The purpose driven assessment program

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Northwest Evaluation Association
The pursuit of compliance is exhausting because it is always a moving target. Governors move on, the party in power gets replaced, a new president is elected, and all want to put their own stamp on education.

It is saner and less exhausting to define your own course and align compliance requirements to that.
Characteristics of compliance-based assessment systems
Control of the assessment system is assumed to be external – tests are mandated and not chosen.
Assessments are focused on accountability and are perceived as punitive
The district’s assessment program changes anytime federal and state mandates change.
Seven standards that define the purpose driven assessment system
The purposes of all assessments are defined and the assessments are valid and useful for their purposes.
Making Assessment Matter – Students and Educators Want Tests that Support Learning.
Northwest Evaluation Association and Grunwald Associates - 2014

https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2014/04/MakeAssessmentMatter_5-2014.pdf
Teacher and Administrator perceptions on the purposes of assessments

To the best of your knowledge, please indicate which of the following ways your district is using assessment data:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate School Performance</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate Teacher and Administrator Performance</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure Student Growth</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate Program Effectiveness</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform Instructional Practice</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Too much time is spent on preparing for and taking assessments - teachers

53%
Too much time is spent on preparing for and taking assessments - administrators

40%
Estimated Time Devoted to Testing in Third Grade – 12 Urban School Systems

Estimated time devoted to test preparation in one midwestern school system.

- State Mandated
- Benchmark
- Local

Assessment results are used to support students

- Teachers: 68%
- Administrators: 88%

Green bar chart indicates 'Agree'.
Assessment results are used to support teachers

- Teachers: 48%
- Administrators: 73%

(Chart indicating agreement percentages)
I care about doing well on tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tests are a waste of time

39% Agree (Girls)

46% Agree (Boys)
To increase value, consider the purpose...

Identify gaps between:

1. How critical is this data to your work?
2. How do you actually use this data?
Teachers are educated in the proper administration and application of the assessments used in their classrooms.
Percent of teachers and administrators who correctly matched the assessment term with it’s definition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Term</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance tasks</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom/teacher-developed assessments</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of year accountability</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic assessments</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summative classroom assessments</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim assessments</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formative assessment practice</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What types of extra help, if any, does your teacher or school give you if you do not do well on a...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Support</th>
<th>Classroom test</th>
<th>State Standardized Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before and/or after school support</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One to one support</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to added resources</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small group support</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No extra support provided</strong></td>
<td><strong>20%</strong></td>
<td><strong>38%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment results are aligned to the needs of their audiences.
Assessment audiences

- School Board
- Students
- Teachers
- Parents
- Principals, school administrators, and teacher leaders
- District Administrators
- Community members
- State and federal officials
What kind of data do parents want?

- Providing activities for home: 77%
- Adjust content to student needs: 79%
- Helping my child with homework: 84%
- Measuring high quality teaching: 88%
- Communicating with teacher/admin: 90%
- Monitoring standards: 91%
- Knowing if I need to seek extra help: 92%
- Determining readiness for next grade: 93%
- Knowing when to be concerned: 95%
- Monitoring general progress: 95%

Questions parents want answered from assessment

- Core question – Do you know and care for my child?
- What are my child’s strengths and weaknesses?
- Is my child on track for the next grade?
- Is my child on track for college?
- Is my child showing improvement?
- Should I be concerned?
Questions teachers want answered from assessment

• What does each student know and not know?
• What does this student need to learn next?
• What resources will help this student?
• How can I group these students for instruction?
## Assessment Purpose and Audiences

### District Assessment Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Assessments</th>
<th>Purpose: How is the data used?</th>
<th>Who uses the data?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
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</table>

What does this help you see about your assessment system?

Are there redundancies?

Are there gaps?
Redundant, mis-aligned, or unused assessments are eliminated.
Compare assessments and their purposes to find unnecessary overlaps and gaps.

Be careful about different grade levels and subjects.
Assessment results are delivered in a timely and useful manner.
Percent of students who say they do not receive their state accountability test results.

37%
The metrics and incentives used encourage a focus on all learners.
2012

New York state introduces new assessments that reflect the Common Core and “college and career” ready standards.
Because of the higher cut scores, statewide proficiency rates drop from 55% to 31% in reading. They drop from 65% top 31% in mathematics.
The Commissioner, John King, correctly explains the results:

“These proficiency scores do not reflect a drop in performance, but rather a raising of standards to reflect college and career readiness in the 21st century.”

The subsequent New York Times headline:

Test Scores Sink as New York Adopts Tougher Benchmarks

Raising the bar doesn’t make one less of a high jumper
High Jumping Fitness – Minimum Competency

97%

3%

Standard = 1 ft.
High jumping fitness – Physically fit

37%

63%

Standard = 3.5 feet
High jumping fitness – Scholarship athlete

4%  96%

Standard = 6 feet
As Common Core or College and Career Ready aligned tests are introduced in more states, the New York story will be repeated in other states.
The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium released cut scores on their new Common Core aligned test this winter. NWEA has estimated the difficulty of these cut scores as they compare to many states’ prior assessments.

The estimates are available at:

https://public.tableau.com/profile/publish/ThePhantomCollapseofStudentAchievement/Dashboard4#!/publish-confirm
An illustration of the **phantom collapse**
The assessment program contributes to a climate of transparency and objectivity with a long-term focus.
An example of a testing integrity problem
### Assessment Planning Template - August 2011

**District/School:** ________________

**2011-2012 Top Priority Assessment Goal:** ________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark Objectives</th>
<th>How Measured</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Assessment Implementation and Staff Development Timeline:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before School Starts</th>
<th>By December 2011</th>
<th>By March 2012</th>
<th>By June 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete assessment calendar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine data analysis dates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff orientation to district and school assessment planning</td>
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**Thanks to North Mason School District for sharing this document.**