



**ED-SWAEC School Improvement
Professional Development Session 1
September 2023**

Participant Guide

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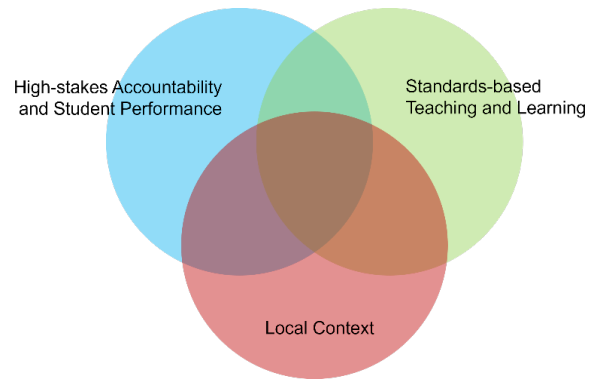
Ed Directions' School Improvement Framework

Circle 1 - High Stakes Accountability and Student Performance

is grounded in the rules, rewards, and sanctions that the state will roll out this year to drive school improvement. Success is measured by student performance on tests, and schools are held accountable for the results of students who share no personal accountability for their performance. Therein lies the conundrum. The leader's work in this domain must encompass the following:

The "adult side" that includes how the work of the state, district, and school professional staff is expected to change. This includes but is not limited to:

- creating a vision of a new "best practice" focused on student performance.
- create a "rollout" plan to communicate the expectations compellingly and convincingly to all stakeholders and ensure that all stakeholders are on board and prepared for success.
- create a data management plan that will enable the districts and the schools to identify, generate and analyze the data they will need to plan and utilize to move their students from where they are to where they need to be (e.g., progress monitoring, causal analysis, priority needed edification, etc.).



The "student side" that includes revised expectations will be used to determine student "proficiency" and the metrics that will be used to define "student success" on the state assessment and accountability reports:

- develop a plan for "unpacking" student expectations to determine level and program accountability metrics.
- begin planning an approach to PLC conferencing that is grounded in standards-based best practice (e.g., the understanding that what is "learned" in the classroom is no guarantee of what will be performed on a test).
- a data management component to monitor the students' progress toward those expectations and enable districts and schools to course-correct where needed (through PLC's and PD).
- explore "social and emotional curricula" strategies that promote student attitudes and perceptions that support "best effort" and high levels of engagement in learning work and performing work.

Circle 2 - Standards-based Teaching and Learning is grounded in the creation of districts and schools focused on "student success." This includes the various levels and types of curricula, the planning and instructional methods employed and the assigned student work that results from it. It embraces not only the content curriculum but also the thinking and the social and emotional curricula. It includes progress monitoring by formative assessments, teacher made tests/assignments, and informal checks for understanding. The leader's work in this domain must encompass the following:

The "adult side" includes how the work of the state, district, and school's professional staff must work differently. This includes but is not limited to:

- develop intentional district and school climates and cultures that create optimum learning and performing environments.
- analyze existing curricula and revised as needed to produce the "new expectations."
- provide time and resources to revise the existing curricula to better meet student needs.
- plan to monitor for congruence between what is planned to be taught with what is actually taught.
- revise walk-through and observation practice that acknowledges that standards are going to be tested by grade level and content area and enabling the monitoring of the taught curriculum to ensure that the taught curriculum is congruent to the expectations.
- a plan to monitor that what is actually taught is congruent to what is learned and that the learning is consistent with student progress expectations.
- revise existing PLC practice to ensure that adequate time is devoted to the analysis of student work to determine priority needs and develop support systems that intentionally address those needs.
- institutionalize the collective understanding that the students are there to do schoolwork and that a key aspect of the teacher's job is to get them to engage with that work.

The “student side” includes revision of “proficient student” expectations that support student movement from their current status to proficiency by the time of the state assessment (or transitioned to the next level):

- students must attend school, and schools must have programs in place for the students who regularly miss school (keyed to five days, 10 days, and 20 days missed).
- students must attend and stay highly engaged in formative and shaping work.
- course, unit, and lesson plans must focus on student growth towards defined expectations and not just on the content to be covered.
- teachers and students must understand “progress to proficiency” and share perceptions of student progress.
- classrooms must honor research on how students learn and the factors that dictate student performance.
- students must develop “self-assessment” and self-monitoring strategies.

Circle 3 - The Local Context includes all the multitude of variables outside the other two domains above that make up the school “community” and school “environment” and dictate the decisions that academic leaders and teachers must deal with on a day-to-day basis. There may be spoken or unspoken expectations and may conflict with, or complicate, efforts to improve the school grade, per se. The leader must work to mitigate those and communicate in a convincing and compelling way that an improved school is a reward for the whole community.

The “greater community” includes all stakeholders who should have an interest in the school’s success. This includes but is not limited to:

- the nature of the greater community environment (e.g., housing, work opportunities, education levels, etc.).
- available community resources (human, economic, and social).
- the community attitudes about and support for the school.
- community involvement in the school and its programs.
- the social and emotional environment (e.g., family structure, income and social status, parental ability to support at home learning, etc.).

The school side that includes the whole “school community” and influence how resources are managed, how relationships with the board and community are managed, what and how things are communicated to both the school and greater communities and how staff and financial resources are managed. These include but are not limited to:

- the school improvement planning process and individual action plan development (designed to change adults or students?).
- development of an optimum district or school climate and culture.
- emphasis on multiple curricula (e.g., standards focused, social and emotional, thinking, etc.).
- student proficiency focused course plans, unit plans, lesson plans and data management plans.
- staff analysis to determine staff ability to move all students towards proficiency including follow-up professional development to increase staff confidence and competence.
- analysis of current student performance levels to include an initial analysis of “at risk” characteristics followed by diagnostic and analysis of student work to identify point of breakdown and cause of breakdown.
- analysis of existing school management systems to ensure that they are consistent with best practice indicators (e.g., getting students to school on time, providing appropriate “learning diets”, development of safe and secure environments, etc.).
- developing inclusive data management systems to monitor student work and student progress, teacher work, barriers to success, effectiveness of programs, technologies, materials, and strategies.

Activity 1 - Unpacking the State Assessment: What do kids have to know and do?

