



# **K-12 Quality Assessment Framework**

July 2017

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Used appropriately, assessment can be a powerful tool to help both educators and their students know where students are now in their learning progression and determine where they need to go next. Decades of research have consistently identified formative assessment as one of the strongest strategies for improving student learning, and more recently, emphasizes its particular strength when the student is engaged as an active participant in the assessment process. With consistent, ongoing educator support and engaged students, assessment to inform student learning (assessment *for* learning) can provide individualized support to meet the needs of each learner.

As written in the [Portland Public Schools Racial Educational Equity Policy](#):

Portland Public Schools will significantly change its practices in order to achieve and maintain racial equity in education. Educational equity means raising the achievement of all students while (1) narrowing the gaps between the lowest and highest performing students and (2) eliminating the racial predictability and disproportionality of which student groups occupy the highest and lowest achievement categories.

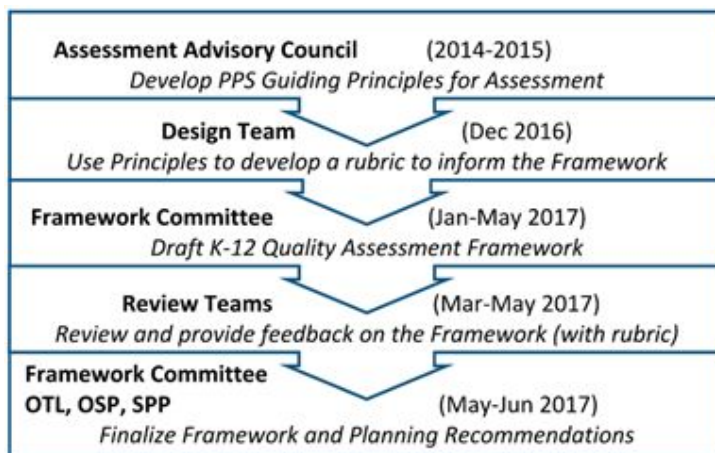
A stated goal in the policy is for PPS to “remedy the practices, including assessment, that lead to the over-representation of students of color in areas such as special education and discipline, and the under-representation in programs such as talented and gifted and Advanced Placement.”

Assessment, as described in this document, is a key strategy to close the achievement gap and stands in contrast to punitive uses of testing that perpetuate it. As Chappuis and Stiggins (2005) wrote, “The results of a decade of research and development, help us understand how to use the classroom assessment process and its results to help students become confident learners. Strong achievement gains are within reach for all students, especially those who have experienced little success before.”

Adhering to the guidelines and principles in this document will require a significant shift in practice as well as focused efforts to build systemic supports and tools that allow promising practices to expand.

### The Framework Development Process

In 2014, recognizing the need to build a student-centered assessment system, PPS assembled the Assessment Advisory Council. The Council included a group of expert advisors, instructional leaders from across the district, and parents who developed the [PPS Vision and Guiding Principles for Assessment](#). At the same time, the Oregon Education Investment Board, Oregon Education Association, & Oregon Department of Education led a comprehensive statewide effort to propose an “ideal” system of assessment for students, families, and educators. The proposed system closely aligns to the PPS Guiding Principles for Assessment and is



articulated in [A New Path for Oregon: System of Assessment to Empower Meaningful Student Learning](#).

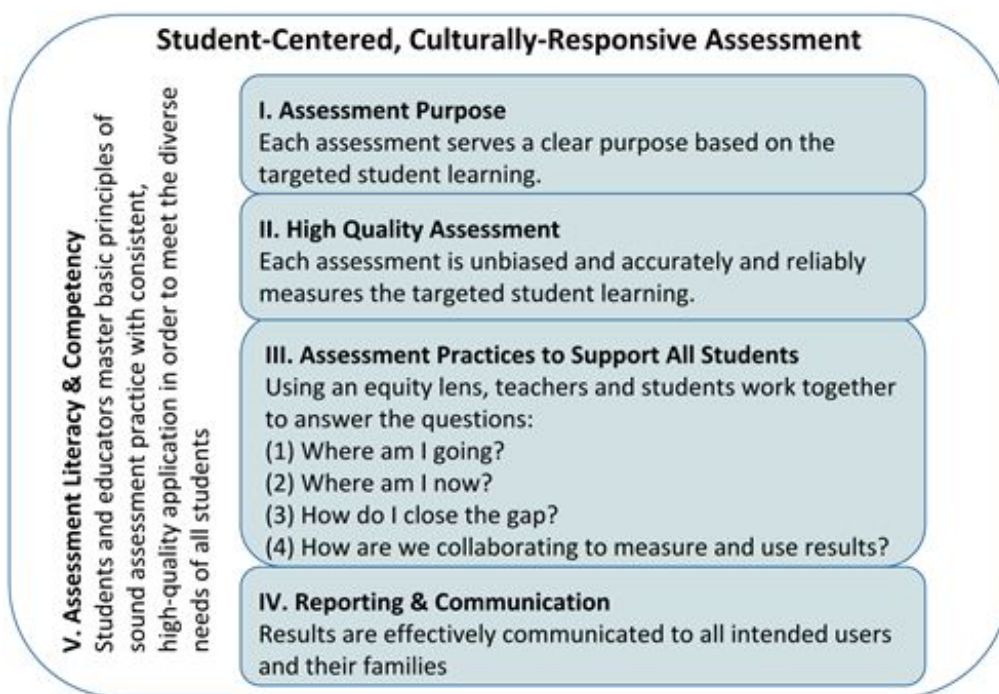
In fall 2016, PPS launched an initiative to build on the PPS principles and create a balanced assessment system. A cross-functional team of district educators designed a rubric based on the principles to inform and evaluate the Framework. Then, a district-wide Framework Committee drafted the K-12 Quality Assessment Framework. The Committee included over 30 people, most of whom were school teachers and principals with additional representation from district leaders across departments and programs. Review Teams, consisting primarily of teachers and school administrators, used the rubric to evaluate and give both feedback and planning recommendations to inform final revisions. The Framework is a first step in a multi-year effort to balance the system and address the district's fragmented use of assessment *for* learning and limited assessment literacy.

