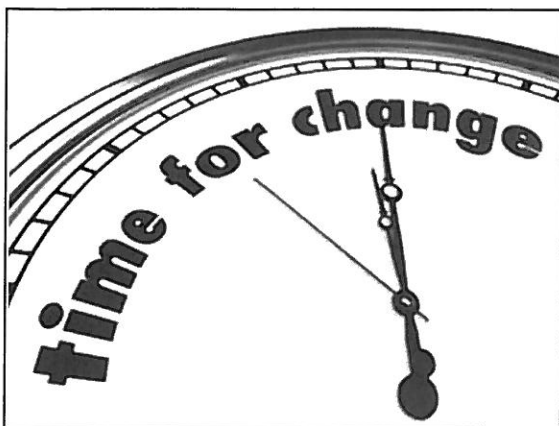# CKEC ISLN

January 2013

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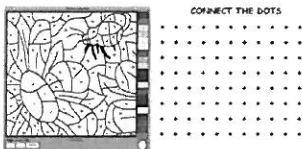
EVERY CHILD

PROFICIENT & PREPARED FOR
S U C C E S S
KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Slide 1

time for change

Slide 2

LEARNING TARGET
I CAN......... .

Analyze where you and your school/district is with balanced assessment and your next steps.

Slide 3

There are two strategies for your life and career. One is PAINT-BY-NUMBERS, and the other is CONNECT-THE-DOTS puzzle. So with paint by numbers set, you know ahead of time what it is going to look like. By contrast with a connect-the dots puzzle, you can only guess at what it might look like by the time you finish.

Mark Templeton

CEO of Citrix

CONNECT THE DOTS

Slide 4

PAINT-BY-NUMBERS	CONNECT-THE-DOTS
How?	Why?
Ends are predictable	Ends are uncertain
Means prescribed by ends	Means interpreted by ends
Knowledge is stable	Knowledge is generative
Teaching is learning techniques	Teaching is reflective on practice
Add on programs/techniques	Integrated programs/techniques

You know that you are painting by numbers when the system is taking you over

Alan Jones, KLA
Presentation - Nov. 2012

Slide 5

DO YOU HAVE A "PAINT BY NUMBERS" OR "CONNECT THE DOTS" LEADERSHIP APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT LITERACY?

Slide 6

ASSESSMENT LITERACY: SEVEN ACTIONS TO ENSURE STUDENT SUCCESS

Balance the District's assessment system to meet all key user needs.

Refine achievement standards to reflect clear and appropriate expectations at all levels

Ensure assessment quality in all contexts to support good decision making.

Help learners become assessors by using formative assessment (assessment *for* learning) strategies in the classroom.

Build communication systems to support and report student learning

Motivate students with learning success.

Provide professional learning needed to ensure a foundation of assessment literacy throughout the system.

Assessment Balance and Quality An Action Guide for School Leaders

Chappuis, Commodore. Stiggins

Formative Assessment	Summative Assessment
It's a Process! A way of using assessment to increase student achievement	It's a thing! An assessment given to identify what students know
• Provides practice • Allows teachers to determine next steps during the learning process based on information learned • Involves students as assessors of their own learning and as resources to other students • Provides students with descriptive feedback to help them improve	• State assessments • District benchmark or interim assessments • End-of-unit or chapter tests • End-of-term or semester exams • Scores that are used for accountability for schools and students (report card grades)
Used to inform instruction	Used as a gauge student learning relative to content standards
Occurs during instruction	Occurs after instruction
Process allows teachers and students to make adjustments so that students can be successful	Tools to help evaluate the effectiveness of programs, school improvement goals, alignment of curriculum, or student

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT VIGNETTES

1 - Distribute the 12 vignettes at your table.

2 - Each person read their own vignette(s).

3 - Share what you have read.

- Start with vignette #1 – the person who read this vignette briefly summarizes the vignette for the group and how it is formative
- Allow each person 1-2min per vignette.

Reflection:

Which of these formative practices do you see in your school(s) now?

How will you use these vignettes with your administrators & teachers?

BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS: THREE TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS

Classroom Assessment

Benchmark/Interim Assessments

State Assessments

ARE YOU BALANCED?

Divide into 3 small groups from your district.

Each group take one of the assessment types:

- Classroom Assessment
- Benchmark/interim
- State Assessment

Read the Formative/Summative Applications and identify what you currently have in place to support that assessment.

When ready discuss as a district – add based on your discussion

ONE MORE STEP- SELF EVALUATION ACTION ONE: BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Review the Self Evaluation for Action One

As a district group discuss where you are as a district for each of the competencies.

While you discuss be talking about your next steps in creating a balanced assessment system within your district.

If you have time, go to Action Two and continue your self evaluation.

TO BE CONTINUED BACK IN YOUR DISTRICT.....

Complete the self evaluation

As a school or district are you where you want to be in Assessment Literacy?

Once you know where you are identify the next steps---think about "Connecting the Dots" with your assessment.

SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER.....

Formative Assessment is supported by research:

- Marzano - one of top 10 strategies
- Black and Wiliam – shows conclusively that formative assessment does improve learning
- Hattie – Feedback has one of the highest effects on student learning

---

SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER.....

Focus on Feedback

Read the 4 pieces of information about feedback.

As a group discuss:

- What does this reinforce about what you know about feedback?
- Any different ideas?

SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER.....

Student Growth goals will require effective assessment systems within schools and districts.

SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER.....

A new generation of Assessments are being created:

PARCC –

- http://www.parcconline.org/parcc-assessment

Smarter Balance

WHERE ARE YOU AS A LEADER?

