Project Summary

February 2014

ELPA21 is a consortium of 11 states — Arkansas, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Nebraska, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, Washington, and West Virginia — developing an assessment system designed to measure the performance of English language learners (ELLs) as they progress through their K-12 education and achieve college and career readiness. The consortium is collaborating with the Understanding Language Initiative of Stanford University, the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST) of the University of California, Los Angeles, and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The Oregon Department of Education is the lead state agency, and CCSSO is the project management partner.

The ELPA21 assessment will measure student proficiency in the new English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards that correspond to the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards and will report on the four language domains (i.e., reading, writing, speaking, and listening) and language comprehension. The system will report domain scores and a composite score on a continuous K-12 vertical scale.

The major deliverables of ELPA21 are a screener and a summative assessment. The screener will be developed for each of six grade bands and will allow schools to assess baseline English language proficiency of incoming ELLs. It will be used to inform placement and make instructional decisions. The summative assessment will include two fixed forms per grade band for increased security. This assessment will be administered near the end of the academic year.

The assessment system will be online and will incorporate technology-enhanced items that allow students to indicate their responses in ways other than traditional item types do (e.g., multiple choice items). The assessment system will include more interactive item styles, especially for speaking and listening tests; reduce turnaround time on reporting results; improve efficiency of data collection and management; increase security of test content and student data; and reduce administrative burdens on school and district staff.

ELPA21 is committed to the consortium model, and its governance and management structure relies heavily on the collective wisdom and decisions of the ELPA21 member states. Design and development of ELPA21 are being based on the prior successes of consortium member states (e.g., the Kansas writing tool and Oregon’s online testing delivery specifications).

Since receiving notice of the U.S. Department of Education grant award in September 2012, ELPA21 has been focused on formulating responses to the grant’s terms and conditions, establishing and populating its governance structure, and developing the assessment system structure and processes for development. Please find a summary of ELPA21’s governance and a timeline of deliverables below:

- Task Management Teams (TMTs) — TMTs guide, design, and approve the work under their purview. TMTs are led by experts with industry-leading experience, and each team includes state education agency (SEA) members nominated by the ELPA21 consortium states. TMTs and their advisors are listed below:
  - Administration, Accommodations, and Accessibility: Martha Thurlow, National Center on Educational Outcomes
  - Assessment Design, Scaling, and Field Testing: Bill Auty, Measurement Consulting and Scott Elliot, SEG Measurement

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● Item Acquisition and Development: Phoebe Winter, Assessment Research and Development Consultant
  ○ Performance Standard Setting, Data, and Reporting: Mary Seburn, Quantiful, LLC

Two additional key areas, Technology Integration and Utilization, and Communications and Outreach, are being overseen by Scott Elliot of SEG Measurement and Kara Schlosser respectively.

- Consortium Council (CC) — The CC oversees the development of the assessment system, and responds to operational issues and decisions. One SEA representative per consortium state has been appointed:
  ○ Arkansas Patricia Conner, Data Literacy Leader
  ○ Florida Chane Eplin, Bureau Chief
  ○ Iowa Colleen Anderson, Student Assessment Consultant
  ○ Kansas Lee Jones, Education Program Consultant, Assessment
  ○ Louisiana Jessica Baghian, Assistant Chief of Staff
  ○ Nebraska Terri Schuster, Director, Title III
  ○ Ohio Abdinur (Abdi) Mohamud, ELP Consultant
  ○ Oregon Martha Martinez, Education Specialist
  ○ South Carolina Amelia Brailsford, Coordinator of Test Development, Office of Assessment
  ○ Washington Margaret Ho, English Language Proficiency Assessment Coordinator and ELPA21 Chairperson
  ○ West Virginia Robert Crawford, Assistant Director, Office of Federal Programs

- Executive Board (EB) — The EB makes overarching policy decisions. Members of the EB were elected by the CC. The members of the EB, including the project chairperson, are as follows:
  ○ Florida Chane Eplin, Bureau Chief
  ○ Iowa Jobi Lawrence, Title III Coordinator
  ○ Kansas Phyllis Farrar, World Languages Consultant, Careers, Standards, and Assessment Services
  ○ Ohio Paula Mahaley, Assistant Director, Office of Curriculum and Assessment
  ○ Oregon Doug Kosty, Assistant Superintendent, Office of Assessment and Information Services
  ○ Washington Margaret Ho, English Language Proficiency Assessment Coordinator and ELPA21 Chairperson

Project Advisory — ELPA21’s governance structure includes oversight of qualitative and quantitative aspects of the assessment system design, development, and implementation. Kenji Hakuta of the Understanding Language Initiative of Stanford University serves as Principal Investigator, and CRESST is building the validity plan and overseeing its execution. A timeline of major deliverables has been ratified by the CC and presented to the U.S. Department of Education.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pilot test</td>
<td>SY 2014-2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field test</td>
<td>SY 2015-2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operational</td>
<td>SY 2016-2017</td>
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The ELPA21 federal grant funds the development of a common English language proficiency assessment system. The assessment system is being built using the ELP Standards developed by CCSSO and the Understanding Language Initiative. The development of the ELP Standards is a separately funded project.

For more information on ELPA21, contact Cat Still, Program Director for ELPA21, at cat.still@ccsso.org.

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