## Design and Use

This Framework lays the foundation and provides structures for a balanced assessment system through a shared set of agreements, language, and principles that will be used to align and inform district-wide, evidence-based best practices. The amount of detail to include in the document was a continuous discussion during the drafting process. This is intentionally designed to be a high-level guide that informs decisions, practices, and professional learning while still allowing flexibility to evolve over time and encompass the range of student and educator needs across K-12.

The K-12 Quality Assessment Framework has five components that address key tenets of a student-centered, culturally-responsive assessment system. ("A Students' Bill of Assessment Rights" describes the principles of a student-centered system. See Appendix A.) It calls for each assessment to have a **clear purpose** based on the targeted student learning. The assessments must be **high quality** to accurately and reliably measure the targeted student learning while also controlling for bias.

Those high quality assessments must be implemented with **practices that empower historically underrepresented students**, who are most harmed by practices that are not culturally responsive or student-centered.



Students and teachers should work together to answer the questions:

- What is the identified student learning target (Where am I going?)
- Where is the student in their progression of learning? (Where am I now?)
- What steps are taken to achieve proficiency? (How can I close the individual learning gap?)
- Using an equity lens, how are we collaborating in the measurement and use of the results?

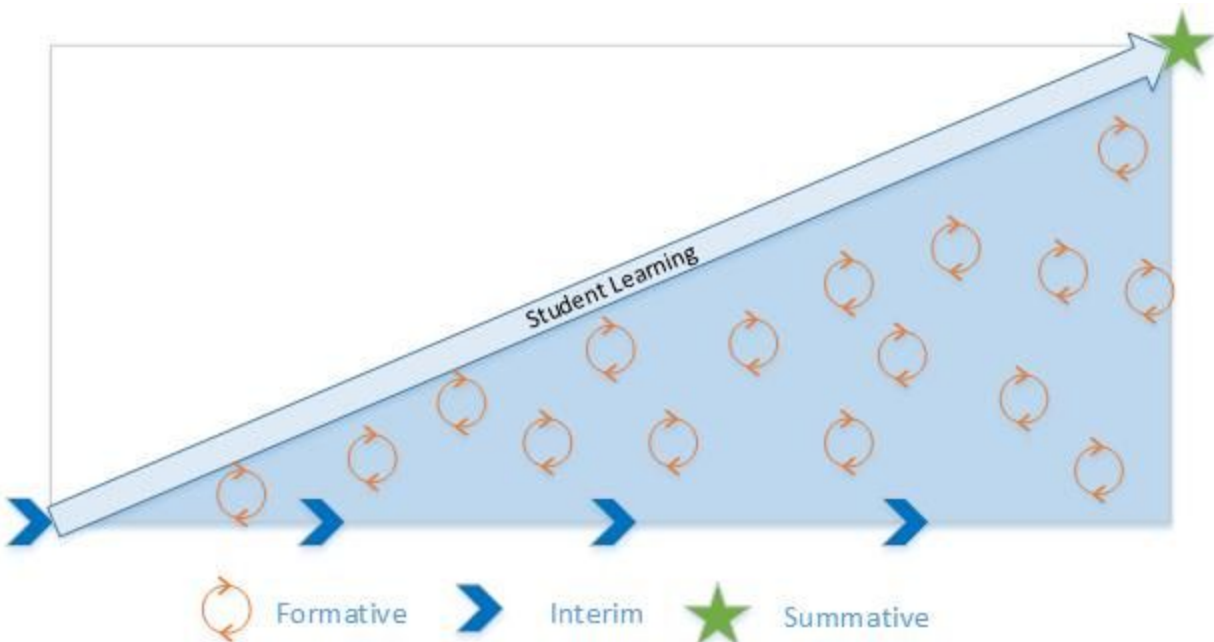
(adapted from Chappuis, 2009)

Assessment **reporting and communication** of the results with the learner and the teacher must empower student learning and improve the quality and effectiveness of instruction. Methods of reporting and communication will vary based on the assessment purpose and intended audience.

Finally, all PPS educators must work together to develop **assessment literate students and educators** to effectively implement sound assessment practices that meet the needs of diverse learners.

With a collective focus on assessment literacy and student-centered classroom assessment, we have a significant opportunity to improve student achievement across the district. In accordance with the principles stated by the Oregon educators in *A New Path*, our mission must be to use assessment to encourage students to keep striving for learning success.

## I. ASSESSMENT PURPOSE



A balanced assessment system creates and enables the environment for all students to engage in the ownership of their learning through self-reflection, goal-setting, and teacher feedback. It offers all students, especially historically underserved students, opportunities to demonstrate learning through creative and diverse types of evidence/assessments. Balanced assessment works towards more

equitable outcomes for students based on instruction that more accurately meets student needs, as well as providing clear parameters and guidance from the district as to what constitutes effective assessment practices. Ultimately, a balanced assessment system creates a shared understanding among all educators (i.e. assessment literacy).