Take a few minutes to complete the self assessment

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES:

HOLD THE DATE:

- National Speaker *Eric Jensen* will be speaking at NorthEast Christian Church on Wed., March 6th sign-up for the morning session: *Tools for Engagement* or afternoon session: *Discoveries from Brain Research* or both at http://www.cksec.org/OnlineReg/

DATE CHANGE:

- March CKEC ISLN will now be on WEDNESDAY, March 20th –NECC requested this change, so please change it in your calendars!

HOLD THE DATE:

- SUMMER Joint ISLN/KLA statewide meeting will be *WED. & THURS. June 26th & 27th* at Lexington Center – more details to come!

Framework for a Balanced System

CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT		
Level of Assessment/ Key Issues	**Formative Applications**	**Summative Applications**
Key decision(s) to be informed?	What comes next in each student's learning?	What standards has each student mastered? What grade does each student receive?
Who is the decision maker?	Students and Teachers	Teacher
What information do they need?	Evidence on where the student is now on the learning continuum	Evidence of each student's mastery of each relevant standard
What are the essential assessment conditions?	• Appropriate standards in learning progressions • Accurate assessment results • Results leading to next steps • Results as descriptive feedback	• Clear and appropriate standards • Accurate evidence • Evidence well summarized • Grading symbols that carry clear and consistent meaning for all
What do we have in place that supports effective classroom assessment practices?		

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INTERIM/BENCHMARK ASSESSMENTS		
Level of Assessment/ Key Issues	**Formative Applications**	**Summative Applications**
Key decision(s) to be informed?	Where can we improve instructional programs right away?	Did the program of instruction deliver as promised? Should we continue to use it?
Who is the decision maker?	Professional Learning Communities; district and building level instructional leaders	Instructional Leaders
What information do they need?	Standards students are struggling to master	Accurate evidence of student mastery of particular program standards
What are the essential assessment conditions?	• Clear and appropriate standards • Accurate assessment results • Results revealing how each student did in mastering each standard	Accurate assessments focused on specific program standards aggregated over learners.
What do we have in place that supports effective Interim/Benchmark assessment practices?		

STATE ACCOUNTABILITY TESTING		
Level of Assessment/ Key Issues	**Formative Applications**	**Summative Applications**
Key decision(s) to be informed?	Where can we improve instruction next year?	Are enough students meeting standards?
Who is the decision maker?	School leaders, Curriculum & Instructional Leaders	School and Community Leaders
What information do they need?	Standards students are struggling to master	Percent of students meeting standards
What are the essential assessment conditions?	Accurate evidence of how each student did in mastering standards aggregated over students	Accurate assessments of how *each* student did in mastering standards
What do we have in place that supports effective uses of State Accountability Data?		

FOCUS ON FEEDBACK

• Connect to clear learning targets that teachers have shared with students.
• Begin with the strengths in the student work under discussion.
• Discuss questions or concerns about the work.
• Provide direction on how to address these questions and concerns.
• Be individualized to each student.
• Be delivered in student-accessible language and forms.
• Arrive when learners can still use it.
 Susan Brookhart
	Levels of Feedback
	
	  • Task Feedback
	  • Process Feedback
	  • Self-Regulation Feedback
	 John Hattie

Previous learning models, influenced by behaviorism, viewed the student's role in the feedback process as passively waiting to receive feedback from a teacher. Newer neurological research shows that humans biologically anticipate and seek feedback. In a classroom, feedback can be more powerful when a teacher gives students opportunities to seek and receive feedback. The students' actions, in turn, provide important feedback to the teacher about how to differentiate instruction Hattie, 2009	Just as a thermostat adjusts room temperature, effective feedback helps maintain a supportive environment for learning. Ultimately, we need to remember what engineers realized more than 60 years ago—feedback only works within a system. Because classrooms are much more complex than thermostats, you cannot give good feedback without understanding your students, their experiences with current and previous teachers, their attitudes about the subjects they are studying, and how they perceive you. This complexity means that the key to effective feedback is the judgment and creativity of teachers. Dylan Wiliam

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An Overview of PARCC

The PARCC system aims to increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for success in college and careers. The assessments are intended to help educators increase student learning by providing data throughout the school year to inform instruction, interventions, and professional development as well as to improve teacher, school, and system effectiveness. The PARCC assessment system will have a two-part summative assessment (a performance-based assessment and an end-of- year assessment); two optional components (a diagnostic assessment and a midyear assessment); and one required non-summative assessment in speaking and listening.

The Summative Assessments

The two required summative assessments will assess Common Core State Standards in English language arts and literacy and in mathematics for grades 3–8; three grades of high school English language arts; and two pathways in high school mathematics (Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II; and Mathematics I, Mathematics II, and Mathematics III). Students will take the summative assessments on computers.

Performance-based assessments. For each grade and course tested, the performance-based assessments will focus on the hard-to-measure standards, such as the grade 11–12 English language arts standard that calls for students to "synthesize information from a range of sources (for example, texts, experiments, simulations) into a coherent understanding of a process, phenomenon, or concept, resolving conflicting information when possible" (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). Tasks may include short-, medium-, and extended-response items as well as computer-enhanced items. Simulations may also be used when needed to obtain a better measure of a standard, with more sophisticated simulations to be added as the technology infrastructure in member states evolves. For example, the mathematics standards call for "making inferences and justifying conclusions." Simulations of a wide variety of experiments could be used to determine whether students can generate a model of the relationship among multiple variables, draw inferences, and justify those inferences with data. These assessments will be given as close to the end of the school year as possible (after approximately 75–80 percent of the instructional time for the school year has occurred) and will likely require a mix of human and computer scoring. This component will not generate a separate score but will be used in conjunction with the end-of-year assessment to determine the student's summative score.

