Transcript – Course Introduction

Hello, my name is Leanne Ketterlin Geller. I am an associate professor at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. My focus is on applied measurement and how to use assessment results to make instructional decisions.

During this course, we will provide you with an overview of the ESTAR and MSTAR diagnostic assessment system. We will review the ESTAR and MSTAR Learning Progressions, discuss the criteria you should consider when deciding which diagnostic assessment your student should take, and learn how to interpret the results of the reports that are generated.

By now many of you have administered the ESTAR or MSTAR Universal Screener in your classrooms. As you will recall, a universal screener is often the first the step in implementing a response to intervention framework, and the ESTAR and MSTAR Universal Screeners are designed to help teachers identify students who may be at risk for not meeting our expectations for algebra and algebra-readiness knowledge and skills.

While the ESTAR and MSTAR Universal Screener results can help us determine the level of support at-risk students need in order to be successful in algebra, the ESTAR and MSTAR Diagnostic Assessments can be utilized to identify why students are struggling with algebra related content. We are able to achieve this by incorporating learning progressions into the design of the ESTAR and MSTAR Diagnostic Assessments.

By reviewing these assessments, you obtain much more information than just whether a student answered an item correctly or incorrectly. Instead, based on the student's answers, you gain insights into the underlying misconceptions or errors that led the student to answer incorrectly. At this granular level, responses are mapped to precisely where, on a learning progression, a student is struggling. With this detailed insight, you can modify your instruction to meet the needs of these struggling students. While a brief introduction to the ESTAR and MSTAR learning progressions is included in this course, it's recommended that you review the Learning Progressions professional development course prior to administering the ESTAR and MSTAR Diagnostic Assessments to your students. The course is also available through Project Share.

It is also important to note that, while the ESTAR and MSTAR Universal Screeners are designed to be given to all students, the ESTAR and MSTAR Diagnostic Assessments are only intended for students who are at risk or those who are identified as needing additional instructional support in Tiers 2 and 3 on the Universal Screener. Additional assessment resources are available on the Resources page of the ESTAR and MSTAR Assessment Systems home page within Project Share. Here you will find several guides as well as the diagnostic assessment decision tree and assessment descriptions.