Reference 1 – State test requirements included several different elements that had to be linked. For example, the third-grade ELA testing included:

Reporting Category	Genre	Percentage of Assessment	Indications of Rigor
Key ideas and details	Literature	15-25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading selections may include grade level selections that include from 300 - 800 words. Variety of testing formats will be used including electronic formats. Readings will be on grade level and will include discipline specific language in test prompts. Question values were determined by the rigor and difficulty of the questions.
	Informational		
Craft and structure	Literature	25-35%	
	Informational		
Integration of knowledge and ideas	Literature	20-30%	
	Informational		
Language and editing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluating correct errors Use grammar rules such as capitalization, punctuation, and spelling Language use and conventions 	Literature or Informational	15-25%	

A sample test provided by the state gave the team an idea of the frequency of use of various types of questions that would be found on the state formal assessment.

Number of Test Items	Types of Test Items
20	Selectable Hot Text – 2
	Evidence-Based Selected Response [EBSR] – 4
	Graphic Response Display (GRID) – 3
	Multiple-Choice – 3
	Multiple Select – 1
	Open Response – 2
	Drag-and-Drop Hot Text – 1
	Editing Task Choice – 3
	Editing Task – 1

In addition to the state test specifications, the team unpacked the state ELA standard for each grade level. For each standard, they developed a worksheet that included critical vocabulary, tasks, test items, and technology references. As an example, in Florida we unpacked standard L AFS. 5. RL. 1. 1: the worksheet looked like this:

Reference 2 – When the state sends out guidance on the original submission

Standard	Critical Vocabulary		Tasks	Possible Test Items
L AFS. 5. RL. 1. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explicit Meaning Literal Meaning Inference Conclusion Text Phrases Sentences Main Idea Key Idea Central Idea Theme Supporting Details Relevant Details Language Choice Audience Purpose Character Emphatic/ Expressive Language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading for Information Literature Informal Writing Story Excerpt Folktale Legend Newspaper Article Magazine Article Poem Drama Play Map/Chart/Graft Inset/Graphic Picture Inset Text Features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the main idea Identify supporting details Show supporting detail impact on the development of the reading Recognize and show how language is used Drawn inference our conclusion and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple-choice Hot text selection Identifying correct inference our conclusion Multiple selects Drag-and-drop text into response Drag-and-drop text to support an inference or conclusion Extended response question EBSR

A “learnings list” similar to this was developed for each of the reading strands and clusters. This gave them a baseline understanding of what the state expected the students to know, what they were expected to do, and an indication of the level at which the student had to work to be considered proficient. A few issues emerged in this process that complicated their comparison.

- The state strands and clusters are large umbrellas that include a large language component and multiple learnings identified as significant.
- Some critical vocabulary sets included multiple representations for the same concept (e.g., main idea, central idea, theme, focus, key idea, etc.).
- Some of the terms and learnings on the list proved to be umbrella terms themselves (e.g., graph – circle graph, line graph, etc.).
- Some of the tasks included were multi-step processes and required the students to know a set of tasks to complete an assessment. Many of these processes need to be taught in parts and it is necessary to try to follow these across grade levels.

Once unpacked, the state standards, test specifications, supporting resources, and online resources were assembled in the artifact collection of district curriculum documents. This included grade level ELA curricula/modules/lesson plans, text and support materials, ELA planning, district assessment and monitoring tools, and district ELA pacing and schedules.

Activity: Supporting High Stakes Accountability

1. Read the following list of actions the schools can do to collaborate with Ed Directions.
2. Force-rank the priority of each line item with 1 being most important and 6 being the lowest priority.
3. Discuss your rankings with your table.

Support High Stakes Accountability	Priority
Collaborate in unpacking and creating meaning from the artifacts provided by the state as a part of the new state standards initiative.	
Facilitate and support "red flag analyses" of state and local test scores as a starting point for district/school development of data streams needed to inform planning and decision-making.	
Support in developing a shared vision, goals, and objectives to drive an intentional school plan for actualizing the new state initiatives.	
Support in developing data streams that inform decisions about student needs, school capacity, and ad hoc professional development and PLC needs.	
Help customize ad hoc professional development to create a shared understanding of current research relative to the school transformation Initiative.	
Collaborate in the end of semester transition report.	

Activity 2 – Standards-based Teaching and Learning

Reference 1 – The Formative Period in Brief

Timeframe: From week 3 to the beginning of winter break

Priorities:

- Building an independent learner and increasing potential as performer
- Building operational language
- Using critical reading, writing, and thinking strategies
- Building basic reading and performing competencies
- Building a best effort comfort zone

Reference 2 – Sample of a Formative Walk-Through Form

Observer	Date	Time	Teacher

Student Work	
Acquiring work	
Practice work	
Work that creates meaning	
Translating work	
Equivalent work	
Teacher Work	
Lecture	
Worksheets/workbook	
Work centers	
Differentiated instruction	
Differentiated work	
Visual supports	
Text activities	
Monitoring student work	
Assessing student performance	
Ineffective work patterns	
Management	
Effective rituals (academic)	
Effective rituals (management)	
Behavior and academic expectations are posted.	
Classroom Setup	
Standards and learnings are posted	
Classroom arrangement is flexible	
Visuals include cumulative and focusing visuals	
Proficient student work samples are posted	
Classroom has a print collection suitable for the discipline	

Notes:

Activity: Standards-based Teaching and Learning

1. Read the following list of actions the schools can do to collaborate with Ed Directions.
2. Force-rank the priority of each line item with 1 being most important and 4 being the lowest priority.
3. Discuss your rankings with your table.

Support Standards-based Teaching and Learning	Priority
Conduct an initial needs assessment in targeted schools.	
Leadership coaches observe classrooms, interview staff, analyze data, and provide an initial analysis of the status of the school.	
Facilitate the development of an initial school transformation plan.	
Provide professional development and lead PLC discussions in “core” school transformation research.	

Activity 3 – Local Context: Formative Readiness Assessment

Is your school upholding best practice indicators? Take a look at each row and decide if the answer is yes or no. Then prioritize the top issues that you are going to mitigate in the coming months.

- **Step 1:** Review Proficient Learner Characteristics – to see what our students need to have by the end of the Formative Period.
- **Step 2:** Review with your team some of the student characteristics that they think are most essential and some of the ones that might be missing.
- **Step 3:** Select one of the indicators that you need to address and is a high priority.
- **Step 4:** On the next page, create action items for your October, November, and end of semester planning.
(For the optional working lunch – complete this chart and then convert your highest priorities into your action plans on the next page.)

