



## **Positions Descriptions for**

**The National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, Inc.**

**(The Center for Assessment)**

### **Our Hiring Objective**

The Center is searching for an additional professional—preferably senior level—to contribute to our work in educational measurement and accountability.

### **Who We Are**

The National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, Inc (The Center) is a small non-profit consulting organization that occupies a unique and influential niche at the intersection of psychometrics and educational assessment policy.

Formed in 1998, the Center strives to promote increased student achievement through improved practices in educational assessment and accountability. The Center helps states and others develop better systems and use student assessment data better. The Center is the only consulting group we are aware of that provides the combination of technical, practical, and policy-oriented support to states and other groups through long-term relationships designed to help the client successfully implement program improvements. The Center brings intellectual leadership, strong attention to operational details, and outstanding skill in working within complex policy contexts.

The Center currently has contracts with over 20 states. The Center's nationally recognized staff include Damian Betebenner, Charlie DePascale, Jenn Dunn, Brian Gong, Karin Hess, Richard Hill, Scott Marion, and Marianne Perie.

### **What We Do**

The Center strives to promote increases in student learning through improved practices in educational assessment and accountability. The Center works directly with state departments of education (we currently are under contract with approximately 20 states) and has working relationships with several national research and advocacy organizations such as the National Center for Educational Outcomes (NCEO), The Center for Research on Student Standards and Testing (CRESST), Achieve, Inc., WestEd, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and the U.S. Department of Education. The Center works with its clients and partners to fulfill this ambitious mission by:

- Providing customized support to states and districts in designing and implementing valid assessment and accountability programs.
- Coordinating Technical Advisory Committees that help ensure states' assessment and accountability programs receive the best on-going technical advice possible.

- Synthesizing existing research and conducting new analyses to provide empirical support for addressing current policy problems in sound, innovative ways.

These broad strategies are instantiated through specific projects tailored to the needs of each client. The Center, in general, does not do operational development work (e.g., we do not develop, administer, or score tests). The Center is non-partisan. Sample current projects of the Center include:

- Helping states devise standards-based student longitudinal growth systems for school accountability, and analyzing the factors affecting the validity and reliability (decision consistency) of such systems,
- Working with a federally funded consortium to develop practical and technically-sound approaches for documenting the technical quality of alternate assessments (large-scale assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities that prevent them from participating in the general assessments),
- Working with a state to design and implement local assessment systems to support high school graduation decisions based on curriculum-embedded work, along with state-wide review procedures to support the quality and comparability of districts' systems across the state,
- Investigating how to improve the instructional sensitivity of various tests and test items enabling us to improve the validity of inferences regarding student learning of explicit content standards and cognitive models, and
- Studying how “formative” assessments are used, helping to provide conceptual clarity to this growing field, and how they might be best used to maximize student learning.

## **How We Work**

Center professionals work directly with state and other clients over a relatively long period of time, generally avoiding short-term “quick-fix” type work. We build these long-term (e.g., multi-year) relationships in order to properly support our clients’ programs and initiatives. This does not mean that we are limited to long-term projects, but our major efforts are directed at sustained programs with states.

All Center professionals must anticipate problems, propose solutions, and work effectively with the state to develop and implement technically sound solutions in the “real-world” contexts of political, fiduciary, legal, cultural, and operational constraints. Center staff do so by bringing to bear expertise developed through working in practical settings such as a state department of education or as a testing contractor and through advanced studies (such as an earned doctorate in psychometrics, assessment, statistics, or curriculum). Each staff member possesses a deep understanding of measurement and accountability concepts as well as expertise in curriculum and/or educational policy, as well as the ability to quickly learn and adapt to states’ individual circumstances. All Center professionals are capable communicators, able to write and speak effectively to a variety of audiences. Center professionals are highly independent, but also collaborate intensely with other staff members and outside experts. Each Center professional is an able manager, responsible for ensuring the successful progression of several projects. Center professionals typically spend several days a month travelling to meet with clients on site. Most

importantly, all Center professionals are hard working, intellectually curious, honest, and committed to improving education for all children through improved educational assessment and accountability.