Who is it for?	What does it communicate?
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To report on learning and communicate progress</li> <li>● To motivate and encourage</li> <li>● To know how students are doing and set goals for continuous improvement</li> <li>● To build independence in learning, especially for our culturally and linguistically diverse students</li> </ul>
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To check for understanding</li> <li>● To inform instruction</li> <li>● To evaluate students, provide feedback, and assign grades</li> <li>● To diagnose students' strengths and areas of need in learning</li> </ul>
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To be informed about students' progress towards learning</li> <li>● To connect home and school efforts to support student learning in partnership, using a culturally responsive lens</li> </ul>
School Administrators & Building Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To use data effectively to ensure programming is supporting all student learning, especially for our culturally and linguistically diverse students</li> <li>● To allocate resources</li> <li>● To ensure accountability</li> </ul>
Central Office Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To ensure programming is aligned with instructional and systemic frameworks across the district (both academically and student supports)</li> </ul>
Politicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To establish accountability of schools</li> <li>● To inform the public of school progress</li> <li>● To advocate for sound policy</li> </ul>
Taxpayers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To demonstrate that tax dollars are well spent</li> </ul>

*Heavily adapted from Madison Metropolitan School District (2015).*

Different types of assessments in a balanced system serve different purposes and have unique characteristics, uses, and applications.

<b>Formative Assessment (Assessment for Learning)</b>	
Formative assessment is an intentional and consistent process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides immediate feedback to adjust on-going teaching and learning in order to improve students' growth toward the intended instructional outcomes. (CCSSO, 2007)	
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Inform instruction within and between lessons, for both student and teacher</li> <li>● Check for understanding</li> <li>● Build relationships by involving students in evaluating and setting goals</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Promote metacognition and reflection</li> <li>● Provide more culturally responsive and relevant learning experiences for students</li> </ul>	
<b>Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Done at any time during instruction to give immediate feedback to student and/or teacher in relation to learning targets</li> <li>● Can be spontaneous or planned</li> <li>● Students are at the center of teaching and learning</li> <li>● More likely to be informal process rather than formal product or standardized process</li> </ul>	
<b>Use of Data</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Immediate feedback to student and/or teacher to determine next instructional steps</li> <li>● Collect qualitative, descriptive, and/or observational data to look for patterns and trends in individual student's learning</li> <li>● Combine formative assessment data with interim and summative data as a way to collect comprehensive evidence of growth and mastery</li> </ul>	
	<b>Formative Application</b> <i>Assessment for (to inform) Learning</i>	<b>Summative Application</b> <i>Assessment of (to evaluate) Learning</i>
	<b>Teachers:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Where are students now in their learning?</li> <li>● What comes next for their learning and therefore my instruction?</li> <li>● Is this student challenged enough? Is this student falling behind?</li> <li>● How are my focal students doing in this lesson?</li> </ul> <b>Students:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Am I progressing up the scaffolding?</li> <li>● What is my hope of continuing to grow in this subject?</li> <li>● Where am I now?</li> <li>● What comes next for me?</li> <li>● What specific concerns need to be addressed?</li> </ul> <b>Families:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Where and how can I help my child?</li> </ul>	<b>Teachers:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What standards have each student mastered?</li> <li>● What grade has each student earned on her or his report card?</li> </ul> <b>Students/Families:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Am I/Is my child progressing in a satisfactory manner?</li> <li>● Is the content culturally congruent?</li> </ul> <b>Principals:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Is the teacher able to use assessments to provide evidence of student growth?</li> <li>● What support can I offer to this teacher?</li> <li>● Is there any change or support we need to implement on a school-wide basis?</li> </ul>
<b>Use in Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use different modes of formative assessment (in any content area) across multiple cultures and learning domains: oral language, writing, performance, and non-verbal</li> <li>● Ensure relevance to race and ethnicity of students in the classroom using an equity lens (e.g., connect content and formative assessment to prior cultural knowledge)</li> <li>● Determine which mode will be optimal based on your content and learning outcomes</li> <li>● Should be conducted frequently during instruction (e.g., multiple times during a single lesson or lesson series)</li> </ul>	
<i>Heavily adapted from Madison Metropolitan School District (2015).</i>		

### Interim Assessment (Assessment for Learning)

Interim assessment evaluates student knowledge and skills relative to a specific set of academic goals, typically within a limited time frame and are designed to inform decisions at both the classroom level and beyond, such as the school or district level (Perie, Marion, Gong & Wurtzel, 2007). Interim assessments can serve both formative (supporting instruction) and summative (supporting program evaluation or prediction) purposes; however, the primary purpose should center on improving learning for individual students. (Chappuis, Commodore, & Stiggins, 2017).

