Competency-Based Learning Series:
Assessment in a Competency-Based Learning System
Seminar #3
Welcome

Great Schools Partnership partners:
Ted Hall, Senior Associate
Craig Kesselheim, Senior Associate

Colorado partners:
Samantha Olson,
Director of NextGen Learning, CEI
Christina Jean,
Innovation + Blended Learning Specialist, CDE
Welcome

Team Introductions
Colorado Seminar Series

Competency-Based Learning: A Systemic Approach is a seminar series focused on supporting districts in Colorado to implement competency-based learning. Here, you can find all the meeting materials, our webinar archive, and essential guiding documents and resources to support your work.

Guiding Documents and Resources

- Guiding Documents
- Resources

Webinars

- Upcoming
- Archive

Meeting Sessions

- November 16-19, 2015 | Seminar 1
Is a non-profit support organization based in Portland, Maine working nationally with schools, districts and state agencies, providing coaching, and developing tools.
We Believe

In equitable, personalized, rigorous learning for all students leading to readiness for college, careers, and citizenship
We Believe

That schools must simultaneously attend to policy, practice, and community engagement
We Believe

School improvement is **context-based**, not one-size fits all
Series Outcomes

Team members will be ready to lead the implementation of competency-based learning.
Series Outcomes

The district teams will be prepared to **design and plan** professional development regarding competency-based learning within the 2015/16 school year.
Series Outcomes

We will develop a network of support across the state of Colorado to enact a vision and implement a system of learning that supports personalization through competency-based learning and multiple and flexible pathways.
Seminar 3

Outcomes

I will review and apply the principles of formative assessment
I will understand key leverage points for and possible strategies for transitioning to a new model of grading
I will understand and be able to communicate the rationale for separating habits of work from grading
I can identify the policy implications when transitioning to standards-based grading
Seminar 3

Outcomes

We will develop a communications plan to engage and build support for a transition in grading practices, with all stakeholders in mind (including post-secondary institutions and employers)
Agenda: Day One

Introductions and Review of Agenda

Formative Assessment—Review and Practice

Shared Updates on District Work

Introduction to Grading and Reporting in a Competency-Based System

Understanding the Complexities of Grading and Reporting through a Simulation

Policy Implications and Habits of Work

Wrap Up and Prepare for Day Two
Welcome, Review of Reflections, Agenda Overview

Reporting of Grades and Recognition of Honors

Finish Simulation on Complexities of Grading and Reporting

District/School Team Planning

Final Reflections and Preparation for Final Seminar
REVIEW NORMS FOR OUR WORK TOGETHER
Norms from November

Colorado Springs

- Stay on schedule
- Stay future focused
- Stay learner centered
- Be open minded
- Assume best intentions
- Celebrate and validate each others’ journeys
- Create team time
- Be engaged
- Be focus and outcome oriented
Norms from November

Grand Junction

- Think interdependently
- Operate with a growth mindset
- Think out of the box
- Be solution oriented towards learners
- Find humor in the work
- Assume positive intentions
- Support the work and concerns of others
Norms from November

Continued

• Make sure this is a safe place to learn and ask tough questions
• Speak in truth
• Listen for understanding and empathy
• Be child centered
• Use technology only to support the process
• Look for ways to honor and celebrate the work
Some Assumptions

• We **model** and **support** your practice; you lead

• We provide **action planning time**: you choose and enact your strategies

• We provide **resources** in a user-friendly site; you **access** these when you need them.

• We will provide **structure for maximum engagement**; you will take advantage of that structure.

• Questions about this?
Competency-Based Learning Simplified
A Great Schools Partnership Learning Model

Reporting Method

Transcripts and Report Cards
Content-Area Graduation Standards
5–8 standards for each content area

Transcripts and Report Cards
Cross-Curricular Graduation Standards
5–8 standards taught in all content areas

Assessment Method

Body of Evidence
Students demonstrate achievement of standards through a body of evidence evaluated using common rubrics

Verification of Proficiency
Students demonstrate achievement of content-area graduation standards through their aggregate performance on summative assessments over time

Summative Assessment
Graded summative assessments are used to evaluate the achievement of performance indicators

Formative Assessment
Ungraded formative assessments are used to evaluate student learning progress

Progress Reports
Performance Indicators
5–10 indicators for each cross-curricular and content-area standard that move students toward competency and the achievement of graduation

Teacher Feedback
Learning Objectives
Learning objectives guide the design of curriculum units that move students toward competency and the achievement of performance indicators

This work by Great Schools Partnership is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.
Essential Question:
Why is formative assessment one of the most critical components of a proficiency-based learning system?

