Assessment Literacy Standards
A NATIONAL IMPERATIVE

Michigan Assessment Consortium
Improve learning.
Increase success.

Assessment literacy is the set of beliefs, knowledge, and practices about assessment that lead a teacher, administrator, policymaker, or students and their families, to use assessment to improve student learning and achievement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE

Student assessment has become increasingly important to educators, students, their families, and the public. Yet, despite the link between curriculum, instruction, and assessment—and the proliferation of large-scale and classroom assessment programs—most of those affected by student assessment (students, their families, teachers, school administrators, and local and state policymakers) may not understand the assessment tools and strategies used, their purposes, the types of assessment that can best match purposes for assessment, and the strengths and shortcomings of the various types of measures. They are also not prepared to use the results from these assessments to benefit students—to improve their learning and their achievement. As a result, some students do not achieve the rigorous outcomes we value for all students, thus perpetuating inequities in learning and achievement. **Therefore, assessment literacy is essential for all education stakeholders so they can make the important learning decisions needed to maximize achievement by all students.**

The Michigan Assessment Consortium (MAC) has undertaken an effort to create and promulgate Assessment Literacy Standards for various individuals who are affected by student assessment.

The Assessment Literacy Standards for students and their families, teachers, administrators, and policymakers will serve as the foundation from which the education field comes to understand what assessment literacy means as well as the role and purpose of comprehensive, balanced, quality assessment systems. This set of Assessment Literacy Standards shows what assessment literate students and their families, teachers, administrators, and policymakers value, know, and can do. The ultimate goal of the MAC is that the Assessment Literacy Standards are used to inform policy and program development and decisions regarding assessment practices, teacher preparation, administrative certification, educator evaluation, program accreditation, and school/district accreditation.

Assessment literacy is essential for equitable learning by all students. Therefore, the purpose of the Standards is driven by both the users and uses of assessment to achieve equitable outcomes for all students. Assessment literacy is essential in this era where important decisions are being made about students, educators, and educational systems based on the data collected from students. Understanding the appropriate roles that student assessment can play to determine levels of student achievement and educational accomplishment, as well as to guide improved learning, is critical. Understanding what assessment can and cannot accomplish is important to ensure that such information is used in the most positive and accurate manner possible. All assessment users should periodically examine their assessment practices to ensure that all students can interact with assessments and assessment results to accurately demonstrate and understand the extent of their learning.

It is important to note that the Assessment Literacy Standards relate, specifically, to academic assessment. This is not the only type of assessment that has an impact on student achievement. Other aspects of the whole child such as social-emotional health, wellness, and physical health clearly impact

a student's success in school. Appropriate assessment in these non-academic domains is important for the success of all students. It is likely that many of these Assessment Literacy Standards are relevant to the assessment of non-academic domains. Such measures should be selected or developed carefully; professional guidance will be most useful. Care should also be used in the interpretation and the use of results of such measures. It is likely that assessments of non-academic domains have nuances and differences from the assessments used in academic areas. No attempt was made in these Standards to address aspects of the assessments of non-academic factors. This should not be interpreted as a diminution of the importance of those domains. Rather, it is hoped that other organizations with more expertise in those areas will address the needs for assessment standards related to non-academic domains.

The Assessment Literacy Standards are not intended to be technical in nature, nor should they be divorced from consideration of the various ways in which teachers instruct and students learn in classrooms and elsewhere. The Standards emphasize assessment *for* learning. This includes use of formative assessment practices such as instructional planning, learning progressions, and formative feedback to students, as well as student self-assessment and peer assessment. Understanding aspects of assessment *of* learning, such as the use of interim and annual summative achievement measures, is also emphasized.

Consequently, balance is a critical component of the Standards:

a) Balance must exist between multiple measures, which may include formative assessment strategies, as well as interim and summative assessments; and

b) Balance is critical to the effective use of assessment results across multiple purposes for assessment (such as diagnostic, placement, and progress monitoring) by multiple users of assessments (such as students and their families, educators, and policymakers).

It is the intention of the MAC that these Standards will serve as the basis for short- and long-term professional learning efforts to improve curricula, instruction, and assessment, all leading to improved student achievement.

DEVELOPMENT

The Standards are intended for long-term use in pre-service and in-service professional learning courses and programs, for future and current educators. Many documents were used to develop Standards for each group. One document, Assessment Literacy in Michigan Education (Roeber, 2011), provided the basic multifaceted framework of assessment literacy and was used to align the Standards for these groups. Other documents were examined for ideas about Assessment Literacy Standards to include. A list of these documents is included at the end of this publication.