<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can serve multiple purposes across instruction, program evaluation, and prediction</li> <li>• <i>Instruction</i>: Identify standards students are struggling to meet and those students needing additional support in order to inform instructional practices and supports</li> <li>• <i>Program Evaluation</i>: Results can be aggregated across schools to give wider view of district progress in meeting grade-level standards in order to identify program needs</li> <li>• <i>Prediction</i>: Predict potential outcomes for annual state tests</li> </ul>	
<b>Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Given periodically throughout the year</li> <li>• Criterion-referenced: test students in relation to a defined set of knowledge and skills (i.e., standards)</li> <li>• May be developed by a teacher, school, collaborative team, district, state, or purchased from a vendor</li> <li>• Can be aggregated and disaggregated on multiple variables, including but not limited to race and language</li> <li>• Monitor progress over time</li> </ul>	
<b>Use of Data</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify student strengths and areas needing improvement</li> <li>• Plan interventions for flexible student groups or individuals</li> <li>• Combine interim assessment data with formative and summative data to collect comprehensive evidence of growth and progress towards grade-level standards</li> <li>• Reflect at regular intervals (e.g., quarterly)</li> </ul>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Formative Application <i>Assessment for (to inform) Learning</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Summative Application <i>Assessment of (to evaluate) Learning</i></p>
	<p><b>Instructional Leaders and Educator Teams:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are my students on track for meeting grade-level standards?</li> <li>• How well are they progressing? Which standards do our students tend to struggle in mastering? Which ones do they excel in mastering?</li> <li>• Which students are excelling right now? Which students seem to be struggling?</li> <li>• Where can we improve instruction immediately to increase student success and growth?</li> <li>• Is this student responding to intervention?</li> <li>• Has achievement improved? Has this intervention been effective?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Instructional Leaders and Educator Teams:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is this adopted instructional program delivering learning as promised? Should we continue, refine, or end it? Is it culturally responsive?</li> <li>• Do teachers need professional development to enhance their instructional knowledge or their educational equity knowledge?</li> <li>• Do we have the systems in place to support teachers and students to maximize learning?</li> </ul>

Heavily adapted from Madison Metropolitan School District (2015) and Oregon Education Investment Board, et al. (2015).



## Summative Assessment (Assessment of Learning)

Summative assessment is the process of evaluating (and grading) the learning of students at a given point in time, e.g., end-of-unit, end-of-year. A summative assessment is designed to evaluate cumulative learning. Summative assessment occurs after instruction to help evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and levels of student learning. They can also measure how the larger system is performing and may offer clues for needed improvement. Some summative assessments are external and related to accountability, such as annual assessments.

<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Measure proficiency of grade-level standards</li> <li>● Inform long-term instructional planning</li> <li>● Evaluate cumulative learning of the standards</li> <li>● Evaluate the system in relationship to graduation rates, the racial opportunity gap, in relationship to college and career readiness</li> </ul>	
<b>Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Can be standardized</li> <li>● Often performance-based</li> <li>● Determines final evaluation of learning</li> <li>● Large-scale (can be given simultaneously to a large group)</li> <li>● Longer time to complete for the student (e.g. multiple sittings/sessions)</li> <li>● Snapshot data (represents one point in time)</li> <li>● Can be used to track long-term trends</li> <li>● Does not inform learning progression; feedback can be delayed</li> </ul>	
<b>Use of Data</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Combine summative assessment data with formative and interim data to collect comprehensive evidence of growth, progress towards grade-level standards, and mastery</li> <li>● Compare subgroups to identify gaps in learning</li> <li>● Track trends over time for the class, grade, school, and district in reference to performance on state content standards</li> </ul>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Formative Application <i>Assessment for (to inform) Learning</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Summative Application <i>Assessment of (to evaluate) Learning</i></p>
	<p><b>Instructional Leaders and Educator Teams:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● From year to year where do students show strengths and weaknesses, especially in regards to my focal students?</li> <li>● How can we be more culturally responsive?</li> <li>● What supports can be offered to change the year to year trend?</li> <li>● How can we support students vertically?</li> <li>● What can we learn from other schools and districts?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Instructional Leaders, Policy makers and the Community:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Are our students meeting standards?</li> <li>● Are there differences in performance by different groups of students (e.g. race, native language, special education designation)?</li> <li>● Are there certain segments of our student population who need more support?</li> <li>● Are there particular schools or school leaders who need more support?</li> <li>● Is the curriculum and delivery model meeting the needs of the students?</li> <li>● Are there system improvement needs and efforts that will improve student learning outcomes?</li> </ul>

*Heavily adapted from Madison Metropolitan School District (2015) and Oregon Education Investment Board, et al. (2015).*

## II. HIGH QUALITY ASSESSMENT

*A New Path for Oregon (2015)* provides a basis for defining high quality assessment:

**Quality assessment requires an agreed upon definition and must utilize an equity lens.** Assessment is the process of gathering evidence of student learning in order to inform instructional decisions. Those decisions can support or certify student learning depending on the context. A quality assessment is valid based on clear purpose (measuring what it's intended to measure), yields reliable results (measuring accurately time and time again), and is...[culturally sensitive]..unbiased (measuring learning equally regardless of cultural background). Anything less is not acceptable for Oregon's students. Only quality assessments have the potential to support individual growth for all students. This means it provides a consistent and accurate representation of the learning target and serves the information needs of the intended users. Careful development and clarity of purpose minimizes the misuse and distortion of results due to factors unrelated to the achievement being measured.

A high quality assessment must provide meaningful evidence to inform instructional decisions, accurately reflect student learning, and motivate students to learn. As stated in A Student's Bill of Assessment Rights [Appendix A], "Students are entitled to dependable assessment of their learning using quality assessments." In order to effectively implement high quality assessments the purpose must be clear to all users.

High Quality Assessments contain the following key characteristics:

- They arise from and serve a **clear and specific purpose**.
- They are **connected to clear, complete and appropriately defined learning targets/goals**. In other words, assessments must be designed and developed to reflect developmentally, linguistically, and academically appropriate learning targets and be culturally responsive.
- They result in data that **accurately reflect what students can do in relation to the learning target(s) assessed**. Here we define "accurate" to mean that the assessment data gives explicit and clear evidence in relation to the specified learning targets.
- They **foster student ownership** of their learning and progress, and engage them in striving for learning success.

### Balanced Assessment System

As described in the previous section, formative, interim, and summative assessments are integral to a balanced assessment system with different purposes and users of each assessment and the results. No matter the purpose or user, all assessments given to students should be of high quality, and the assessment system should be responsive to the emotional impact from a learner's point of view.