Pick 2-3 passages that help you think about the essential question.
Walk around and discuss—find one person and share your first highlighted excerpts and why you chose those passages. We will do this three times, giving about 3 minutes for each round.
Excerpt from Sample Social Studies Unit

Connecting Summative Assessments to Formative Plans

Unit Title: The American Revolution- was it justified?
Grade Level/Course: Grade 8 US History

Stage 2- Evidence of Student Learning

Summative assessment

Students will assume the roles of historical figures and participate in a 1776 colonial town meeting at which they will debate whether to declare independence from Great Britain. Loyalists and Patriots will try to persuade Neutralists to join their side; Neutralists will question the Loyalists and Patriots on their arguments and use/interpretation of evidence and then vote each “round” on which side has the most compelling arguments and rebuttals. All students will use strategic thinking to cite evidence, develop logical arguments and justify their own conclusions or critique conclusions others have drawn. Students who are proficient are able to think strategically and make logical inferences about the perspective the historical person they are role-playing would have had on the events and key laws of 1770s America.

Students will prepare the following materials to use in their town meeting:

• Written speech from perspective of historical person who the student is role-playing (SS 1/E; SS 6 E, GP A.2, A.3)
• Create a visual (poster, google site, twitter feed, etc.) that demonstrates the point of view of character (SS 6/B; GP A.4)
• Nameplate for historical character with “quote” summarizing character’s perspective on independence from Great Britain (GP A.4; SS 6.B)
Excerpt from Sample Social Studies Unit

**Unit Title:** The American Revolution—was it justified?

**Grade Level/Course:** Grade 8 US History

**Stage 2—Evidence of Student Learning**

Summative assessment

Students will assume the roles of historical figures and participate in a 1776 colonial town meeting at which they will debate whether to declare independence from Great Britain. Loyalists and Patriots will try to persuade Neutralists to join their side; Neutralists will question the Loyalists and Patriots on their arguments and use/interpretation of evidence and then vote each “round” on which side has the most compelling arguments and rebuttals. All students will use strategic thinking to cite evidence, develop logical arguments and justify their own conclusions or critique conclusions others have drawn. Students who are proficient are able to think strategically and make logical inferences about the perspective the historical person they are role-playing would have had on the events and key laws of 1770s America.

Students will prepare the following materials to use in their town meeting:

- Written speech from perspective of historical person the student is role-playing (SS 1/E; SS 6 E, GP A.2, A.3)
- Create a visual (poster, google site, twitter feed, etc.) that demonstrates the point of view of character (SS 6/B; GP A.4)
- Nameplate for historical character with “quote” summarizing character’s perspective on independence from Great Britain (GP A.4; SS 6.B)

During the town meeting, students will:

- Present the speech they have prepared and participate in the development of a rebuttal or counterargument (GP A.2; A.3; A.4)