Best Practice Indicators	Yes/No	Priority
The academic leaders school evaluation indicates that all classrooms have adequate culture and climate so that all students feel safe and welcomed.		
Teacher attendance is maintaining at over 95 percent and the school has developed a substitute plan to make sure the students and subs can maintain learning momentum.		
Schoolwide and individual class academic and behavioral rituals and routines have been introduced, practiced, and mastered by all students.		
All teachers have been implementing the district and/or school discipline policies and are promoting optimum behaviors instead of reactionary punishments.		
Observations of classrooms and conversations with students indicate that students feel they can be successful and few, if any, students feel that they are doomed to failure.		
All teachers are planning around student work and are differentiating for differences and experience base, learning style, learning rate, etc.		
All students have mastered attending and acquiring work strategies and have been introduced to organizing and meaningful work.		
School counselors and support staff monitored student performance as learner during the opening weeks and suggested changes in student distribution and/ or support systems provided?		
The academic leadership team developed observation tools for the Formative Period and scheduled regular monitoring of classroom and non-classroom activity.		
All teachers who are struggling have been identified, conferenced, and if necessary, placed on an improvement plan. Academic leaders have scheduled follow-ups to measure the implementation and impact of the improvement plan.		
Students who have exhibited chronic absenteeism or tardiness have been identified and their attendance has been monitored. Plans are in place to prevent relapse into ineffective attendance patterns.		
Teachers have been trained in effective PLC strategies. Academic leaders have scheduled weekly PLC sessions to monitor student work and growth as learner.		
The school data room contains visual reminders of school, grade level, and content area goals and the school's current status in terms of those goals.		
The school data room contains samples of student learning work and student performance on assessments that can drive PLC discussions of student growth and special support needed.		

Step 4 – Identify one priority (At lunch, identify the top three to five priorities that you are going to address).

Step 5 – Complete the “Planning for the Formative Period” tool. For this activity, create a 30/60/90-day plan of how you hope to address the indicator. (At lunch, you will repeat this process for up to five priorities.)

Planning for the Formative Period

Period	Action Item	Who Is Responsible	Comp. Date	Evidence to be Collected
By End of October				

Period	Action Item	Who Is Responsible	Comp. Date	Evidence to be Collected
By End of November				

Period	Action Items	Who Is Responsible	Comp. Date	Evidence to be Collected
By End of Winter Break				

Activity 4: 5 Legged Model

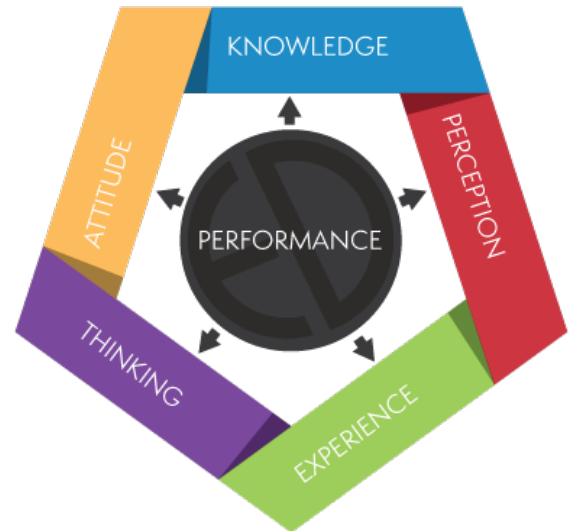
Reference – 5 Legged Model in Brief

Knowledge: State assessments establish expectations for all students. Each student must own the learnings (concepts, tasks, thinking) required to meet these expectations. This critical vocabulary needs to be operational, not just known.

Attitude: Students must know the learning required. Additionally, they must be willing to perform the necessary tasks and invest a “best-effort” on every part of the assessment. Every answer or product should represent the student’s personal best effort.

Perception: Most state assessments embed perceptions generated by learning. There are two perceptions required for student performance that are not related to standards expectations:

- **Perception of Proficiency:** The student knows what constitutes good work and how to produce it.
- **Perception of Efficacy:** The student believes, “I can work successfully at the levels required.”



Thinking: Mature thinking patterns and critical reading and writing are required on every question of a state test.

Experience: Almost all students need two sets of experiences: they must have work experience that forms the five legs, and they must have experience working successfully at the level of the assessment. In other words, they must have both Formative and Calibrating experiences.

Activity – 5 Legged Model Table Discussion

1. Review the 5 legs.
2. What are your school’s or district’s strengths?
3. What are your areas of opportunity (areas where you need to improve)?
4. What are your priorities (or action plan) for supporting strengths and addressing opportunities?
5. What is your top priority?
6. What is your first step?

Activity 5: Characteristics of Proficient Students

Reference – Proficient Student Characteristics

Characteristic	End of Grade 2	End of Grade 3/5	End of Grade 8
Regular and prompt attendance	Begins to take responsibility for getting ready for school.	Takes responsibility for getting ready for school and getting to school on time.	Accept responsibility getting ready for school and getting to school on time.
Active, engaged listening	Pays attention when addressed and follows instructions.	Engages in active listening and seeks clarity and provides feedback when appropriate.	Is an active critical listener who seeks clarity and detail and provides both short-term and long-term feedback.
Independent learning	Works independently with a peer group and learning situations.	Can work independently as learner and performer but may need teacher prompt or monitoring support.	Can learn by working independently, in small groups are in whole class situations. Takes responsibility for learning.
Attention or engagement control	Can control attention for at least five minutes and stay engaged in tasks for the same length of time.	Can stay attentive or engaged for at least 15 minutes and refocus if pulled off task.	Can stay attentive or engaged for at least 30 minutes and can refocus if pulled off task. Can control the level of engagement based on the complexity of the task.
Can work independently from long term memory	Is beginning to work from long term memory but may still be teacher dependent to pull content knowledge from long term memory.	Can work independent of the teacher if the work is in the students' comfort zone. At the end of grade 3/5 student must be able to work from long term memory and the level consistent with the assessment.	Can work without teacher presence or teacher prompt to access long-term memory and use learning in high level, complex tasks.
Communicates using critical content vocabulary	Can communicate with the initial critical vocabulary of the reading and math.	Can communicate with discipline specific language if prompted but prefers informal register. The formal register will be required on the test.	All school related communication involves content appropriate vocabulary in formal register.
Understands operational vocabulary and plans complete responses	Can understand tasks and follow thinking processes through at least three steps.	Understands that tasks and operations require specific steps in planning and has strategies for determining what's required for proficiency and then working to that level.	Unpacks directions, identifies tasks needed for completion in the rubric for proficiency and plans a proficient response.
Format mastery	Has mastered short response, multiple choice, and initial electronic assessment formats.	has mastered short response, open response, electronic, multiple choice, and other assessment types as found on the state assessment.	has mastered short response, open response, electronic, multiple choice, and other assessment types as found on the state assessment.
Critical reading	Is primarily a recreational reader but should have a perception of reading to learn in reading to respond.	emerges as a critical or strategic reader who understands how to read to perform a task.	Reads critically and purposefully to learn or acquire data for problem-solving and decision-making.
Varies reading rate according to purpose	Exhibits grade level speed in recreational reading.	Reads critically at a rate consistent with the expectations of the state assessments.	Reads critically at a rate consistent with the expectations of the state assessments.