End-of-year comprehensive assessments. The end-of-year assessments will take place during the last few weeks of the school year and use a range of innovative item types, such as selected-response, constructed-response, and technology-enhanced items. Multiple versions of the test will be developed for each grade level to allow for varying time frames across member states and schools. The assessments will be electronically scored for fast return of results. The system will produce data on proficiency, college and career readiness, and growth for use in accountability systems. Because results from the two portions of the summative assessment will be combined, PARCC anticipates having nearly twice as many score points in its summative tests as state tests currently have. This

will enhance the system's ability to measure the full range of student performance against grade-level standards and student growth across a broad performance spectrum. An online interactive data tool will provide teachers, parents, and administrators with access to results after each assessment and will include tools for displaying data, creating customized reports, and comparing the performance of similar schools. In addition, parents will be mailed printed reports after each assessment.

The Diagnostic, Midyear, and Speaking and Listening Assessments PARCC is developing optional diagnostic and midyear assessments for grade levels 3–8 and high school as well as a required speaking and listening assessment.

Diagnostic assessments.
Diagnostic assessments in English language arts and mathematics will be designed to pinpoint students' strengths and weaknesses relative to particular standards for each grade or course. Starting in September 2014, these assessments will be available throughout the school year and will provide an indicator of student knowledge and skills so schools can tailor instruction, supports, and professional development to address student needs. For example, they may be used to identify a subset of students in a classroom who share a common misconception that can be addressed through targeted instruction, a student who is missing fundamental prerequisite skills and requires additional support, or an area of the standards in which the faculty could benefit from targeted professional development.

Midyear assessments. Midyear assessments will feature rich performance tasks that mirror the types of tasks included in the summative performance-based assessments. States and districts may choose to administer—even require—a midyear assessment. In future years, if studies support such use, states may choose to include this component as part of their summative results.

Speaking and listening assessments. To assess the speaking and listening standards within the Common Core State Standards, an assessment will be required, but it will not be used in determining the summative score. Schools can administer this component at any time during the academic year. One option for this assessment may involve asking students to do an oral presentation on their written product from the English language arts midyear performance task and engage in academic conversation with classmates about the ideas presented. Teachers will score students' speaking and listening skills using a standardized rubric. If they wish, they can incorporate the scores as part of student grades.

Other Resources from PARCC
PARCC will develop a Partnership Resource Center, which is expected to launch in 2013. This web-based platform will offer a continually expanding collection of resources for teachers, students, administrators, and parents, such as released test items, formative assessments, model content frameworks, professional development resources, practice tests, and student and teacher tutorials.

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Assessment Leadership Self Assessment

1. I understand the attributes of a sound and balanced assessment system and the conditions required to achieve balance in my school or district.

   Low   1_____   2_____   3_____   4_____   5_____   High

2. I understand the necessity of clear academic standards, aligned classroom level targets, and their relation ship to the development of accurate assessments.

   Low   1_____   2_____   3_____   4_____   5_____   High

3. I understand what makes quality student assessments, I can help teachers learn to assess accurately and use the results productively and ensure that these standards are met in all school/district assessments.

   Low   1_____   2_____   3_____   4_____   5_____   High

4. I know formative assessment practices (assessment *for* learning) and I work with my staff to integrate them into classroom instruction.

   Low   1_____   2_____   3_____   4_____   5_____   High

5. I create the conditions necessary for the appropriate use and reporting of student achievement information , and can communicate effectively with all members of the school community about student assessment results, including report card grades and their relationship to improving curriculum and instruction.

   Low   1_____   2_____   3_____   4_____   5_____   High

6. I understand the issues related to the unethical and inappropriate use of student assessment information and protect students and staff from such misuse.

   Low   1_____   2_____   3_____   4_____   5_____   High

7. I can plan, present and/or secure professional learning for my staff that contributes to the use of sound assessment practices.

   Low   1_____   2_____   3_____   4_____   5_____   High

8. I know and can evaluate the teacher's classroom assessment competencies and help teachers to assess accurately and use the results productively.

   Low   1_____   2_____   3_____   4_____   5_____   High

9. I can analyze student assessment information accurately, use the information to improve curriculum and instruction and assist teachers in doing the same.

   Low   1_____   2_____   3_____   4_____   5_____   High

10. I can develop and implement sound assessment and assessment-related policies.

    Low   1_____   2_____   3_____   4_____   5_____   High

Adapted from Leadership Self Assessment in

Assessment Balance and Quality An Action Guide for School Leaders

Chappuis, Commodore. Stiggins

Formative Assessments with Tests

Scenario 1 – The Pretest

In Mr. Jacque's classroom, the learning targets are posted on the classroom wall. Each week, Mr. Jacque points to the chart of targets and reminds the students of which targets they are currently working to master. Each time he begins a new unit of instruction, Mr. Jacque creates a pretest and he posts the relevant learning targets at the front of top of the pretest. The pretest is set up so that each learning target is listed as the 'header' to that section of questions; students always know how the questions they are asked to answer connect to the targets for that section. Mr. Jacque then gathers the data from the pretest by individual student for EACH target of the assessment. He uses the information he gathers to differentiate his process, products, and content throughout the unit of instruction. Students in his classroom maintain a portfolio with a list of their learning targets (mirror image of the poster on the wall) on the front cover of the portfolio. They keep their pretest results in their portfolios and work to gather evidence that they are mastering the targets and are ready for the summative assessment. They develop data charts to track their progress along the way and make decisions about where to best invest their efforts in support of addressing their learning needs.

Formative Assessments with Tests

Scenario 2 – The Review

Two days prior to a final test for a unit, Señora Muñoz creates 'laundry day' in her classroom during which students prepare to 'clean up' whatever it is they still might not understand. On that day, students enter the classroom to find different laundry jugs in 4 corners of the room.
Each jug represents a different stage in their level of readiness for the test:

☐ **Tide** – students select this detergent if they are believe the tidal wave of information might drown them. In the Tide corner the learning activities involve a comprehensive review of the information and/or an activity that might help the learners experience the information in a different way. Students from the Cheer group often times hang out here to mentor and find creative ways to represent the information that their peers might better understand.

