

2018

## Istation Program Implementation Evaluation 2018

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# ISTATION PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION 2018



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# Introduction

In 2017, the Idaho State Department of Education entered into a contract with Istation to improve the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI), Idaho's statewide testing platform for kindergarten through third grade (K-3). The implementation of the new Istation IRI assessment is set to be phased in over two years. To begin this process, in academic year 2017-2018, Istation engaged 58 schools across the State of Idaho in a pilot program for the new IRI assessment.

In response to a request by members of the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee (JFAC) of the Idaho State Legislature, the Idaho Policy Institute (IPI) began conducting an independent evaluation of the implementation of this pilot study.

This phase of IPI's study was structured exclusively around the experiences of K-3 teachers with administering and utilizing the output of the Istation IRI assessment.

## Methodology

For the purpose of this project, the IPI research team designed an online survey to be distributed via email to all K-3 teachers from participating pilot schools. This phase of the study focused upon receiving the expert input of teachers who are "in the trenches": individuals who are using the new assessment and have first-hand experience with its impacts and effectiveness.

The survey was created and distributed using the Qualtrics platform and was designed to address three components of the new IRI assessment from Istation:

- (1) The **administration** of the assessment
- (2) The **effectiveness** of the assessment
- (3) The **output** of the assessment

The research team identified these as the key areas to address the overall use and contribution of the assessment to the identification of reading proficiency and the usefulness of the assessment for teaching purposes.

The survey consisted of a maximum of 18

questions<sup>1</sup> and was designed to be brief, easy to navigate, and provide teachers with an opportunity to offer their thoughts and experiences with the Istation IRI assessment via a combination of multiple choice, Likert-scale, and open-ended response questions.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, several questions asked teachers to compare their experience of administering the old IRI assessment in Fall 2017 with their experiences administering the new IRI assessment (from Istation) during the Fall of 2017.

The research team reached out via email to the principal of each pilot school to inform

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<sup>1</sup> Every teacher was asked to answer 14 questions and logic incorporated into the survey offered up to four additional questions to teachers depending on if they personally administered the IRI exam, had students in their class that are English Language Learners (ELL), or had students that receive special education services (SES). See Appendix A.

<sup>2</sup> The language and format of the questions were informed by the expert opinions of employees at IPI, employees within the College of Education at Boise State University, and Evelyn Johnson, Ed.D of the Lee Pesky Learning Center. The research team at IPI is responsible for the final survey language.

them of the study and ask them to inform their teachers that a survey from IPI would be distributed the following week and to encourage their participation.

With no access to a centralized email database of K-3 teachers in the pilot schools, and mindful of the time constraints driving this study, the IPI research team collected K-3 teacher email addresses from the pilot schools' websites. This formed the basis of the survey's email distribution list. IPI initially identified 634 individuals at participating schools. This number included a handful of names that were listed on the website with no job title attached to their name, who were subsequently excluded. This reduced the survey population to 627 teachers. Eleven of the schools did not publish their teachers' contact information online or only provided a contact form via the website that could not be integrated with Qualtrics.<sup>3</sup> Once these were also excluded, the research team were left with a final distribution list of 476 teachers.

The research team distributed the survey via email directly to these K-3 teachers. Each teacher was sent an email invitation to participate in the survey, including a unique link to the survey that could only be used to complete the survey once. This allowed IPI to ensure the integrity and validity of the results.

Upon distribution of the survey, Qualtrics reported that 18 email addresses had "bounced" and were invalid. This reduced the participant population to 458. Another reduction occurred soon after when a teacher from Mill Creek Elementary notified the research team that the school had actually decided not to participate in the pilot program. This resulted in reducing

the participant population by 14 additional teachers, leaving a final population of 444 teachers.

The survey remained in the field for a total of 12 days. During that time, IPI sent out two email reminders to those who had not yet completed the survey. In the end, a total of 133 usable responses<sup>4</sup> were collected for analysis, giving the study a final response rate of 30%.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to survey data, the research team also compiled each school's 2017-2018 Title I eligibility status and poverty rate for use as control variables in statistical analyses. This data was obtained from the Idaho State Department of Education's website.

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<sup>3</sup> Excluded schools are comprised of Mount Hall Elementary, Naples Elementary, Lewis & Clark Elementary, Horizon Elementary, Jefferson Elementary, Pinehurst Elementary, Canyon Elementary, Athol Elementary, Wilder Elementary, Wendell Elementary, and Central Elementary.

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<sup>4</sup> After the survey closed, IPI excluded 17 partial responses, 3 responses that declined to give consent for the study, 2 responses that had been contributed from teachers at Mill Creek (a school that did not in fact administer the new IRI assessment), 2 responses contributed by teachers that taught above 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level that had been mistakenly included, and 1 response that had come from an anonymous source that could not be identified and would therefore undermine the integrity of our research design.

<sup>5</sup> 29.95%

# Findings

## Demographics

The experience levels of survey respondents ranged from less than a year of teaching to 36 years. The average level of experience among respondents was 12.8 years, while four and five years teaching experience were the most common responses. Approximately 70% of respondents reported holding at least a bachelors degree, while 28% held a graduate degree and 1% a doctoral degree.

Kindergarten teachers accounted for 20% of the response pool, 1<sup>st</sup> grade teachers 25%, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers 31%, and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teachers 23%. The reported class size ranged from as few as six students to as many as 50. The average class size among respondents was 22 students, which was also the most frequently reported size.

Roughly 56% of respondents reported having English Language Learner (ELL) students in their class, while 82% reported having students who received special education services (SES).

## Administration

When it comes to the administration of the Istation IRI, the IPI research team was interested in gauging how K-3 teachers self-identified their grasp of administration protocol, understanding of the assessment's content, and their overall level of preparedness to administer the exam (inclusive of access to the necessary technology as well as an understanding of how to use it). Approximately 91% of respondents indicated an adequate (53%) or excellent (38%) grasp of the Istation's administration protocol, while 6% felt they had a poor grasp of what the protocol actually entailed. Results were similar when teachers were asked about their

understanding of the assessment's content. Approximately 87% reported an adequate (63%) or excellent (24%) understanding of the assessment's content, compared to 12% who felt they had a poor understanding.

The lowest marks in the section on the administration of the assessment came when respondents were asked to rate their preparedness, although results were still generally positive. Roughly 80% felt their preparedness to administer the exam was either adequate (41%) or excellent (39%), compared to 18% who felt it was poor.

When it comes to the tools necessary to administer the exam, 86% of teachers surveyed felt they had adequate (38%) or excellent (48%) access to the necessary technology. Approximately 12% indicated they had poor access.

Teachers reported high marks for their understanding of how to operate the computers for the assessment—35% said they had an adequate understanding, while 56% said they had an excellent understanding. Approximately 8% rated their understanding “poor.”

## *Experience Personally Administering*

Of the 133 teachers surveyed, only 28 (21%) reported that they, personally, administered the IRI assessment to their students. Among these teachers, 57% found the new IRI from Istation easier to administer than the old exam. About 18% found it about the same, while 25% found it harder.

Looking at the length of the exam, the teachers who personally administered the exam all agreed that there was a shift in the amount of time it took to administer the exam—none reported that it took the same amount of time. There was no consensus on the direction of the change. Approximately

57% reported that the new IRI took more time to administer, while 43% reported that it took less time.

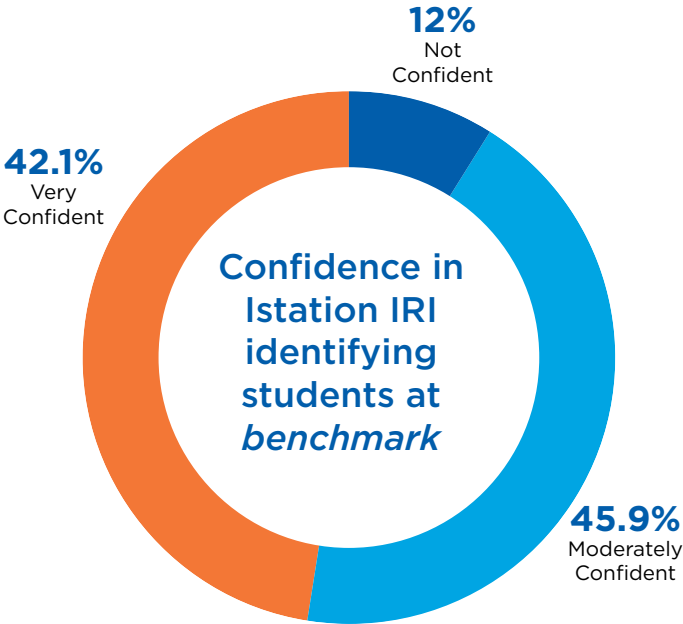
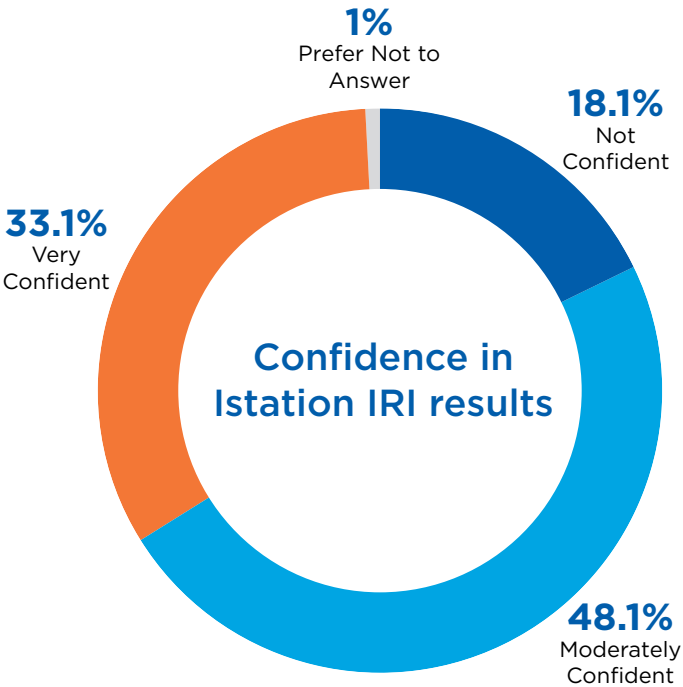
When it came to workload, however, only 7% of those who administered the IRI themselves reported that the exam took the same level of work as the previous IRI. Approximately 36% reported it took more work, while 57% found that the new assessment took less.

