Assessing Learning
In a Proficiency-Based Learning Model

March 17-18, 2016
High School Redesign in Action
From the Great Schools Partnership

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From the Great Schools Partnership
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Outcomes

I can explain the principles of quality assessment systems
Outcomes

I can design or refine assessments according to principles of high quality assessments
Outcomes

I can apply a process to calibrate scoring of student work
Welcome, introductions, and overview of the session (5 min)

Design “do now” (10 min)

Calibrate scoring of sample student work (40 min)

Principles of quality assessment systems (20 min)

Break (10 min)

Assessment tuning (50 min)

Closing and reflections (10 min)
Resources

greatschoolspartnership.org/nessc16_assessing
Is a non-profit support organization based in Portland working nationally with schools, districts and state agencies, providing coaching, and developing tools.
GSP has served as the coordinator of the **New England Secondary School Consortium** since its inception in 2009.
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.
Design an Assessment
(In 10 minutes)

Steps

- **Review** sample performance indicators and scoring criteria (2 min)

- **Brainstorm** all the ways students could demonstrate their knowledge and skill for these scoring criteria. (6 min)

- **Determine** 1-2 ideas you’ll share (1 min)
Assessment Pathways Simplified
A Great Schools Partnership Learning Model

We believe that reliability results from the careful alignment of demonstrations tasks and instruction with intended learning outcomes. Comparability is possible when teachers assess student work with task-neutral common scoring guides and have time to calibrate their understanding and use. The graphic below represents five general learning pathways and how they can be assessed. While each of these has instructional value, only the first four will lead to greater comparability over time because they are assessed using common scoring criteria. We believe that these pathways are valuable and represent the many ways educators are personalizing learning for students in a proficiency-based learning system.
Scoring Calibration

Steps

- **Review** each sample of student work.
- Using the scoring criteria, **determine** which description for **each** performance indicator best matches the sample.
Score Sample Student Work (AK)

Please read the criteria carefully then score the sample student work and enter your score here.

NEXT  25% complete

bit.ly/NESSC16score1
Score Sample Student Work (JM)

Please read the criteria carefully then score the sample student work and enter your score here.

NEXT

25% complete

bit.ly/NESSC16score2
Scoring Calibration

Debate

• Each person gets to share why they scored the work the way they did, citing evidence from the student work. (5 min)

• Share perspectives (3-5 min)
  ▶ Did you change your mind? Why?
Scoring Calibration

Reflection

• Why is calibration necessary?
• What makes it hard?
• What’s missing or needs to be refined for your calibration process in your school or district?
Principles of Quality Assessment Systems
GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES

An Internationally Benchmarked Self-Assessment Tool for Secondary Learning
### 1.5 ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

#### Step 1 >> Read the Performance Descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Initiating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The school primarily uses a “one-size-fits-all” approach to assessment, and most assessments employ fixed-response, selected-response, and multiple-choice questions that primarily measure recall. The assessment literacy of teachers is limited, and many are unaware of research-based assessment strategies or the impact that varied assessment strategies can have on student learning. When students struggle to demonstrate what they have learned, assessment practices seldom change when students are retested. Teacher feedback often lacks clear guidance that will help students recognize learning needs and progress toward proficiency. Student learning is assessed infrequently, and assessment data are rarely used to modify instructional strategies.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>More teachers are employing multiple assessment strategies in the classroom, but these practices are unevenly applied across the school and only occasionally result in personalized instructional modifications. Faculties are supported in increasing their understanding of assessment design and in matching assessments to specified learning goals. The school has started using more innovative assessment strategies—including exhibitions and portfolios—but many student projects display a lack of academic rigor, sophistication, or intellectual curiosity. The school has provided a few professional development opportunities to improve faculty understanding of effective assessment design and how assessment strategies can also be a learning tool for teachers and students. Assessment data is being reviewed and analyzed sporadically to inform instructional practices.</td>
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<td>The teaching faculty has embraced assessment as a critical component of the learning process. The school has created a coherent system of varied, curriculum-embedded assessments that are aligned with standards and designed to capture a broad range of student learning. Teachers have received training in using assessments to identify and respond to student learning needs and are skilled in the use of formative assessment. Formative, performance-based assessment strategies are used in every classroom throughout the school year to identify emerging student needs so that teachers can modify instruction and coordinate support before students fall behind. Performance assessments and demonstrations of learning are challenging, relevant, and model real-life situations and applications. Learning expectations are clearly communicated to all students at the beginning of courses and lessons, and students understand the assessment methods used by teachers. Teachers provide specific, detailed, and timely oral and written feedback to students on their learning strengths and weaknesses. Students are provided with differentiated assessment opportunities, where appropriate, so that they have ample opportunity to exhibit learning using multiple approaches. Equitable assessment practices ensure that all students have the time, resources, and support they need to demonstrate proficiency.</td>
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#### Step 4 >> Score Your School

Place an X on the scale below to indicate your school’s performance in this dimension.