### **Where We Are Located**

The Center is located in a beautifully renovated mill building on the banks of the Cocheco River in relaxed and affordable Dover, NH, ten miles from the seacoast town of Portsmouth, NH and about an hour north of the cultural and sports offerings of Boston, MA and about an hour south of the many recreational opportunities of New England's ski and wilderness areas.

Center staff members are expected to be based out of our Dover, NH office. In rare cases we will consider employing staff members to work from remote locations.

### **Position Descriptions**

We are searching for a senior associate, but we will also consider applications from strong junior candidates. Position descriptions for both the Senior and Associate levels follow.

#### **Senior Associate**

The Senior Associate is a nationally recognized leader in assessment/accountability system design and implementation. The Senior Associate develops methods, tools, and intellectual products to solve problems in assessment and accountability posed by clients and the field. The Senior Associate is sought after and contributes to our field in professional mission activities, through publications, presentations, advising, or other means. The Senior Associate is able to secure and manage contracts with states and other agencies. In general, the Senior Associate is the "point person" for all work related to the specific client, and therefore must be able to effectively plan, organize, and complete the necessary project work. All Center Associates have excellent written and oral communication skills. Senior staff are expert facilitators, able to help lead meetings and workgroups, such as technical advisory committees or work sessions of state educators designing content standards. The Senior Associate is able to recognize emerging trends in assessment, accountability, and school reform in order to help lead our work with clients and continue to position the Center to be a leading contributor to such issues.

#### **Qualifications**

A Senior Associate must hold an earned doctorate in psychometrics, assessment, statistics, curriculum, or a related field and have at least five years' experience working in practical settings such as a state department of education or with a testing contractor. Extraordinary experience may substitute for an earned doctorate. The Senior Associate has a solid project, publication, and/or presentation record and is a recognized intellectual leader among her/his peers. The Senior Associate must be able to secure and manage large contracts with public and/or non-profit agencies. Like all Center professionals, the Senior Associate must have a demonstrated ability to work independently, solve problems, and serve as an effective team member. Further, the senior staff person must be able to lead these collaborative teams to ensure

that the client's needs are best served and Center staff members have opportunities to learn and grow.

### **Associate**

The Associate possesses a deep understanding of assessment and accountability principles and shows promise for becoming an important contributor to major assessment/accountability issues. In general, the Associate will work along with a Senior Associate or Center management on specific projects, but will also be expected to take on more responsibility, over time, for independent work with a limited number of clients. Center Associates must work well with a range of clients and are expected to develop the skills necessary to help lead meetings and workgroups. All Center Associates must have excellent written and oral communication skills. The Associate must be able to develop and pursue an applied research agenda to develop solutions to important issues in measurement or accountability directly applicable to the work and mission of the Center.

### **Qualifications**

An Associate must hold an earned doctorate in psychometrics, assessment, statistics, curriculum, or a related field. Extraordinary experience may substitute for an earned doctorate. Associates should have at least some experience working in practical settings such as a state department of education or with a testing contractor. The Associate demonstrates promise for developing a solid project, publication, and/or presentation record and for becoming a recognized intellectual leader among her/his peers. Like all Center professionals, the Associate must have a demonstrated ability to work independently and serve as an effective team member.

Both positions offer a very competitive salary and benefits package.

### **To Apply**

Please indicate the position for which you are applying and submit the following materials to Scott Marion, Associate Director at the address below:

- ✓ A letter of interest indicating why would you be a good fit with the Center
- ✓ A curriculum vita
- ✓ Names of three references with affiliations, email addresses, and phone numbers
- ✓ Salary requirements
- ✓ A sample of original writing

If you have any questions, feel free to contact:

Brian Gong  
Executive Director  
[bgong@nciea.org](mailto:bgong@nciea.org)  
603-516-7900

Scott Marion  
Associate Director  
[smarion@nciea.org](mailto:smarion@nciea.org)  
603-516-7900

**Center for Assessment  
P.O. Box 351  
Dover, NH 03821-0351**