☐ **Gain** – students select this detergent if they understand the basics of the concepts taught, but seem to be missing some of the nuances or finer details. Learning activities in this corner involve investigation as students identify the details around which they are unsure and then examine the text, homework examples, internet sources and other classroom resources to gain their answers.

☐ **Bold** – students select this detergent if they are fairly confident they will pass the unit exam, but still have a few niggling questions. Often times, Bold activities involve creating possible review activities for future classes or test questions for the teacher to consider and then challenging each other, as they might in a game show, with completing their own activities.

☐ **Cheer** – students select this detergent if they are certain they will be successful on the exam. Cheer activities involve enrichment activities to extend and refine their learning. One such activity involves helping the students in the Tide section. Interestingly, a majority of the students in this category select the option of helping those in the Tide category. Using their homework as 'evidence' as to where they belong, students select the appropriate corner and move toward the laundry jug where they find the appropriate worksheets or activities or instructions to support their continued growth. Students work on these activities for two days and then they take the test. Because "laundry day" is an established practice in Señora Muñoz's classroom, students come prepared with an understanding of which jug they will visit for that particular unit of study and they get right to work with addressing the responsibilities laid out for that detergent. None of the work generated in these few days 'counts' in the gradebook and students readily accept the opportunity to increase their chances of success on the test.

Formative Assessments with Tests

Scenario 3 – Goal setting (after the test)

When Mr. Fabri returns scored tests back to his students, he always engages them in a self-analysis of their results. Students identify which learning targets they mastered on the test and which learning targets they did not master. Students then select the target areas requiring their attention and create a learning goal and plan of action to address their gaps. Students are welcome to partner with others who are still trying to master those same learning targets. In their plan of action, students identify their own learning exercises or activities that will help them master the content and ultimately 'prove' their readiness to retake that part of the exam (e.g. some additional practice questions from the text book or worksheets). With their goal statement and new evidence of learning in hand, students 'qualify' to retake the relevant part(s) of the test.

Students do not retake the entire test (unless needed) and the part(s) of the test that they do retake will offer different test questions that link directly to the target area in question. Unless the majority of the class requires additional time and support, Mr. Fabri continues moving forward to the next unit, and those retaking parts of the test either conduct their work as 'extra' homework on their own, or they visit his classroom before or after school for additional help.

Formative Assessments with Tests

Scenario 4 – The Final before the Final

One month before the end of the year, Ms. O'Malley gives a variation of the final itself. The test covers the exact learning targets that will be on the actual final exam, but the questions and prompts are different. Students are required to identify their learning strengths and opportunities for growth and then to spend the next two weeks focusing on their target areas before the actual final. The final is then given two weeks after the pretest (two weeks in advance of the end of the year). At this point, most of the students complete the final and spend the final two weeks engaged in a large and interesting enrichment project. Those students who do not pass the exam then spend the final two weeks identifying and closing their gaps as they prepare to retake the test (different test from the pretest and final exam already taken. The new test has the same learning targets with different questions and prompts).

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Formative Assessments as Quizzes

Scenario 5 – Multiple Quizzes

In each unit of study, Ms. Weiss gives 4 un-graded quizzes. The quizzes are scaffolded sequentially to 'build up' to student success on the unit test. The quizzes are scored (though not included in the unit grade) so that students can identify where they need more study and where they are already successful, and so that Ms. Weiss can continue to gauge where she will need to spend more time and energy with her instruction to help students be successful on the unit test. Using this approach, Ms. Weiss has been able to document significant gains in student achievement in her classroom, nearly closing the achievement gap entirely with 96% - 98% achievement ratings in all of her units of study.

Formative Assessments as Quizzes

Scenario 6 – Monday Quizzes

A team of teachers has agreed to give a quick 5-point quiz every Monday aimed at the targets of their learning for that week of study. At the end of the day, the team gathers to sort all of the student quizzes from their various classrooms into 3 piles: 1) students clearly don't understand it; 2) students clearly understand it; and 3) it remains unclear if students understand it. At that point, team members select one of the piles and create a series of learning activities or experiences to support the learners represented in that pile. On Tuesday, teachers reenter their classrooms with 3 differentiated options in their hands and students discover the activities they are to accomplish that week relative to their learning needs. In this scenario, students remained in their individual classrooms and teachers monitored all 3 groups at once. (Variation: In some cases, if schedules align, students move to different classrooms for the week based on their learning needs.) The team of teachers moves about the room throughout the week with student names on their clipboards and monitor student changes in learning readiness with a + (student has it), - (student still does not have it) and ? (still questionable). The team touches base quickly at the end of each day for quick problem solving to help the learners in their room who are not mastering the content prior to Friday's summative assessment.

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Formative Assessments as Homework

Scenario 7 – Homework that Varies

Ms. Zargapour has discovered that reteaching something students learned incorrectly is more challenging than starting from the point of inquiry and exploration for something not yet practiced. As a result, she's changed the way she assigns homework:

Each day, she establishes *three homework pathways*: "I'm going to assign ten problems for homework tonight.

-If at the end of ten problems, you are confident that you have mastered the content, then generate three questions you think I should use on the test to check your learning.

-If you are doing the homework and are not certain that you have the answers right, try three to five more problems and see if you can figure them out.

-But if you become frustrated and confused when doing the homework (you have to try at least five of the problems), stop answering the problems and create a list of questions regarding your specific struggles so I can better help you tomorrow."

