Essential Assessment Actions for
Local District Leadership Teams

Essential Actions

1. Balance assessment systems
2. Refine achievement standards
3. Ensure assessment quality
4. Help learners become assessors
5. Balance communication systems
6. Motivate with learning success
7. Ensure assessment literacy

Essential Actions

1. Balance assessment systems
2. Refine achievement standards
3. Ensure assessment quality

Action 1
Balance Assessment

- **Mistaken belief**

- **New perspective**

- **Rationale**

- Annual standardized tests = good schools/teachers
- Annual, interim, and classroom balance = good schools
- KEY decisions at all levels

Assessment Results Inform Decisions

- **What decisions?**
- **Who's making them?**
- **What information will be helpful to them?**

Balanced Assessment Systems meet the info needs of <u>all</u> users:

- In the **classroom**
- With **interim/benchmark** assessments
- With **annual** testing

Balanced Assessment Systems

SUPPORT LEARNING

Assessments *FOR* Learning

– How can we use the assessment process & results to help students learn more?

CERTIFY LEARNING

Assessments *OF* Learning

– How much have students learned as of a particular point in time?

Measurement of student growth for teacher evaluation is an achievement certification decision: verify level of ach before and after instruction

Expected achievement gain with assessment FOR learning: .4 to .7 standard deviation gain with largest gains for struggling learners

Black & Wiliam, 1998

High-Impact Practices

- Increased classroom assessment quality (accuracy)
- Increased descriptive feedback, reduced evaluative feedback
- Increased student self-assessment
- Increased opportunities for students to communicate about their evolving learning during the teaching

Action 2
Continue to Refine Standards

- **Mistaken belief**
- **New perspective**

- Ach standards suffice
- Refinement is essential

High-Quality Standards:

- Reflect best current thinking of the field
- Are unambiguously stated
- In learning progressions
- Each deconstructed into scaffolding

High-Quality Standards:

- Reflect best current thinking of the field
- Unambiguously stated
- In learning progressions
- Each deconstructed into scaffolding
- In student-friendly terms
- Realistic in number given resources—in priority order
- Mastered by the teachers assigned to teach them

Consideration of student growth in teacher evaluation should focus on each teacher's highest priority achievement standards in each subject taught
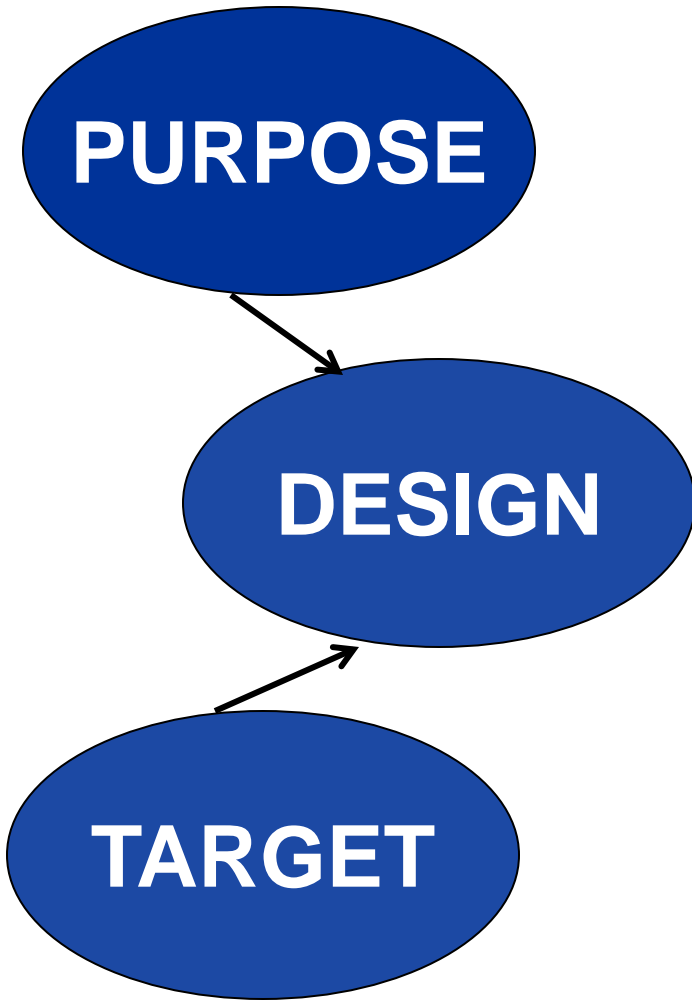
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Action 3
Ensure <u>Local</u> Assessment Quality

