Meaningful Measurement: The Role of Assessments in Improving High School Education in the Twenty-First Century

April 14, 2009

www.all4ed.org
Welcome and Introductions

Governor Bob Wise

Alliance for Excellent Education
High School Assessments for the Twenty-First Century

David Coleman
Student Achievement Partners, LLC

Scott Palmer
EducationCounsel, LLC
Designing the Core Based on Evidence

Tuesday, April 14, 2009
Spheres of Evidence

- College
- Work
- Life
- International
What Professors Say About College Readiness in Math

Importance of 107 skills among postsecondary instructors

PS Mean Rating vs. Skill number
# The Core of Math in A+ Countries

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Building on the Focus on Evidence to Define a College Ready Core

**College Readiness**
- ACT/College Board Curriculum
- ADP Research

**Work**
- ACT WorkKeys
- ADP Research

**Observation**
- Evaluating Evidence
- Building Knowledge (and experience)

**Life**
- Jury instructions
- C.S. Lewis on reading well for life

**International**
- PISA

- Close reading to gain knowledge and evaluate argument
- Faithful understanding of texts; applying to new situations
- Functional text that blends text with graphs, diagrams, statistics
- Capacity to evaluate evidence and read to expand experience
Ability to Read Complex Text Predicts the Likelihood of Success in College Courses

• Starting at the low range of ability, small improvements in the ability to read complex text generate huge returns in the likelihood of success in college.

• That said, the likelihood of success is still under 50-50 unless we get 40% of complex text questions correct or more.

• Thus, there are roughly two sorts of people: Those who get less than 40% of questions right, who on average don't make it in college; and those who get more than 40% right, who on average do.
However, standards need to align more tightly to core
For Example, Standards Focus On Literary Terms/Genre That College Professors Say Are Not Essential

**Top Ten Reading Skills in ACT National Curriculum Survey:**

- Determining main idea(s) and purpose(s) of a paragraph or a text by identifying ideas, key words and topic sentences
- Inferring the main idea(s) and purpose(s) of a paragraph or a text
- Summarizing basic ideas and events in a text
- Drawing conclusions from information given in a text
- Distinguishing between fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment
- Determining from a text the major claims made
- Determining the appropriate meaning of words and phrases from context
- Understanding the point of view from which a text is told
- Evaluating information in a text for significance or importance
- Determining how details are used to support points made in a text

**All in the Bottom Third:**

- Recognizing and understanding the use of literary devices: metaphor-simile
- Recognizing and understanding the use of literary devices: irony
- Recognizing and understanding the use of literary devices: symbolism
- Recognizing and understanding the use of literary devices: satire
- Recognizing and understanding the use of literary devices: foreshadowing
Simultaneously A Serious Lack of Alignment: Standards, Curriculum, Classroom Practice And Assessment

Demands of assessment, work, college, and life

1. Text-dependent reading vs. self-dependent
2. Unexpected, unfamiliar passages
3. Thinking that requires deduction from text evidence vs. linking to outside evidence
4. Complex text (not different skills) drives performance across non-fiction and fiction
5. Evaluating evidence

≠

Curriculum/Classroom Practice Focuses Elsewhere

• 80% on personal reaction/connections
• Little explicit responsibility for gaining knowledge through reading non-fiction complex text
• Relying on background and making connections vs. deducing from what’s there.

Standards do not help by being vague about what matters.

• Several terms for “thinking” (inferences, generalization, etc.) but not focus on text evidence.
• Significant emphasis on literary terms/genre less relevant to reading closely (especially non-fiction)
• Little focus on how skills are or can be assessed
An Assessment Model to Align Instruction

**Current Assessment Reporting**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Reading Skill</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tr>
<td>Main Idea</td>
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<tr>
<td>Word Meaning</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inference/Generalization</td>
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</table>

**Focus on Text Complexity**

- Substantial shift towards text complexity/non-fiction aligned with demands of work, life, college.

**Sharing Accountability for Reading Instruction**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Reading Area</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<td>Social Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science</td>
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**Graph**

- Graph showing comparison between 'Your child' and 'NYC average' in terms of reading skills.
- Bar chart indicating progress towards on-track reading skills.
For assessments to become an engine to drive meaningful performance:

1. Standards must be fewer, clearer, higher

2. Teacher effectiveness becomes the focus

3. Core tests must achieve:
   - quality
   - timeliness of results
   - transparency of growth

4. Formative assessment must become a breakthrough science
The High School Assessment Landscape: Challenges and Opportunities

- Moderator: Lyndsay Pinkus, *Alliance for Excellent Education*
- Stephen Chappuis, *ETS Assessment Institute*
- Raymond Pecheone, *School Redesign Network, Stanford University*
- Rachel Quenemoen, *National Center on Educational Outcomes*
- Sara Hall, *State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA)*
Current Context and Trends

“Innovations that include strengthening the practice of formative assessment produce significant and often substantial learning gains.”

