

## School/District Assessment System Self-Evaluation

<p><i>Action One: Balance the district's assessment system to meet all key user needs</i></p> <p>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.</p>				
5 Implemented	4	3 Progressing	2	1 Getting Started
<p>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.</p>		<p>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.</p>		<p>There is little understanding of differences in purpose and assessment users, or appropriate uses of results across classroom, interim/benchmark, and annual levels.</p>
<p>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.</p>		<p>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.</p>		<p>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.</p>

Source: Reprinted with permission from S. Chappuis, C. Commodore, and R. Stiggins, *Assessment Balance and Quality: An Action Guide for School Leaders* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2010), pp 86-94.

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

<i>Action One (continued)</i>				
<b>5</b> Implemented	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b> Progressing	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b> Getting Started
<p>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.</p>		<p>We know the need to do some systemwide planning around assessment and are in the process of developing an action plan to get there.</p>		<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>		<p>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.</p>		<p>Our policies have not yet been examined for their role in supporting assessment balance and quality.</p>
<p>We have an information management system to collect, house, and deliver achievement information to users at classroom, interim/benchmark, and annual assessment levels.</p>		<p>We have an information management system but have not integrated its use across levels.</p>		<p>As yet no such system has been developed or purchased.</p>
<p>Our school board and community understand the concept and need for a balanced assessment system and are supportive of this priority.</p>		<p>We are currently educating our staff, policymakers, and community on the need to develop an assessment system to meet diverse information needs across levels.</p>		<p>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.</p>

Source: Reprinted with permission from S. Chappuis, C. Commodore, and R. Stiggins, *Assessment Balance and Quality: An Action Guide for School Leaders* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2010), pp 86-94.

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

<i>Action One (continued)</i>				
<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Implemented</b>		<b>Progressing</b>		<b>Getting Started</b>
<p>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.</p>		<p>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.</p>		<p>We do not have a comprehensive picture of what assessments are currently being given.</p>

<i>Action Two: Refine achievement standards to reflect clear and appropriate expectations at all levels</i>				
<p>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.</p>				
<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Implemented</b>		<b>Progressing</b>		<b>Getting Started</b>
<p>We continue to refine our local achievement standards, have aligned them with state standards, and have identified our highest-priority learning outcomes.</p>		<p>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.</p>		<p>Local learning expectations are not in place.</p>
<p>Assessment results for all uses are always linked back to the local content standards.</p>		<p>We can link some assessments back to our written curriculum, but don't always know how or why we should do that.</p>		<p>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.</p>
<p>We have deconstructed our standards into knowledge, reasoning, performance skills, and product development learning targets at each grade level for each subject.</p>		<p>We are in the process of deconstructing each of our standards into the scaffolding of grade-level curricula.</p>		<p>The deconstruction process has not been initiated.</p>

Source: Reprinted with permission from S. Chappuis, C. Commodore, and R. Stiggins, *Assessment Balance and Quality: An Action Guide for School Leaders* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2010), pp 86-94.

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

<i>Action Two (continued)</i>				
<b>5</b> Implemented	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b> Progressing	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b> 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.

Source: Reprinted with permission from S. Chappuis, C. Commodore, and R. Stiggins, *Assessment Balance and Quality: An Action Guide for School Leaders* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2010), pp 86-94.

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

<p><i>Action Three: Ensure assessment quality in all contexts to support good decision making</i></p> <p>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.</p>				
<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Implemented</b>		<b>Progressing</b>		<b>Getting Started</b>
We have adopted and can apply the criteria by which we should judge the quality of our assessments, both <i>of</i> and <i>for</i> 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.

Source: Reprinted with permission from S. Chappuis, C. Comodore, and R. Stiggins, *Assessment Balance and Quality: An Action Guide for School Leaders* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2010), pp 86-94.

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

<p><i>Action Four: Help learners become assessors by using assessment for learning strategies in the classroom</i></p> <p>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.</p>				
<b>5</b> Implemented	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b> Progressing	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b> Getting Started
Faculty, staff, policymakers, and community members all understand and embrace the idea of assessment <i>for</i> 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 <i>for</i> 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.

Source: Reprinted with permission from S. Chappuis, C. Commodore, and R. Stiggins, *Assessment Balance and Quality: An Action Guide for School Leaders* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2010), pp 86-94.

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

<p><i>Action Five: Build communication systems to support and report student learning</i></p> <p>Action 5 asks that districts and schools develop the capacity to deliver useful and understandable information about assessment of and assessment for learning results.</p>				
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.

Source: Reprinted with permission from S. Chappuis, C. Commodore, and R. Stiggins, *Assessment Balance and Quality: An Action Guide for School Leaders* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2010), pp 86-94.

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

<i>Action Six: Motivate students with learning success</i>				
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	4	3	2	1
Implemented		Progressing		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 <i>for learning</i> .		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.

Source: Reprinted with permission from S. Chappuis, C. Commodore, and R. Stiggins, *Assessment Balance and Quality: An Action Guide for School Leaders* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2010), pp 86-94.

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

<p><i>Action Seven: Provide the professional development needed to ensure assessment literacy throughout the system</i></p> <p>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.</p>				
<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Implemented</b>		<b>Progressing</b>		<b>Getting Started</b>
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 <i>for</i> 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.

Source: Reprinted with permission from S. Chappuis, C. Commodore, and R. Stiggins, *Assessment Balance and Quality: An Action Guide for School Leaders* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2010), pp 86-94.