Critical thinking	Can solve simple problems and follow one, two or three step thinking problems. Can learn to respond in an SRE pattern.	can solve problems make decisions and draw conclusions requiring up to five thinking steps and can respond orally or in writing in an SRE pattern.	can solve problems make decisions and draw conclusions requiring up to seven thinking steps and can respond orally or in writing in an SRE pattern.
Critical writing	Can explain a thought or solution and provide a reason and evidence.	can communicate thinking, decisions, or solutions to a problem clearly and in a logical order.	can communicate thinking, decisions, solutions, or reactions to data clearly, using appropriate vocabulary and logic
Engagement experience	Can identify work that they have done successfully that is at the level of the assessment.	Identifies assessment level work and determines if the work he or she produced is proficient.	Identifies assessment level work, determines proficiency and revises to proficiency if needed.
Appropriate attitudes	Understands best effort and can give best effort to learning work and assessment work.	Gives best effort in learning and assessment work. Accepts challenges and takes academic risks.	Accepts difficult challenges, takes academic risks, and seeks personal best. Frequently identifies alternative or tangential applications.
Perception of proficiency	Understands what grade level proficient work looks like and knows how to produce it.	Identifies his or her work as proficient, identifies what's wrong if it is not proficient and corrects the work.	Understands proficiency and seeks to produce proficient work. Seeks support or assistance to increase the level of performance.
Self-evaluation and revision to proficiency	Regularly checks work to make sure it is correct and revises work if prompted.	Checks work without teacher prompt and revises to proficiency. Seeks support if needed.	Independently checks work, identifies flaws and refines product to proficiency. Seeks instruction or direction if needed
Completes tasks assigned in class	Follows most reading and math work through to conclusion.	Completes school tasks in a timely fashion with a focus completing all the parts of the task.	Completes school tasks and reviews work to ensure all parts of a task or completed proficiently.
Completes homework and prepares for class	Requires parental assistance but completes homework in class preparation	Understands the purpose of homework and links homework to class learning. Looks ahead to the next day's lesson to prepare materials.	Links homework to learning and to the next day's work, completes the homework and gets the materials needed for the next class together.
Extend learnings beyond the classroom	Makes initial links between what's learned in school in the real world.	Is curious about the world outside the classroom and recognizes some learnings in the real world. Is able to link learning to a real-world scenario found on an assessment if prepared to do so.	Is able to engage in discussions about the application of learning in real-world situations and produce multiple real-world examples of specific learnings. Can identify real-world applications.

Activity – Characteristics of Proficient Students Table Discussion

1. Review the characteristics of proficient students.
2. What are your school's or district's strengths?
3. What are your areas of opportunity (areas where you need to improve)?
4. What are your priorities (or action plan) for supporting strengths and addressing opportunities?
5. What is your top priority?
6. What is your first step?

Exit Slip: Adult Processing Activity

Answer the next few questions regarding your experience today. If you have the chance, it's also helpful to come together with other school leaders that also attended this session to compare answers. This is a great activity for PLCs when new content is introduced or any professional development or adult learning opportunity. This is also a great processing exit slip for students as well (incorporating both meaningful work and translation work to better store the day's learnings in long-term, retrievable memory).

What is something NEW I learned today:

What is something that I ALREADY KNEW but was reinforced today:

What was the MOST IMPORTANT THING that I heard today:

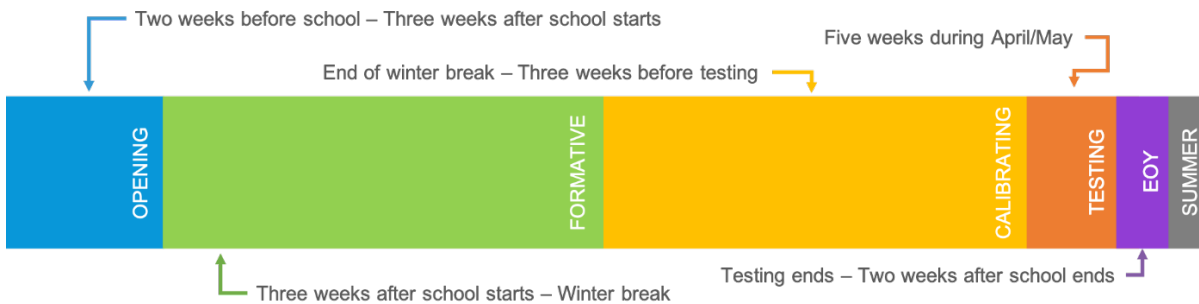
What is something that I learned that I could start using tomorrow:

Reference Section

Rhythm of The Learner Year

We use **the Rhythm of The Learner Year** for:

- Building independent, proficient performers.
- Building a comfort zone around best effort.
- Establishing an accurate perception of “proficient” learning and performing.
- Effective engagement in critical reading, writing, and thinking strategies in content work and assessment.
- Building compensating and accommodating strategies where performing competencies are lacking.
- Providing only effective learning and performing work in all classes.