We should caution that, with only 28 individuals in our sample who personally administered the Istation IRI assessment, there is not enough data to confidently generalize their experience to the wider population. Consequently, these results should be interpreted cautiously. They are nevertheless useful in guiding future research endeavors.

## Effectiveness

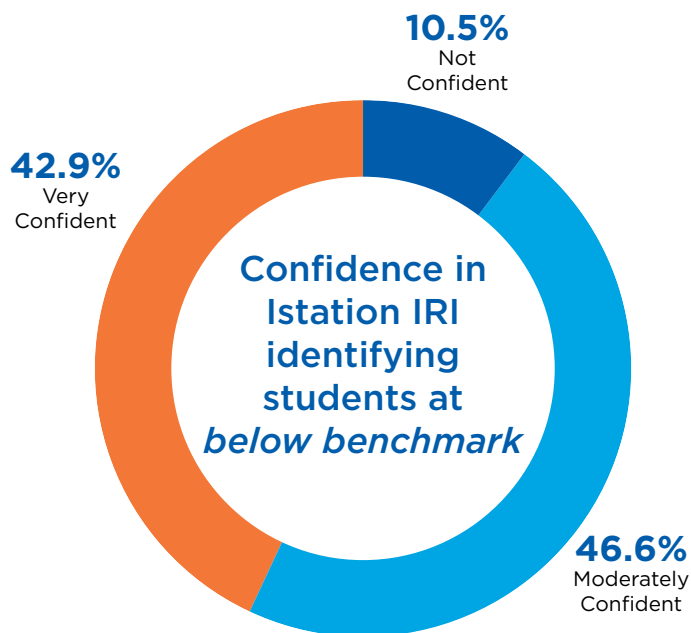
In looking at the Istation IRI’s effectiveness, of primary interest is how confident teachers are in the results the assessment generates, and consequently, the influence these results have over their day-to-day instruction. One of the stated advantages of the Istation IRI is its potential to be administered more regularly than the old IRI in order to track and measure student progress. This can provide timely guidance for educators and inform their teaching methods.

Approximately 32% of teachers reported that the Istation IRI assessment did an excellent job of matching their in-class observations and experiences with students. A little more than half, 51%, reported that it did an adequate job. About 16% felt that it performed poorly in that regard. Similar numbers were reported for how well the Istation IRI identified a student’s reading level—32% scored it “Excellent,” 45% “Adequate,” and 20% “Poor.”



This trend held when it came to teachers’ confidence levels in the results of the Istation IRI assessment. A little less than half—48%—reported being *moderately* confident in the test’s results, while 33% reported being *very* confident. Conversely, 18%, (almost one in five) said they were not confident in the accuracy of the exam’s results.

The Istation IRI sorts students into three



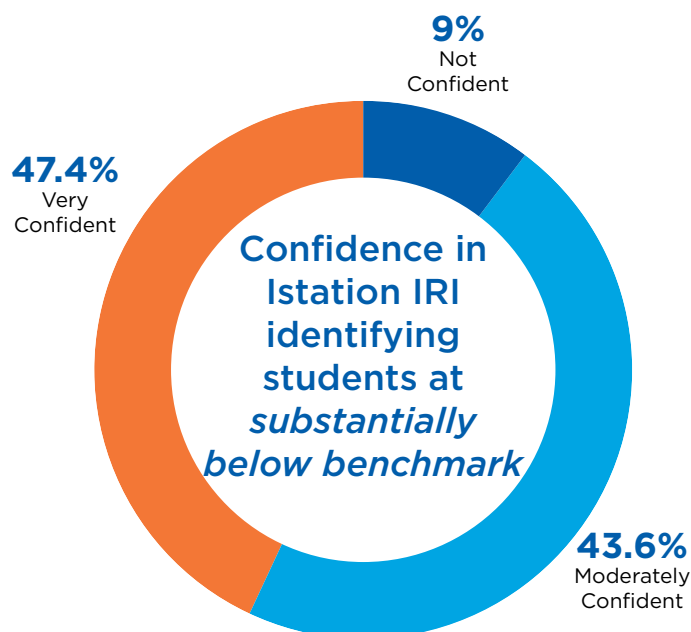
overall groups: at *benchmark*, *below benchmark*, and *substantially below benchmark*.<sup>6</sup> One area this study attempted to address is if teachers felt that the assessment did a better job of identifying students at some of these levels over the others. Roughly 88% of respondents were confident that the Istation IRI correctly identified students performing at *benchmark* level—46% were moderately confident, while 42% were very confident. The remaining 12% were not confident.

Results were similar when looking at students identified at *below benchmark* level—89% expressed confidence in the results (47% moderately, 43% very).<sup>7</sup> About 11% were not confident in the test’s efficacy at the below benchmark level.

The final classification in the Istation assessment—*substantially below benchmark* level—fared best among respondents. Roughly 91% of respondents expressed confidence in the assessment’s ability to identify students performing substantially below average (44% moderately confident and 47% very confident). About 9% had no confidence in the test’s evaluation of the substantially below benchmark level.

Teachers were also asked to compare the new Istation IRI against the old IRI assessment and identify which they preferred. About 13% said they preferred the old assessment, while another 13% expressed no preference one way or another. **Approximately 70% said they preferred the Istation IRI assessment.**

When investigating teachers level of confidence in the Istation IRI’s ability to identify students performing at benchmark level, the IPI research team made some notable observations. Three factors were found to have a significant<sup>8</sup> effect upon the confidence in teachers that the Istation IRI was successfully identifying students performing at benchmark level: (1) *Region*, (2) *Grade Level*, and (3) *School Poverty Rate*. Generally, as grade level increases by one year, teachers are 81.6% more likely to be confident in the Istation IRI’s ability to identify students performing at benchmark level. Conversely, as a school’s poverty rate increases by 1%, teachers are 2.3% less likely to be confident in the identification of students performing at benchmark level. (While a school’s region was also found to be statistically significant, since it is



<sup>6</sup> These classifications were specified by Istation.

<sup>7</sup> Percentages may not add due to rounding.

<sup>8</sup> Statistical significance within an ordered logit statistical analysis using two-tailed tests. See Appendix E.



a categorical factor its effect cannot be interpreted.)

IPI used the same data analysis process to investigate teachers confidence levels in the Istation IRI's ability to successfully identify students performing below benchmark and substantially below benchmark. The research team found that only two factors played a significant role in explaining teacher's confidence levels: (1) *Region* and, (2) *Grade Level*. As grade level increases by one year, teachers are 69.2% more likely to be confident in the Istation IRI's ability to identify students performing below benchmark levels and 89.1% more likely to be confident in its ability to identify students performing substantially below benchmark level.

## Output

When it comes to the section on the Istation IRI's output, the research team was interested in how teachers viewed and/or used the reports the assessment actually generates. Approximately 53% of respondents reported *understanding* the data output of the Istation IRI was easy, while 9% found it difficult. The rest of the respondents were neutral.

When asked about *interpreting* the data output, there was a very slight shift in response categories, but the distribution remained largely the same. About 52% found it easy, while 12% found it difficult. The rest of the respondents were neutral.

We found a more substantial change when teachers were asked about the difficulty of using the data output to inform their teaching methods. While 40% reported it was easy, 17% indicated it was difficult. Another 40% reported it was neither easy nor difficult. While most teachers did not report issues integrating Istation's data output into their teaching methods, it is worth underscoring that when the question

shifted from understanding and interpreting to actually using the output, there was a 12-13 point drop among those saying it was "easy" and a 5-8 point increase in those saying it was "difficult."

## Qualitative Component

The survey also generated qualitative data from three open-ended questions that provided the research team with rich data for analysis<sup>9</sup>. This response rate yielded valuable insight into the operations of administering and using the new Istation IRI assessment throughout the pilot schools.