Formative Assessments as Homework

Scenario 8 – Homework as Optional

In Mr. Ngum's classroom, all homework is not graded. He tells students that they don't have to do it—it is there to help them practice so that they do well on the test. To show them that practice matters, he has students individually chart their results by each learning target that will be on the test. He reminds them that at the unit's end, a summative assessment (which includes the targets they have monitored over time) counts as their unit grade. Of course, tracking growth is very hard to do with just a few quiz and test scores and students typically opt in to homework as a 'self-check' about their ability to demonstrate mastery regarding each learning target. To get them started, he gives them the tools to chart results and portfolio options for classroom
storage so they can keep track of their evidence. Because it is important to demonstrate that their own decisions need to be data driven, Mr. Ngum has students use their results to identify how much and what content should be in their homework for the next day. Achieving mastery on a learning target should mean little or no continued practice on that target, while missed learning targets should require additional practice.

For the several years he has used this process, Mr. Ngum has noticed a few benefits to his homework system:

☐ Each year, he has a 100 percent turn-in on all homework by all students.

☐ Regularly, students opt to do more than he originally assigned as they customize to meet their own learning expectations.Students enter the test with a greater level of confidence and more accurate awareness of how they will perform on tests.

☐ Students develop a sense of efficacy and learning literacy as they develop new skills and habits to make healthy instructional decisions. They develop a learning orientation and use their homework demonstrate personal growth rather than rack up points.

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Formative Assessments During Class

Scenario 10 – Personal Communication

Ms. Tanaka believes it is important to ask her learners daily to check in on their level of understanding regarding the content she has been teaching. To do that, she uses some quick and ready strategies following the introduction of a major concept or at the end of a class period so that each day she checks in at least once with all of her learners. She uses the responses they give her to help her decide where she should focus her energies the next day for that class period.

Because she understands that students grow bored quickly with the mundane, Ms. Tanaka uses a variety of strategies to gather her information:

- ☐ **Ready, Set, Show** – When Ms. Tanaka calls out "ready, set, show," students immediately know to hold up a single finger if they feel terribly confused, two fingers if they believe they are starting to understand it, and three fingers if they think they have mastered the content.
- ☐ **Exit slips** – Periodically, especially when the subject might be a little more touchy or embarrassing for students, Ms. Tanaka will ask students to take out a piece of notebook paper and write a quick note about 1 point of pain, 2 questions they still have and 3 points they want to remember based on the lesson they just had. This is always done at the end of class and students have to hand Ms. Tanaka the exit slip in order to leave the classroom.
- ☐ **Plus/Delta/Next** – Sometimes Ms. Tanaka facilitates a quick (5 min) large group conversation at the end of the day asking the learners what they feel they need to change about their learning that day (delta) and what they liked or gained for their learning that day (plus) and what they suggest they still need (next).
- ☐ **4 Corners** – on a day when it might be clear that students are not grasping the content or that movement would be a good idea, Ms. Tanaka calls for 4 corners. Students move to the corner (corners are clearly labeled and maintain that consistent label with each use) that best represents how they feel about their learning in the moment. Their task once they arrive in the appropriate corner is to generate questions with their peers in that corner (quickly – they only get about 2 minutes total) about what they are learning and then to ask those questions in an effort to try to stump the teacher. Ms. Tanaka has found that the questions they ask truly reflect the level of understanding she would anticipate from each of the corners:
    - ○ **Stop! (corner 1)** – I am totally confused
    - ○ **Slow Down (corner 2)** – I understand some of it but couldn't pass a test today
    - ○ **Keep Moving (corner 3)** – I'm getting it and I wish we wouldn't have too much homework about it
    - ○ **Let Me Help (corner 4)** – I understand it and could teach it to my friends

Each corner then reports out their questions. Ms. Tanaka has observed that the questions they ask seem to inform the thinking of the other groups, generating good class discussion and a healthy sense of collaboration.

Formative Assessments as Homework

Scenario 9 – *Homework as Qualifying*

Ms. de Souza's classroom is very diverse. She realizes that her learners return home to very different environments and levels of support for their homework. She has discovered it is as unfair to expect the same level of homework completion or quality from kids who live in negligent circumstances as it is to assume "deep understanding" in homework from kids who live in homes with over-involved parents willing to provide the right answers. Because she believes so deeply in practice, Ms. de Souza assigns homework each day, but it is not graded. Instead, she has the students use their homework as a "qualifying" ticket to enter her classroom and take the daily quiz. She discovered that this is a great 'focus' strategy that gets her learners immediately
on task for the day while she takes roll call. Once they are ready, they score the five questions immediately and go through each question, discussing answers, misunderstandings about answers, and so on. Ms. de Souza uses that data to inform her instruction for the rest of the class period.
In her experience, there has been an increase in homework completion; still, sometimes a student might not have the homework done (though mostly now they make the attempt because they understand the value of the system in place to support them). In that case, she decided it is not helpful to make them explain why they don't have it done. Instead, she still wants to learn about their understanding of the materials. "Ticketless" students enter the classroom and immediately begin doing missed homework or writing a list of questions regarding the confusion that stopped
them from completing homework.
Either way, Ms. de Souza is helping learners clarify their knowledge base so she can interact with them and support their learning needs.

Formative processes in a traditional grading system

Scenario 11 – *Requiring Proficiency*

Mr. Billings has noticed that when he grades papers and returns them to the students they simply accept the grade and refuse his invitation for them to improve their score. "Thank you very much," they'll say, "but I'm fine with my C-" To change this trend, Mr. Billings first learned to clarify his expectations for each project/assignment up front. Then, he altered his process:
papers and projects are no longer graded unless they meet a level of proficiency in his expectations (earning a grade of A or B). If the work they turn in does not meet his stated expectations, he simply returns the work with specific feedback indicating what they must still do in order to earn a score for that assignment.

