

Strategies for Developing and Implementing Common Classroom Assessments



Common Assessment Webinar Series

Goal: To present some fundamental classroom-based assessment practices for educational leaders and teachers to consider when planning for, developing and using common assessments.

4 Part Series:

- 1) The value of common assessment and data use within a local assessment system.
- 2) Characteristics of quality assessments
- 3) Analyzing assessment items and tasks
- 4) Promoting the use of common assessment and data



Change in Assessment Practices

Historically, educational leaders and teachers have not been given the opportunity to learn about sound classroom assessment practices.

Further, over the years, the measurement community has narrowed its role to one of maximizing the efficiency and accuracy of high-stakes testing while playing virtually no attention to assessment as it plays out for teachers or learners day to day in the classroom.

Stiggins, 2008 Assessment Manifesto p. 10



Become Assessment Literate

Assessment Literacy- "the knowledge about how to assess what students know and can do, interpret the results of these assessments, and apply these results to improve student learning and program effectiveness"

(Webb, 2002)



Developing Assessment Literacy Skills

1. Define **clear learning goals**, which are the basis of developing or choosing ways to assess student learning;
2. Make use of a **variety of assessment methods** to gather evidence of student learning;
3. Engineer an effective classroom **assessment environment** that boosts student motivation to learn;
4. Analyze achievement data (both quantitative and qualitative) and **make good inferences from the data** gathered

SERVE Center, University of North Carolina, 2004

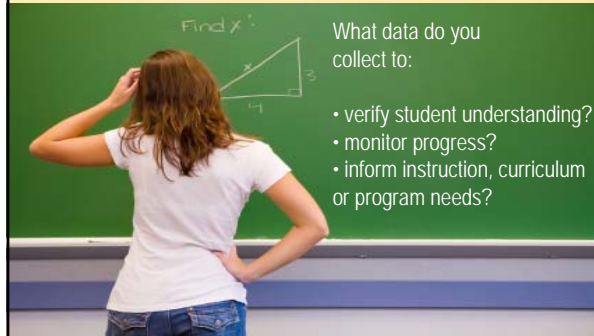
MEASURED
PROGRESS
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

Making Connections



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How do you know what they know?



Valid assessment
requires multiple sources of
evidence, collected over time.



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Formative → Summative

"Hand-out Number 1"

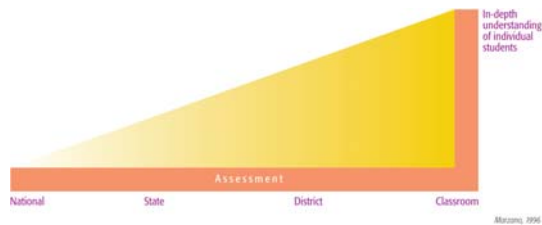
Type	Classroom Formative	Classroom Summative	District-Level Summative	State/National Summative
When	Daily	Unit Monthly Weekly	Monthly Semester Trimester	Annually
Purpose	Student and teacher feedback towards ongoing learning	Determining grades, achievement toward proficiency of standards	Identify groups of at-risk students; used for determining PD, programmatic needs	Accountability, rank, and school improvement goals
What	Sharing criteria, questioning, self assessments, observations, descriptive feedback, using peers as resources.	Teacher-developed and/or curriculum embedded: end-of-unit tests, projects, performance tasks	Common, benchmark, interim, including NWEA, MAPPS, Aims Web, District-created, Pre/post tests, and/or writing samples collected at the district level	Examples: SBA, ACT, SAT, NAEP, TIMSS

Analyzing the Emphasis of Your Assessment Practices

1. Review the assessment chart (handout #1)
2. Determine the weight each type of assessment receives in your classroom, school, or district (choose one perspective)
3. Distribute 100 percentage points among the different assessment practices
4. Discuss with your team or make comments in the chat box about your findings

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Levels of Assessment Data

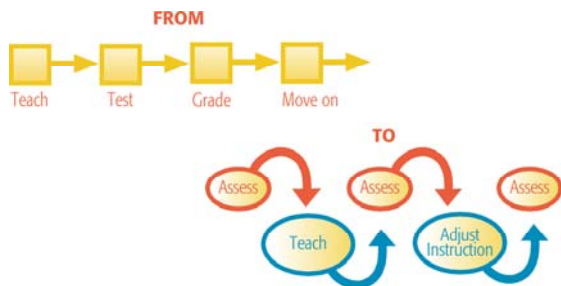


Essential to Effectively Using Classroom Assessment

- School leaders and teachers are assessment-literate
- Classrooms reflect a balanced assessment system
- Teachers are skilled users of both formative and summative assessment
- Data from assessments are used as continuous feedback for improving instruction and student learning