The data gathered from these three questions was analyzed by reading each response and identifying repeated themes. The IPI research team organized the comments<sup>10</sup> by the three overarching themes of this study: (1) The administration of the assessment, (2) The effectiveness of the assessment, and (3) The output of the assessment. The IPI research team then identified repeated, more specific, sub-categories within these overarching themes and employed 11 additional sub categories to further organize themes.<sup>11</sup> In order to fully represent the insights of participating teachers, a final "Other" category was included to note comments that did not fall into any of our preceding themes.

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<sup>9</sup> Of the 133 useable responses, 79 included responses to Question 10, 59 responses to Question 11a, and 89 to Question 12a.

<sup>10</sup> For responses that included comments regarding multiple themes, the responses were broken apart and each comment was organized with its corresponding theme. Therefore, one *response* might have yielded three *comments*.

<sup>11</sup> Sub-categories were: (1) Technology, (2) Time/Timing, (3) Training, (4) Cost, (5) Content, (6) Relationship to Other Assessments (non IRI), (7) Relationship to classroom experience, (8) Scoring, (9) Usefulness of Output, (10) Quality of Output, (11) Accessibility of Output, and a final category of, (12) Other.



***Question 10: If you would like to use the space below to share any additional thoughts you have regarding IR assessments and/or the Istation assessment, please do so and we will carefully consider your feedback. We greatly appreciate you taking the time to share your knowledge and insight with us.***

The responses from teachers for Question 10 highlighted their notable reactions to the use of technology when administering the new Istation IRI assessment, the content of the assessment, and the usefulness of the output. Notable concerns can be seen in repeated comments from Kindergarten teachers concerning technology use and the value of using the new Istation IRI assessment in the Fall. Additional repeated comments of note come from 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade teachers regard the time demands of administering the new Istation IRI assessment while also administering other assessments throughout the academic year.

***Question 11a: What has been the experience of your ELL student/s with the new IRI assessment (from Istation)?***

The IPI research team organized these responses by the overarching themes and subcategories mentioned in the above section regarding Question 10 (See Appendix C).<sup>12</sup> Additionally the research team identified responses that were notably “Favorable” and responses that were notably “Not Favorable.” Of the 59 responses, the research team classified 24 comments as notably “Favorable” in their

description of their students experience with the new Istation IRI assessment and 18 comments as notably “Not Favorable.” A total of 17 comments were classified as neither “Favorable” nor “Not Favorable.”<sup>13</sup>

***Question 12a: What has been the experience of your students who receive special education services with the new IRI assessment (from Istation)?***

Again, the IPI research team organized responses to this question by the overarching themes and subcategories outlined above (See Appendix D). Of the total 89 responses received for Question 12a, the research team identified 34 as notably “Favorable” and 21 as notably “Not Favorable,” with 34 responses falling into neither category.

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<sup>12</sup> Appendices B, C and D present responses according to themes and subcategories. Both Question 11a and 12a yielded a wide variety of comments that did not fit beneath the themes and subcategories used throughout the qualitative analysis section of this project. These comments are nevertheless valuable, insightful, and worthy of recognition. These comments are gathered in a category labeled “Other.” Such comments that were classified as neither “Favorable” nor “Not Favorable” included responses such as, for example: “They take the test alongside peers.”

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<sup>13</sup> The research team at IPI used their expertise to distinguish between the favorability of these comments. Bias was minimized through the use of a “Neither” category, in which any unclear comments were placed. Additionally, all comments received from teachers are presented in Appendices B-D for review.

# Future Research

Due to the limitations of existing data, IPI stresses that a full-scale evaluation of the Istation IRI pilot program is not possible until Fall 2018. This is because the new assessment has only been administered once (Fall 2017). For this reason, this study has focused exclusively on the experiences of K-3 teachers with the Istation IRI. This evaluation also only examines the experience of 133 teachers from 41 of the pilot schools and does not address the impact of the new Istation IRI on student performance or offer an evaluation of the student experience. Future research is required to consider these aspects.

Once Phase Two of the Istation IRI implementation has begun in Fall 2018, a more focused evaluation and analysis will be possible, as the research team will have a more robust and complete dataset, covering three testing periods instead of one. Additionally, students will have advanced a grade level, allowing evaluation of their progress over time and determine whether classroom instruction was affected by the Istation assessment. A longer timetable will also afford the research team the opportunity to survey educators while the assessment process is fresh in their mind, rather than necessitating they recall their activities months after the fact.

A notable limitation of this project is the response rate of our survey: 30%. The insight and opinion of a limited number of teachers are presented here and further, more expansive research that includes the opinion of a higher number of educators in the State of Idaho would be beneficial. Additionally, only a small portion of our respondents (21%) had experience with personally administering the new IRI assessment (from Istation). Therefore, the results pertaining to the administration process should be considered with this in mind.

A longer time horizon in subsequent phases of this study will allow for greater coordination between the IPI research team and participating schools, affording researchers the time to obtain more comprehensive contact lists from participating schools and coordinate with their IT departments to ensure that survey invitations are not inadvertently blocked by organization spam filters. Additionally, it would allow the research team to coordinate more closely with school officials in identifying relevant personnel (including those beyond classroom instructors) associated with the Istation IRI pilot program, to ensure a more comprehensive view of the program's effects are captured.

# Appendix A: Frequency Table

#	Question/Response	N	%
<b>Q1</b>	Taking the new IRI assessment (from Istation) into consideration, on a scale of Poor to Excellent, how would you rate yourself in regards to administering the exam to your students in Fall 2017:		
<b>Q1_1</b>	<i>Grasp of the administration protocol</i>		
	Poor	8	6.02
	Adequate	71	53.38
	Excellent	50	37.59
	Prefer not to answer	4	3.01
<b>Q1_2</b>	<i>Understanding of the assessment's content</i>		
	Poor	16	12.03
	Adequate	84	63.16
	Excellent	32	24.06
	Prefer not to answer	1	0.75
<b>Q1_3</b>	<i>Preparedness to administer the assessment</i>		
	Poor	24	18.05
	Adequate	55	41.35
	Excellent	52	39.1
	Prefer not to answer	2	1.5
<b>Q1_4</b>	<i>Access to the technology required to administer the assessment</i>		
	Poor	16	12.03
	Adequate	51	38.35
	Excellent	64	48.12
	Prefer not to answer	2	1.5
<b>Q1_5</b>	<i>Understanding of how to operate the computers for the assessment</i>		
	Poor	10	7.52
	Adequate	47	35.34
	Excellent	74	55.64
	Prefer not to answer	2	1.5
<b>Q2</b>	<i>In Fall of 2017, both the new IRI assessment (from Istation) as well as the previous IRI assessment were administered to students. Did you personally administer both assessments</i>		
	Yes	28	21.05
	No	105	78.95
	Prefer not to answer	0	0



#	Question/Response	N	%
<b>Q3</b>	<i>In your opinion, how did administering the new IRI (from Istation) compare to administering the old IRI?</i>		
	It was easier to administer	16	57.14
	It was the same to administer	5	17.86
	It was more difficult to administer	7	25
<b>Q4</b>	How did the new IRI assessment (from Istation) compare to the old IRI in the following areas:		
<b>Q4_1</b>	<i>Time to administer the assessment</i>		
	Less	12	42.86
	Same	0	0
	More	16	57.14
	Prefer not to answer	0	0
<b>Q4_2</b>	<i>Level of work to administer the assessment</i>		
	Less	16	57.14
	Same	2	7.14
	More	10	35.71
	Prefer not to answer	0	0
<b>Q5</b>	We would now like to ask you for your opinion about the effectiveness of the Istation assessment overall in identifying the capabilities of a student. Please indicate, on a scale of Poor to Excellent, how well the results of the new IRI assessment (from Istation) accomplish the following:		
<b>Q5_1</b>	<i>Match my in-class observations / experiences of a student's capabilities</i>		
	Poor	21	15.79
	Adequate	68	51.13
	Excellent	42	31.58
	Prefer not to answer	2	1.5
<b>Q5_2</b>	<i>Identify a student's level of reading</i>		
	Poor	27	20.3
	Adequate	60	45.11
	Excellent	42	31.58
	Prefer not to answer	4	3.01
<b>Q6</b>	<i>How confident are you in the results of the new IRI assessment (from Istation)?</i>		
	Not confident	24	18.05
	Moderately confident	64	48.12
	Very confident	44	33.08
	Prefer not to answer	1	0.75

#	Question/Response	N	%
<b>Q7</b>	Please indicate your level of confidence in the results generated by the new IRI assessment (from Istation) to:		
<b>Q7_1</b>	<i>Identify students performing at benchmark level</i>		
	Not confident	16	12.03
	Moderately confident	61	45.86
	Very confident	56	42.11
	Prefer not to answer	0	0
<b>Q7_2</b>	<i>Identify students performing at below benchmark level</i>		
	Not confident	14	10.53
	Moderately confident	62	46.62
	Very confident	57	42.86
	Prefer not to answer	0	0
<b>Q7_3</b>	<i>Identify students performing at substantially below benchmark level</i>		
	Not confident	12	9.02
	Moderately confident	58	43.61
	Very confident	63	47.37
	Prefer not to answer	0	0
<b>Q8</b>	<i>Again, we would like to ask for your expert opinion on the content of the Istation assessment in comparison to the old IRI assessment that you also administered in Fall 2017. Overall, do you prefer the content of the new IRI assessment (from Istation) to the old IRI assessment?</i>		
	I prefer the old IRI assessment	17	12.78
	I prefer the new Istation assessment	93	69.92
	I do not have a preference	18	13.53
	I prefer not to answer	5	3.76
<b>Q9</b>	We would like to know about the usefulness of the data output that the new IRI assessment (from Istation) generates for you as an educator. Please indicate the level of difficulty you had using the following elements of the assessment as an educator.		
<b>Q9_1</b>	<i>Understanding the data output of the assessment</i>		
	Easy	71	53.38
	Neither easy nor difficult	47	35.34
	Difficult	12	9.02
	Prefer not to answer	3	2.26