**Scoring Criteria (Rubric)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>G.P. A2: Uses evidence and logic appropriately in communication</strong></td>
<td>I can state or list relevant ideas or facts.</td>
<td>I can express my ideas and present some evidence to support them.</td>
<td>I can explain ideas logically and use evidence to support them.</td>
<td>I can cite specific evidence and synthesize ideas logically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G.P. A3: Adjusts communication based on the audience</strong></td>
<td>I can identify the audience for my work.</td>
<td>I can recognize different audiences and think about their needs.</td>
<td>I can differentiate my tone, level of complexity, and voice based on audience.</td>
<td>I can assess the audience for my work and adapt my communication style to match their needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G.P. A4: Uses a variety of modes of</strong></td>
<td>I can state my ideas.</td>
<td>I can show what I mean in more than</td>
<td>I can express myself in a variety</td>
<td>I can express myself in a variety</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Stage 3 - Instructional Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily Learning Target</th>
<th>Formative Assessment</th>
<th>Learning Experience(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can explain the reasons for the settlement of various English colonies (2 days)</td>
<td>• Presentation checklist: 1) “headline statement” 2) examples to support headline, 3) explanation of important dates/events in colony 4) students define terms, use clear voice, maintain eye contact  • Complete Venn diagram with partner comparing two colonies (done beginning of class after presentations)</td>
<td>Day 1: Each small group researches using textbook, and supplied internet resources the settlement of one colony. Prepares short presentation  Day 2: Presentations. Students complete matrix graphic organizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can define mercantilism and describe how it could be viewed as a benefit to colonists and as a cost to colonists (1 day)</td>
<td>• Role play cards (farmer, shipbuilder, ship owner, merchant, etc.)</td>
<td>In class reading &amp; note-taking using note-taking template</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can analyze the causes and consequences of laws and events in the 1770’s and infer different viewpoints (3 days)</td>
<td>Each day: 1) take one event from the chart, and do mini-debate with whole class. 2) Pair groups and have them pick another event to debate by dividing group into 2 patriots, 2 loyalists and 2 neutralists.</td>
<td>Using textbook and in groups of 3, students complete action-reaction chart defining events and inferring perspective of loyalist &amp; patriot on each event/law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can compare &amp; contrast the political cartoon of the Boston Massacre with eyewitness accounts of the event (2 days)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tuning Units for Summative-Formative Connection

• Review description of sample assessment and scoring criteria on *Excerpt from Sample Social Studies Unit* (8 min)

• Using *Tools for Formative Assessment* Chart, brainstorm formative assessments (8 min)

• Discuss how to move to a school-wide system for formative assessment (8 min)
What are the Key Features of Effective Formative Assessment in Order for a School-Wide System?
Council of Chiefs and State School Officers formed a task force to define features of formative assessment:

- Formative assessment is a **planned process**, not any particular test.
- It is used not just by teachers but by both teachers and students.
- Formative assessment takes place **during instruction**.
- It provides **assessment-based feedback** to teachers and students.
- The function of this feedback is to help teachers and students **make adjustments** that will improve students' achievement of intended curricular aims.
“[F]or formative assessment to exist at all, it must lead to instructional adjustment decisions by teachers or learning tactic adjustment decisions by students. The decisions to adjust or not to adjust…need to be made on the spot or almost on the spot—when there's still instructional and learning time available.”

- W. James Popham
District Updates

Review What You Have Done and Share With Your Colleagues
District Updates “menu”

• Key moments
• Breakthroughs
• Training others / building capacity
• Assets and Barriers
• Standards/perf. indicator status
• Scoring criteria status
• Policy status
• Public engagement
Break
Introduction to the purposes of grading
Continuum Exercise
Assessing, Grading, Reporting: Process

- Pre-Assessment
- Instruction / Formative Assessment
- Summative Assessment
- Re-Teaching
- Grades
- Reports
Key Learning in Our Work

• Report Cards ≠ Step One

(http://themanatee.net/parents-fail-to-lol-at-new-report-card-system/)

Parents fail to LOL at new report card system

November 13, 2014 by Shauna Chase  Leave a Comment

Fredericton — Many parents in the Fredericton area are displeased about a new pilot project introduced this fall by the Anglophone West School District.

The parents are saying that they were confused by their kids’ first report cards of the school year issued late last week. Instead of percentages or letter grades, children are assessed with meaningless acronyms. For example, “His Reading Is Okay But His Math Needs Some Work” is shown as “HRIOBHMNSW” on the report card. Kids who are struggling with gym but are excellent in academics have received a grade of “R4MBA,” for “Ready For Major League Baseball,” not to be confused with “R4MBA” for the “Ready For a Masters in Business Administration” being given to more academically inclined children.

Parents Jim and Grace Peters are among those outraged by the new system. Their 3 children used to be straight-A students, which used to mean they could...
Key Learning in Our Work

• Report Cards ≠ Step One
Starting the Conversation About Grading

The first task in successful grading reform is to reach consensus on the purpose of grades.