The original version of this document (2015) was extensively reviewed by state and national experts, the MAC Board of Directors, and numerous educators throughout Michigan. Their feedback helped shape and inform the quality and utility of the original Standards. In 2016, the Michigan State Board of Education endorsed the original version of the Assessment Literacy Standards for the state of Michigan.

The MAC periodically considers additional research and publications that emphasize assessment literacy and undertakes periodic revisions to the Assessment Literacy Standards to maintain their currency.

GOALS

The MAC believes that all learners can achieve rigorous, ambitious academic outcomes when they are provided with sufficient learning opportunities supported through meaningful assessment processes. Integral to meaningful assessment is equitable assessment, wherein schools help all students achieve ambitious outcomes through a bias-free, balanced approach to assessment that honors the unique strengths, talents, and identities of all students. Additionally, equity requires qualified educators to help all students achieve high expectations for learning. We endeavor to create an equitable assessment environment for all Michigan students by ensuring the assessment literacy of all learners and their families, educators, and policymakers.

Assessment literacy is essential in this era where important decisions are being made about students, educators, and educational systems based on the data collected from students.

MAC

Assessment Literacy Standards

Local and State Policymakers

District Administrators

Administrator Certification

Building Administrators

Pre-Service Teachers

Teachers

Students and Their Families

GOALS *continued*

Low or inequitable student achievement can have many causes. By better understanding the nature of student assessment, users can consider whether inequitable results are due to issues with the assessment, or if they might be more accurately related to other aspects of the educational process such as inequities in opportunities to learn, such as differences in instructional time or rigor, or other important instructional considerations.

Thus, two primary goals for the MAC's Assessment Literacy Standards are to:

a) describe the dispositions, knowledge, and skills various parties who are assessment literate need to possess and use to implement a balanced assessment system in their schools. A balanced assessment system consists of assessment both for and of learning, used by different users for different assessment purposes. The MAC believes that balanced assessment systems are essential to achieving equitable outcomes for all students by maximizing student learning and reducing or eliminating the negative impacts or consequences of assessment for all students.

b) develop and implement assessment learning activities and materials that can be used to increase the knowledge and skills of assessment users: educators, students and their families, and policymakers. The ultimate goal of this effort is to create a more assessment-literate population better able to efficiently use student assessment to improve the learning and achievement of all students.

FORMAT AND USE

The Assessment Literacy Standards were written for five groups of individuals:

- Students and their families
- Classroom teachers
- Building administrators
- District administrators
- Policymakers

The Standards for each group are organized into Dispositions, Knowledge, and Performance.

Dispositions: Standards address what the individuals who are assessment literate believe regarding assessment.

Knowledge: Standards specify the particular vocabulary, processes, and practices that assessment literate individuals know and understand.

Performance: Standards address the skills of individuals who are assessment literate.

A purposeful decision was made to include all relevant Standards for each of the five groups related to academic assessment, despite the redundancy it created.

The Standards for any of the five groups, as a result, can stand alone, and yet remain comprehensive. In addition, understanding the Standards for groups increases the overall understanding for individuals within a group.

The Glossary provides definitions of the terms in the Assessment Literacy Standards as a tool for greater understanding of their intent and meaning.

The Acknowledgments and References provide useful reference material about assessment practices.

The Standards are intended for long-term use in education as opposed to being a temporal topic that fades from importance with the rise of new issues.

Assessment Literacy Standards for students and their families, teachers, administrators, and policymakers will serve as the foundation from which the field comes to understand what assessment literacy means and the role and purpose of comprehensive, balanced, quality assessment systems.

ELEMENTARY STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

DISPOSITIONS
Elementary students and their families who are assessment literate believe that students:

A. Achieve ambitious targets for learning if given sufficient learning opportunities, educator support, and family encouragement.

B. Learn more efficiently when they know the targets for their learning and the corresponding success criteria.

C. Achieve learning targets through deliberate effort and perseverance.

D. Learn more effectively with formative, actionable feedback provided by their teachers, peers, and self.

E. Use assessment to self-assess, monitor, and support their learning.

F. Are ultimately responsible for their own learning.

KNOWLEDGE
Elementary students and their families who are assessment literate know:

A. There are different reasons for taking assessments:
1. Improving student learning and achievement.
2. Providing information about student learning for use in grading and other purposes.
3. Identifying students to receive specialized services (e.g., gifted programs, support services, etc.).
4. Providing information that predicts students' future performance/achievement.