#	Question/Response	N	%
<b>Q9_2</b>	<i>Interpreting the data output of the assessment</i>		
	Easy	69	51.88
	Neither easy nor difficult	45	33.83
	Difficult	16	12.03
	Prefer not to answer	3	2.26
<b>Q9_3</b>	<i>Using the data output of the assessment to adapt / inform / impact my teaching methods</i>		
	Easy	53	39.85
	Neither easy nor difficult	53	39.85
	Difficult	23	17.29
	Prefer not to answer	4	3.01
<b>Q10</b>	<i>If you would like to use the space below to share any additional thoughts you have regarding IRI assessments and / or the Istation assessment, please do so and we will carefully consider your feedback. We greatly appreciate you taking the time to share your knowledge and insight with us.</i>	<b>See Appendix B</b>	
<b>Q11</b>	<i>Do you have any ELL (English Language Learner) students in your class?</i>		
	Yes	75	56.39
	No	57	42.86
	Prefer not to answer	1	0.75
<b>Q11a</b>	<i>What has been the experience of your ELL students with the new IRI assessment (from Istation)?</i>	<b>See Appendix C</b>	
<b>Q12</b>	<i>Do you have any students who receive special education services in your class?</i>		
	Yes	109	81.95
	No	23	17.29
	Prefer not to answer	1	0.75
<b>Q12a</b>	<i>What has been the experience of your students who receive special education services with the new IRI assessment (from Istation)?</i>	<b>See Appendix D</b>	



#	Question/Response	N	%
Q13	<i>How many years have you been a teacher? (Even if inconsistently, or part-time).</i>		
	1	1	0.76
	2	1	0.76
	3	6	4.55
	4	7	5.3
	5	10	7.58
	6	10	3.03
	7	4	5.3
	8	7	5.3
	9	6	4.55
	10	4	3.03
	11	6	4.55
	12	9	6.82
	13	7	5.3
	14	1	0.76
	15	7	5.3
	16	6	4.55
	17	2	1.52
	18	5	3.79
	19	3	2.27
	20	1	0.76
	21	4	3.03
	22	1	0.76
	23	3	2.27
	24	2	1.52
	25	1	0.76
	26	2	1.52
	28	3	2.27
	29	2	1.52
	30	1	0.76
	31	3	2.27
	32	1	0.76
	33	2	1.52
	35	1	0.76
	36	1	0.76

#	Question/Response	N	%
<b>Q14</b>	<i>Please share with us your highest level of education</i>		
	High school	0	0
	Some college	1	0.76
	Bachelor degree	93	70.45
	Graduate degree	37	28.03
	Doctoral degree	1	0.76
	Prefer not to answer	0	0
<b>Q15</b>	<i>What grade level do you teach?</i>		
	Kindergarten	27	20.45
	1st Grade	33	25
	2nd Grade	41	31.06
	3rd Grade	31	23.48
	None of the above		

#	Question/Response	N	%
Q16	How many students do you have in your class?		
	6	1	0.76
	9	2	1.52
	10	2	1.52
	11	1	0.76
	12	1	0.76
	14	3	2.27
	15	5	3.79
	16	3	2.27
	17	8	6.06
	18	10	7.58
	19	7	5.3
	20	6	4.55
	21	6	4.55
	22	17	12.88
	23	11	8.33
	24	12	9.09
	25	8	6.06
	26	14	10.61
	27	5	3.79
	28	1	0.76
	29	3	2.27
	30	1	0.76
	35	1	0.76
	38	1	0.76
	42	1	0.76
	48	1	0.76
	50	1	0.76



# Appendix B: Open Comments

**Survey Q10:** *If you would like to use the space below to share any additional thoughts you have regarding IR assessments and/or the Istation assessment, please do so and we will carefully consider your feedback. We greatly appreciate you taking the time to share your knowledge and insight with us.*

## ADMINISTRATION

### Technology

- As a kindergarten teacher I realize that many of my students come to school with little or NO computer experience. It is intimidating for them. They do not even know how to manipulate the mouse. I feel that the IStation IRI is a good learning experience for them but the data is not reliable. I found that some of my high students scored low and some of my below level students are excellent guessers. (Kindergarten).
- For kindergarten, the fall assessment is not an accurate representation of what they know. They could not use the computers well enough! (Kindergarten).
- I feel like the new Istation assessment had a lot to do with computer skills and since it is a reading assessment, which should not be a factor. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- My class takes these tests on iPads and seem to like that. Sometimes the sound is an issue but we are working through those issues. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I hate to base a child's knowledge or a teacher's effectiveness on a computer test. I have students who will not try their best on a computer test because there's not a live face in front of them. I've watched kids click through answers to be done. I also have kids who don't have access at home to a computer, and that unfamiliarity with the computer inhibits their performance. I also have kids on the other end of the spectrum that know only how to swipe with their index finger and using the mouse isn't easy for them. I even have a student who tells me that he gets headaches looking at a computer screen. I could print out a binder of reports, but I don't see that it gives me more information than what I get by instructing one on one with students. I'm not a fan of Istation. Sorry. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I have students with severe deficits that are scoring at grade level sometimes. I attribute this to their screen time at home. They have been handed an iPad since they were tiny and it is helping their score. I know they need help. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- I have seen some concerns regarding students with special needs as they are not able to show what they know with a computer generated assessments. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- I teach kindergarten and for little people who don't have experience with a computer or I-pad it is very hard and intimidating at the beginning of the year. I had students in tears and just plain quit taking the assessment. (Kindergarten).
- I teach kindergarten and whenever you are using technology as an assessment it isn't always accurate because you don't know if it is what they know or if it is the use of technology that is the problem. (Kindergarten).
- I was somewhat concerned about computerized assessments because some students may just click through answers or not pay attention. I was also concerned about possible technology issues during testing that may impact scores. I quickly learned which student would need to have a test monitor and have been able to work with students on this assessment with no concerns for clicking through answers or losing focus since the first administration of the assessment. Computer issues have not come up this year, but still wonder how that will be handled if it does happen in the future. My hope is the test can be reassigned and the student can retake the test under better conditions (in the case of technology issues lowering student score). (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Istation requires students to use computers including a mouse. Many of my students simply do not come to kindergarten with those skills. The skills measured on the Fall Istation were more likely to be technology skills than literacy skills. (Kindergarten).
- It is impossible to monitor all of them only having ten computers and no administer of the assessment (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- I think until the students understand the test and are better equipped at running a computer and

understanding the format of the test it will not adequately show their actual abilities that I see in class on everyday work. (Kindergarten).

- My biggest concerns come from it being a timed technology test. Part of the issue we saw with our students is needing time to navigate the technology. It makes the IRI a technology/reading assessment instead of a just a reading assessment. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I have some concerns over the computer based aspect because students can just click through to get finished without listening to the questions. This will be true of any computer based assessment and is something that I will work on with my students. A student's computer skills has an effect on how they perform. This could be helped if we were able to use touch screen devices, but that is not something that we are able to do this year. Again, this is concern that I would have with any computer based assessment and is not limited to Istation. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- When students take the assessment on the iPad it doesn't always register with their finger tapping gently so I've had to do lessons on that by practicing how to place the pad of your finger on the iPad rather than the tip. (This was after some scores were really low and I realized what the factor was because I had done some of the same type of assessments on paper and found different results.) Even though we did the modeling and practice as the students progressed they didn't give additional information on how to do the activity. For instance, I have a student who reads at a first grade level about 129 words per minute. She didn't know you had to push the arrow button at the bottom of the page to go on so it recorded her at 29 words per minute and said she's not progressing at the rate she needs to. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Finally, our kids today are overly tested on computers. It's unfortunate that we are adding yet another technology-based test for them to endure. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- The way the computer says the sounds for the letters is a little odd, and hard to hear some sounds. It would be nice if the kids were not listening to useless information for so long and the beginning. (Kindergarten).
- If you were working on a touch screen, it made it difficult to hover over the choices. Once their finger touched the screen- it took that answer as the one they chose even if they were just trying to listen to the word. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- While I can clearly see a need to assess more than just fluency in the IRI, the current ISIP has inherent flaws. Computer literacy is necessary in order to manipulate the test. The answer "popping" up. Gives students the idea that they are choosing the correct answer even when they aren't. Students get bored, and often just click so they can get out of the test. Also, I noticed one of my students had a word, I believe it was didn't, but because an apostrophe was not available she thought she had misheard the word, and typed did dent. Given the options, she wrote what was reasonable, but still was marked incorrect, due to this flaw. I am not certain how many other instances like this one are within the program, but am certain this cannot possibly be the only one. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I do like the cute characters. The students felt it was fun. Many felt it was "like a game." I think there are some flaws, but it could also be tweaked to become a valuable tool. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).