- **Mistaken beliefs**

- **New perspective**

- Assessments are sound, or quality doesn't matter

- Quality is essential

STRINGENT REQUIREMENTS:

- Gather accurate evidence of student achievement
- Use assessment effectively to promote & to verify student success

ACCURACY	EFFECTIVE USE

PURPOSE

DESIGN

TARGET

Remember our guiding principles:

- Rely on high-quality assessments to gather dependable evidence

- Go for high-resolution pictures of student mastery of priority standards

Action 4
Help Learners Become Assessors

- Mistaken belief
- New perspective
- Rationale
- Achievement gap
- Productive action

- Adults assess students
- Students assess themselves too

Essential New Belief

What STUDENTS think about and do with assessment results is as important as what adults think about and do with them.

Students get to make their data-based instructional decisions FIRST!

Students Decide:

- Can I learn this or am I just too slow, dense ... stupid?

- Is the learning worth the energy I must expend to attain it?

- Is trying to learn worth the risk that I might fail...again...in public?

Can we help them make decisions that will lead to productive learning?

Yes, with
ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

Assessment *for* Learning:

Formative assessment practices that include *the student* as crucial decision-maker too

ATI Assessment *for* Learning Strategies

Where am I going?

1. Provide a clear statement of the learning target
2. Use examples and models

Where am I now?

3. Offer regular descriptive feedback
4. Teach students to self-assess and set goals

How can I close the gap?

5. Design focused lessons
6. Teach students focused revision
7. Engage students in self-reflection; let them keep track of and share their learning

Action 4
Help Learners Become Assessors

- Mistaken belief
- New perspective
- Rationale
- Impact on gap

- Productive action

- Adults assess students
- Students assess themselves too
- Profound gains can result
- For all but especially low achievers

- Only teachers can involve students during their learning—but they need leadership support

Action 5
Build Balanced
Communication Systems

- Mistaken belief

- New perspective

- Rationale
- Achievement gap
- Productive action

- Grades and test scores work as feedback to support learning
- THEY DO NOT; descriptive feedback supports learning

Action 5
Build Balanced
Communication Systems

- **Mistaken belief**
- **New perspective**
- **Rationale**
- **Achievement gap**
- **Productive action**

- Grades and scores support
- Descriptive feedback does
- Profound gains result

FEEDBACK THAT SUPPORTS LEARNING

- Focuses on attributes of the work rather than on attributes of the student
- Is descriptive of the work; how to do better next time
- Clearly understood by the learner
- In bit-sized chunks--helpful, but does not overwhelm
- Arrives in time to inform the learning

Chappuis, 2009

Expected achievement gain with effective communication to support learning:

0.8 standard deviation

Hattie & Temperly, 2007

Action 5
Build Balanced
Communication Systems

- Mistaken belief
- New perspective

- Rationale
- Achievement gap
- Productive action

- Grades and scores work
- Use descriptive feedback when appropriate
- Profound gains result
- Largest gains for strugglers
- Only teachers can balance descriptive and judgmental feedback—but they need support

Action 6
Motivate with Learning Success

- Mistaken belief

- New perspective

- Rationale

- Achievement gap

- Productive action

- The intimidation of accountability motivates all

- NO! Success does

Essential New Belief

We must assess accurately, and use results effectively to make sure **students react productively** to assessment results.

A <u>student's</u> emotional reaction to results will determine what that student does in response.

