

Important Information Concerning 2019 RISE Validity and Reliability

RISE Reports on Nextera:

Classroom reports for RISE continued to see delays of up to a week to access what Questar reports as accurate information. When students submitted the test, the scale score they saw was accurate. USBE has recommended that no reports from RISE be sent home until they have verification from Questar that the data is correctly reporting what the students earned. Most districts are waiting until the fall to send ISRs home. Ron Twitchell will send an email to principals when USBE declares the data correctly reported.

RISE Validity and Reliability:

There have been a number of questions and concerns raised about the validity and reliability of the RISE test and the effect that the five outages have had on student scores. To clarify, validity as used in the assessment world, means that the question items on the test are measuring what they intend to measure. In the case of RISE where we are using the same question items that were in SAGE, we can be confident in the validity of the test because the items have been proven to be aligned with the Utah State Core. There are five years of SAGE data to confirm this.

Reliability is another term for consistency. Reliability and validity are independent of each other. A measurement may be valid, but not reliable, or it may be reliable but not valid. Suppose the speedometer on your car is defective and reports your car's speed 10% slower than it is actually traveling. Your speed is reliable in the fact that it is giving you the same measure of 20 miles per hour as you drive in a school zone, but it is invalid since you are really traveling faster and could get a ticket. Your defense in traffic court that you were driving 20 mph because your speedometer said so would not stand up in court. Your car's measurement was invalid.

Educators often ask, "Were my students able to demonstrate their proficiency as intended?" This is actually a question of reliability. In other words, how consistent are students' scores at representing their achievement when compared with their previous results? In an email to superintendents across the state earlier this month, State Superintendent Sydnee Dickson said, "Unfortunately, the mounting issues with the operating platform created by Questar bring up many questions that will need to be answered. The frequency of the problems that have occurred may impact the Utah State Board of Education's ability to use the results for purposes of statewide accountability... We believe the results can still be used to inform classroom instruction and individual student learning. However, we are less confident about overall accountability."

We recommend that principals be cautious in telling their teachers that their students' RISE scores are not valid and reliable. At this point, we do not know this for sure.

Here's what we do know:

- We know that the test itself is a valid test as it measures what it was intended to measure.
- We know that students who were not affected by system outages will have had a similar opportunity to demonstrate their proficiency to that of the previous five SAGE-tested years.
- We also know that if we filter out students whose scores were affected by outages (Provo City School District was one of the districts with a greater number of incidents, and teachers will know of their student's experience), we will have more accurate scores – accurate enough that principals and teacher teams may make instructional decisions based on RISE data – along with their own formal and informal assessment data – as has been done in years past.
- We know that we don't know how students' scores were affected; therefore, it would not be appropriate to conclude that the data are invalid. In fact, four of the RISE system outages were issues with the submission of a session of the test *after the student had already finished that segment*. The outages had less of an impact on students *when they were actually testing* if the issue was simply an inability to submit.

School Accountability:

While we will likely be able to use RISE data for instructional decisions, its use for school accountability has not yet been determined. The issue lies in the fact that the state accountability system requires that we count all students who participated – even if they were negatively impacted by the system outages. Questar will be analyzing the RISE results of all students to see if and what the impact may be from the system outages. The USBE will engage an objective third party to analyze and verify those results. *We will be monitoring this analysis closely.* Depending upon what they find, there are three options:

1. If the analysis determines there is little impact, the state will move forward with the accountability system as planned.
2. If the analysis determines there was an impact, there is an option to place an asterisk indicating where there have been testing irregularities that may have skewed the data.
3. If the analysis determines there was a more significant impact, the USBE may decide to discontinue the accountability system for the 2018-19 school year. Superintendent Dickson indicated that this was a last resort.

The Utah Association of Assessment Directors is authoring a letter recommending that USBE not use the RISE 2019 results for any school accountability.

Please contact Ron Twitchell with any questions you may have. Please look forward to more communication throughout the summer and fall of 2019 regarding the state's findings.