(Black and Wiliam, 1998)
Balanced Assessment Systems to Meet All User Needs

- Annual state tests for accountability
- Interim/benchmark assessments meet other information needs
- Continuous high-quality classroom assessment meets the needs of still other users
Definitions

Formative assessment is a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students’ achievement of intended instructional outcomes.” (CCSSO, 2008)
Characteristics and an Example

• Timeliness of the results allows teachers to quickly adapt instruction while learning is still in progress

• The students who are assessed are the ones who benefit from the adjustment

• The students can use the results to adjust and improve their own learning
Name: ____________________  Assignment: ____________________  Date: _____

Please look at your corrected test and mark whether each problem is right or wrong. Then look at the problems you got wrong and decide if you made a simple mistake. If you did, mark the “Simple Mistake” column. For all the remaining problems you got wrong, mark the “Don’t Get It” column.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Learning Target</th>
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<th>Wrong</th>
<th>Simple Mistake</th>
<th>Don’t Get It</th>
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<td>Predict what will happen when cells are placed in a variety of solutions</td>
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Analyzing My Results

I AM GOOD AT THESE!
Learning targets I got right:

I AM PRETTY GOOD AT THESE, BUT NEED TO DO A LITTLE REVIEW
Learning targets I got wrong because of a simple mistake:

What I can do to keep this from happening again:

I NEED TO KEEP LEARNING THESE
Learning targets I got wrong and I’m not sure what to do to correct them:

What I can do to get better at them:
How We’d Know it is Working:
Seven Strategies of Assessment for Learning

Where am I going?

1. Provide students with a clear and understandable vision of the target
2. Use examples and models of strong and weak work

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 lessons to focus on one learning target or aspect of quality at a time
6. Teach students focused revision
7. Engage students in self-reflection and let them keep track of and share their learning
Challenges

• Getting to balance
• Opportunity to learn
• Quality and effective use
Solutions

• Communicate and educate re: the proven results; establish reasons for learning

• Acknowledge that assessment literacy if often absent from pre-and in-service training

• Provide high-quality professional development
Raymond Pecheone

School Redesign Network, Stanford University
Students with Disabilities, Expectations, and Academic Achievement: The Critical Role of Inclusive Standards-Based Assessments in Improving Outcomes

Rachel Quenemoen, Senior Research Fellow National Center on Educational Outcomes
Standards-Based Reform Context

--- Everything else is negotiable ---

schedules, place, time, structure, curriculum, instructional methods, methods of assessment.

Accountability
Bottom Lines

How can all students show what they know based on defined content (what) standards and achievement (how well) standards?

How well does the assessment system help us figure out where students are being taught well?
Figure 1. Distribution of Disability Categories*

- Specific learning disabilities: 43.6%
- Speech language impairments: 19.2%
- Other health impairments: 10.5%
- Mental retardation: 8.3%
- Emotional disturbance: 7.3%
- Autism: 4.3%
- Developmental delay: 2.2%
- Multiple disabilities: 1.5%
- Hearing impairments: 1.2%
- Orthopedic impairments: 1.0%
- Visual impairments: 0.4%
- Traumatic brain injury: 0.4%
- Deaf-blindness: 0.02%

*Figure summary and data provided for illustrative purposes only.
Inclusive Assessment 101: Purpose, Purpose, Purpose

Norm referenced vs. criterion referenced testing

System accountability vs. student accountability

Universal design, accommodations, alternate assessments, grade-level, modified, and alternate achievement standards, and other messy business
Good News

Data from schools, states, and the National Assessment of Educational Progress

Not all schools are being successful – what makes the difference?

Successful schools ensure that all students are taught the challenging standards-based curriculum through effective instructional strategies, and all students are expected to learn it.
EXPECTATIONS: Who can learn?

Literature on expectations suggests students learn what we expect them to learn.

Some students – with and without disabilities – may not achieve to the levels we hope even after high quality standards-based instruction.

But we have no way to predict which ones so we have to teach them ALL well!
If we test without teaching – or teach a separate curriculum – then we will not see achievement that will prepare students well for their futures. We will see more of the same performance as in the past.

The preponderance of evidence is that the SYSTEM is responsible for limited access to the general curriculum and the resulting achievement gap – not the student’s disabilities, color, SES, or whatever excuse is given.
NCEO Resources

Visit:  www.nceo.info

quene003@umn.edu
Sara Hall
State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA)
Meaningful Measurement: The Role of Assessments in Improving High School Education in the Twenty-First Century

April 14, 2009

www.all4ed.org

Every Child a Graduate
The View from the Ground: Using Assessments to Improve Teaching and Learning

- Moderator: M. Miller, Alliance for Excellent Education
- Jeff Gilbert, Hillside High School, CA
- Arthur VanderVeen, New York City Department of Education
- Alex Harris, DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education
Jeff Gilbert

*Hillside High School, CA*
Jeff Gilbert
Lead Principal
Hillsdale High School
San Mateo, CA
What is “Achievement”? 