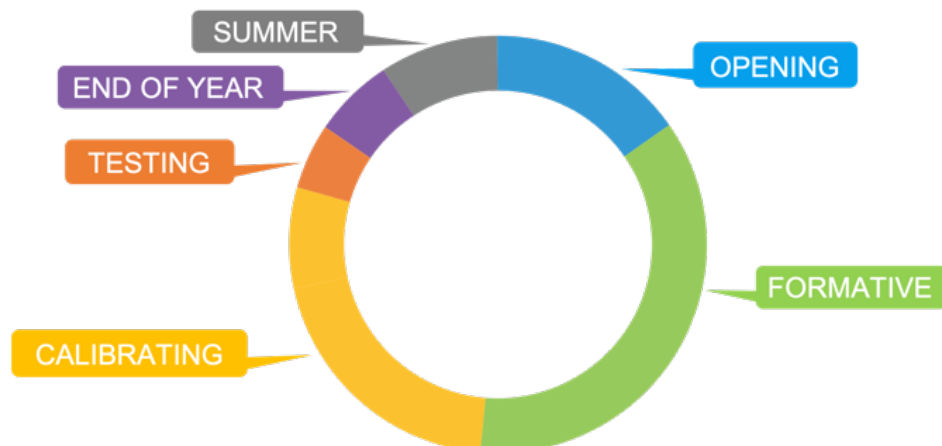


Steps for Redesigning Learners

- Establishing learning and performance goals.
- Planning for optimal learning.
- Differentiating learning and performance.
- Implementing best practice(s).
- Monitoring and adjusting the plan.
- Providing multiple learning opportunities.
- Providing targeted interventions.

The Rhythm of the Learner Year Periods

- Opening of School Period
- Formative Period
- Calibrating Period
- Testing Period
- End-of-Year Period
- Summer Period



Rhythm of the Learner Year At-a-glance

<p>Opening of School Period</p> <p><i>Timeframe: 2 weeks before school opens to 3 weeks after school opens.</i></p> <p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enculturing • Preparing all students for success in class • Mastering management and academic rituals and routines • Building adult access to students • Establishing work and performance expectations • Jump starting critical reading, thinking and writing 	<p>Formative Period</p> <p><i>Timeframe: From week 3 to the beginning of winter break.</i></p> <p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building an independent learner and increasing potential as performer • Building operational language • Using critical reading, writing, and thinking strategies • Building basic reading and performing competencies • Building a best effort comfort zone 	<p>Calibrating Period</p> <p><i>Timeframe: From the end of winter break to three weeks before the state test.</i></p> <p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building proficient performance • Mastering uses of content • Successful equivalent performance • Operational language fluency
<p>Testing Period</p> <p><i>Timeframe: Up to two weeks before the test through the testing cycle and up to a week after the test.</i></p> <p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable long term memory • Ensure best effort • Transition to the End of Year work 	<p>End of Year Period</p> <p><i>Timeframe: The week after the test through the end of the school year.</i></p> <p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing student ownership of learning and performing • Enabling successful transitions • Establish summer expectations 	<p>Summer Period</p> <p><i>Timeframe: From the end of school to 2 weeks before the start of the next year.</i></p> <p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce performance loss • Encourage interests and talents • Build access • Review of data • Planning, planning, planning

The Formative Period

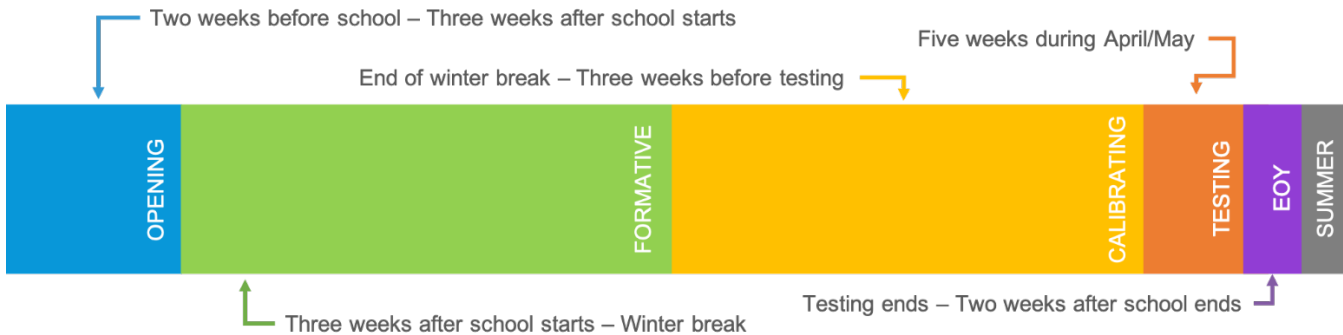
Description: The Formative Period is a time when the focus is on building proficient learners. Content is covered and students begin learning to use what they learn, but there is a strong "building an efficient learner" strand in the curriculum.

Timeframe: The Formative Period usually begins after the third week of school, but that can be delayed if opening activities have not been successful.

Maximizing growth and potential requires the development of an effective core set of competencies in all students, so it may be necessary to delay the beginning of the formative work. The Formative Period lasts until mid-December or early January.



Goals: The goals for the Formative Period focus on making all students effective learners. Emphasis is on the development of formative work habits, high levels of engagement, formative assessments, and independent use of learning. In an effective Formative Period, students become independent learners and independent performers.



The Formative Period Priorities

Priorities for Academic Leaders:

- Monitor all systems and revise as needed.
- Develop or adapt observation tools for the Formative Period.
- Visibly support teachers and students in classrooms and extracurricular activities.
- Visit all classrooms during instruction time, looking for management and academic rituals and routines, evidence of standards focus, teacher planning for learner work, and student engagement.
- If problems are identified, meet daily with leadership team to form plans B and C.
- Participate in PLC discussions and provide leadership in identifying priority needs and building targeted support plans.
- Evaluate teacher/student compatibility and move students if needed to ensure student success.
- Provide help (e.g., a part-time, retired teacher) to assist teachers in developing Formative Period student profiles.
- Collect/analyze performance data on systems and teachers and meet regularly with academic leaders to refine systems and evaluate/support teachers.
- Meet with leadership team and PLC groups to create a vision of the Calibrating and Testing Periods and begin developing strategic plans for calibration and testing.

Priorities for Teachers:

- Fine-tune academic and behavioral rituals and routines.
- Monitor attendance and tardiness and intervene as needed.
- Expand the classroom culture to embrace the use of discipline-specific and formal language in all classroom communications.
- Introduce directed learning and thinking work and build student competence in attending, acquiring, organizing, and creating meaning.
- Embed critical reading, critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, and critical writing competencies.
- Provide teacher and peer support to ensure student success, but gradually build student independence as learner, thinker, and performer.
- Develop strategies for purposeful (e.g., reading to learn), critical, and analytical reading.
- Monitor student learning work and update student profiles.
- Provide targeted support for all students not mastering learning competencies.

