Malbert Smith III, Ph.D., is the president and CEO of MetaMetrics, an educational measurement and research organization. Together with co-founder and Chief Science Officer A. Jackson Stenner, Ph.D., Dr. Smith created The Lexile® Framework for Reading; El Sistema Lexile® para Leer, the Spanish-language version of the widely used reading framework; The Lexile® Framework for Writing; and The Quantile® Framework for Mathematics. Focused on fostering literacy and mathematics excellence, Dr. Smith strives to make education measurement useful and actionable in classroom instruction and the home.

In order for young people to best grow as learners, they require instruction targeted to their individual abilities. Dr. Smith's vision of common metrics for reading, writing and mathematics opens the way for differentiated and individualized instruction. In each state—and increasingly abroad—educators are using Lexile® and Quantile® measures to blend instruction and assessment in whole-class and intervention settings.

Concerned with the relationship between early literacy and college and career readiness, Dr. Smith led research to build a continuum of text difficulty that places educational and life goals on the Lexile scale. In order to establish a P-20 educational system, a coherent and consistent measurement scale is essential to forecasting an individual's growth toward goals, as well as to delivering targeted intervention or enrichment along the way.

MetaMetrics has contracts with more than 20 state departments of education, working with their leadership teams on assessment and accountability issues. Dr. Smith has helped more than 20 states launch summer reading programs designed to combat summer loss, especially among low-income students. Dr. Smith has been featured on television programs in Oklahoma, Florida, Kentucky and North Carolina.

Drs. Smith and Stenner have been senior investigators on a number of international, national and state-level studies. Dr. Smith speaks at conferences and summits across the world on educational issues and research. They have also partnered with Harvard University’s Dr. James Kim on an IR grant to study the effects of summer loss.

Dr. Smith is also a Research Professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He serves on the UNC School of Education Foundation Board. In 2009, Dr. Smith received the Distinguished Alumni Award and, in 2013, was the commencement speaker for the UNC School of Education. In addition to his work at UNC, Dr. Smith serves on the following boards: Public School Forum of North Carolina and the National Summer Learning Association.

Select Research Publications


White Papers & Position Papers


"Four Global Trends in Education (And Why They Matter)" (2012)

"Transitioning from Adoption to Implementation of the Common Core State Standards" (2012)

"Bending the Reading Growth Trajectory: Instructional Strategies to Promote Skills and Close the Readiness Gap" (2011)