

Best Practice for Selecting the Intelligent Test Blueprint (ITB) for Transcend

The process of selecting standards to be assessed on a Transcend interim assessment is an easy task of clicking on the standard you want to assess, but the underlying decisions on which standards to select is a process that takes a few considerations. This document provides districts guidance on how to ensure the instruction the student receives is aligned to the standards that will be measured on the Transcend interim assessment.

For the district staff that will be selecting the ITB, there are a few helpful pieces of information that should be at least considered. Remember, these are recommendations based on Transcend's previous experience with districts and therefore we consider them to be points to think about when selecting the ITB.

- 1) **The Intelligent Blueprint Test (ITB) is selected at the district level.** This is a very important point because ITBs currently cannot be selected at the school level.
- 2) **Each interim assessment should be administered 6-10 weeks apart.** In order for the interim assessment to be aligned with instruction, this timeframe ensures that there is plenty of time for new standards and topics to be introduced and provides students with the opportunity to learn the new material.
- 3) **The first Math interim assessment should include at least 5 new standards but ideally each interim should measure a third of the new standards.** This recommendation of 5 new standards is the minimum number of standards so the ITB isn't heavily weighted with new content in the last couple of interims. Transcend has seen some ITBs that are heavily weighted with new standards in the latter interims leaving very few opportunities for the cumulative framework design (measuring standards from previous interims) to be used effectively. Ideally, each ITB would be equally weighted with a third of each interim containing new standards.
- 4) **For Reading, standards 1 through 4 are considered "foundational standards" and will be measured regardless if they have been selected in the ITB or not.** Transcend presents students with three stand-alone items in each Reading domain (RL, RI), to guide the selection of passages of appropriate difficulty. These items align to Reading standards 1,2,4. Based on how students perform on these stand-alone items determine the passages that are then presented to the student. Furthermore, each passage set includes items for standards 1-4 which are considered the "foundational" standards (demonstrate understanding of a text, main ideas, meaning of words, etc.) that are necessary to make a "complete" Reading test. For example, when standards 5 and 6 only are selected, Transcend will include standards 5 and 6 in addition to standards 1-4, but will not include other higher-level standards 7,8,9. This assessment design ensures that each domain (literacy and informational) is accurately measured.

- 5) **For Reading standards, standards from both Literacy and Information should be selected and standard 9 should not be selected for interim 1.** Transcend has witnessed some districts selecting all the standards for the entire domain (i.e., Reading Literature). The Transcend Reading assessment is passage dependent so if all the standards are selected in interim 1, they will all be available in the following interims and leaving very few opportunities to focus in on the standards that were instructed during the period between interims. Moreover, standard 9 measures paired passages and if it is selected for interim 1, paired passages will be measured on interim 2 and 3 due to the cumulative framework.

- 6) **Standards should be selected based on when the student was first instructed on the standard and NOT when the students have mastered the content.** Since Transcend has a cumulative framework design, items that students receive on interim 1 that they may have been introduced to, but not necessarily mastered yet, can be assessed on future interims. Therefore, this cumulative framework design helps produce the growth scores for interim 1 to the latter interims.

Furthermore, if you are struggling to determine what standards to select for each ITB or have issues scheduling the assessments, Transcend offers the following suggestions that we have discussed and witnessed from previous districts.

- 1) **Meet with the individuals who oversee the curriculum for the district and/or schools.** The titles of these individuals differ from content supervisors to curriculum coordinators, etc. Typically, there is an individual or individuals who are knowledgeable of the curriculum and either has the scope and sequence or pacing guides available or can help develop a plan on which standards to select for the ITB. They will be critical to ensure the alignment between the instruction and the assessment.
- 2) **Ensure the Transcend assessment test windows are properly communicated on the district assessment calendar or other communication documents to staff AND parents.** It is critical that all staff are aware of the testing windows and more importantly that parents understand when their kid(s) are going to be tested.