Priorities for Students:

- Attend school daily.
- Use all rituals and routines proficiently.
- Actively listen and critically read as required in lessons.
- Highly engage in and complete all learning and work.
- Give best effort and complete all assessments.
- Participate in pair, group, and class activities.
- Accept suggestions for work improvement and revise work to proficiency.
- Accept support when provided and actively engage in support activities.



The 5 Legged Model - Quick Reference

	Why It Is Important	A Problem Causes
Leg 1: Knowledge	State assessments establish expectations for all students. To meet these expectations, each student must own the learnings (concepts, tasks, thinking) required. This vocabulary must not only be known but must be operational.	If critical learnings are not known or are not operational, students cannot perform the required tasks. This knowledge base must be congruent with the task for students to reach their potential. Alternative languages and level experiences can produce a gap between potential and performance.
Leg 2: Attitude	Students must know the learnings required and be willing to perform the necessary tasks, investing their best effort on every part of the assessment. The expectation is that every answer or product represents the student's personal best effort.	Poor attitude usually causes a student to learn and perform below potential. It leads to several problems: Low motivation. Attention problems. Inefficient use of time. Behavior or socialization issues. Loss of concentration. Attendance problems or tardiness. Intentionally not giving their best effort.
Leg 3: Perceptions	Most state assessments embed perceptions (time, space, distance, etc.). Two perceptions required but not related to standards expectations are: Perception of proficiency: Knowing what constitutes good work and how to produce it. Perception of efficacy: The belief, "I can work successfully at the level required." Students must know what good work is and believe they can produce it, or they will not demonstrate their full potential.	Students operate in a comfort zone built by experience as a learner. If a student believes shoddy work or inadequate effort is good enough, he or she will work at that level on any assessment. If the student believes she or he cannot do the work required, she or he will be correct. Lack of belief in self produces anxiety and can negatively impact attitude.
Leg 4: Thinking	Mature thinking patterns and critical reading, writing, and thinking are required on every question of a state test.	Immature thinkers, impulsive responders, and attention-deficit students regularly misread questions, leave tasks unfinished, and produce products that lack depth and integrity.
Leg 5: Experience	Almost all students need two sets of experiences. They must have work experience that forms the five supporting legs, and they must have experience working successfully at the level of the assessment. They must have formative and calibrating experiences, where differentiation and accommodation become critical.	If the student lacks the appropriate experience, she or he can know the content but be unprepared to work at the required levels.

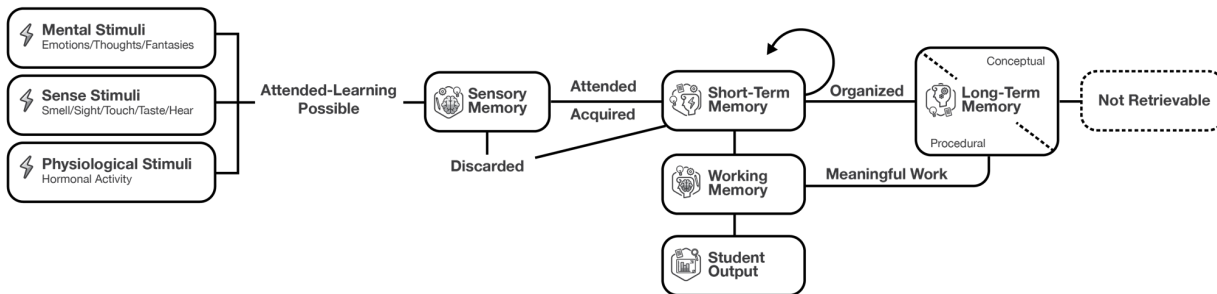
The Neuroscience of Learning Process Review

To understand the importance of this concept in the classroom, teachers must understand how students learn. The Educational Directions approach was adapted from brain mapping research and the work of Robin Fogarty on how the brain learns. We emphasize the basic process of learning — attending work, acquiring work, organizing work, and meaningful work — that moves the students from an awareness level to independent proficient use of the learning.

Educational Directions has developed a learning model based on the neuroscience of memory that focuses on student work that enables retrievable long-term memory. In our model, learning begins when we become aware of a sensory stimulus, which is always present. The stimulus may be mental, physiological, emotional, or educational. Learners are often unaware of the stimuli and discard the learnings in milliseconds. This process is done in a part of the brain that some researchers call the sensory memory. It processes and discards or moves on information quickly.

For learning to take place, the learning must be attended (the learner must be aware of its existence and its need to be learned), and the learner must do something to acquire the learning. Without attending and acquiring work there is no learning.

- Learning begins with attention and is stored as **sensory memory**.
- If the learner does something to acquire the learning, it gets moved to **short-term memory** where it is available for unit testing (begins to disappear after two days).
- To move the learning to the **long-term memory** centers (where it is available for state testing), the student must organize, link, and/or translate the learning to make meaning.



Competency Building Student Work

	Why Important	A Problem Causes
Attending Work (critical listening and critical reading)	Critical listening critical reading are fundamental to acquiring the learnings embedded in classroom work. Critical listening is a skill taught and is absolutely essential for students to take notes from lectures. Critical reading and enable students to read to learn or read for assessment. It is essential for students to use textbooks efficiently and to understand both the question and any data included in a question.	Without effective listening and reading skills students can fail to identify what must be learned and prioritize what has to be for work. Without these two skills students can remember what they find interesting but miss what they have to learn. Few lack the skills will be able to identify the critical vocabulary learning set or a lesson.
Acquiring and Practicing Work	Acquiring and Practicing work requires a student to take notes, journal or in some other way to record what has to be learned, why it has to be learned, how it has to be what the relevant details are.	Without effective acquiring skills, students can record bits and pieces of learnings, irrelevant elements, miss identifying those things learned, and preparing those things for deep learning.
Translating Work	Students must do something with what they acquire if they want to get it into long-term memory. Organizing learnings, linking learnings to tasks or visuals or elaborating learnings in their own words transfers the learnings from short-term memory to long-term memory.	Most students do not own effective translating strategies and so they're forced to work out of short-term memory. Most will be short term memory dependent by third grade and while they will be able to score on a unit test, they will have trouble recalling the on an end of year assessment and can miss questions even when they "know" the answer.
Work that Creates Meaning	Once affirmation is in the long-term memory it can be used in a variety of different ways. For assessment purposes, it must be queued in long-term memory to language. This means the student has to create meaning for the learning including the language cues that will cue the learning and memory. Work creates meaning with language involves thinking about our thinking with the learning. Work creates meaning includes thinking, problem-solving and decision-making activities.	Unless meaning is created the learning will be stored in long-term memory but may not be retrievable with language. Learning cued to a person or to an event or an experience can be stored but not retrievable.
Calibrating Work	For students to work to their potential on a task they need to have experience working successful at the level expected for the task. This is called successful equivalent experience. It calibrates the students' perceptions of proficiency and perceptions of self as successful. Rating work usually but not always extends the meaningful work done in class.	If the student never experiences calibrating work, they can know the content and do the work but operate at a level below the level expected on an assessment or rubric. Students who use off level language in class or off level books or off level assessments will frequently work to that level and miss questions even when they know the answer.

