



**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Technology Assisted Student Assessment Institute (TASA) Conference**  
***Innovations in Testing Technology: Leadership and Learning from the Field***  
**April 11, 2008**

Ramada Hotel and Conference Centre  
2170 Harvey Avenue Kelowna BC

**Program**

- 8:00 a.m.      **Registration and Breakfast**
- 9:00 a.m.      **Opening Greetings**  
*Jim Gaskill, Director Technology Assisted Student Assessment Institute*
- 9:15 a.m.      **Welcome Remarks**  
Britta Gundersen-Bryden, Executive Director, BC Ministry of Education
- 9:30 a.m.      **Keynote Address**  
Recasting the LMS: Educational Applications of Multi-User Virtual Environments  
*Grant Potter, e-Learning Coordinator, UNBC Centre for Teaching Learning and Technology*
- 10:15 a.m.      **Concurrent Sessions 1**
- Achieving Success through Online Exam Administration**  
*Debbie Willock, CEO, A. Willock Information Systems Inc.*  
This session will provide a brief overview of current online exam capabilities in British Columbia and show how a student completes an online exam or assessment. Presenters will describe how large scale exams can be successfully administered across a province, from registration and completion of an exam, invigilation of an exam, marking the exam, to delivering the results of those exams. Other components for assessments that may be discussed as time permits are special needs adaptive software, oral and aural components.
- Integrated Online Assessments for Students, Teachers and Leaders: Changing School Culture**  
*Barry Carbol, Publisher Etraffic Press*  
*Elizabeth Childs, Publisher, Professional Learning, Etraffic Solutions*  
This presentation will showcase a variety of partnered projects that are underway in British Columbia that make BC a leader in online learning and assessment. Projects include: Pilot Math – an online grade 10 Math resource that uses online assessment as a regular part of students’ learning experiences; LLearn – an innovative set of French language courses that address the need for communicative language learning materials with high quality audio and media to support student learning; Network Central – a collaborative learning environment

that has been created to meet the needs of the BC Principals and Vice Principals Association. This environment provides a range of online learning opportunities and assessment tools that enable administrators to reach the leadership standards as outlined by their association.

Each of the projects outlined above contribute to the creation of a school culture that fosters the use of technology-based assessment as an essential tool for learning and personal and professional development. These projects will inform the movement toward large-scale online assessment in K-12 education in Canada.

### **Using the Online Environment to Field Test Diploma Exam Questions**

*Pamela Witte, Sr. Manager Accountability and Reporting, Alberta Education*

*John Drader, Examination Manager, Alberta Education*

Alberta Education engages in a rigorous provincial-wide field testing process that is important to the development of fair, valid and reliable provincial assessments. This session will review how the field testing process works in the development of questions for diploma examinations and will provide a brief overview of the study conducted by Alberta Education in January 2007 to determine if there were any differences between traditional paper and pencil administration and an online delivery of a Science 30 field test. The study sought to determine the efficiencies, benefits, risks and challenges of field testing online and apply the findings of the study to determine the feasibility of moving to an online environment for high stakes exams such as Diploma examinations. In particular, the presentation will focus on how the field test was delivered using the online environment.

11:15 a.m. **Nutrition Break**

11:30 a.m. Concurrent Sessions 2

### **Computer Adaptive Sequential Testing Project**

*Greg Sadesky, Senior Psychometrician, Castle Rock Research*

The most valuable characteristics of a formative, classroom-based assessment tool are first, that it accurately measures student performance across the full range of student ability and second, that it supports a substantively-based interpretation of test performance. One innovative and new approach that addresses these characteristics is found in the use of Computer Adaptive Sequential Testing (CAST). In the CAST framework, students can be administered pre-assembled, content-balanced sets of test items, or testlets, based on their performance on previous testlets. In a current application of this methodology pioneered by Castle Rock Research Corporation, these testlets were constructed to reflect the skills and knowledge identified by SMEs as exemplifying achievement with each of several performance ranges. As a result, student performance can be well described with respect to the knowledge and skills described in the performance range, allowing teachers to quickly identify ability groupings within their classrooms, and giving students clear direction in their studies.

