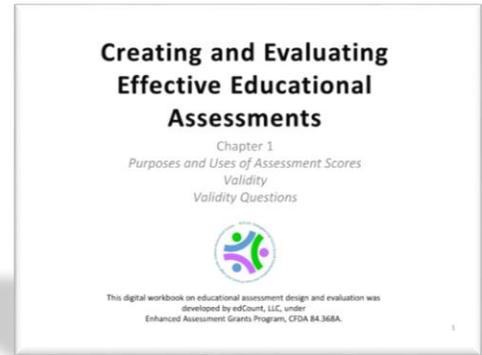
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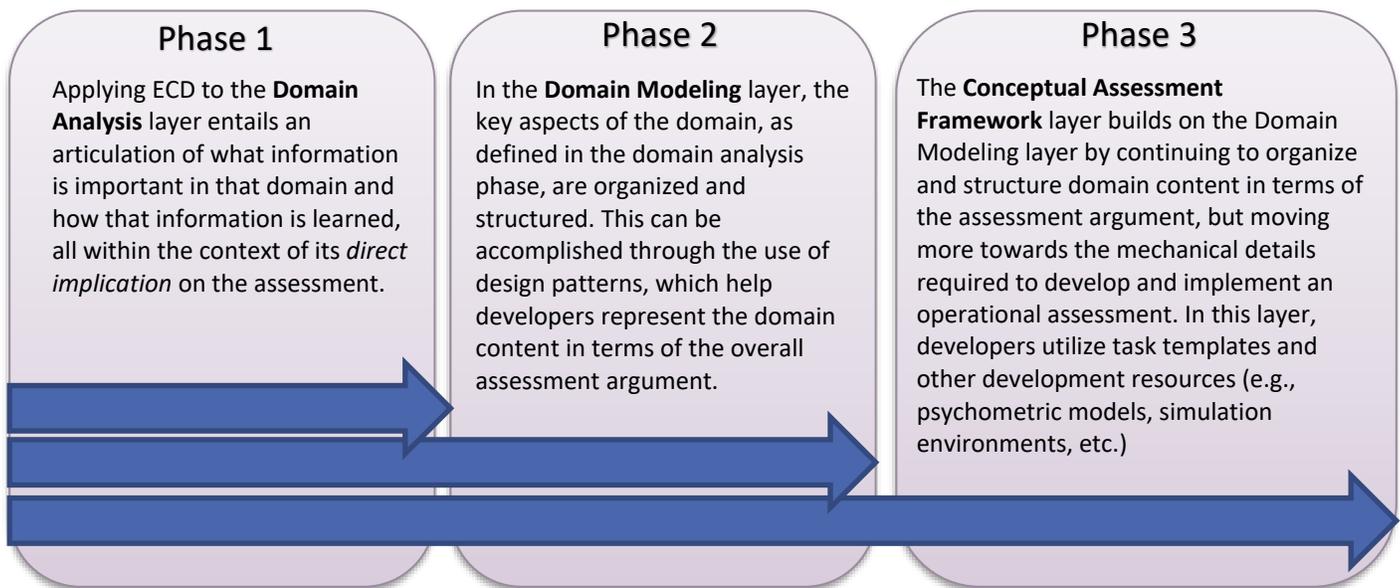
## Digital Workbook on Educational Assessment Design and Evaluation

edCount collaborated internally to design and develop the content for the first chapter of a digital workbook on educational assessment design and evaluation. The content of the workbook is designed to explore the purposes and uses of educational assessments and the concept of validity, and to introduce four key validity questions that guide the evaluation of assessment scores for their intended purposes and uses. Based on input from the state partners, the SCILLSS organizational partners are expanding the digital workbook to include five interactive chapters, or modules, and are accelerating the development timeline for the workbook to allow for the completion of all five chapters by December 2018. This will accomplish stronger integration between the digital workbook and the needs assessment protocols, and will allow for a more coherent dissemination of the resources.



## SCILLSS Three-phase Principled-design Process

SCILLSS partners articulated a cyclical, three-phase principled-design process to guide the development of a coherent sampling of state and classroom assessment materials, including claim/subclaims, measurement targets, performance level descriptors, design patterns, task models, tasks, and scoring rubrics. These phases are summarized below.



## What's Next?

In 2018, SCILLSS organizational partners will finalize year 1 deliverables including: 1) the local and state needs assessment protocols, 2) the digital workbook on educational assessment design and evaluation, and 3) the project and participating state ToAs. SCILLSS partners will also submit their first Annual Progress Report to the US Department of Education detailing the project progress and outcomes for the first year. In March, SCILLSS partners will meet to discuss and begin development of a sampling of principled-design state assessment resources using the three-phase design process.

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