Outcomes

Participants will review and discuss the research on assessment processes so that they can create a learning culture for the teachers looking to explore common assessments.
What is Assessment?

Assessment is the process of defining, selecting, designing, collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and using information to increase students’ learning and development.
Why do we assess?
Purposes of Assessment

- To make summative statements
- To certify students
- To make instructional decisions
- To give feedback to students
- To give feedback to teachers
- To report progress to parents & communities
Purposes of Assessment (Cont’d)

- To provide examples of meaningful, higher-level tasks
- To sort, rank, or compare students
- To norm students or groups of students
- To place students in courses/grades/levels
- To predict future success
What is Assessment Literacy?

As you read the definitions of assessment literacy (p.1) put forth by researchers in the field, look for common elements in the definitions that can help you answer the question:

What do teachers need to know and understand about assessment to strengthen the critical connection between teaching and assessing student learning?
What is *common* in Common Assessments?

- Common assessments can mean same or shared
  - Not synonymous

- Common assessments employed as same but not collaborative can result in teachers feeling terrified to use them.

- Common assessments employed as same but not shared can result in teachers not feeling collective ownership.
Why use Common Assessments?

To identify:

- students who need additional time and support for learning;
- teaching strategies most effective in helping students acquire the intended knowledge and skills;
- program concerns – areas in which students generally are having difficulty achieving the intended standard; and
- improving goals for teachers and the team.
Common assessments should be the engine of a PLC. The process of using common assessments is integral to every question a PLC must explore together:

• What is it we expect them to learn?
• How will we know when they have learned it?
• How will we respond when they don’t learn?
• How will we respond when they do learn?

DuFour, Eaker, & DuFour, 2010
Common assessments work best when they are done collaboratively from design through delivery, and into the results process from teachers to learners.
Neither the label of an assessment as formative or summative nor the intention of the assessment matters; rather, it is how the assessment is ultimately employed by the end users that will matter most.
Collaborative common assessment

Any assessment, formative or summative, that is either team created or team endorsed in advance of instruction and then administered in close proximity by all instructors so they can collaboratively examine the results, plan instructionally agile responses, analyze errors, and explore areas for program improvement.
The Collaborative Common Assessment Process

1. Instruction & on-going assessment
2. Tally and review common assessment results
3. Create a plan for appropriate interventions
4. Revise curriculum, instruction, & assessments as needed
5. Identify the targets of the assessment(s)
6. Design formative and summative assessments & determine which will be common
7. Repeat intervention loop as needed
8. Assess again - monitoring for results
9. Instruction & on-going assessment
10. Monitor for learning of individual and collective results

Foundation for Collaborative Common Assessments:
- Establish Team Norms for Collaboration
- Identify Priority Standards
- Examine School data and establish SMART goals
- Create a 'road map' of CAs and Targets
- Monitor progress on SMART Goal
4 Critical Phases

- Preparation
- Design
- Delivery System
- Data Use
Preparation Phase

- Adhering to the Foundation for Collaborative Common Assessments
  - Establish team norms
  - Prioritize and unpack standards
  - Explore available data
  - Establish SMART goals
  - Create a road map that aligns learning targets & assessments
The Seven Norms of Collaborative Work

1. Pausing
2. Paraphrasing
3. Posing questions
4. Putting ideas on the table
5. Providing data
6. Paying attention to self and others
7. Presuming positive intentions

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A-B-C Teach

- Form three pairs at your table.
- Each pair will read the research and considerations (p. 3-6) for the remaining three phases.
- Create a drawing to highlight the main ideas of your phase to share with the table.
Data used solely to measure, confirm, and sort learners into interventions only serve to move teachers and their leaders to the point of great frustrations, if not the brink of exhaustion and frenzied decision making that can often be fraught with inaccuracies.

Cassandra Erkens
Shifts in Data Use

**From**

- Using percentages
- Looking only at the whole picture
- Using grading based cut scores (e.g. 80% is passing)

**To**

- Using proficiency (scale scores) with descriptors
- Looking target by target
- Digging deeper to examine target specific needs & analyze errors
Shifts in Data Use

From
- Providing scores to students for review and acceptance
- Regrouping students based on general categories

To
- Engaging students in self analysis and decision making
- Developing strategic interventions within identified learning target areas
Data Use

Which data analysis practices are you already doing well? Which would you add? Remove?
Practices that lead to systems that monitor learning:

- Building administrators requiring assessment data be submitted for accountability purposes but not using the data to support teachers in their own continued learning.
- Heavy reliance on pencil-and-paper assessments for common assessment work.
- Teachers employing assessments solely as a pathway to test preparation for high-stakes tests.
- Use of ready-made assessments without an analysis of a match to learning standards.
Practices that lead to systems that support learning:

- Teachers generating data by embedding the practice of collaboratively examining and scoring student work.
- Teachers’ data discussions going beyond the numbers by consulting student work to identify the types of errors made in a given assessment.
- Teachers’ data discussions going beyond aggregate cut scores to examine target areas of the test.
Before you jump...
5 keys critical to developing quality assessments:

- Understanding the purpose of the assessment
- Clearly articulating the learning targets (that can be communicated to students in terms they understand)
- Surfacing practical information that can be shared with students, parents and others
- Choosing an appropriate method of assessment
- Selecting the right sample size, items, tasks and scoring that reinforces quality
Teachers will need to:

- Know how instructional decision-making fits into the balanced system of assessment
- Identify clear and appropriate purposes for each assessment
- Become a master of the learning targets that are to be assessed
- Create and select high-quality assessments aligned to those targets
Teachers will need to:

- Employ a variety of assessments that are appropriate for the students and learning targets
- Analyze the results of assessments given their knowledge of students, and makes instructional adjustments based on those results
- Implement assessments equitably, making appropriate modifications based on student need
Principals/(other school leaders) will need to:

- See learning target clarity and appropriateness as a foundation of sound assessment practice
- Promote through supervision and policy ethical assessment practices in all contexts
- Establish the expectation that faculty members will continuously develop and hone their assessment literacy, and recognize the faculty who become leaders and model accomplished assessment practices
Principal(s)/(other school leaders) will need to:

- See the development of their own assessment literacy as a career-long learning process
- Understand how assessment information can be used to strengthen partnerships with students’ families and the community
- Promote effective communication of results both in formative and summative contexts
- Advocate for student involvement in their own learning through the use of assessment as a teaching and learning strategy
For collaborative assessment planning, PLCs needs:

- Team norms to keep conversations safe
- Data aggregated and ready for analysis
- Data protocols to guide PLC conversations
- STUDENT WORK to explore errors and instructional fixes
REFLECTION
As you reflect, think about...

1. How are the ideas and information presented **CONNECTED** to what you already knew?
2. What new ideas did you get that **EXTENDED** or pushed your thinking in new directions?
3. What is still **CHALLENGING** or confusing for you to get your mind around? What questions, wonderings or puzzles do you now have?