

Essential Assessment Actions for Local District Leadership Teams

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*Essential Assessment
Actions for
Local District Leadership
Teams*

**Truly Essential Ingredients in
District Assessment Systems:**

1. A balanced (purpose-driven) system that serves ALL users well
2. Refined and explicit achievement standards
3. Verifiably high-quality assessments
4. Effective systems for communicating results

**Implication? Foundation of
assessment literacy is essential**

For Each Action:

- Enduring belief to abandon
- Replacement belief
- Rationale for the change
- Achievement gap implications
- Locus of productive action

Action 1
Balance Assessment

- Mistaken belief
- New perspective
- Rationale
- Achievement gap
- Productive action
- Test score accountability drives school quality
- Annual, interim, and classroom assessments combined=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 all 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?

Classroom Level

<p><u>Support Learning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous • For practice • Inform student and teacher • Progress toward each relevant standard 	<p><u>Certify Learning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic • For accountability • Inform teacher/leader • To help judge teacher impact on learning
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Interim/Benchmark Level

<p><u>Support Learning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic • ID struggling learners • ID standards our students struggle to master • For immediate faculty & program improvement 	<p><u>Certify Learning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic • Document mastery of interim standards • Evaluate instructional effectiveness
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Annual Testing

Support Learning

- Once a year
- ID standards student struggle to master
- Improve program next year

Certify Learning

- Once a year
- Demonstrate mastery of standards for public accountability

Action 1 Balance Assessment

- Mistaken belief
- New perspective
- Rationale
- Achievement gap
- Productive action
- Annual tests = good schools
- Balanced assessment = good schools
- Key decisions at all levels
- Classroom helps all, with largest gains for struggling learners; can see impact thru range of achievement

If assessment isn't working productively day-to-day in the classroom during the learning—if bad decisions are made based on inaccurate evidence due to inept assessment—the other levels can't overcome the problems for the learner...

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

Black & William, 1998

On the Summative side:

High-quality classroom
assessments, whether used by a
single teacher or standardized
across classrooms, provide the
highest resolution portrait of
teacher impact on student
learning currently available.

Action 1
Balance Assessment

- Mistaken belief
- New perspective
- Rationale
- Achievement gap
- Productive action
- Accty drives school quality
- Annual, interim, classroom uses
- Key decisions at all levels
- Classroom helps all—but struggling learners most
- Only local districts can create balanced assessment systems

Action 1 Question:

Is your assessment system in balance and ready to meet the information needs of ALL users, including those who must evaluate teacher impact on student learning?

Action 2

Manage Ach Standards

- Mistaken belief
- New perspective
- Rationale
- Achievement gap
- Productive action
- 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
- Are unambiguously stated
- Are arrayed 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

Action 2 Refine Standards

- Mistaken belief
- New perspective
- Rationale
- Achievement gap
- Productive action
- State standards suffice
- No! They require refinement
- Need to reflect each teacher's assigned responsibilities
- Can't define and assess impact on student growth w/out clear focus on relevant standards
- Local districts must refine standards, and be sure they're in learning progressions

Action 2 Question

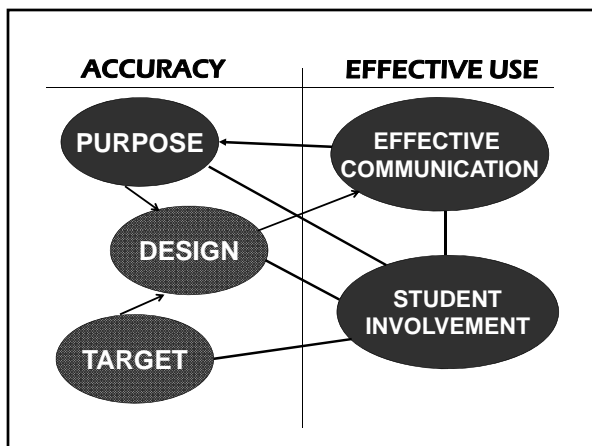
Is your achievement standards house in good order; that is, is it ready to underpin the consideration of student achievement in teacher evaluation?

Action 3
Ensure Local Assessment Quality

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



Design Features

- Select a proper method
- Build with quality ingredients
- Sample appropriately
- Prevent bias

AVAILABLE ASSESSMENT METHODS

- Selected Response
- Written Response (Essay)
- Performance Assessment
- Direct Personal Interaction

Rules of engagement:

- These assessment methods are not interchangeable
- None of the methods is inherently superior to the others
- Each method brings specific strengths and weaknesses
- Pick a proper method for the target and know how to use it well

Action 3
Ensure Local Assessment Quality

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

- Assessments are sound
Quality doesn't matter
- Accuracy is essential
- They inform key decisions about teacher performance
- Can't tap impact w/out good evidence
- Only teachers can assure the quality of their own assessments—but they need leadership support to learn...

Action 3 Questions

Are your local assessments of sufficient quality to yield dependable evidence of the true impact of your teachers?

Action 4
Build Effective Communication Systems

- Mistaken belief
- New perspective

- Complex statistical analysis required here
- It is NOT; descriptive statistics suffice here:
 - Pre/post frequency distributions
 - Typical (like, average) pre/post student achievement

Action 4 Question:
Are your faculty members prepared to gather, summarize, and report changes in the growth of their students?

Ensure Assessment Literacy

- Mistaken beliefs
- New perspective
- Rationale
- Impact on gap
- Productive action
- Teachers & leaders are assessment literate, or it doesn't matter
- They absolutely must be
- Profound achievement gains result
- Largest gains for strugglers
- Provide opportunities to learn to assess productively

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"* (Pearson, 2010)

"Defensible Teacher Evaluation"
(Corwin, 2014)

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