Productive Response to Assessment Results

- **I understand these results.**
- **I know what I need to do next.**
- **I'm okay.**
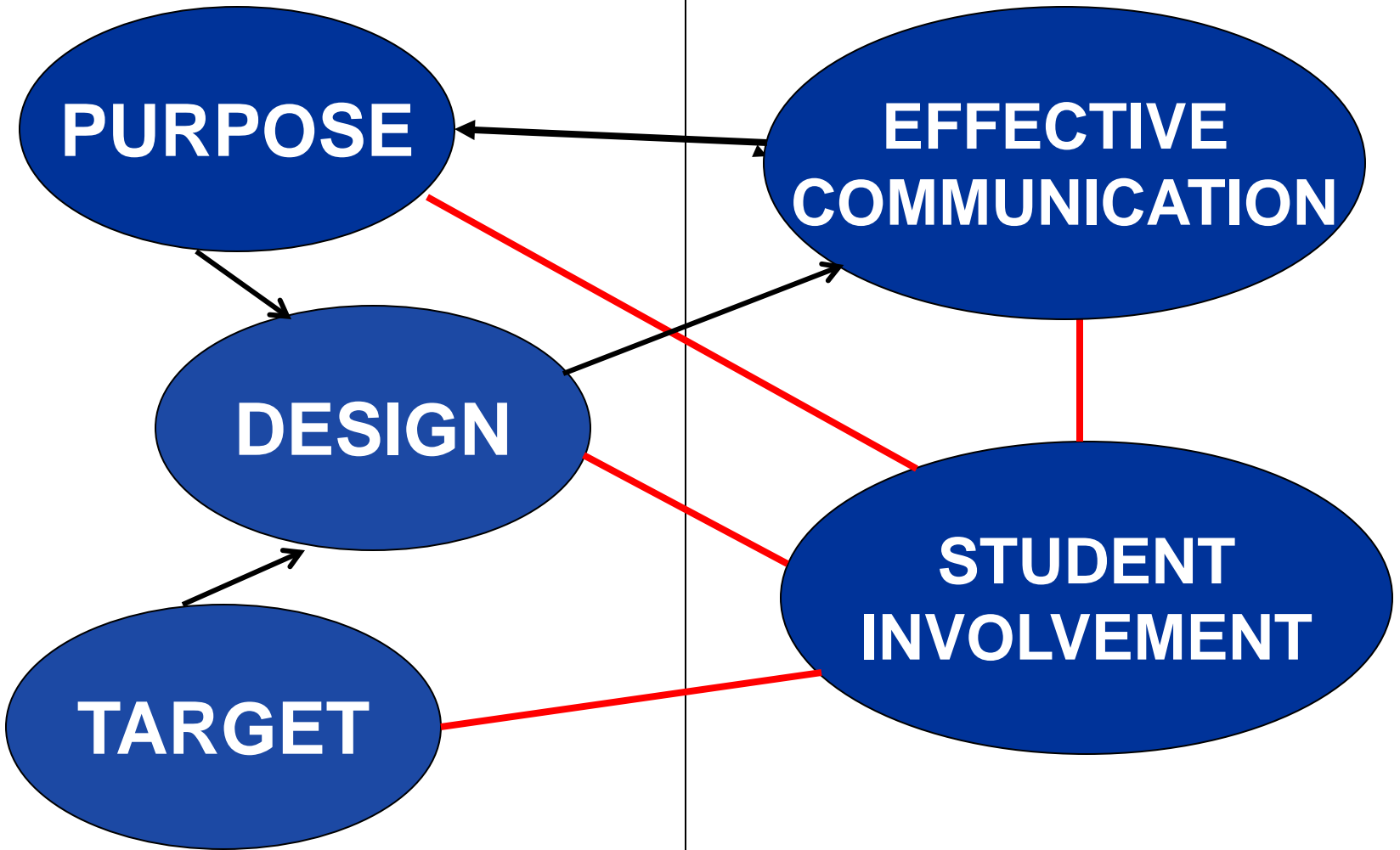- **I choose to keep trying.**

The **Counterproductive,** Hopeless Response

- I don't understand.
- I have no idea what to do next.
- I'm no good at this stuff anyway.
- I give up.

Essential New Belief

What **STUDENTS** think about and do with assessment results is as important as what adults think about and do with them.

Those with confident sense of academic capability (self-efficacy):

- Use work time more effectively
- Are more efficient problem solvers
- Show more persistence
- Work harder
- Evaluate their progress more frequently
- Use self-regulator strategies that promote success

(Schunk & Pajares, 2005)

Action 6
Motivate with Learning Success

- Mistaken belief
- New perspective
- Rationale
- Achievement gap
- Productive action

- Intimidation motivates all
- No! Success motivates all
- Profound gains result
- Re-energizes strugglers
- Only teachers can use assessments to build confidence in all learners—but they need support

We know

- What teachers need to know and do
- What will happen to student learning if they do
- How to deliver proper tools with effective professional development

The unanswered Action 7 question:
Will teachers be given the opportunity to learn?

GPS for Excellence in Assessment:

"Assessment Balance and Quality: An Action Guide for School Leaders"

- Design your own vision (where you want to be)

- Analyze where you are now (re: these 7 Actions)

- Map your route for closing the gap