When you hear “Achievement Gap”, what achievement are we talking about?
Whoever controls the assessment system controls the definition of achievement

Whoever controls the definition of achievement dictates curriculum and instruction
Assessment: Redesign started with, “What should all students be able to know and do?”

Values: Equity, Personalization, Rigor

Culture: Teacher-led, learning-focused, reform-oriented

Structures--Redesign to support instruction:
- 5 Smaller Learning Communities,
- time for collaboration
- Advisory
- institutional coherence
- Shared Decision-making
We want to reclaim what “achievement” means

• Learning Outcomes:
  • Hillsdale High School:
    – Communication
    – Critical Thinking
    – Social Responsibility
    – Decision-making

• Content Areas: Learning Outcomes reflect the content/skills of the field

• State Standards: State standards help shape the curriculum
Assessment Tools

- School-wide Digital Portfolio

- Rubrics/Portfolio Tasks/Benchmark Assessments aligned to Learning Outcomes

- Formative Assessments used to determine whether students are prepared to “know and do”

Formal Assessments must be:

VALID and RELIABLE
Building Capacity

Schools must:

- Build **institutional** capacity
- Be entrepreneurial
- Partner strategically
- Build structures that support teachers
- Develop leadership
- Create models
A Final Thought

- Please don’t reduce the assessment of what we do to a series of numbers
- Jason Ortega
- Leoni Uhila
- Carlos Lucero
- All would be viewed as “Far Below Basic” by any formal measure, but…
Assessment and Accountability Reforms in New York City

Arthur VanderVeen
New York City Department of Education

Meaningful Measurement: The Role of Assessments in Improving High School Education in the Twenty-First Century

Alliance for Excellent Education
April 14, 2009
Accountability must be a reciprocal process. For every increment of performance I demand from you, I have an equal responsibility to provide you with the capacity to meet that expectation. Likewise, for every investment you make in my skill and knowledge, I have a reciprocal responsibility to demonstrate some new increment in performance. This is the principle of “reciprocity of accountability for capacity.” It is the glue that, in the final analysis, will hold accountability systems together.

# Accountability and Achievement Resources

## WHAT

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<tr>
<th>ACCOUNTABILITY</th>
<th>REWARDS AND CONSEQUENCES</th>
<th>ACHIEVEMENT RESOURCES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Progress Reports&lt;br&gt;Grades based on student outcomes</td>
<td>Rewards&lt;br&gt;Monetary bonuses</td>
<td>Periodic Assessments&lt;br&gt;Diagnose and track progress</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality Reviews&lt;br&gt;Scores based on performance management criteria</td>
<td>Consequences&lt;br&gt;Immediate restructuring of chronically failing schools. Target setting for other D/F schools; if no improvement, leadership change after 2 and closure after 4 years</td>
<td>Achievement Reporting and Innovation System (ARIS)&lt;br&gt;Fully integrated knowledge and data management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Environment Survey&lt;br&gt;Parent, teacher, and student surveys about school environment</td>
<td><strong>Aligned Mechanisms</strong>&lt;br&gt;City and School Support Organizations’ performance targets, Principals’ Performance Review and bonuses, school-wide teacher performance bonuses</td>
<td>Children First Intensive&lt;br&gt;Hands-on data training through Inquiry Teams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Federal and State Evaluation&lt;br&gt;Measures of schools’ Adequate Yearly Progress and accountability standing</td>
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<td>Knowledge Management&lt;br&gt;Support structures and tools for collaboration and knowledge sharing</td>
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## HOW

- **Progress Reports**
  - Grades based on student outcomes
- **Quality Reviews**
  - Scores based on performance management criteria
- **Learning Environment Survey**
  - Parent, teacher, and student surveys about school environment
- **Federal and State Evaluation**
  - Measures of schools’ Adequate Yearly Progress and accountability standing

## Periodic Assessments
- Diagnose and track progress

## Achievement Reporting and Innovation System (ARIS)
- Fully integrated knowledge and data management

## Children First Intensive
- Hands-on data training through Inquiry Teams

## Knowledge Management
- Support structures and tools for collaboration and knowledge sharing
Progress Report Scoring

Grade and Overall Score
Out of 100 points (front page)

School Environment
15 points

Student Performance
25 points

Student Progress
60 points

Additional Credit
Up to 15 points

Elementary, Middle, and K-8 Schools
- Learning Environment Survey results
- Attendance
- Student test scores in ELA and Math (median proficiency and % Level 3/4)
- Student progress on ELA and Math test scores (avg. change and % making progress)
- Exemplary progress on test scores with high need students

High Schools
- Learning Environment Survey results
- Attendance
- Graduation rates (4-year and 6-year)
- Credit accumulation
- Regents completion and pass rates
- Exemplary progress in credit gains with high need students
Progress Report

- **Broad Scale**: Integrate diverse sources of observation and data about schools and outcomes.