## Time / Timing

- I felt like the assessment took a long time for some of my students. We would spend anywhere from 25-40 minutes and for kindergarteners and even first graders that is a lot of time to be sitting still! The issue that some students ran into was being given too many attempts at a question, and the student became very frustrated. If we are going to use the IStation as a standardized test, it would be very beneficial to expose the kindergarten students to the test early so they can be successful test takers as 1st graders. I do not think their kindergarten scores are very reliable especially in the fall. It will be interesting to see my spring scores now that they have learned how to use the computer. I still feel that the scores are not reliable because no matter how much I explain the importance of the test there will be students guessing and just clicking. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Even though the Istation assessment may take a little longer, my students seem to like it better. I feel that they will do a better job on the assessment over all because it is more user friendly. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- Also, some students breeze through the assessment and do not carefully consider how they should pay more attention (refocus) which is provided by a test proctor. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- I dislike the Istation test because it takes longer and we have had to give it every month. In third grade we are already taking interim ISAT twice a month. With Istation every month and the other tests required by our school (AIMSweb, STAR, progress monitoring) we are testing every week. Then, we have classroom test to give in each subject so we can assign grades. It has become too much in third grade because they take the assessments for k-3 as well as the assessments for 3-12. Over testing leads to not enough teaching time and too many interruptions in the classroom. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- I teach third grade. Our schedule is disrupted for two days during the administration of the old IRI due to our students being pulled out of our class one by one. Istation can be done any time in about 20

minutes. It is very convenient from a time management perspective. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).

- If it is going to be given as the new IRI it needs to be administered in a way that students are being monitored during the test to ensure they are on task. This requires large blocked out periods of time with access to computers and someone to monitor kids until all are finished. Just as you would with the ISATS. If we are being held to these scores they need to treat them like a legit test. It is too loosely given. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- It took some time to teach the students how to take the assessment. Many of them did not understand the CLOZE format of the fluency portion. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- As always, the student's ability to operate the computer or iPad has an influence on their success. Some students have performed poorly because of this factor. We also need to have reliable devices for the students to use, including headphones that work. Now that everything is up and running and I have a better understanding of how to interpret Istation is a great resource for me. (Kindergarten).
- The assessment is too long for first graders. They get bored and click through quickly to get finished. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- The Istation at times is very quick when we have a few slow processors, and we have a lot of English as a second language learners. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- The new IRI assessment for 1st grade is VERY lengthy. I watched several of my students simply lose interest and just start clicking without even thinking about what or why they were clicking- they just wanted to be done. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- The test is long for first grade. Students start to get distracted. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).

## Training

- I have no training on Istation. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Concerns with some equipment not always working efficiently and taking more time for testing. Interested in hearing more about what other teachers are finding as well as additional training (that is not during school day). (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- I would really like some more training after doing the pilot program. I learned a great deal through the pilot but still know that I need some additional training. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- My comments are reflective of the first of the year. We did not receive adequate training to fully or properly implement Istation. As the year has progressed, I have been able to better understand the reports and the potential Istation has in helping me determine reading the progress and success of each student. Also, at the beginning of the year our school was poorly set up to use Istation. That has also improved over the course of the year. I would have loved to have more training up front, particularly how to use the data, where to find the most helpful reports and how to enter in interventions and progress. None of this was explained at the beginning. (Kindergarten).
- Now that I have been trained in how to read the reports and what they are used for, I find them easier to use and to read. If all teachers were to take the training, I feel they would also be confident in reading the assessments and using the data as well (Kindergarten).
- We have only had a couple trainings on iStation so I really don't know how to read the data. I think it's valuable, I just wish we had more trainings on it to fully understand the data. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).

## Cost

- I prefer the old, old IRI test that was administered one to one and measured 3 areas of reading: fluency (wpm), decoding and comprehension. It was faster and gave a meaningful overview of reading skills, and costs a lot less money. Istation is an expensive program for the state and is very expensive for districts to have the right technology to run the program. It is very expensive for districts to have enough devices to allow students to have enough practice in Istation. All of that money would have been better spent to hire more teachers to allow smaller class sizes which would have a great impact on student achievement. More tests and harder tests isn't going to help our students. Our students are starting school with lower and fewer skills, and more behavior and emotional issues than ever before- smaller class sizes is the best way to help them- not another test that is costing the state and districts a lot of money. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).

# EFFECTIVENESS

## Content

- I like how this test assesses more skills, including basic skills (like letter / sound recognition), but this is only helpful at the beginning of the year. After students start to actually read, this skill isn't used as much and lowered their overall core. I have students who are reading over 60 wpm with good comprehension that only scored a 2 on the Istation test because they did not do well on the parts that tested for beginning skills. I do not think you can judge how fast a student reads as indicative of their reading ability. If they do not have comprehension skills, then being able to "read" in this context is useless. For this reason I like the Istation test better than the IRI, but feel the Istation test still has room for improvement. What is the end goal? How many words per minute? Comprehension? The tests needs to be based on the end goal, the final expectation of what the student should be able to do. By testing those basic skills, which should be out grown by the end of the year (r should be evolved into actual reading) it is tainting the end of year score. The final test should represent the final expectation or end of year goal, and then it should be used to show where they start, how far they have come, and (finally) if they have reached that goal. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- First Graders should be reading oral fluency probes on the old IRI. They should not be reading letters/sounds and have that be the score that is reported to the state. This gives a false score in reading abilities of students. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- For 1st grade the spelling that has 6 slots is misleading to students because they believe they need to put a letter for every slot. A practice test or the instruction example that a teacher can stop and give examples would make a difference for those struggling students. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- I appreciate that the scoring is normed as specific to grade and month, and not a comparison of end of grade target. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- I appreciate how much more detailed the new assessment is, compared to the old assessment. Reading is so much more than how many words you can read in one minute. The Istation assessment covers various areas. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I feel that this assessment is more valid than the previous IRI. This assessment shows all areas of reading proficiency and not just one area of reading. I prefer this test. The information in this measure is great as well. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I found some of the beginning sound, ending sounds, section did not have correct answer to choose. Some of vocabulary have some answers that kids will pick that mean same thing but there is another answer that is better but may not be picked because of the child's background knowledge. Basically I think some of the questions need to be cleaned up or more straight forward. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- With the new I Station IRI I have been very pleased to see that the data assesses more than just fluency. It gives a much better overall score of reading abilities. In the past, students were encouraged to read as fast as they could, without paying any attention to the actual content of reading. Now students are assessed on vocabulary, comprehension, spelling, and fluency. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I like the Istation test better because it is a better measure of a student's reading ability. A fluency test (only) does not tell an educator or evaluator enough about that student's reading ability. I also believe that the IRI should not be based on fluency only because then teachers stress reading quickly to pass the test when comprehension should be more important. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- The new IRI ISIP/Istation makes it too easy for kids to guess with multiple choice answers. The program goes too fast for slow & moderate readers or kids who are being careful and need to reread something. The bird comes on too soon and too often, interrupting their train of thought and telling them to go fast when they shouldn't be told to rush through it. I think making them do the ISIP test every month is too often to keep them motivated to really do their best and work hard. The test does not go low enough for special education students, so they are not showing any growth or progress according to the test. The scope and sequence is hard to understand. A scope and sequence for math could not be found. The ISIP does match with our curriculum or our scope and sequence, so often kids are being tested on things they haven't been taught yet. The "fluency" portion of the test is more of a vocabulary and comprehension test. We have no idea how the Overall Reading score is calculated because, despite asking Istation reps multiple times, we don't know how. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I teach first grade and I did see a discrepancy in the letter knowledge test. I took the test myself to see what was going on and found that the robot voice giving the sounds was very difficult to understand. n,m,d,b,g,f,v.... there were multiple sounds that were difficult for me as an adult to decipher between. Is it possible to record a human voice for all parts of the test that use sounds (this includes all phonemic awareness tests)? (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- I took the assessment myself so I would know what my students will be doing and it was hard for me to understand what sound was being produced. I had no clue what letter sound was being said so I understand a 5 year olds frustrations. An actual person's voice would be better than a computerized voice. For the kindergarten students, I didn't like it. (Kindergarten).