B. Different approaches to assessment are used:
1. The formative assessment process is used frequently during instruction, to adjust learning strategies or instructional approaches.
2. Summative assessments are used periodically at the conclusion of units of instruction (e.g., interim or annual summative assessments).

C. Different types of assessments are used to assess different types of learning targets in the classroom:
1. Selected response: Multiple-choice, true-false, matching.
2. Constructed response: Short or extended written response.
3. Performance: Written responses, presentations, or products.
4. Personal communication: Observations and interviews.

D. Different types of assessments provide different types of information about what students know and can currently do.

E. How to self-assess their learning, using rubrics and formative feedback from self and peers.

F. How to use assessment results to reflect on their learning, set goals for future learning, and work to improve their learning.

G. Important decisions that affect students should be based on multiple pieces of data, including the most current and relevant data.

PERFORMANCE
Elementary students and their families who are assessment literate:

A. Use learning targets to understand academic standards and to support student learning outcomes.

B. Use formative feedback to improve student learning.

C. Use a variety of appropriate protocols to review their own work.

D. Use assessment results to improve student achievement.

E. Explain their assessment results to teachers and their families.

F. Self-monitor their learning over time.

Assessment Literacy Standards//

SECONDARY STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

DISPOSITIONS

Secondary students and their families who are assessment literate believe that students:

A. Achieve ambitious targets for learning when given sufficient learning opportunities, educator support, and family encouragement.

B. Learn more efficiently when they know the targets for their learning and success criteria.

C. Achieve these targets through deliberate effort and perseverance.

D. Learn from effective formative feedback provided by their teachers, peers, and self.

E. Use assessment to self-assess, monitor, and support their continued learning.

F. Are ultimately responsible for their own learning.

KNOWLEDGE

Secondary students and their families who are assessment literate know:

A. There are different reasons for taking assessments:
1. Improving student learning and achievement.
2. Identifying students to receive specialized services (e.g., gifted programs, support services, etc.).
3. Providing information about student learning for use in grading and other purposes.
4. Providing information that predicts students' future performance/achievement.
5. Informing non-instructional decisions (e.g., college admissions decisions).

B. Different approaches to assessment are used:
1. The formative assessment process is used frequently during instruction.
2. Summative assessments are used periodically at the conclusion of units of instruction (e.g., interim or annual summative assessments).

C. Different types of assessments are used to assess different types of learning targets in the classroom:
1. Selected response: Multiple-choice, true-false, matching.
2. Constructed response: Short or extended written response.
3. Performance: Written responses, presentations, or products.
4. Personal communication: Observations and interviews.

D. Different types of assessments are scored differently and provide different types of information about what students currently know and can do.

E. How to self-assess their learning, using rubrics and formative feedback from self and peers.

F. Feedback can be descriptive versus evaluative.

G. How to use assessment results to reflect on their learning and to set goals for future learning.

H. Important decisions that affect students should be based on multiple pieces of data.

PERFORMANCE

Secondary students and their families who are assessment literate:

A. Use learning targets to understand the standards and to support student learning outcomes.

B. Use formative feedback to improve student learning.

C. Use different approaches for looking at their own work with peers and teachers.

D. Use assessment results to improve student achievement.

E. Explain their assessment results to teachers and their families.

F. Use multiple sources of data to monitor their learning over time.

Assessment Literacy Standards//

TEACHERS

DISPOSITIONS

Teachers who are assessment literate believe:

A. All educators must be capable in their understanding and use of classroom assessment.

B. An effective balanced assessment system must meet the information needs of all users and use different, appropriate methods of assessment to address those needs.

C. Sound educational decisions require accurate and appropriate assessment information.

D. Multiple measures can provide a more balanced picture of achievement by a student or group of students.

E. Accurate assessments are a critical part of effective teaching and learning for every student.

F. Each student learns at a different pace and must be given sufficient time and assistance to achieve ambitious learner outcomes.

G. The formative assessment process can be used by teachers to assist all students in achieving ambitious learner outcomes.

H. Assessment information can be used in making instructional decisions that positively impact learning.

I. Clear learning targets, understood and used by teachers and understood by students, are necessary for learning and assessment.

J. Effective formative feedback is critical to support learning for all students.

K. Students should be active partners in the learning process by using assessment to improve their learning.

L. Users of assessments require time to learn to select, develop, and administer assessments, as well as use the assessment results appropriately; resources are needed to carry out these activities.