1. Not Addressed
2. Initiating
3. Developing
4. Performing

---

1 2 3 4 5
NOT ADDRESSED INITIATING DEVELOPING PERFORMING
The teaching faculty has embraced assessment as a critical component of the learning process. The school has created a coherent system of varied, curriculum-embedded assessments that are aligned with standards and designed to capture a broad range of student learning. Teachers have received training in using assessments to identify and respond to student learning needs and are skilled in the use of diagnostic assessment. Formative, performance-based assessment strategies are used in every classroom throughout the school year to identify emerging student needs so that teachers can modify instruction and coordinate support before students fall behind. Performance assessments and demonstrations of learning are challenging, relevant, and model real-life situations and applications. Learning expectations are clearly communicated to all students at the beginning of courses and lessons, and students understand the assessment methods used by teachers. Teachers provide specific, detailed, and timely oral and written feedback to students on their learning strengths and weaknesses. Students are provided with differentiated assessment opportunities, where appropriate, so that they have ample opportunity to exhibit learning using multiple approaches. Equitable assessment practices ensure that all students have the time, resources, and support they need to demonstrate proficiency.
The school has created a coherent system of varied, curriculum-embedded assessments that are aligned with standards and designed to capture a broad range of student learning.
# Proficiency-Based Learning Simplified

A Great Schools Partnership Learning Model

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Graduation Requirement</th>
<th>Reporting Method</th>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
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</table>
| YES                    | Transcripts and Report Cards | Body of Evidence  
Students demonstrate achievement of standards through a body of evidence evaluated using common rubrics |
| YES                    | Transcripts and Report Cards | Verification of Proficiency  
Students demonstrate achievement of content-area graduation standards through their aggregate performance on summative assessments over time |
| NO                     | Progress Reports  | Summative Assessment  
Graded summative assessments are used to evaluate the achievement of performance indicators |
| NO                     | Teacher Feedback  | Formative Assessment  
Ungraded formative assessments are used to evaluate student learning progress |

**Cross-Curricular Graduation Standards**
- 5–8 standards taught in all content areas

**Content-Area Graduation Standards**
- 5–8 standards for each content area

**Performance Indicators**
- 5–10 indicators for each cross-curricular and content-area standard that move students toward proficiency and the achievement of graduation standards

**Learning Objectives**
- Learning objectives guide the design of curriculum units that move students toward proficiency and the achievement of performance indicators

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PBL Cycle of Teaching + Learning

- Reporting, Reflection, Refinement
- School-wide Planning
- Instruction, Feedback, Evaluation
- Design for Learning

- Standards
- Performance Indicators
- Scoring Criteria
- Curriculum Mapping
- Designing Summative Task
- Unit Design
- Instructional Design
- Reporting, Reflection, Refinement
- Scoring-with criteria
- Students attempt Summative Assessment
- Supports/Interventions
- Formative Assessment
- Instruction

Supports/Interventions
Reporting Learning
Scoring-with criteria
Students attempt Summative Assessment
Supports/Interventions
Formative Assessment
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<td><strong>ALIGNMENT:</strong> How aligned is the assessment task to the graduation standards and performance indicators?</td>
<td>• It is unclear what skills or knowledge students will demonstrate through the task • The product or work that students create will not allow them to demonstrate the skills/knowledge within the performance indicators</td>
<td>• It is clear what skills or knowledge students will demonstrate through the task (Graduation standards and performance indicators are clearly identified) • Cognitive level of task matches the level in the identified indicators • Content knowledge and skills required in assessment task match those identified in the indicators</td>
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<td><strong>ACCESSIBILITY:</strong> How accessible is the assessment task to all students?</td>
<td>• Expectations are undefined or unclear • Options for differentiation are not described • Task provides little or no opportunity for student choice • Task is written without sensitivity to cultural differences that may exist in the classroom</td>
<td>• Expectations of the assessment task are clear to students • Options for accommodations for students with special needs are described to ensure all students can achieve proficiency at a rigorous level. • Task provides opportunities for student choice • Task is written with sensitivity to cultural differences</td>
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<td><strong>TRANSFER:</strong> How relevant is the assessment task to the real world and/or student’s lives? Does it require students to apply knowledge or create something new using what they have learned?</td>
<td>• Task is strictly content-based • Task can be accomplished using only one source or familiar sources that have been discussed in class</td>
<td>• Task is complex (interdisciplinary, incorporates cross-curricular skills, and/or assesses multiple performance indicators) • Task requires the use of multiple sources and/or novel material</td>
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<td><strong>RIGOR:</strong> How challenging is the task? Does it require students to think critically at the level defined by the indicators assessed? Is the task a learning stretch?</td>
<td>• Task only requires students to recall, summarize, or define • The assessment requires students to complete discrete tasks aligned with portions of an indicator or only one indicator at a time</td>
<td>• Task requires higher order thinking; application, analysis, evaluation or creation in alignment with the indicators being assessed, or the use of complex or novel sources or texts • Task requires students to integrate and apply the skills and knowledge described in several different performance indicators</td>
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<td>• Rubric descriptors/scoring criteria clearly define levels of performance • Task allows for individual demonstration of proficiency in the identified indicators • Habits of work are assessed separately from academic knowledge and skills • <em>(If applicable) Items are grouped, or clearly identified, by indicator being assessed</em></td>
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### CRITERIA

#### ALIGNMENT:
How aligned is the assessment task to the graduation standards and performance indicators?

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#### SCORING:
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#### CONTENT KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:
What academic knowledge and skills are assessed?