- I felt like the data was much more accurate of a student's reading ability with Istation. The old IRI tested speed and that alone is not an accurate measure of reading. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- I think it's too sensitive. The spelling is too difficult. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- The only thing that cannot be assessed adequately is fluency. I don't think it is an accurate assessment, but everything else seems to be great! (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- I have never liked that students are measured on fluency only under the current IRI. While a good indicator, it does not give a complete picture of the reader. I appreciate the more comprehensive look that Istation takes at the whole reader. It has been informative and useful in driving my instruction this school year. I still worry somewhat about the absence of fluency from Istation at the first grade level, but overall am much happier with the new Istation assessment. It has been great to report a more comprehensive picture to parents as well. We can give them more specific strengths as well as areas to continue to work on when we discuss state assessment results this school year than we have been able to in past years with the fluency only scores. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Also, the vice on the letter recognition portion is very difficult to understand for my students and for myself. That being said, the old IRI is pretty much useless for kindergartners and kindergarten teachers. Istation is better, but still significantly flawed. (Kindergarten).
- It does a poor job in some areas particularly with high leveled students. It is hard to ensure they are really trying their best. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Also, assessing vocabulary in 3rd grade using only synonyms and antonyms was incredibly difficult to my students. I wish the program wasn't so sing/songy. The students find it more as a game than an assessment. I would like to see it more straightforward and to the point. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- It would be helpful if the Istation could give us data on individual standards instead of just headings like "Comprehension"; "Reading Fluency", etc. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I would also like to see more activities/assessment focused on reading comprehension. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- Once kids are at a higher reading level, their letter knowledge goes down because they are not having to focus on the individual sounds anymore and see them more in chunks, which gives them a lower score. This should not be the case as we want them actually reading rather than focusing on letter sounds. They should be able to phase out of the lower level skills and skip those portions of the test. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- The Istation is a great tool in that it assesses valuable pieces of beginning reading that are not found in the IRI. However, there are some major faults with the assessment. The phonemic awareness part where the picture of a person's mouth is articulating a word sound-by- sound is not authentic enough for many students to even determine what he is saying. I have found many higher level students who are already reading are so worried about answering quickly that they just click without really taking time to hear the entire problem so the assessment doesn't accurately assess their ability. On the letter sound knowledge I've had a few students as priority alerts even though they know all of their sounds fluently so I'm very concerned about using this data as an indicator of putting them on a literacy plan based solely on the data which the state has required us to do in the past. On the spelling assessment it goes straight from short vowels to long vowels and our spelling program spends more time on digraphs and blends so it looks as though they are not progressing in spelling even though I see great indications of it in individual writing. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- The Istation showed more reading skills then the IRI. Please continue to use the Istation. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- I do not like how surface-level the old IRI assessment is- okay, so you are a slow/fast reader, but are you understanding WHAT you are reading? The assessment doesn't answer that, but neither does the new one really (please reference my first comment for an explanation). (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- The previous IRI assessment did not give you any impute on where a child was struggling. Plus just because a child does not read fast does not mean they are not proficient; I have had plenty of students who read 100 words a min. but can't tell you one thig they read about. How is that child at grade level? (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Vowel pronunciation was difficult to hear and mark correctly. The student was told to work as fast as you can so they assumed it meant to go FAST! The students didn't listen or take time to mark correctly because they were told to go as fast as they cold. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).

## Relationship to other assessments (Non-IRI)

- Looking at the data from Istation and the previous IRI, I had trouble seeing alignments in the data/ lack of data. It also doesn't align well with our STAR 360 early literacy test data. Some data points are complete opposites in several literacy domains! I would be interested to see how other districts and the state department see the alignment of their progress monitoring tools and Istation. (Kindergarten).
- I believe that IStation is a useful tool to use in conjunction with other types of assessments. Students



all perform differently to different types of tests. For instance, some students perform well when they are interacting with a person versus those students who do better with technology or game settings. Students may be able to read silently and comprehend but struggle to read aloud. Therefore, I think using IStation data as a piece of the assessment puzzle is helpful to get an overall picture but not necessarily as a stand-alone piece of data. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).

- I also don't like not having an ORF. An ORF score is 90% correlated to how a child does on a test like ISAT. It is definitely something to think about. How is this test nationally normed? How do we know we are holding students to a high enough standard? (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- The text fluency section does not match anything close to what I see and through legacy IRI or DIBELS progress monitoring. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- The results from I-station do not match any other assessment or screener given to my students. Some students in class are reading at a First or Second Grade level. All of the other assessments and screeners I have used on them matches with what I see in c lass. The results from the I-station assessments on these same students has flagged them to indicate that they are in danger of not meeting most of the Kindergarten Benchmarks. (Kindergarten).

## Relationship to classroom experience

- I feel that for students who are already under the benchmark, this test can be irrelevant because they do not care to do it successfully or correctly. Some are only clicking to be done with it. I also feel that some activities on the IStation are redundant. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I felt like the Istation IRI results matched my students better than the old IRI results. (Kindergarten).
- Istation's biggest weakness is the fluency part of the test, but that is very hard to gauge on a computer based test. However, that is one of the easiest things to do in a classroom setting. So overall, the information gained from Istation was MUCH more helpful and informative than the IRI. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- Every time we took the assessment I had students who watched the sun and finished the assessment but checking on scores after, it indicated to me that they weren't done. That is frustrating. Many times the scores do not indicate what I see in the classroom when I assess a student on my own as they pass the standards. (Kindergarten).
- The text fluency section does not match anything close to what I see in class and through legacy IRI or DIBELS progress monitoring. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).

## Scoring

- I found the students who score low on the old IRI do need the extra help, but it did not assess the student who scored low on the new IRI. I had several students who score lower than students receiving Title 1. 7 points lower. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- The fluency portion is a closed reading activity and difficult to rate a consistent fluency score. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- Many of my students had VERY inconsistent scores. They would score well above grade level one month, and then well below the next, and high again the next time. If this occurred with only a few students, I would think it could have been outside factors, but due to the occurrence being evident throughout the sampling, it would imply it is the measure rather than the participants. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).

## OUTPUT

### Usefulness

- After testing the students, it was very difficult to access the teacher resource materials that would apply to the specific area of deficit. It seemed very unorganized. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- Both the data and lesson suggestions have been helpful in guiding/differentiating my instruction. Our school also purchased the intervention piece. This has been a time savor since the program tailors the lessons to the student. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- Istation gives specific feedback for multiple skills that students need for success. The old IRI does not. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- I believe this new assessment gives us more information about our readers. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- I do very much like I Station! However, it is difficult to find the time during the day necessary to utilize the program successfully. But I am trying! The kids love to see their progress graphs increase each time

they take the monthly progress monitoring test. The feedback they get is immediate and meaningful. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).

- I feel the old IRI assessment tells me one thing, how fast or slow my students read. The Istation assessments helps me identify WHERE they are struggling and provides me with interventions to help them in that area. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- I also like the more in depth data, and the ability for my students to practice/grow using Istation. (Kindergarten).
- I like the instant data and all the different ways to look at results. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I greatly preferred the Istation assessment to the old IRI. The old IRI really gave us no data to help our students with specific areas. I now at least have a direction and specific areas to work on. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I have a Master's Degree in Curriculum and a Reading Endorsement. I find the assessment helpful for identifying but it doesn't give enough information. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- I have enjoyed using the new IRI (Istation) I feel like it really helped me track the progress of my students and help inform me what I could use to help them. (Kindergarten).
- Overall, it gives a much better snapshot into a student's actual reading ability. I love the monthly reports. They are so helpful in data meetings and to use while planning student interventions. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I like how Istation provides more in-depth data than the old IRI. The old IRI basically scored students on fluency only (at least in 2nd grade). I like how Istation collects data in the four core areas of early reading. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I really liked the fact that I could look back at the questions and see what they missed and why they missed it. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- It's very hard to compare the two IRI assessments. The Legacy IRI provided me with very little information even though there were high stakes attached to it. Conversely, the Istation provides me with a great deal of information that helps me grasp the skills of EVERY student in my class. In addition the Istation IRI is very valuable in helping me plan for my students, as well as intervene. Finally, the Istation IRI is a great tool for progress monitoring, which the Legacy IRI did not provide. (Kindergarten).
- Overall I was very happy with the Istation assessment. It gives many points of data to look at and is more comprehensive than the IRI. The reports were useful and I liked that I could use them to track the progress my students have made over the year. I like that I can see a student's strengths and weaknesses. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Overall, Istation has helped me inform my reading instruction (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- The new IRI (Istation) assessment is amazing. It breaks it down by skills and gives you a more accurate indicator of where a child is struggling. This information is easier to use in the classroom to help your students succeed. I feel the new IRI is a more accurate indicator of whether a child is performing at grade level or not. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- We love the new Istation Assessment. It meets the needs of our highly diverse classes and especially classes like mine where at least half of the students came into second grade unable to read at grade level. It is also very useful for my Special Education students who do not understand other forms of testing. This is a learning game to them and they really enjoy seeing the progress graph after each portion. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).

## Quality

- I believe the Istation exam is much more current for showing proper information for where students are reading at. I had multiple students for the old IRI that gave me inaccurate information. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- I think it will be more reliable as the students learn how to use the program and if teachers help the students understand the importance of doing their best. I teach 1st grade and some students "happy click", just click answers to get through, if they don't know information or if they don't like a particular section. Those things will hopefully disappear with time and training. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- I do not feel that the Istation is adequately gauging student performance. The results are all over the place and the spelling portion is so limited in words and so fast that kids cannot show their mastery of concepts. I think it is a good tool for quick assessment, or a quick check but I do not feel it is giving me consistent correct scores of ability. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- I thought the new IRI was extremely beneficial. It gave us a greater depth of data, and an opportunity to do updates and receive new information once a month on our students. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- I wish I knew why students are performing badly. Are they distracted, can they not use a mouse, are

they just trying to be done? (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).

