

Fiscal Highlights

Slow Start to Computer Adaptive Testing - Thomas E. Young

How is spending on computer adaptive testing coming along? During the 2012 General Session, House Bill 15 appropriated \$6.7 million ongoing to cover the anticipated costs of implementing computer adaptive testing over a five year period. Since passage, the procurement process has been completed (January 2013) and the first year of the five year contract is scheduled to be completed in August 2013. The total contract amount is \$39.3 million, which represents the \$6.7 million ongoing appropriation over five years ($\$6.7 \times 5 = \33.5 million) plus \$5.8 million from existing Utah State Office of Education Assessment section budget.

Anticipated expenditures associated with computer adaptive testing include:

- helpdesk support,
- test administration manuals,
- scoring,
- adaptive test engines,
- reporting systems, and
- hosting.

In terms of burn rate (spending), actual expenditures are about \$6.5 million lower compared to appropriated, indicating that costs associated with the program are more back-loaded rather than evenly distributed. The back-loaded nature of the project is in contrast to the even flow notion assumed with a constant ongoing appropriation.