Formative processes in a traditional grading system

Scenario 12 – *Student Involved Grading*

Ms. Abbott requires her learners to keep all of their work in a portfolio in the classroom. Each contribution to the portfolio is scored and students self-monitor (in addition to teacher monitoring), on the inside cover of the portfolio, their progress on mastering the identified learning targets. Students add academic goals and personal intervention plans to their portfolios, addressing their own learning needs as they progress through the materials. At the end of the grading period, students select the appropriate number of samples of their work (determined by Ms. Abbott) to submit for the grade. With each selected item, students are required to add a paragraph explaining why that artifact was selected and what it demonstrates regarding their learning of the content. They then 'grade' themselves using their own evidence. Ultimately, Ms. Abbott determines the grade, but students are involved in the process and they are confident that
their input does inform her final marking. To her surprise, Ms. Abbott has noted over time that the students typically grade themselves more harshly than she would have graded them.

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Thinking About Assessment

Activity 5: School/District Assessment System Self-Evaluation

Purpose:

This activity is necessary in charting a path of Seven Actions that leads to your assessment vision becoming a reality. When completed, your self-evaluation will show you what parts of what Actions have been implemented and what work lies ahead of you. In effect, it helps identify priorities to be taken by your school or district, and by doing so, maps the course for achieving balance and quality.

Time:

Variable, likely to be 1–3 hours

Materials Needed:

Copies of the following School/District Assessment System Self-Evaluation

Suggested Room Setup:

- Tables and chairs set up for easy discussion among team members

- Wall space or boards for keeping a tally of the evaluation scores and for listing what is already accomplished and what needs to be addressed

Directions:

After having read in Part 3 the Seven Actions that must be addressed to have a quality, balanced assessment system and having performed a personal analysis of where your district is in the completion of those Actions, it is now time to do the self-evaluation as a leadership team.

To have everyone focused and refreshed on the Seven Actions, please view the accompanying 35-minute DVD, *Developing Balanced Assessment Systems: Seven Essential Actions for Schools and Districts*, featuring Rick Stiggins.

Read through the items in the following District Assessment System Self-Evaluation correlated to each of the Seven Actions. Discuss each item with your team and come to agreement about where you would place your school/district along the item's accompanying 5-point rating scale. Consider the following as you move through the activity:

- The larger, more diverse a team you can assemble that is representative of your school/district, the more accurate your profile is likely to be. Expanding participation in this activity to others in your system not part of your leadership study team is beneficial. Or, your team can do the profiling activity first and then repeat it with a larger group to create more understanding of the issues and gain a larger representation of opinion.

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- If a larger district or school team is assembled, coming to consensus about each item may be more difficult because people will bring not only different perspectives but also very different realities. For example, one person's school may deserve a high rating on one Action while another school in the district hasn't even considered that scope of work and therefore admittedly gets a lower mark. How can that be reconciled to reflect the work the district needs to accomplish? Or, the district may be doing well overall in one area but that work has not filtered into the schools. How should the team rate the district overall? There is likely to be rich, revealing discussion about many of the issues raised in the profile; staying focused on the status of the level of analysis (school or district) is essential.

- What one knows and doesn't know when asked to make judgments or evaluations influences one's answers to questions. In this activity—as in many others in this guide—participants' responses are directly related to their level of assessment literacy.

When you have rated all Actions and summarized the results, proceed with a team discussion of your current status, using the following questions as a springboard:

- Where are our strengths—places where our ratings seem high and we think that we have made real progress? What are the keys to our success on these fronts? List them.

- What have we accomplished to date? What is still to be done? Discuss specifics.

- Where are our omissions or weaknesses—areas where we have made little or no progress to date?

- How would we rank the Actions in terms of our progress? Rank them from 1 to 7, with 7 being most completely implemented.

- For areas of little progress to date, what have been our barriers? List them.

- How can we remove these barriers? Note suggestions.

- What should be our next priorities? Which pending Actions are most critical to our specific situation? How soon can/should we act on them?

Closure:

As we noted at the start of this Action Guide, our intention is to help you in two areas: (1) at a system/organizational (school or district) level; and (2) at a personal/professional level, one that considers the necessary knowledge and skills for leading assessment reform. We think it is helpful for teams to revisit this self-evaluation profile both before and after reading and doing many of the activities in Part 4. Doing the self-evaluation now will help clarify and increase understanding

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of the ten competencies for leaders you will encounter there. These competencies will be beneficial in implementing the Seven Actions. Coming back after reading Part 4 and reviewing the profile in light of these ten competencies will produce a deeper, more complete self-evaluation.

School/District Assessment System Self-Evaluation

Action One: Balance the district's assessment system to meet all key user needs				
Balanced assessment systems blend effective assessment use at the classroom level with interim/benchmark assessment and annual testing to serve both formative and summative purposes. This Action urges examination of current levels of balance and movement toward greater balance if needed.				
5 Implemented	**4**	**3** Progressing	**2**	**1** Getting Started
All faculty and staff are aware of differences in assessment purpose across classroom, interim/benchmark, and annual levels, and know how to use each to support and/or verify student learning; that is, to balance formative with summative assessment. We also understand what uses can and cannot be made with each level of assessment.		There is inconsistency among staff regarding assessment purpose, and some confusion about what is formative and what is summative. We are aware of the need for balance and have begun to plan for a balanced system.		There is little understanding of differences in purpose and assessment users, or appropriate uses of results across classroom, interim/benchmark, and annual levels.
A top assessment priority is to help students develop the capacity to assess their own learning and to use assessment results to help promote further learning.		Some faculty and staff recognize that students are important users of assessment information who make data-based instructional decisions that impact their own success, and have made some progress in helping them do so.		Students have not been viewed as key assessment users and there is little awareness of the benefits of bringing them into the assessment process, or knowledge of how to do so.