Susan M. Brookhart
Initial Steps

Decide on Purpose
Focus on the Main Issue
Don't Get Sidetracked
Secondary Issues Will Follow
Next Step

One way to begin this work is by giving faculty members the opportunity to talk openly about their beliefs about grading.
Shared Agreements

“Teachers who are skeptical about standards-based grading need safe, honest conversations about their beliefs.”

—Susan M. Brookhart (2011)
Usually when schools begin this conversation, it is because there is an agenda, so best to be open about it.
Before Changing Report Cards

It is Important to Have

- Clear Standards and Criteria
- Consistent Assessment Practice
- Consistent Grading Practices
- Broad Base of Champions
A Closer Look at the Purposes of Grading

Take one minute to write down the top three purposes of grading in your school or district without consulting the other members of your team.
• Guskey and Bailey found several common purposes of grading when asking educators across the country.

• Review the purposes—how are they similar or different to your top three? Discuss at your table.
Common Purposes of Grading

• To communicate student learning / student achievement
• To help students self-assess
• To select/identify students for educational paths or programs
• To provide incentives for students to learn
• To evaluate the effectiveness of instructional programs
• To provide evidence of students’ lack of effort or responsibility

Introduction to the Grading Committee Simulation

You have been asked to serve on a newly formed “Grading and Assessment Committee” for your assigned district.

You will take on a particular role on that committee as you go through this simulation.
Introduction to the Grading Committee Simulation

You will be given a profile of the district, as well as relevant policy documents, to begin your work. Your school district is moving toward competency-based education, but is still in the beginning stages of that work.

The superintendent recognizes that one of the steps in moving forward is the need for clear policies and practices related to grading and assessment.
Introduction to the Grading Committee Simulation

Your task is to review the relevant materials, do appropriate research on grading and assessment policies and practices, and develop a timeline and action plan for the Grading and Assessment Committee.
Introduction to the Grading Committee Simulation

Here is the agenda for your first meeting:

1. Introductions and pick roles
2. Task outline, including identification of group facilitator
3. Identify stakeholder interests and concerns
4. Outline specific research focus areas
5. Begin discussion of timeline
Roles for the Simulation

Superintendent
Principals
Students
Teachers
Parents
School Counselor
Special Educator
LUNCH
Plan for the Afternoon

Concurrent Sessions: Policy Implications and Habits of Work

Grading Committee Meets, Shares Learning and Begins Work

Wrap Up and Prepare for Day Two
Ending the Day...
Planning for Day Two

Concurrent Sessions: Grading Scales and Recognition/Honors

Grading Committee Meets, Shares Learning and Continues Work

Team Planning Time
ENDING THE DAY...

1. Announcements
2. Please complete survey
QUESTIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS
Competency-Based Learning Series:
Assessment in a Competency-Based Learning System
Seminar #3
Welcome, Review of Reflections, Agenda Overview

Concurrent Sessions: Reporting of Grades and Recognition of Honors

Finish Simulation on Complexities of Grading and Reporting

District/School Team Planning, including “Tuning” of Work

Final Reflections and Preparation for Final Seminar
Review of Reflections
Norms from November

Colorado Springs

- Stay on schedule
- Stay future focused
- Stay learner centered
- Be open minded
- Assume best intentions
- Celebrate and validate each others’ journeys
- Create team time
- Be engaged
- Be focus and outcome oriented
Norms from November

Grand Junction

- Think interdependently
- Operate with a growth mindset
- Think out of the box
- Be solution oriented towards learners
- Find humor in the work
- Assume positive intentions
- Support the work and concerns of others
Norms from November

Continued

• Make sure this is a safe place to learn and ask tough questions
• Speak in truth
• Listen for understanding and empathy
• Be child centered
• Use technology only to support the process
• Look for ways to honor and celebrate the work
Concurrent Sessions:

Reporting of Grades and Recognition of Honors
Finish Simulation on Complexities of Grading and Reporting
11:00-12:00  Team planning
12:00-12:30  Lunch
12:30-2:15   Team planning (include break)
2:15-2:45    Tuning in pairs
2:45-3:00    Closing activity and complete survey
NEXT STEPS

• Questions?
• Final in-person: June
• Final reflections
ENDING THE DAY...

1. Closing

2. Please complete survey
THANK YOU