In *Assessment for Learning, A Key to Motivation and Achievement*, Stiggins (2006) describes the purpose of balanced assessment system, and the responsibility to create a system that accounts for the experience of the student. This is elaborated upon by Chappuis et al. (2017):

In a balanced assessment system educators use evidence gathered through multiple forms of assessment to (1) inform instructional decisions; and (2) motivate students to learn. Assessment systems must yield accurate information about student learning for use at several levels of decision making, and they must be used in a manner that effectively manages the emotional dynamics of the assessment experience from the learner’s point of view.

### **Bias in Assessment**

Assessment users must be cognizant that there can be bias in any assessment and work to mitigate this for all students. *A New Path for Oregon* (2015) defines bias as not “measuring learning equally regardless of cultural background.” Chappuis, et al. (2017) broaden the term to include any situation in which an assessment results in inaccurate information about any group of students: “Bias can arise from the quality or nature of the assessment itself, the fit of that assessment into the culture of the classroom, the environment within which the assessment is conducted, or the relationship between the assessment and the instruction provided leading up to it” (Chappuis et al., 2017). Awareness of the various forms of bias in assessment enables the user to mitigate it, and to consider it when results are interpreted.

Some examples of bias: a math problem referencing "cords of wood" for an urban population living in apartments in a year round warm climate; a reading assessment based on a story in which the setting is a yacht; using timed tests (e.g. spelling or math facts) exclusively to check for understanding; a social studies writing assignment that glorifies the experience of white settlers absent an indigenous perspective.

Here are reflective questions educators should ask themselves when developing, administering and interpreting the results of assessments:

1. Where did bias show up in my instruction leading up to the assessment?
2. Where does the assessment have bias?
3. How does bias show up in my interpretation of the evidence?
4. How does bias show up in my feedback to students about their learning?

## **III. ASSESSMENT PRACTICES TO SUPPORT ALL STUDENTS**

Assessment must inform all users. Students must be seen not merely as the subjects of assessment, but as important members of the assessment user network. Traditionally, assessment has been seen as something teachers and school leaders do to students. This is unfortunate because assessment has far more power to influence learning when educators help students understand where they are at any given time in their journey toward success. Knowing how far they have come and what

steps remain can be highly motivating. It makes students aware of their progress and growth, and this awareness gives them confidence. It also shows them where they are headed, thus making them feel in control of their learning. And finally, it shows which goals are within immediate reach, making progress feel manageable, and giving students the motivation and encouragement they need to overcome challenges and continue their efforts.

Student success depends on decisions made by numerous individuals and groups, among them families, teachers, education support professionals, school and district administrators, school board members, community members, policy makers, and of course, the students themselves. (*A New Path for Oregon*, 2015)

To inform learning and encourage students to continue their efforts, all assessment users must attend to equitable, sound assessment practices. Equitable assessment practices are culturally relevant, standards aligned, research-based, drive instruction and decision making and most importantly focus on supporting student growth. Assessment practices that support all students start with including the student as the driver in the decision making process. The questions educators need to keep in the forefront when employing formative assessment for learning strategies are:

- What is the identified student learning target (Where am I going?)
- Where is the student in their progression of learning? (Where am I now?)
- What steps are taken to achieve proficiency? (How can I close the individual learning gap?)
- Using an equity lens, how are we collaborating in the measurement and use of the results?

When the student in partnership with the teacher is engaging in answering these questions throughout the learning process, students learn how to self assess, set goals and achieve those goals. The educator's role is to be proactive in teaching students how to successfully answer these questions and provide the positive classroom atmosphere, appropriate learning targets and relevant assessments to help the student achieve at the highest level possible. Chappuis et al. identified seven strategies that PPS adapted to identify successful assessment strategies.

### **Best Practices (Educators in Schools)**

(adapted from Chappuis et al., 2017)

<b>Where am I going?</b>
<p>1. Provide clear use of learning targets that considers diverse learning needs, linguistic and cultural backgrounds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standards-based</li><li>• Assessments connected to learning targets</li><li>• Opportunities for student self assessment</li><li>• Student-friendly language</li><li>• Use of/co-development of scoring criteria which defines quality (for example use of a rubric) using student friendly language</li></ul>
<p>2. Use examples of work representing multiple places within the <u>learning progression</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use anonymous student work, educator's work, work gathered from outside sources</li></ul>

- Use work that is culturally and linguistically relevant to students
- Use work from multiple cultural and linguistic backgrounds
- Use work from student's native language when appropriate
- Provide opportunities for students to analyze work

### Where am I now?

- 3: Offer ongoing descriptive feedback during learning
  - Timely; arrives in time to inform learning
  - Provides information about progress relative to the intended learning goal
  - Reflects strengths as well as areas of improvement
  - Addresses partial understanding
  - Use of/co-development of scoring criteria which defines quality (for example use of a rubric) using student friendly language
4. Focus on self-assessment, growth, and goal setting for next steps
  - Focuses on progression of learning
  - Students identify strengths as well as areas of improvement in order to set personal learning goals
  - Provides multiple types of standards-driven assessments
  - Modifications, including different entry points, accommodations, and multiple opportunities to show what they know