School/District Assessment System Self-Evaluation (continued)

Action One (continued)				
5 Implemented	**4**	**3** Progressing	**2**	**1** Getting Started
We have a comprehensive assessment system in place that defines a philosophy of assessment, states the roles assessment can play, and is meeting the information needs of all users. The plan coordinates state-, district-, and building-level tests, and supports administrators and teachers in bringing assessment balance to the district and its classrooms.		We know the need to do some systemwide planning around assessment and are in the process of developing an action plan to get there.		As yet, no such system has been conceived, designed, or developed. Most of our system is made up of large-scale, standardized testing from the state level.
Policies at the district and school levels reflect the value placed on assessment balance and quality, and we have identified all of those policies that contribute to balanced and productive assessment, and have a systemic approach to the development and coordination of those policies.		We have some policies that support sound assessment practice but they are inconsistent across schools and/or at the district level. We don't always know yet what language needs to be used/replaced.		Our policies have not yet been examined for their role in supporting assessment balance and quality.
We have an information management system to collect, house, and deliver achievement information to users at classroom, interim/benchmark, and annual assessment levels.		We have an information management system but have not integrated its use across levels.		As yet no such system has been developed or purchased.
Our school board and community understand the concept and need for a balanced assessment system and are supportive of this priority.		We are currently educating our staff, policymakers, and community on the need to develop an assessment system to meet diverse information needs across levels.		Our policymakers and community are unaware of the need to think of assessment in this manner and view assessment mostly in the traditional role of measurement.

School/District Assessment System Self-Evaluation *(continued)*

Action One (continued)

5 Implemented	4	3 Progressing	2	1 Getting Started
We have inventoried all assessments used in the district and have categorized them by purpose, standards/targets measured, time of year, etc. for the purpose of understanding the balance we have in our current assessment system.		We are in the process of identifying all of the various assessments used at the district and school level for the purpose of getting a clearer understanding of what is currently in our assessment system.		We do not have a comprehensive picture of what assessments are currently being given.

Action Two: Refine achievement standards to reflect clear and appropriate expectations at all levels

Achievement standards are fundamental to any assessment system. That is, clear learning targets are needed to underpin classroom, interim/benchmark, and annual assessments. This Action calls for developing local achievement expectations as a foundation for balanced assessment.

5 Implemented	4	3 Progressing	2	1 Getting Started
We continue to refine our local achievement standards, have aligned them with state standards, and have identified our highest-priority learning outcomes.		We are aware of the need to develop clear local academic standards aligned to state standards and are in the process of doing so. What is in place is not yet used consistently across classrooms.		Local learning expectations are not in place.
Assessment results for all uses are always linked back to the local content standards.		We can link some assessments back to our written curriculum, but don't always know how or why we should do that.		We use the results as they are delivered to us and have yet to take the extra step of consistently matching results to the written curriculum.
We have deconstructed our standards into knowledge, reasoning, performance skills, and product development learning targets at each grade level for each subject.		We are in the process of deconstructing each of our standards into the scaffolding of grade-level curricula.		The deconstruction process has not been initiated.

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School/District Assessment System Self-Evaluation *(continued)*

Action Two (continued)				
5 Implemented	**4**	**3** Progressing	**2**	**1** Getting Started
We have transformed the grade- and course-level learning targets that guide classroom assessment and instruction into student- and family-friendly versions.		Some of that work has been accomplished but we have not completed it for all grade levels and courses or it is not adequately communicated to parents and/or students.		We have yet to begin this process.
We have verified that each teacher in each classroom is master of the content standards that their students are expected to master. We provide professional support in content areas to teachers when needed.		We have identified contexts in which professional development is needed to ensure teacher competence in terms of our standards and that learning is underway.		There has been no investigation of teacher preparedness in their own content area(s).
All teachers in the district have received adequate training and ongoing support in developing their understanding of the written curricular documents. Teachers are given time to collaboratively plan lessons aimed at accomplishing grade-level/subject expectations.		We share curricular documents with our teachers. If there are questions about the new curriculum we address them, and provide some training at the beginning of the year in the understanding and use of those documents.		The curricular documents are available on request or are given to teachers when the documents have undergone revisions.
A curriculum implementation plan is in place to ensure consistency in achievement expectations across classrooms. Teachers are held accountable for teaching the written curriculum.		We recognize a need for a curriculum implementation plan to ensure the written curriculum is the taught curriculum, and have taken some steps to ensure that.		We have not ensured that there is consistency in achievement expectations across teachers. What is taught in each classroom in the same subject/grade level can differ widely.
Model/sample lessons and assessments, linked to the content standards, are available and used for professional development.		This is true for some subjects and grade levels.		We do not have this in our school/district.

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School/District Assessment System Self-Evaluation *(continued)*

Action Three: Ensure assessment quality in all contexts to support good decision making

Because a variety of decisions are made based on assessment results, all assessments at classroom, interim/benchmark, and annual levels of use must yield dependable information about student achievement. This Action urges the evaluation of current assessments to verify quality.

5 Implemented	4	3 Progressing	2	1 Getting Started
We have adopted and can apply the criteria by which we should judge the quality of our assessments, both *of* and *for* learning.		We have standards for assessment quality, and some district staff have the capability to evaluate for quality, but it is not a consistent condition in the district.		No such criteria have been identified; no quality control framework exists for us at any level.
There is general understanding that quality assessments form the foundation for accurate report card grades and for decisions made about students that rely on assessment data.		We subscribe to the use of multiple measures but haven't ensured that all data sources yield dependable results.		We've not considered this as a priority for our time/resources.
At the classroom level, teachers understand the importance of selecting the appropriate assessment method match to the type(s) of learning target to be assessed in order to help ensure quality results.		Teachers understand the need to vary assessment methods but may not apply strict quality criteria when doing so.		Teachers do not see the link between assessment quality and the assessment method used.
We have conducted a local evaluation of the quality of all of our assessments, including interim/benchmark and common assessments, if used.		We are aware of the need to conduct such an evaluation and are planning to conduct it.		There is no awareness of the need for or plans to conduct such an evaluation.