## **Criterion Online Writing Evaluation Service: Driving Technological Innovation**

*William Allan, Director of Publishing, Educational Testing Services (ETS)*

The Criterion Online Writing Evaluation is a comprehensive, instructional web-based tool that assists students to plan, write, and revise essays. Instructors can create their own topics or select from the Criterion topic library at any level from fourth grade through upper-level college or university. Within seconds, the system provides annotated diagnostic feedback and a holistic score to students and teachers, so that students can quickly review, revise, and resubmit essays. Instructors can also provide their own feedback within the system, as well as view summary reports of Criterion feedback. Criterion is a flexible system that students and teachers can access from school, home, or anywhere with an internet connection. In addition to an online demonstration of Criterion, the session will describe the research and technology that underpin the program, provide examples of how the service is being used in a variety of classroom settings, and highlight the impact the program is having on improved student learning.

## **A Look at the Program for International Student Assessment 2009 Electronic Reading Assessment**

*Pierre Brochu, Coordinator of Assessments, Council of Ministers of Education Canada*

In 2009, the OECD Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) will be administered for a fourth time in over 60 countries, including Canada. As was the case in 2000, Reading will be the major domain of the assessment with mathematics and science as minor domains.

Very few substantial changes have been made to the assessment framework of the Reading domain between 2000 and 2009. However, one major improvement in 2009 relates to the inclusion of an Electronic Reading Assessment (ERA). As part of this assessment, a subset of the regular PISA students will be asked to respond to a computer-based assessment of their skills in reading literacy using electronic texts. In the spring of 2008, Canada will take part in the field test of the ERA along with about 20 other countries. The ERA will be formally administered in 2009. This presentation will describe the assessment framework, the process used to develop the assessment as well as the administration procedures expected to be implemented in 2009.

12:30 p.m.

### **Buffet Lunch**

1:00 p.m.

### **Luncheon Address**

The Drake Equation, Dark Matter and Technology Assisted Assessment  
*Fernando Cartwright, Senior Research Analyst, Canadian Council on Learning*

2:00 p.m.

### **Concurrent Sessions 3**

#### **Beyond Multiple Choice- Some Innovative Item Types**

*Greg Sadesky, Senior Psychometrician, Castle Rock Research*

Innovative item types are rightfully talked about as a powerful tool to enhance computer-based assessment. All too often, what is put forward as innovative is a perfectly good multiple-choice item decorated with new

graphics and / or multimedia. Meanwhile, the assessment attributes of the item remain virtually unchanged. In this session, the key characteristics of high-quality innovative items will be surveyed along with illustrative examples of both what to do when conceiving and building an innovative item, and also some common pitfalls.

### **An Impact Analysis of Computer Adaptive Assessment at the Calgary Board of Education**

*Duncan White, Innovative Learning Services, Calgary Board of Education, and Curtis Slater, Research and Development Facilitator, Calgary Board of Education*

Innovative Learning Services builds and supports a variety of learning technologies that are available to all CBE staff and learners. As an on-demand, curriculum-specific, online assessment tool, CAA offered authentic assessment opportunities for CBE students that would address a whole spectrum of student learning styles. We will present professional development strategies and the research initiative that measured impact on student learning and instructional practice.

### **Online Student Assessments**

*Roslyne Scott, Regional Manager, Bridges Transitions Inc.*

This presentation will showcase the *Learning Styles Inventory* and *Do What You Are* assessments developed by Bridges Transitions. These two online assessments have been specifically developed for high school students and allow students to work independently. With the completion of either assessment a confidential report is generated. This report helps open the channels for more effective interaction between students, parents and teachers.

3:00 p.m.

### **Nutrition Break**

3:15 p.m.

### **Research, Policy, and Practice: Panel Session**

Followed by a brief introduction from the panelists, participants in this session are invited to bring forward questions and discussion points to be addressed.

Chair: *Jim Gaskill, TASA Director*

Panelists: *Fernando Cartwright, Senior Research Analyst, CCL; Duncan White, Calgary Board of Education.*

4:00 p.m.

### **Closing**

*Dr. Jim Gaskill, Director, Technology Assisted Student Assessment Institute (TASA)*

For Registration: <http://www.tasainstitute.com/symposium/index.html>