### How can I close the individual learning gap?

5. Use evidence of student learning needs to determine next steps in teaching
  - Assessment information utilized before, during, or after instruction
  - Analyze data to drive next instructional steps
6. Design focused instruction and interventions that are differentiated for the full spectrum of learners, and followed by practice with feedback
  - Scaffold the lesson by narrowing the focus on the specific goal(s) identified in strategy 5.
  - When a concept or skill proves difficult for students, provide further instruction, let them practice, and provide feedback focused just on the aspects students are practicing, prior to reassessing for a grade
  - Level the abstraction of questions and activities (e.g.; Depth of Knowledge, cognitive rigor)
7. Provide opportunities for students to track, reflect on, and share their learning progress
  - Focus and reflect on student's journey
  - Celebrate and share achievements
  - Empower students to believe in themselves and feel in control of their success

### Reflecting with an Equity Lens

8. Collaborative ongoing measurement and use of results.
  - Include/engage multiple perspectives in multidisciplinary teams
  - Disaggregate data by race and other subgroups
  - Use multiple types of data (e.g., interim/benchmark, diagnostic, observations, conferring)

## Best Practices (Students in the Classroom)

(adapted from *A New Path for Oregon*, 2015.)

Best practices are student-centered and engage the students in the use of assessment in the classroom.

#### 1. Goals and Growth

- Students know and understand the learning targets
- Students know progression towards their proficiency on the identified learning targets
  - Self-assess and track progress towards proficiency
  - Identify strengths and areas of improvement to set short and long term goals
  - Use/co-develop scoring criteria to determine where they lie on the proficiency scale
  - Make use of multiple opportunities to show what they know

#### 2. Relevancy

- Students are engaged in understanding the assessment purpose and use of results
- Students can make meaning of the assessments in their lives and understand real world applications
- Assessments reflect diverse students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds
- Assessments and materials are high quality and accurately reflect students' targeted learning

#### 3. Motivation and Engagement

- Students have effective communication of their assessment results
- Students can reflect on the process and apply and refine their own beliefs and behaviors around learning
- Student have a sense of optimism about success being within their reach if they keep striving

## IV. REPORTING & COMMUNICATING STUDENT LEARNING

There are a variety of methods that can be used to report and communicate assessment feedback. Regardless of the reporting method, feedback to the learner and the teacher should aim to empower student learning and improve the quality and effectiveness of instruction. Historically underrepresented students are most harmed by assessment practices that are not culturally responsive or student centered. PPS recognizes that current grading practices have the potential to perpetuate institutionalized racism. The goal is to break down the power dynamics in grading and assessment practices which have historically been centered in “whiteness.”

Proficiency-based assessment and instruction reflect best practices in communicating transparent results to all stakeholders. Students and families should understand what success looks like. Students need to receive feedback in a timely manner as they work toward proficiency in their subjects. Proficiency-based assessment and instruction practices allow for multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate learning, and student behavior must be reported separately from their academic ability. Communicating, reporting, and providing feedback around student learning needs to be based on common standards-based learning targets and shared grading criteria across grade level content areas.

**Assessment for Learning:** Assessment for learning is one of the most powerful tools for students to understand and engage in their learning process. These assessments are classroom based and are

ongoing. They are formative and must include clear feedback that empowers the students in their learning. This feedback gives detailed description to the teacher and student regarding progress that is being made. The feedback is clearly understood by the user and the description reveals to the student how to improve the next time. The end results are used by the teacher to shape future instructional decisions.

Examples of Assessment <i>for</i> Learning Reporting & Feedback	Intended Audience
Teacher/Student Conferencing	Student and Teacher
Feedback on pre/post quiz/test	Student, Teacher, and Family
Ongoing evidence collection in classroom (exit tickets, thumbs up/down, observation)	Student and Teacher
Self-Assessment	Student, Teacher, and Family
Peer-to-Peer Assessment Form	Student, Teacher, and Family
Student Checklists	Student, Teacher, and Family
Student Goal Setting Form	Student, Teacher, and Family
Online Collaborative Tools to view work	Student, Teacher, and Family
Electronic Gradebook	Student and Family
Communication and feedback about homework	Students
Feedback on performance assessments or presentations	Student, Teacher

**Assessment of Learning:**

These assessments occur periodically, are more “formal,” and are generally aimed at providing evaluative or summative feedback to students, teachers, and families. In some cases, this information is reported to stakeholders outside of the school, including the district, state, or colleges and universities. When reporting grade level performance formally or evaluatively student progress will be reported based on common standards-based learning targets. The reporting should use shared grading criteria across grade level content areas and consistent K-12 grading marks (i.e. INC, Meets, Exceeds, etc). Despite the summative nature of this type of feedback, teachers must maximize opportunities for students to demonstrate their proficiency via evaluative assessment.

Methods of reporting and communicating information will vary greatly, depending on the type of assessment, the purpose of the assessment, and the intended audience:

Examples of Assessment of Learning Reporting Methods	Intended Audience
Report Cards	Student and Family
Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences	Student and Family
State Assessment Report	Student, Family, Teacher, District Staff, State
Transcripts	Student, Family, District, Other Institutions
End of Unit Test	Student, Family, and Teacher
Notice Towards Graduation	Student and Family

## V. ASSESSMENT LITERACY & COMPETENCY

The development and promotion of an assessment literate school culture is a shared responsibility across roles. It is only with these kinds of collaboration that we can come to trust one another to gather good evidence of student achievement and use it to promote their academic well-being. (National Task Force Definition of Assessment Literacy, 2016)

**Assessment literacy** refers to the knowledge and conceptual understanding of the principles of quality assessment. **Assessment competency** refers to the consistent practice of high-quality student-involved assessment.

### Assessment Literacy and Competency Characteristics

All those who are assessment literate and competent share the following understandings:

- Beginning assessment with a clear purpose;
- Starting with clear and specific learning target(s) to be assessed;
- Building high-quality assessments to fit this intended context;
- Communicating results in ways that assure understanding by recipients, and;
- Linking assessment and student motivation in ways that keep all students striving for academic success.