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Requires a Shift in Assessment Use



Shifts in Assessment Practices

FROM	TO
Separating learners	Ensuring universal success
Norm-referenced	Criterion-referenced
Large-scale assessments	Classroom assessment
Primarily summative	Formative/summative
Teacher-directed	Teacher- and student-focused

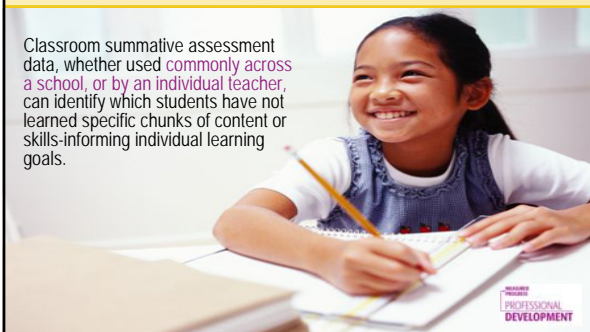
Classroom Summative Assessment

- ☐ Teachers are most familiar with this type of data because they have the most control over how it relates to what they are teaching
- ☐ Usually in the form of quizzes, unit tests, or projects
- ☐ Can be included in curricular materials that are part of a purchased program
- ☐ Largest source of evidence for whether students are “passing”

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DEVELOPMENT

Using Classroom Data to Identify Learning Gaps and Goals

Classroom summative assessment data, whether used commonly across a school, or by an individual teacher, can identify which students have not learned specific chunks of content or skills-informing individual learning goals.



Do You Agree?

Teachers often assume that it is their teaching that directs student learning.



In practice, **ASSESSMENT** directs student learning, because it is the assessment system that defines what is worth learning.

Havnes, 2004, p.1



Why "Common" Assessment?

Why have teachers across multiple classrooms use the same assessment or assessment items?

What might be some of the benefits?



The Value of Common Assessments within a Local Assessment System

- ☐ Fosters a process for collegial dialogue
- ☐ Eliminates redundancy and focuses instruction
- ☐ Promotes consistency
- ☐ Provides equity and fairness
- ☐ Promotes continuity between grade levels and between schools



Collaborative Inquiry

...inspires a curiosity about student performance while promoting open dialogue about the **school's collective responsibility** for resolving student learning issues and ensuring student success.



Check for Alignment

How well does the assessment align with the GLE's and Learning Targets?

Use the stoplight color code to indicate the level of alignment.



Poll- Green=Good alignment
Yellow=Minimal evidence of alignment
Red= No evidence of alignment



Helping or Hindering?

Assessment is a potent strategic tool for educators with which to spell out the learning that will be rewarded and to guide students into effective approaches to study.

Equally, however, poorly designed assessment has the potential to hinder learning.

James, McInnis & Delvin 2002



Intentional Assessment Use

- Serve clear purposes
- Aligned to standards
- Directly linked to instruction and learning
- Results used for setting goals to support continuous improvement
- Believed in, not feared



Using Common Assessment Data



How can the data from common assessments be used?



Common Assessment Data Use

Multiple Purposes:

- ☐ Differentiate instruction
- ☐ Inform flexible groupings
- ☐ Determine intervention effectiveness
- ☐ Make instructional adjustments
- ☐ Close gaps in student understanding
- ☐ Plan for future students/instruction
- ☐ Get a "pulse" on the success of specific curriculum or program



The Power of Data

"What separates successful schools from those that will not be successful in their reform efforts is the use of one, often neglected, essential element – **data.**"



–Victoria Bernhardt

Supporting the Use of Common Assessment and Data

Common assessments can be effectively used if educators have the knowledge and tools to use the assessments and results appropriately within an environment that **fosters collegiality and vision for continuous improvement.**



Data Analysis in PLC's

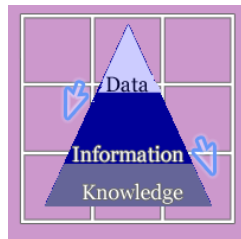
In learning to incorporate data analysis as a regular part of professional learning team discussions, **"teachers become more reflective about their teaching practices**, less reactive, less willing to accept easy answers, and **more open-minded to solutions** based on the data they gather."

ERIC Digest 153 - December 2001 Data Inquiry and Analysis for Educational Reform, Howard H. Wade



Recognizing the Benefits

Data inquiry must grow out of a common recognition of the potential benefits assessment data can have in helping to achieve common goals.



Balancing Assessment Use

"To maximize student success, assessment must be seen as an **instructional tool** for use while learning is occurring, and as an **accountability tool** to determine if learning has occurred. Because both purposes are important, they must be in balance."

From *Balanced Assessment: The Key to Accountability and Improved Student Learning*, NEA (2003)