



SCILLSS QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Volume 3 / Issue 3

December 2019

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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 Year 3, Quarter 3 News & Highlights

What We've Been Up To

In this quarter, the SCILLSS project engaged in dissemination efforts, finalized the classroom-based assessment tasks, launched the SCILLSS pilot study, and began developing the state-specific action plans. SCILLSS organizational partners submitted proposals to present at NCSA and to facilitate workshops in Montana and Wyoming on developing classroom assessment tasks aligned to three-dimensional standards. Partners also prepared for facilitating a professional development workshop in Nebraska and learned that their proposal to present at NCME was accepted. SCILLSS partners also finalized the educator-developed and expert-developed classroom-based assessment tasks for piloting and facilitated meetings with the participating educators to explain feedback and changes to the tasks. Subsequently, SCILLSS partners launched the first phase of the SCILLSS pilot study, which involved facilitating virtual trainings with educators on how to administer and score the educator- and expert-developed tasks and developing the data collection tools and piloting materials.

Dissemination

edCount submitted a proposal to the 2020 NCSA Annual Conference titled, "Advancing Multidimensional Science Assessment Design for Large-scale and Classroom Use," summarizing SCILLSS partners' intent to describe the project's principled-design approach to assessing the NGSS for both large-scale and local tests, with a specific emphasis on classroom assessment. edCount also submitted proposals to present at the Montana Office of Public Instruction's Annual Assessment Conference in January 2020 and to facilitate three two-day regional workshops in Wyoming in summer 2020. The purpose of these sessions is to engage educators in a principled-design approach for developing three-dimensional classroom science assessment tasks. edCount also collaborated with Nebraska state leads to plan and develop materials for a two-day professional learning workshop on January 24-25, 2020 in Kearney, Nebraska to engage teacher leaders and teachers in a train-the-trainer modeled session designed to increase their knowledge of a principled-approach and to provide strategies for developing three-dimensional classroom science assessment tasks.

edCount's proposal to present at the 2020 Annual Meeting of the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME) was accepted. The session will share how SCILLSS partners are applying current research, theory, and best practice to establish replicable and scalable principled-design tools that state and local educators can use to clarify and strengthen the connection between statewide assessments, local assessments, and classroom instruction, enabling all stakeholders to derive maximum meaning and utility from assessment scores.

The SCILLSS Quarterly Newsletter was developed with funding from the U.S. Department of Education under Enhanced Assessment Grants Program CFDA 84.368A. The contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and no assumption of endorsement by the Federal government should be made.





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Pilot Study

SCILLSS partners are currently collaborating with educators from across the three partner states (Nebraska, Montana and Wyoming) to pilot the principled-design process for developing classroom science assessment tasks. Participating educators are administering both educator- and expert-developed classroom science assessment tasks developed using a principled-design approach. The goals of the pilot study are (a) to investigate the extent to which our principled-design process is feasible for teachers to use for developing NGSS-aligned classroom assessment tasks, and (b) to evaluate the extent to which the set of assessment tasks generated through this process yield accurate and useful information about students' science learning.

edCount collaborated with SRI partners to refine and finalize the data collection tools including a post-pilot student survey, a post-pilot educator survey, the post-pilot focus group script and protocol, and 15 task-specific scoring and annotation spreadsheets to guide educators through the process of evaluating and annotating each student response. Partners also finalized post-pilot submission instructions to provide guidance to educators for the final submission of pilot materials.

Task Development for Classroom Use

edCount developed a PowerPoint presentation to facilitate virtual meetings with educators in partner states to share feedback and proposed revisions to the educator-developed classroom assessment tasks. edCount facilitated nine virtual meetings with educators related to the feedback on the tasks developed at the summer workshops. During the virtual sessions, edCount shared the purpose and key aspects of the review process, the feedback and proposed revisions to the educator-developed tasks, and the next steps for educators to finalize the tasks and accompanying materials in preparation for piloting. edCount and SRI partners reviewed additional educator comments and revisions to the educator-developed classroom assessment tasks and finalized both the educator- and SCILLSS expert- developed tasks and supporting documentation in preparation for piloting.

What's Next?

Next steps include scheduling and facilitating post-pilot focus groups with the participating educators to gather additional feedback about the quality of the principled-design process and the appropriateness and usefulness of the classroom assessment tasks, as well as beginning to organize and conduct preliminary analyses of the data from phase one of the SCILLSS pilot study. SCILLSS partners will also facilitate workshops on developing classroom-based assessment tasks aligned to three-dimensional standards using a principled-approach in Montana and Nebraska and begin planning for the 2020 annual meeting and subsequent meeting with NWEA on using a principled process to develop assessment tasks.



State-specific Action Plans

PIRE partners developed a Theory of Action (ToA) status implementation tool to gauge state partners' progress in implementing their ToAs. edCount facilitated planning meetings with Nebraska and Montana to discuss plans to evaluate states' implementation of their ToA and to develop state action plans. The purpose of the state action plans is to guide state partners in their post-project efforts to establish a coherent, high-quality assessment system in science and to take the necessary steps toward achieving the claims and outcomes in their ToA. edCount plans to meet with Wyoming state leads to discuss their ToA and state action plan in January 2020.

Contact Us!

Liz Summers,
Project Director

lsummers@edcount.com

Erin Buchanan,
Deputy Project Director

ebuchanan@edcount.com