(Chappuis, et al., 2016, p. 48)

There are also characteristics specific to particular roles.

Who	Assessment Literacy & Competencies
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the learning target they are trying to master,</li> <li>• Have confidence that they receive accurate information about their learning progress,</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Have the opportunity to ask for and receive the information they need to help them grow, and</li> <li>● Feel that they have an important role in promoting their own success.</li> </ul>
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Know how instructional decision making fits into the balanced system of assessment,</li> <li>● Identify clear and appropriate purposes for each assessment,</li> <li>● Are masters of the learning targets that are to be assessed,</li> <li>● Can create and select high-quality assessments aligned to those targets,</li> <li>● Implements assessments equitably, making appropriate modifications based on student need,</li> <li>● Employ a variety of assessments that are appropriate for the students and learning targets,</li> <li>● Analyze the results of assessments given their knowledge of students, and make instructional adjustments based on those results,</li> <li>● Understand how to tailor the communication of results to the needs of the intended user,</li> <li>● Master the use of formative assessment to support student learning and can teach students how to act assertively on their own assessment results to take charge of their own learning success,</li> <li>● Partner with colleagues, their students' families, and the community, using assessment results to identify needs that can be best met collaboratively,</li> </ul>
Principal and School Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Understand ways in which the school leaders and teachers can both promote and impede good assessment practice, and work to improve the conditions in the school to support good assessment practice,</li> <li>● Establish the expectation and provide professional learning opportunities for the school staff to continuously develop and hone their assessment literacy, and recognize those who become leaders and model accomplished assessment practices,</li> <li>● Understand how assessment information can be used to strengthen partnerships with students' families and the community,</li> <li>● Promote effective communication of results both in formative and summative contexts</li> </ul>
District Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Understand and advocate for the development of balanced assessment systems that meet the information needs of all assessment purposes,</li> <li>● Understand ways in which the school system can both promote and impede good assessment practice, and work to improve the conditions in the system to support good assessment practice,</li> <li>● Establish the expectation and provide professional learning opportunities for schools to continuously develop and hone their assessment literacy, and recognize those who become leaders and model accomplished assessment practices,</li> <li>● Promote ethical assessment practices through supervision and policy in all contexts,</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● See learning target clarity and appropriateness as a foundation of sound assessment practice,</li> <li>● Promote effective communication of results both in formative and summative contexts</li> </ul>
All Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● See the development of their own assessment literacy as a career-long learning process,</li> <li>● Advocate for sound assessment practices in instructional and/or policy settings</li> <li>● Advocate for student involvement in their own learning through the use of assessment as a teaching and learning strategy</li> </ul>

## **Developing Assessment for Learning Competencies**

Professional development is essential for educators to deepen their personal understanding of their content base. Professional development is a deliberate process and should be guided by a clear vision and planned goals. Truly furthering professional learning means we must operate with a sense of inquiry and collaboration.

In order to build an effective assessment culture, we must develop, fund, and implement multi-year aligned and differentiated professional development programs to develop and/or enhance educators' (teachers, school and district administrators and education support professionals), and other assessment users' (students, families, local and state policy makers, community members, etc.) culturally-responsive understanding of assessment.

Educator-led efforts should focus on high quality classroom, interim (i.e. periodic) and annual assessments, for both formative and summative uses that have a clear purpose, support state standards and well defined learning targets. Professional learning should go beyond the delivery of assessment, and focus on the application of information gained from assessments.

## **Data Literacy**

Assessment literacy and competency is understood to include data literacy. Data literacy can seem highly complex in nature, so educators must be provided time to continually develop the following knowledge, skills, and practices (Data Literacy, 2016).

Data literate educators:

- know the different kinds of data that exist and which kind of data to use for which decision;
- evaluate the accuracy and sufficiency of each kind of data they will use;
- transform data from a variety of sources (classroom, school, district, state) into actionable information to guide decisions;
- understand cultural relevancy and are able to apply the equity lens to the use of data;
- hold themselves accountable for ethical generation, interpretation, and application of assessment data.

## **A Schoolwide Focus**

A school is truly integrating assessment literacy, competency and data literacy in their culture of achievement when there is:

- Continuous professional development in classroom assessment practices is provided for faculty and staff;
- Agreement on the use of locally developed assessments, and how to score and disseminate results in a timely manner;
- Student involvement in the assessment process, self-reflection and setting of personal learning goals;
- Clearly communicated academic standards and they are related to individual student learning goals.
- A collectively gathered continua of student work to identify criteria and set benchmarks
- The opportunity to regularly interpret and discuss grade level, classroom, and individual student performance data;
- Problem-solving within the context of PLC's, departments/grade levels, etc. to determine best interventions for struggling learners or best enrichment strategies for students who have mastered learning goals; and
- Intentional design that works to close the gap within student learning: whole group, small group and individual.
- Meaningful use of data teams to review and disseminate aggregated, district-wide and school-wide assessment and other data, and to serve as data coaches for the school;
- Appropriate time within the schedule for teachers to collaborate with colleagues and teaching partners.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop and implement common, district-wide **prioritized and deconstructed standards** for core curriculum.

**Build an effective assessment culture.** Develop, fund, and implement multi-year aligned and differentiated professional development programs to build and/or enhance educators' (teachers, school and district administrators and education support professionals), and other assessment users' (students, families, local and state policy makers, community members, etc.) culturally-responsive understanding and use of assessment.