- As opposed to “How Fast Can You identify these letters in a minute, Go!!” This gives me so much more information on a child’s abilities and their needs that should be addressed. (Kindergarten).
- Not only is the new Istation easier for me to understand and implement the data from, my students get more out of it because it is more meaningful to them. The parent portal where they can practice at home has proven beneficial to those who actually have one Istation at home. During conferences with parents, the data is much easier for parents to understand because it is broken down into areas that are more meaningful to them and is presented on the charts/graphs in an easy to understand format. I had all of my parents at both Fall and Winter conferences get what I was saying to them and say things like “oh, so I should be working more on their spelling (etc.) with them”. The ongoing practice for the kids that is aimed at the areas that they are individually needing more practice in is really helpful and the kids love to do Istations. Also, the monthly progress checks help me keep track of where they are and helps me guide my in class teaching if I see an area that a lot are struggling in. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- Overall I was very happy with how things have gone with the pilot this year. Comparing Istation reports to the fall and winter IRI scores, I see a similar results. The number of students on grade level, below grade level and at risk are similar with both assessments. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- The Istation assessment provides a more comprehensive view of a student’s academic level and ability. The immediate data that comes from the assessment is priceless. (Kindergarten).

## Accessibility

- I think Idaho would benefit from the Intervention piece that automatically connects to students and their areas of struggle instead of teachers spending more of their time sifting thru the intervention pieces that are there as resources for teachers. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- It took a bit to understand what the data output was from the assessment, and how to use the data. Once we understood that it was great to see all the information that the assessment provided. It was also quicker to get a full picture of the students’ abilities. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- It was a learning curve, once I understood how to find and read the data, I was Very satisfied!! (Kindergarten).
- I attending a training last week that helped to clear up questions, concerns that I had about reading the information provided on the reports. There are still questions and concerns I have about the data provided. (Kindergarten).
- The program provides a lot of useful information but is difficult to make sense of and navigate. It feels like a fulltime job just making sense of everything. (Kindergarten).

## OTHER

- I feel high stakes testing is not preferred. There should be a trained educator in each classroom that can immediately tell you how a child is doing. I like Istation and it does give you valuable information. I also feel like Math Istation is a valuable computer activity. In both, children are able to learn and grow at their own rate. Hopefully, this will not be turned into a high stress or high stakes test for either the children or the teachers. Nobody does well then. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I would really like to see the new and old IRI combined. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Istation needs to assess all standards and sub standards. Also have detailed standards based report. As all districts in Idaho move to standards based report cards - it would be a real selling point for Istation. (Kindergarten).
- It will take some time getting used to all the new information, however, it’s totally worth all the work!! (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Our assessment coordinator has not shared the teacher login information with staff. We have no way of utilizing its features beyond a score that was given to us. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- Students must have an adult monitor Istation in order to keep students focused. Often time’s scores reflect students’ inability to listen and maintain attention rather than their actual skill level. Students below benchmark do not like it and will invent an excuse to get out of using it. The benchmark or above students seem to interact with the program a little better. (Kindergarten).
- There is just a lot of testing going on for some of these students. Is there a quicker way to assess that? (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).

- The only criticism is the ending animation. It is too long and many students, knowing that the test is over, click out of the test before the “The End” clouds are in place and the program closes itself. If this happens we lose their test scores.
- A better option would be something quick and entertaining like a fireworks show that celebrates them getting to the end or an animation of crossing the finish line and cheering. They are done with the test and all they care about is jumping out of the seat and getting onto the next task. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).

# Appendix C: ELL Open Comments

## Survey Q11a: *What has been the experience of your ELL (English Language Learner) students with the new IRI assessment (from Istation)?*

### ADMINISTRATION

#### Technology

- I think my ELL student has done well with the new form. It is pretty user friendly. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- Three students in my class do not have computers at home, so this was also a disadvantage for them. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- Most do okay, it depends on their level of vocabulary and computer experience. Not all if my ELL have computers in the home. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Since it is kindergarten, technology isn't always an accurate measure of what they really know. (Kindergarten).
- The interaction of ELL students with the new IRI has been positive. The interactive nature of the exam holds their attention and gives them great visuals. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- They aren't good at using computers and they just click through answers so that they can be done (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).

#### Time / Timing

- Many of my ELL students require more processing time to understand the directions and will miss answering questions because they are still figuring out what to do. If they were testing with a live person, that person can see the confusing and know that the student doesn't understand what they are supposed to be doing. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- The time for processing the directions can be a little quick. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- The instructions are too fast, and need to be repeated more, with more examples. It takes ELL students longer to process and understand information. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).

### EFFECTIVENESS

#### Content

- I think my students who are ELL seem to do a little better with the Istation than just the IRI. The Istation tests so much more than just reading fluency and so I can see where my students have the most struggle and where I need to start helping them (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- It has been tricky since they do not understand the English language. Some of the items within the test they have not had exposure to, so the test is testing their knowledge of English rather than their knowledge of reading. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- The biggest struggle is with the spelling portion, because they feel like they have to put a letter in every empty space even if that isn't the correct way to spell the word. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- They enjoy doing the assessment and think it is fun. It reaches them at a level where they can be successful. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- They found it less threatening than reading to a stranger. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- They really appreciate the fact that it reads to them. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- It is useful in helping identify that we need to work on vocabulary. Taking the test has been a learning experience for them to listen to what is being asked. Which neither one do I feel is a negative experience (Kindergarten)
- I like the listening part for these students (Kindergarten).



## In relation to classroom experience

- According to the reports from Istation, they are performing below grade level and are in critical need of intervention, even though they perform well in class. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- I think it might have assessed my student at a higher academic level than I have observed in class, however. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- Fluency is at 0 on Istation, which does not match their actual fluency in class (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).

## Scoring

- My student has been placed on BR Lexile scores. She is also working on basic phonics. I know she can read much better than that, but can't comprehend on the same level. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- They scored about where they should be in class. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- They seem to be able to understand and take the Istation exam and score about where I would expect them to. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- According to the reports from Istation, they are performing below grade level and are in critical need of intervention, even though they perform well in class. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).

## OUTPUT

### Usefulness

- It is useful in helping identify that we need to work on vocabulary. Taking the test has been a learning experience for them to listen to what is being asked. Which neither one do I feel is a negative experience. (Kindergarten).

## OTHER

- I wish there was a Spanish version, but I think it has been a good experience for most (1st Grade).
- It has been difficult for them to understand what to do (Kindergarten).
- It is a little too early to tell. I think they are better able to be assessed by the Istation test (1st Grade).
- It is difficult for them to understand the language (Kindergarten).
- It was extremely difficult for my kindergarten ELL students (Kindergarten).
- It's difficult, but not impossible (Kindergarten).
- Most do well, but a few have struggled (Kindergarten).
- My ELL students are showing progress on the Istation (3rd Grade).
- My ELL students have not had an issue with the Istation assessments (1st Grade).
- My ELLs are ones that have a better grasp of English than others. I don't think it was an issue for them to use this new IRI (2nd Grade).
- Same as everyone else actually (Kindergarten).
- She has done great, but she is also a really high performing student (1st Grade).
- Struggling with language but enjoys it and has made gains (2nd Grade).
- There is no alternative for students that are deaf or hard of hearing with the new IRI assessment from Istation (3rd Grade).
- They do great with it and enjoy it like everyone else (2nd Grade).
- They do well on Istation. Overall they are fairly fluent readers (1st Grade).
- They have been able to navigate just fine on the test (3rd Grade).
- They have difficulty understanding the language, vocabulary and grammar (2nd Grade).
- They have done well, but struggle with the vocabulary and comprehension sections of the assessment

- (1st Grade).
- They have seemed to do fine (Kindergarten).
- They seem to enjoy it more because they feel more confident (3rd Grade).
- They take the test alongside other students (2nd Grade).
- They tend to not listen to and/or follow the directions given (1st Grade).
- This was an extremely difficult task for my ELL students to do, especially the vocabulary section (3rd Grade).
- We did not use the Spanish version because she is tested in English. I also wanted to see progress in English (2nd Grade).
- They enjoyed the Istation (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Fine (Kindergarten & 1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Frustration (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Have noticed anything different (Kindergarten).
- I haven't seen anything that concerns me (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- It is fine (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Same (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- Same as everyone else actually (Kindergarten).
- They have seemed to do fine (Kindergarten).
- They liked it (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- Very good (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).

# Appendix D: SES Open Comments

## Survey Q12a: *What has been the experience of your students who receive special education services with the new IRI assessment (from Istation)?*

### ADMINISTRATION

#### Technology

- If he was able to click in the right spot, things went well, but sometimes the target area that would count as a right answer was challenging for him to get to. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- Difficulty attaining attention, maneuvering through the tests, answering questions, timing out because they don't click on an answer. (Kindergarten).
- Even though I have no current special education students I have one student who is enrolled as a Title 1 student. It is very difficult for him and his growth is not the best. I have to sit right next to him during the test to ensure he doesn't just click, click, click. He needs so many repetitions to gain new skill. Thankfully we were able to purchase some of the actual Istation activities this month so he is getting repetitions in additional ways. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- He likes that he can hear the test. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I have one that it is too difficult for him to navigate but the other 4 have done fine. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- It wasn't easy to know if they are understanding the directions of the new IRI or if they are just clicking for the first time, but once they knew what to do I think it was easy for them. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- Often I see these students just clicking away as if it were a game and not a high stakes assessment. They sometimes struggle with understanding the directions as well. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Technology for some students with SPED services can be challenging. The need to answer and go on to the next question sometimes outweighs their need to answer correctly. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- They are able to feel success in the areas that they are strong in. The test is more interactive so they pay attention more as well. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- They are scoring higher than they should because they are often the kids that are on an iPad or other device at home. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- They aren't sure how to move through the program. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- They have a hard time on the spelling part, but the technology helps them be more focused (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- They like the computer use. (Kindergarten).
- They liked taking a computer test (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).