School Systems Review – Opening of School

This is an optional after-action activity for a school or district team. We define the Opening of School Period as the two weeks before school opens to three (to five) weeks after school opens. Immediately after each Period of the Learner Year, districts and schools should capture what went right, what went wrong, and what could be done differently the following year.

We have a complete battery of indicators for how school opened. Your team can go through this together or individually and discuss afterwards. You do not have to do every set of indicators, or you can remove any line items that don't seem to apply to your school or district.

This activity and set of best practice indicators are the beginning of your summer planning to open school next year. Capturing these ideas while they are still fresh adds nuance and detail to that planning.

Culture Indicators	Self-Assessment (1–10)	Priority (1–5)
Our school culture was designed with “best practice” in mind.		
All teachers believe all students can achieve the goals set by the state standards.		
The opening and closing of school are designed to set the culture for one year and transition to the next.		
Rituals provide for all students to enter/leave on a positive note.		
Rituals are designed to be proactive, not reactive.		
Role group interactions are defined, modeled, and practiced.		
Inter and intra group interactions are monitored and shaped to exclude counterproductive interactions.		
The school is safe and welcoming. Students want to come to school.		
Diversity in style, rate, capacity, processing is accommodated.		
All students get a chance to “produce” in their preferred mode (and enjoy success).		
Parents are welcomed and are aware of access opportunities.		
Access issues have been analyzed and all students have an “access route.”		
Students have daily access to a teacher who can teach them.		
Classes are designed to build capacity in all students (to the standard).		
Classrooms are flexible and have resources for all students.		
Students have the opportunity for immersion, extension, and hands-on experiences.		
Students have the opportunity to speak informally to Administration.		

Planning System Indicators	Self-Assessment (1–10)	Priority (1–5)
Our school's planning was designed with "best practice" in mind.		
The school's planning process is inclusive. All role groups are provided with access and encouraged to participate. (Inclusive)		
Planning is student focused and driven by the school's success in moving all students to expected levels of performance. (Student Focused)		
The planning process begins with analysis of data (scores, structural and causal analysis and non-cognitive indicators). (Data driven)		
The plan establishes specific student performance goals as the purpose for planning. (Proactive)		
Analysis of data trends supports a search for relevant "best practice." (Research based)		
Action plans are developed to establish how and when goals will be reached. Activities relate directly to improvement goals. (Consistent)		
A time/task calendar is established to expected completion dates and individual responsibilities. (Scheduled)		
All action plans include enabling, implementing, and evaluating plans to encourage successful implementation. (Implementable)		
The plan includes regular monitoring, review, and revision. It allows and encourages adjustment as needed. (Flexible)		
The plan is published and communicated to all stake holders. Parents and students are aware of critical plan elements. (Known)		
The plan is read by all staff/stakeholders and translated into personal action (tactical) plans. (Translated)		
Planning is ongoing. Review and evaluation initiate the next planning cycle. (Continuous)		

Time Management System Indicators	Self-Assessment (1–10)	Priority (1–5)
Our school Time Management culture was designed with “best practice” in mind.		
Existing rituals/routines, programs and events not working efficiently are identified. Those not supporting improved performance, abandoned.		
The school planning process accurately estimated the time needed for role groups to plan, implement, and evaluate the critical elements of the plan.		
There is a “Master Calendar” that sets expectations for beginning, ending, and evaluating impact of major initiatives.		
The school is able to provide the time needed to address unforeseen issues in a timely manner.		
Blocks of common time are available for groups or teams who work together. Needed student data and profiles are available. Plans are shared.		
All role groups have been trained in and use “effective meeting procedures.”		
Technologies have been integrated into all classrooms to support teaching, learning and the management of student performance data.		
All role groups have been trained in use of technology to reduce time spent on tasks not related to improved student performance.		
Bell schedules, transit patterns, management programs and class schedules have been designed to maximize teaching and learning time.		
Time “sponges” (e.g., paperwork, reports, or activities) not related to teaching/learning process have been eliminated, reallocated, or rescheduled.		
Classroom time is not lost to ineffective classroom rituals, discipline problems or ineffective student work patterns.		
Institutional interruptions (e.g., intercom, announcements, etc.) are purposeful, timely and kept to a minimum.		
Students are aware of the importance of “time on task” and are involved in efforts to increase efficiency.		
Time utilization is regularly audited to identify more efficient ways to spend time for teaching and learning.		

Data Management System Indicators	Self-Assessment (1–10)	Priority (1–5)
Our school data plan was designed with “best practice” in mind.		
The school has identified the performance expected of all students and identified the data streams needed to monitor/support those expectations.		
The school has acquired the technology and established the information management systems needed to capture the critical data elements.		
Teachers are surveyed regularly to determine if data systems are adequate to their needs.		
The school’s data management system (DMS) is advanced enough to allow ad hoc queries and capture of data stored in separate sub systems.		
The DMS has been streamlined to facilitate daily entry and retrieval of data by teachers and administrators.		
The DMS allows easy and timely transmission of data between/among role groups.		
Use of the data management system is regularly monitored and evaluated to determine frequency and impact of use.		
The school’s DMS generates, collects, and organizes data needed to evaluate the success (or lack of) of school-wide (or district-wide) initiatives.		
The school’s DMS allows the tracking/assisting of both individual students and targeted groups.		
The school data system enables teachers to relate/pattern the relationship between/among teacher work, student work and student performance.		
Teachers have been trained and provided with the resources needed to use data management systems effectively.		
The data collected/generated is analyzed and shared by multiple role groups.		
The school uses data to identify and/or evaluate intervention strategies, materials, and plan priorities.		
All plans incorporate and are based on current student performance data.		
The school meets proposed national standards for data management (e.g., levels of security, accuracy, ease of collection/retrieval, flexibility).		
The school’s data management plan has been designed and supported with an end (see #2) in mind and is adjusted/expanded as needed.		