**Align the Framework** to prioritized initiatives and **integrate assessment**, as defined by the Framework, into existing content, practices, and professional learning. The Assessment Framework should not be implemented in isolation or as a separate initiative. This alignment and integration must include addressing gaps and needs to shift assessment culture, practices, and resources, so that assessment becomes a key strategy to close the achievement gap and stands in contrast to punitive uses of testing that perpetuate it.

Engage stakeholders to create a **student-centered assessment system** whereby:

- Students and their families know and understand the purpose of assessments, the learning targets that make up the assessments and how the results will be used.
- Students and educators work collaboratively on designing assessment targets
- Students and their families understand how to self-assess, and to use assessment results to track progress and know what progress and success mean.

Design and implement tools and resources that efficiently collect data to inform instructional decisions and student supports at all levels of the system. The data collected should reflect academic performance and growth as well as underlying or correlated indicators of student success.

## APPENDIX A

Adopted from *A New Path*, A Students' Bill of Assessment Rights recognizes guiding principles for student involvement throughout the assessment process.

### **A Students' Bill of Assessment Rights** (*A New Path*, 2015, p. 18)

The rationale for reconsidering the student's place in the assessment process extends beyond the fact that their learning can benefit from their involvement. Ethical standards of fair and equal treatment of each and every student require adults to re-evaluate the student's place in the assessment process. Students can be seen as the holders of certain inalienable rights related to the collection and use of achievement information (Stiggins, 2014). Those rights are articulated below and they align with the five Guiding Principles spelled out above.

1. Students are entitled to know the purpose of each assessment in which they participate; that is, they have a right to know specifically how the results will be used.

2. Students are entitled to know and understand the learning target(s) to be reflected in the exercises and scoring methods that make up the assessment.
3. Students are entitled to understand how they will be assessed, and learn how to self-assess and track their progress toward mastery.
4. Students are entitled to dependable assessment of their learning using quality assessments.
5. Students are entitled to effective communication of their assessment results, whether to themselves, their families or others concerned with their academic success.
6. Students are entitled to equal access to learning opportunities, and to feel a sense of optimism about success being within their reach if they keep striving.

Students and their families should be made aware of these rights, and educators will play a vital role in empowering students and families. Students themselves may have difficulty asserting their assessment rights at least until high school and, even then, their ability and power to do so will be limited. In the service of maintaining a foundation of assessment literacy in Oregon schools, students should be reminded of their rights on a regular basis.

## GLOSSARY

**Assessment Bias:** Not “measuring learning equally regardless of cultural background.” In *Balance Assessment Systems*, Chappuis, Commodore, and Stiggins broaden the term to include any situation in which an assessment results in inaccurate information about any group of students: “Bias can arise from the quality or nature of the assessment itself, the fit of that assessment into the culture of the classroom, the environment within which the assessment is conducted, or the relationship between the assessment and the instruction provided leading up to it” (Chappuis, Commodore, Stiggins, 2016, p. 50). Awareness of the various forms of bias in assessment enables the user to mitigate it, and to consider it when results are interpreted.

**Assessment Literacy:** The knowledge and conceptual understanding of the principles of quality classroom assessment.

**Assessment Competency:** The practice of high-quality student involved classroom assessment.

**Balanced Assessment System:** A balance of formative, interim, and summative assessments that “yields accurate information about student learning for use at several levels of decision making, and [are] used in a manner that effectively manages the emotional dynamics of the assessment experience from the learner’s point of view.” (Stiggins, 2006). It offers all students, especially historically underserved students, opportunities to demonstrate learning through creative and diverse types of evidence/assessments.

**Diagnostic Assessments:** A diagnostic assessment is used in a formative way to support further learning. It provides teachers with data on individual student’s needs for growth and informs teachers, students, and families on levels of mastery. They give teachers insight on specific strategies for use with individual students.

**Formative Assessment (Assessment for Learning):** An intentional and consistent process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides immediate feedback to adjust on-going teaching and learning in order to improve students’ growth toward the intended instructional outcomes. (CCSSO,

2007)

**Interim Assessment (Assessment for Learning):** Interim assessment evaluates students' knowledge and skills relative to a specific set of academic goals, typically within a limited timeframe and are designed to inform decisions at both the classroom level and beyond, such as the school or district level. [Adapted from Perie, Marion, Gong & Wurtzel, 2007].

**Learning Progression** is “a description of skills, understanding and knowledge in the sequence in which they typically develop: a picture of what it means to ‘improve’ in an area of learning” (Masters & Forster, 1997). Learning progressions provide “descriptions of the successively more sophisticated ways of thinking about a topic that can follow one another as children learn about and investigate a topic over a broad span of time” (Duschl, Schweingruber, & Shouse, 2007).

**Learning Target** are “what you intend students to learn or accomplish in a given [learning progression]. When shared meaningfully, they become actual targets that students can see and direct their efforts toward. They also serve as targets for the adults in the school whose responsibility it is to plan, monitor, assess, and improve the quality of learning opportunities to raise the achievement of *all* students.” (Moss & Brookhart, 2012). Learning targets “state what students should learn over the course of a unit (or a lesson or an entire semester).” (Marzano & Brown, 2009)

**Summative Assessment (Assessment of Learning):** The process of evaluating (and can include grading) the learning of students at a given point in time, e.g., end-of-unit, end-of-year. A summative assessment is designed to evaluate cumulative learning and occurs after instruction to help evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and levels of student learning. It may also focus on cohort learning trends to inform instruction.

See PPS website for [Common Definitions](#) for Prioritized and Deconstructed Standards for additional definitions.

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