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School/District Assessment System Self-Evaluation *(continued)*

5 Implemented	4	3 Progressing	2	1 Getting Started
Action Four: Help learners become assessors by using assessment for *learning strategies in the classroom* By involving students in their own assessment during learning, teachers can maximize their confidence, motivation, and achievement. This Action urges that teachers involve them in assessment, understanding them as users of results just as they do themselves and others.				
Faculty, staff, policymakers, and community members all understand and embrace the idea of assessment *for* learning—i.e., student-involved assessment to promote learning.		We are in the process of building local awareness of and belief in this set of ideas. Formative assessment is visible, but not as assessment *for* learning.		As yet, there is no awareness of the value of this concept or set of classroom practices.
Teachers use assessment information to focus instruction day to day in the classroom and communicate learning expectations to students in language they can understand.		Our primary use of formative assessment is at the interim or common assessment level, not exactly day-to-day at the classroom level. Some teachers know how to translate learning targets into student-friendly language, but many do not.		This has not been a focus or priority for us to date.
Teachers design assessments to help students self-assess and to help them use assessment results as feedback to set goals.		Some teachers administer assessments as practice; others need training to help them make that transition.		We don't involve students in the assessment process in these ways.

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School/District Assessment System Self-Evaluation (continued)

Action Five: Build communication systems to support and report student learning

Action 5 asks that districts and schools develop the capacity to deliver useful and understandable information about assessment *of* and assessment *for* learning results.

5 Implemented	4	3 Progressing	2	1 Getting Started
We understand the value of descriptive feedback used to support learning and know that the best use of evaluative feedback is to judge the level of learning.		Some teachers in our system understand the role descriptive feedback can play in helping students learn but we have not taken systemic action to ensure it is present in every classroom.		There is no understanding of the difference between evaluative and descriptive feedback in our system or when/how each should be used.
Teachers know how to offer descriptive feedback to students that will be effective, is delivered during the learning, and is directly linked to the targets of instruction, helping to guide improvement of learning.		Some of this type of communication to students is visible, but mostly is inconsistent across the school/district.		Feedback to students is largely the traditional marks and scores that result in report card grades.
Teachers understand and apply the principles of sound grading practices, assigning report card grades that are accurate, fair, and representative of current achievement status.		We have adopted some grading practices that help support accurate report card grades but still have other practices that can lead to faulty measurement and reporting of student learning.		Each teacher grades student work based on their own system and standards.
We have developed standards-based report cards as a means to communicate student progress relative to the targets of instruction, and we provide teachers the support needed to make it work.		We have this in place in some schools/levels, but not at all levels or with the level of support needed to make it work well.		This has not yet been a focus of our work in the school/district.
Students are involved in communication about their own progress and achievement status.		We have some student/parent conferences going on, but that's about it.		No work has been done in this area.

School/District Assessment System Self-Evaluation *(continued)*

Action Six: Motivate students with learning success

The practice of relying on the anxiety and intimidation of accountability to motivate learning works for some students. It can energize those who have hope of success. But for students who have experienced chronic failure, turning up the anxiety will drive them more deeply into academic failure. For all students, a motivator that can work is success at learning. This Action urges educators to understand these emotional dynamics as they link assessment to student motivation and success.

5 Implemented	4	3 Progressing	2	1 Getting Started
Our faculty, staff, leaders, policymakers, and community understand the power student-involved assessment has to help all students experience the kind of academic success needed to remain motivated, confident, and engaged.		We are in the process of helping all stakeholders understand the motivational power of student-involved assessment *for* learning.		We largely motivate students by holding them accountable for learning.
The classroom assessment practices we use rely on student involvement in assessment during their learning to maintain their confidence and motivation.		The proportion of our teachers who involve their students in ongoing self-assessment as a motivator is increasing steadily.		Our classroom practices rarely include student-involved assessment as a motivator.

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School/District Assessment System Self-Evaluation *(continued)*

5 Implemented	4	3 Progressing	2	1 Getting Started

Action Seven: Provide the professional development needed to ensure assessment literacy throughout the system

To successfully complete Actions 1–6 school districts must provide faculty and staff a foundational understanding of the principles of sound classroom assessment practice. This Action urges the provision of professional development in assessment literacy.

5 Implemented	4	3 Progressing	2	1 Getting Started
Leaders are committed to assessment literacy for all. Professional development resources have been allocated to achieve balance in our assessment systems, to have accurate assessments, and to employ assessment *for* learning practices.		We have begun to make school improvement and resource allocation decisions that reflect a desire to offer the professional development needed to form the foundation of a quality, balanced assessment system.		Such professional development is not yet a priority on our district.
Our school leaders have developed the assessment literacy they need to maintain the vision, to develop essential infrastructure, and support teacher development in assessment literacy.		We acknowledge the need to have all leaders assessment literate and leaders are finding opportunities to increase their knowledge and skills in quality, balanced assessment practices.		Assessment literacy has not been a focus of our development of school leaders.
The development of assessment literacy is offered in a professional development model that allows teachers to learn from each other in collaborative teams and practice in the classroom as they learn.		We have some teacher-directed, job-embedded staff development, but our system does not have the structures in place to support this kind of adult learning.		Our professional development model is still largely workshop based.
Professional development is having its desired impact as our program evaluation shows that we have achieved balance, a high degree of quality assessment, and an increase in student achievement.		Professional development appears to be working but we have little hard data to support that conclusion.		We are not evaluating our programs in ways that would tell us that what we do delivers results.

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