M. Grading should reflect the current levels of student learning and achievement as they change.

N. Assessments used should align with the curricula, instruction, and learning targets being used, as well as support professional learning activities related to each of these.

KNOWLEDGE

Teachers who are assessment literate know:

A. A balanced assessment system supports:
1. Different users who have different assessment purposes.
2. Different assessment purposes that may require different assessment methods.

B. Student assessment can be used for a variety of purposes:
1. Promote student achievement of ambitious outcomes, through formative information gathered throughout learning for use by teachers and students.
2. Monitor individual student and group progress toward grade-level outcomes.
3. Review and improve instructional offerings.
4. Hold students, teachers, or schools/districts accountable.
5. Predict future student performance/achievement.
6. Select students for an instructional course or program (placement).

C. The definitions of and uses for different types of assessments:
1. The formative assessment process (i.e., assessment for learning).
2. Interim/benchmark assessments (i.e., assessment of learning).
3. Summative assessment (i.e., assessment of learning).
4. Criterion vs. norm-referenced assessment score interpretations.

D. The differences between the types of formal assessment tools:
1. Achievement
2. Aptitude
3. Diagnostic
4. Screening
5. Progress Monitoring

E. The different types of assessment methods best matched to learning targets:
1. Selected response: Multiple-choice, true-false, matching.
2. Constructed response: Short or extended written or oral response.
3. Performance: Written responses, presentations, or products.
4. Personal communication: Interview.
5. Observation.

MAC

KNOWLEDGE *continued*

F. Non-technical explanations of statistical concepts associated with assessment:
1. Measures of central tendency (i.e., mean, mode, and median).
2. Measures of variability (i.e., range, variance, and standard deviation).
3. Reliability (i.e., the consistency of assessment information).
4. Validity (i.e., based on evidence supporting the intended uses of the assessment, not the assessment itself).
5. Bias (i.e., nothing about an assessment item disadvantages/advantages any student).
6. Sensitivity (i.e., the assessment item contains nothing that will upset students).
7. Correlation vs. causation (i.e., correlation between two variables does not mean one causes the other).
8. Measurement error (the level of uncertainty around test scores).

G. A test should only be used for purposes for which there is validity evidence supporting those uses.

H. Assessments can be purchased or developed locally; each approach has advantages and challenges.

I. How to develop high-quality classroom tests of learning:
1. Determine the purpose(s) for assessing as part of an overall test plan.
2. Determine the standards or learning targets to be assessed.
3. Select the assessment methods appropriate to learning targets and assessment purpose(s).
4. Design a blueprint that will permit confident conclusions about achievement.
5. Select or develop the necessary assessment items and scoring tools where needed.
6. Review the item data before reporting the results.
7. Use assessment results to improve the test if you intend to use it again in the future.

J. How to develop or select high-quality common assessments of learning:
1. Determine the purpose(s) for assessing.
2. Determine the standards or learning targets to be assessed.
3. Select the assessment methods appropriate to learning targets and assessment purpose(s).

K. The steps in designing an assessment:
1. Design a test plan or blueprint that will permit confident conclusions about achievement.
2. Construct or select the necessary assessment items and scoring tools needed.
3. Review the assessment items for content alignment, fairness, and sensitivity.
4. Try the items out in advance, or review initial item data before reporting the results.
5. Improve the test through review and analysis of the assessment tryout information.

L. The process for selecting an assessment:
1. Select assessment items and scoring tools needed.
2. Review the assessment items for content alignment, fairness, and sensitivity.
3. After initial use, review item data before reporting the results.
4. Improve the test through review and analysis of the initial assessment information.
5. Verify that the assessment will permit confident conclusions about achievement based on the assessment.

M. There are different ways to report results of assessments of learning, and specific circumstances when each is useful:
1. Normative interpretations.
2. Criterion-referenced interpretations.

N. There are multiple sources of assessment information that can validly reflect a teacher's effectiveness.

O. How to translate standards into clear learning targets used by teachers and understood by students.

P. When and how to give students appropriate access to accessibility features that are available to all students, as well as accommodations appropriate for some students (e.g., students with disabilities, Section 504 students, and English learners).

Q. How to provide effective feedback from assessments suitable for different audiences: descriptive versus evaluative feedback.

R. How to use and create scoring tools (guides, rubrics, checklists, scoring rules, standards).

S. Sound assessment reporting practices from assessments used for different purposes.

T. Grading practices that reflect students' current levels of learning and achievement as student learning and achievement changes.