- **Outcomes not Inputs**: Evaluate schools based on measurable results.

- **Progress and Performance**: Measure what schools contribute to students, not what students bring to schools.

- **Peer and City Comparisons**: Compare similar schools on growth measures; hold all schools to Citywide standard.
Quality Review

The Quality Review is an on-site evaluation, by experienced educators, of how effectively schools use data to improve student achievement.

Key Events

- Class visits
- Conversations with multiple constituencies
- Observation of collaborative activity

Results

- Report. Quality Review results are published in a narrative report, posted on each school’s Web site.
- Score. The report includes one of 5 possible scores: possible scores: Outstanding, Well-Developed, Proficient, Underdeveloped with Proficient Features, or Underdeveloped.
- Feedback. The Quality Review provides schools with feedback on what is working well and on areas for improvement, which inform schools’ goals and plans for aligning resources to meet student needs.

Identifying Innovations

- Through the self-assessment schools perform in preparation for Quality Reviews, educators reflect on their practice, identifying the most effective strategies and practices in place in their schools.
- Quality Reviewers identify effective practices in place in schools, surfacing innovations for diffusion across the system.

Quality Review:
Continuous Data-Informed Improvement

- Gather Data
- Plan and Set Goals
- Align Instruction
- Build and Align Capacity
- Monitor and Revise
Learning Environment Survey

The Learning Environment Survey invites all parents, teachers, and grade 6-12 students to evaluate their school’s environment.

- Surveys evaluate academic expectations, communication, engagement, and safety and respect.
- Survey results count for 10 points on the Progress Report. Detailed results are reported on each school’s Web site.
- Last year, 806,539 parents, teachers, and students participated in the survey’s second year. That’s 1 out of every 10 New Yorkers. This year’s survey is underway right now
- **2008 Response Rates:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Response Group</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
<th>Improvement from 2007</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>+14%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>+17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>MS/HS Students</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>+13%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>+14%</td>
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Surveys provide an opportunity for sharing of effective practices among similar schools.

- Student Survey: How much do you agree or disagree with this statement: Students at my school respect students who get good grades.

Middle Schools with Peer Indices between 3.0 and 4.00 (Peer Indices calculated using Incoming Student Test Scores (2007 Average))
High School Periodic Assessments

- **Acuity**
  - Predictives predict performance on NYS Regents Exams (Integrated Algebra, Geometry, English) as far as two years out and identify areas needing targeted instruction.
    - Vertical scale provides longitudinal measure of student growth.
  - Instructionally Targeted Assessments (ITAs) measure student mastery of selected curricula.

- Performance Series computer adaptive tests situate students on learning progressions of math and ELA skills to accelerate student progress.

- PSAT is offered to all 10th and 11th graders. We are investing significant training in building schools’ capacity to use the Summary of Answers and Skills and AP Potential tools to build the pipeline for AP courses.

- ELL predicts performance on NYS ESL Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) and identifies areas needing targeted instruction.

- Design Your Own (DYO) provides support to schools designing their own assessment programs.
### HS Graduation Requirements

**School**: Karl Grell School (2)  
**Class**: Class 395  
**Teacher**: Gwen Lyone  
**Filter**: All Students

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ARIS Reports

Report 1: Compare populations on one measure

Report 2: Analyze one population with multiple measures

Report 3: Compare multiple populations on multiple measures
Inquiry Teams

- Inquiry teams scaffold teachers through a defined inquiry cycle to build their capacity in using data to diagnose student needs and prescribe effective treatments.
- Inquiry teams monitor and evaluate whether treatments and resources are effective, and modify them as needed.
- Inquiry teams analyze larger systems that produced the conditions of learning and design and implement system-level change strategies.
- Ninety percent of teachers will be involved in inquiry work within 18 months.
The Role of Federal Policy in Improving (and Using) Assessments

- Moderator: Jamie Fasteau, *Alliance for Excellent Education*
- Bethany Little, *Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions*
- Celia Sims, *Office of U.S. Senator Richard Burr*
- Catherine Brown, *House Committee on Education and Labor*
Closing

Governor Bob Wise

Alliance for Excellent Education
Meaningful Measurement: The Role of Assessments in Improving High School Education in the Twenty-First Century

April 14, 2009