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#### ACCESSIBILITY:
Is the assessment task accessible to all students?

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#### TRANSFER:
Does the product or work that students create have relevance to the world and/or student’s lives?

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#### RIGOR:
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#### TASK ONLY:
Is the task a learning stretch?

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#### TASK REQUIRE:
Does the task require students to think or create something new using what they have learned?

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#### TASK PROVIDE:
Does the task provide opportunities for student choice?

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#### TASK PROVIDE:
Is the task written without sensitivity to cultural differences?

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#### EXPECTATIONS:
Are the expectations of the assessment task clear to students?

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#### OPTIONS FOR DIFFERENTIATION:
Are options for differentiation described to ensure all students can achieve proficiency?

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#### DRAFT, September 2015
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**CRITERIA**

**SCORING:**

Are the **success criteria** clearly defined? If the assessment includes a group product, how is individual proficiency determined?

- Point values may be assigned to items or sections, but it’s unclear what successful demonstration might look like
- It is unclear how individuals will be assessed for group work
- (If applicable) While the standards/indicators assessed may be stated, it is unclear which portions of the assessment align with which indicators

- Rubric, descriptors/scoring criteria clearly define levels of performance
- Task allows for individual demonstration of proficiency in the identified indicators
- Habits of work are assessed separately from academic knowledge and skills
- (If applicable) Items are grouped, or clearly identified, by indicator being assessed
### CRITERIA

### TRANSFER:
How **relevant** is the assessment task to the real world and/or student’s lives? Does it require students to apply knowledge or create something new using what they have learned?

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<td>• It is unclear what skills or knowledge students will demonstrate through the task</td>
<td>• — — Encouraged but not Required — —</td>
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<td>The product or work that students create will not demonstrate through the task</td>
<td>• Task may provide opportunity for students to engage with a school, community, or expert audience</td>
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<td>• It is unclear how individuals will be assessed for group proficiency determined?</td>
<td>• Task lends itself to a real-world or simulated real-world product or performance</td>
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**NOTE:**
- **STRONGER ASSESSMENTS** are assessments that include transfer to real-world or simulated real-world scenarios, where students apply knowledge in novel situations.
- **WEAKER ASSESSMENTS** are assessments that do not meet the criteria for transfer, limiting students' ability to apply their knowledge in real-world contexts.

**CRITERIA:**
- **ALIGNMENT:** How aligned is the assessment task to the identified performance indicators?
- **RIGOR:** How challenging is the task? Is the task a learning stretch?
- **ACCESSIBILITY:** How is the individual proficiency determined?
**CRITERIA** | **WEAKER ASSESSMENTS** | **STRONGER ASSESSMENTS**
--- | --- | ---
**ALIGNMENT:** How aligned is the work by students or teachers to design strong assessments?
- It is unclear what skills or knowledge students will demonstrate through the task
- The content or task is not clearly identified by indicator being assessed.
- It is clear what skills or knowledge students will demonstrate through the task (Graduation standards and performance indicators are clearly identified).

**RIGOR:** How challenging is the task? Does it require students to think critically at the level defined by the indicators assessed? Is the task a learning stretch?
- Task only requires students to recall, summarize, or define
- The assessment requires students to complete discrete tasks aligned with portions of an indicator or only one indicator at a time
- Task requires higher order thinking: application, analysis, evaluation or creation in alignment with the indicators being assessed, or the use of complex or novel sources or texts
- Task requires students to integrate and apply the skills and knowledge described in several different performance indicators

**SCORING:** Are the success criteria clearly defined? If the assessment includes a group product, how is individual proficiency determined?
- Point values may be assigned to items or sections, but it’s unclear what successful demonstration might look like
- It is unclear how individuals will be assessed for group work
- Rubric descriptors/scoring criteria clearly define levels of performance
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### CRITERIA

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### SCORING:

Are the success criteria clearly defined? If the assessment includes a group product, how is individual proficiency determined?

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**STRONGER ASSESSMENTS**

- Rubric descriptors/scoring criteria clearly define levels of performance
- Task allows for individual demonstration of proficiency in the identified indicators
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Tuning Protocol for Assessments

Steps

• Review the Design Guide, sample task with scoring criteria, and each sample of student work.
• Clarifying Questions
• Silently record feedback in every row of the feedback sheet
  ‣ descriptive, actionable feedback that refers to design guide
• Discussion Rounds
  (alignment, accessibility, transfer, rigor and scoring)
• Debrief
Continuing this Work

- Tune multiple assessments at once in a group
  - Adapt this protocol so that groups can give feedback to everyone within the same hour
  - Key change: 1-2 people give feedback on each row of the feedback sheet
  - Participants move around a table looking at a different assessment for each round of recording feedback

- Work in pairs
Questions?
Feedback
THANK YOU

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