Curriculum Systems Indicators	Self-Assessment (1–10)	Priority (1–5)
Our school curriculum was designed with “best practice” in mind.		
The school has unpacked state, national, program and test standards and used these to establish a sequence of grade level expectations.		
The school has analyzed the expectations and identified the capacities and learnings critical to proficient performance at each grade level.		
All teachers have integrated the exit expectations into unit and lesson plans. All learnings and capacities are addressed.		
Analysis of the curriculum will show the progression of learnings from student initial status to end of year expectations		
The school’s plans and purchases (PD, materials, programs, equipment, and technologies) are driven by student learning and performance needs.		
Staffing decisions reflect identified student learning needs. Issues of style, access, preparation, and experience are addressed.		
All teachers have been trained to develop standards-based units and lessons and to address effective student work patterns in those plans.		
End of year and unit tests are developed prior to teaching to establish the performance expectations that will drive units and lessons.		
The school has profiled all students to better address learning needs and to provide equity in access, experience, and opportunity.		
The unit and lesson plan models are designed to focus on and support active engagement and effective work from all students.		
Lesson plans emphasize the end of unit expectations and prepare students to perform proficiently on the unit test.		
The school’s data management system enables teachers to assess the progress of each student and relate student work to student product.		
All student work is analyzed for structural and causal patterns used to drive the next planning set.		
The school provides adequate time for teachers to develop, monitor and refine the curriculum.		
The school publishes and shares curricula among teachers, levels, grades, and departments.		
The school regularly provides time and resources for teachers to review and revise curriculum.		

Instructional Systems Indicators	Self-Assessment (1–10)	Priority (1–5)
Our school curriculum was designed with “best practice” in mind.		
The school has unpacked state, national, program test standards and used these to establish a sequence of grade level expectations.		
The school has analyzed the expectations and identified the capacities and learnings critical to proficient performance at each grade level.		
All teachers have integrated the exit expectations into unit and lesson plans. All learnings and capacities are addressed.		
Analysis of the curriculum will show the progression of learnings from student initial status to end of year expectations		
The school’s plans and purchases (PD, materials, programs, equipment, and technologies) are driven by student learning and performance needs.		
Staffing decisions reflect identified student learning needs. Issues of style, access, preparation, and experience are addressed.		
All teachers have been trained to develop standards-based units and lessons and to address effective student work patterns in those plans.		
End of year and unit tests are developed prior to teaching to establish the performance expectations that will drive units and lessons.		
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Lesson plans emphasize the end of unit expectations and prepare students to perform proficiently on the unit test.		
The school’s data management system enables teachers to assess the progress of each student and relate student work to student product.		
All student work is analyzed for structural and causal patterns used to drive the next planning set.		
The school provides adequate time for teachers to develop, monitor and refine the curriculum.		
The school publishes and shares curricula among teachers, levels, grades and departments.		
The school regularly provides time and resources for teachers to review and revise curriculum.		

Student Management Systems Indicators	Self-Assessment (1–10)	Priority (1–5)
Our school student management system was designed with middle school “best practice” in mind.		
The community sees the school as a safe and secure environment with a strong learner focus.		
The community is involved in and strongly supports school efforts in behavior management.		
The school culture emphasizes the importance of all students being highly engaged in effective work		
The school research has identified, defined, and planned for student behaviors associated with optimum student performance.		
The school has policy in place to support “BEST PRACTICE” discipline, attendance, and support programs.		
A data management plan was designed to enable the regular review of policy and procedures to determine buy in, effectiveness and equity.		
A “code of conduct” has been published and communicated to all stakeholders. Student rights, responsibilities and expectations are included.		
Teachers have been trained to use proactive management and to avoid escalating encounters with students.		
The school provides time and assistance for teachers to develop, monitor and refine rituals, routines, and management procedures.		
All teachers have translated the code of conduct into their class rituals, routines, and expectations. Expectations are posted and used proactively.		
The school collects and analyzes data to identify patterns (time, location, student mix) that lead to non-productive behaviors.		
Interventions (pattern and individual) are proactive and formative with an emphasis on maintaining the teaching/learning process.		
Individual punishment is appropriate, consistent, and is evaluated for effectiveness.		
The school student management plan is regularly reviewed and is adjusted as needed to maintain optimum behaviors.		
School use of technologies enables quick communication, collection, and organization of data, and enables effective monitoring of critical areas.		
The school works with PTA/PTO groups to inform parents about effective parenting strategies for different age groups.		

Performance Assessment Systems Indicators	Self-Assessment (1–10)	Priority (1–5)
Our school performance assessment plan was designed with middle school “best practice” in mind.		
The school culture recognizes ongoing assessment of student performance as an important data generation tool and a significant learning activity.		
School policies establish and support “best practice” assessment strategies for both the school and individual classrooms.		
All teachers have been trained in “best practices” for the development, administration, scoring and analysis, and follow up of tests.		
The school test plan includes “real time” scrimmages to generate performance data and prepare students for state/national tests.		
School assessment includes timely scrimmages (formative, summative and summative) to track student mastery and target students for assistance.		
Technologies are used to facilitate data management and save time in generating, organizing, analyzing, and communicating data.		
Assessment is designed to establish the level at which students have mastered the knowledge, task/process, and application expectations.		
The difficulty and complexity of school and class assessments escalate to the levels of state/national assessments before those tests are given.		
Teacher made tests prepare all students for the format, venue, language, duration, and language issues found in state/national tests.		
Teacher made tests include diagnostic elements to identify the level of success and/or causes of failure to reach expectations.		
School assessment includes a variety of formats beyond “paper and paper” to encourage success in nontraditional performers.		
All student work (not just tests) is scored and, if not at student potential or if not proficient, is analyzed to establish the break down and the cause.		
All assessment results are collected, analyzed, and patterns of performance are communicated to all staff.		
Support systems are revised as new data are analyzed and indicate a need for change in priorities.		
School and teacher assessment practices are monitored to make sure school policies are followed.		
The school assessment plan is reviewed regularly and is revised when change is needed to approach “best practice.”		