#### Time / Timing

- Bad. The attention span of the students with special needs is not adequate to finishing the Istation IRI (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- The first time we took the assessment, the length was too long for my students. We had to stop part way through and finish the assessment another time. The initial assessment is longer, but as we have continued to do it monthly, it is not taking as long. My special education students have been taking it in one sitting with the rest of my class for most of the year. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- They have had a positive experience. Although some do go through the test too quickly but it is very helpful to go through the test and show them where they went too fast. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- The time limitations were a frustration (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- They seemed a bit frustrated because it tested them until the information it needed was achieved. If they guessed, the test would continue to test. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).

## Training

- With proper training, they are able to benefit from Istation. (Kindergarten).

## EFFECTIVENESS

### Content

- I noticed some concerns with the way sounds are assessed. The mispronounced sounds were extremely difficult for my speech IEP students. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- It can be a lot to take in. (Kindergarten).
- It is positive. They enjoy the format. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- It is too fast and busy for most of them to complete it. They are very distracted by the characters and they often feel overwhelmed with the cartoon and miss the things that are being said to them. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- The experience has been positive. They are able to participate and it adapts to their level. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- The test doesn't go low enough for them. The practice goes lower for them, but are still doing the same grade level test so they aren't showing any growth. Not an appropriate test/measure for SPED students. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- They are able to make progress, instead of just staring at a story that they aren't able to read. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- They aren't pressured to read such a daunting paper. It adapts to their level, which helps them feel more part of the class. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- They find it to be a lot less stressful and a lot more fun. They don't understand the purpose of the testing and instead, they believe it is a game and they are trying to beat their last score. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- They tend to just click on any answer because there is too much information on the screen for them. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- This student struggles with doing things quickly. The test is frustrating for her because it is always telling her to go as fast as she can. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).

### Scoring

- I feel the results seem to have accurate information and they are able to perform the assessment. (Kindergarten)
- Istation correctly places my special needs students in tier 3, in need of critical intervention. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- They do not refuse to take it and they do seem to complete it but score do not generally appear adequate. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- My special education student in third grade takes portions of the test that are usually given to first graders. The test automatically decides which portions need to be given based on the student's level. This student can show progress on lower skills rather than just taking a third grade level test and showing no progress at all. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- The data has been spot on with their current abilities. They do not struggle taking the test and seem to stay focused on the test itself. (Kindergarten).
- The directions are clearly explained and they are able to take the test. I believe the results are accurate. (Kindergarten).
- They can take the test independently and score about where I would expect them to. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- They scored as expected. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- They seem to perform at their level (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).

## OUTPUT

### Usefulness

- I have more data on specific needs for all my students especially my special education services students. (Kindergarten).
- I think that the students who receive special education services benefit a lot from Istation because there is a lot more information and data to help students grow quickly and efficiently. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).

### Quality

- I have one student who receives spec. ed. services for behavioral issues. She is the highest reader in my class, and the second highest reader in the entire first grade, yet on the new IRI, she was identified as strategically below grade level. Kind of difficult to explain to parents that while their child is reading 137 words per minute, she is considered by the state of Idaho to be well below grade level in reading. I would say some definite tweaking is needed. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Students enjoy using it. Gives a more accurate and overall picture of where they are at. Helps to find things to celebrate (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).

## OTHER

- Depends on their individual needs. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Difficult. (Kindergarten).
- Easy to use. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- Fine. (Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- Good. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- Has made some progress but with my student has not been as engaging. (Kindergarten).
- He asks me if he HAS to take the test. Clicks through answers without reading them. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I have a student who is deaf, so Istation is not effective for him. There is an obvious need for some kind of alternative assessment for students like that. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I have to watch those students more closely than others while they take the test each month. Some of those students think the goal is to just take the test rather than do their best, so I have to make sure I remind them to try and not just put in answers. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- I found that some of my students with IEPs needed a one-on-one person to help them stay focused during the assessment. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- It was difficult (Kindergarten).
- Many just guess or don't really try. (Kindergarten).
- My one student is exempt from the IRI because he is and ERR student. (Kindergarten).
- Overall, very positive! (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- Positive (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- Really hard (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- Same as the other students. I would like to see what types of accommodations are available. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- Struggles but is making small gains. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- The one student I have seems okay with the test and understanding it. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- The special education student in my classroom is autistic with attention deficit issues. The narration is too much for her when she takes the assessment like the rest of the students. We have experimented with different assessment environments and having adults sit with her to make sure she stays focused. I feel like we are getting closer to a reasonable experience with Istation for this student that will give us accurate information. (Kindergarten).



- The student spent a lot of time on the exam and became very frustrated when given too many attempts at a question. (Kindergarten).
- These students are excited in the beginning but become very easily distracted and no longer motivated to complete the assessment to the best of their ability. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- These students really need someone to sit one on one with them so they are paying attention otherwise they stop listening and start clicking. (Kindergarten).
- They do great with it and enjoy it like everyone else. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- They do not like it and it becomes a time of increased behaviors or task avoidance at all costs. (Kindergarten).
- They feel successful but can see that they are behind their classmates. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- They have been able to use Istation without difficulty. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- They have done fine, and seem to be able to understand the directions fine. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- They have done well. (Kindergarten).
- They have experienced both negative and positive. Sometimes they complain about having to do it again and again. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- They have struggled with it. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- They liked it (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- They need assistance (Kindergarten).
- They score low, but are showing improvement and they like to see how much growth they have made at the end of the test. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- They seem able to take the test. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- They seem to be okay on it (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).
- They seem to get mad re frustrated with it because it takes them longer than their peers. (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade).
- They take the test alongside peers. (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).
- Working at home has helped the parent see what skills are presented and how their child interacts with those skills. One parent said she can tell more about the way her son interprets words, letters, and instruction. They she can help him better. The other said that he doesn't like to do Istation at home, and she can see how the skills frustrate him because he is below. But she likes knowing the skills required at grade level. (1<sup>st</sup> Grade).

# Appendix E: Ordered Logit Tables

## Model 1: Benchmark Level

Predictor	B	SE B	eB	% Change
Region	0.3074608*	0.1258638	1.359968	36.00
Title 1 Eligibility	-0.5274509	0.7002409	0.591073	-40.89
School Poverty Rate	-0.0229326*	0.0103705	0.9773283	-2.27
Teacher Years Experience	0.0444521	0.0232414	1.045455	4.55
Class Size (Q16)	0.0210844	0.0326124	1.021308	2.13
Grade Level (Q15)	0.5966195**	0.1920849	1.815969	81.60
Teacher Level of Education (Q14)	0.20752	0.4176567	1.230622	23.06
/cut 1	0.2457439	2.1192330		
/cut 2	3.102505	2.143309		
N	113			
$\chi^2$	23.65**			
df	7			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.1093			
Two-tailed test, * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001				

## Model 2: Below Benchmark Level

Predictor	B	SE B	eB	% Change
Region	0.2501799*	0.1246296	1.284256	28.43
Title 1 Eligibility	0.0231672	0.6913893	1.023438	2.34
School Poverty Rate	-0.0176585	0.0097067	0.9824965	-1.75
Teacher Years Experience	-0.0003246	0.0224124	0.9996754	-0.03
Class Size (Q16)	0.0008005	0.0329131	1.000801	0.08
Grade Level (Q15)	0.526116**	0.1857989	1.692347	69.23
Teacher Level of Education (Q14)	-0.1282025	0.4026223	0.879675	-12.03
/cut 1	-1.330857	2.096361		
/cut 2	1.280765	2.099625		
N	113			
$\chi^2$	15.43*			
df	7			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.0713			
Two-tailed test, * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001				

## Model 3: Substantially Below Benchmark Level

Predictor	B	SE B	eB	% Change
Region	0.3184287*	0.1277659	1.374966	37.50
Title 1 Eligibility	-0.5294626	0.6996946	0.5889214	-41.11
School Poverty Rate	-0.0110152	0.0099312	0.9890453	-1.10
Teacher Years Experience	0.0094206	0.0329182	1.0094650	0.95
Class Size (Q16)	0.0214801	0.1917918	1.021712	2.17
Grade Level (Q15)	0.6369864***	0.4277594	1.890774	89.08
Teacher Level of Education (Q14)	0.455078	0.4277594	1.576296	57.63
/cut 1	1.078019	2.12263		
/cut 2	3.938713	2.161934		
N	113			
$\chi^2$	19.66**			
df	7			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.0951			
Two-tailed test, * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001				

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