U. How to help students reflect on their own learning.

TEACHERS

PERFORMANCE I
Teachers who are assessment literate can:

A. Self-assess their work and model this for students.

B. Select and use various assessment methods appropriate to assessment purposes and learning targets.

C. Use learning targets, understood by students and that are aligned with the standards, to guide instruction.

D. Use learning progressions to guide instruction and assessment.

E. Implement assessment development processes:
1. Plan the assessment.
2. Develop/select assessment items.
3. Review and critique assessment items.
4. Try out the items to see if they work.
5. Review and revise items.

F. Model and support good assessment practices for students in their classrooms.

G. Use assessment information within appropriate, ethical, and legal guidelines.

H. Use a variety of protocols as appropriate for reviewing and scoring student work.

I. Understand and determine levels of student achievement accurately and communicate them effectively.

J. Use assessment information to make appropriate instructional decisions to improve learning for individual students and groups of students.

K. Provide timely, actionable formative feedback to students based on assessment results.

L. Support student use of assessment feedback to improve mindsets, learning, and achievement.

M. Use appropriate grading practices (e.g., standards-based) that are equitably applied across students so that grades are a meaningful, accurate reflection of current learning and supportive of future learning.

N. Use appropriate techniques (e.g., learning protocols) to collaboratively analyze, understand, and use evidence to improve instruction.

O. Use multiple sources of evidence over time to identify trends in learning by individual students and groups of students.

P. Use data management systems to access and analyze evidence of student performance.

Q. Communicate effectively about student learning and achievement with students, families, other teachers, and administrators.

R. Seek to increase their knowledge and skills in assessment.

PERFORMANCE II
Teachers who are assessment literate promote the use of assessment data by supporting others to improve student learning through the alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment by:

A. Implementing district learning progressions.

B. Explaining how to analyze and use assessment results.

C. Using assessment information, including student group performance, to improve teaching and learning.

D. Using multiple sources of data over time to identify and monitor trends in learning.

E. Using assessment information to reflect on their effectiveness and to plan changes in instructional practices.

Assessment Literacy Standards//

BUILDING ADMINISTRATORS

DISPOSITIONS
Building Administrators who are assessment literate believe:

A. All educators must be capable in their understanding and use of assessment in their schools.

B. An effective balanced assessment system must meet the information needs of all users and use different, appropriate methods of assessment to address those needs.

C. Sound educational decisions require accurate and appropriate assessment information.

D. Multiple measures can provide a more balanced picture of a student, classroom, or school.

E. Accurate assessments are a critical facet of effective teaching and learning for every student.

F. Teachers should be given support to provide sufficient student learning time and assistance so that all students achieve ambitious learner outcomes.

G. Teachers should be given sufficient time and support in learning to use the formative assessment process, as well as summative assessments, in their classrooms so all students achieve ambitious learner outcomes.

H. Assessment information can be used in making instructional decisions that positively impact learning.

I. Clear learning targets, used by teachers and understood by students, are necessary for learning and assessment.

J. Effective formative feedback is critical to support learning for all students.

K. Teachers should encourage students to be active partners in the learning process by using assessment to improve their learning.

L. Users of assessments require time to learn to select, develop, and administer assessments, as well as use assessment results appropriately; resources are needed to carry out these activities.

M. Grading should reflect the current levels of student learning as student learning and achievement change.

N. Assessments used should be aligned to and support the curricula, instruction, and learning targets being used, as well as professional learning activities related to each of these.

KNOWLEDGE
Building Administrators who are assessment literate know:

A. A balanced assessment system supports:
  1. Different users who have different assessment purposes.
  2. Different assessment purposes that may require different assessment methods.

B. Student assessment can be used for a variety of purposes:
  1. Provide formative information to students and their teacher throughout learning so all students achieve ambitious outcomes.
  2. Monitor student group achievement.
  3. Review and improve instructional program offerings.
  4. Hold students, teachers, or school/district accountable.
  5. Predict future performance/ achievement.
  6. Select students for an instructional course or program (placement).
  7. Evaluate programs.

C. Definitions of and uses for different types of assessments:
  1. Assessment for Learning (i.e., the formative assessment process).
  2. Assessment of Learning (i.e., summative and interim/benchmark assessments).
  3. Criterion vs. norm-referenced assessment score interpretations.

D. The differences between the types of formal assessment tools:
  1. Achievement
  2. Aptitude
  3. Diagnostic
  4. Screening
  5. Progress Monitoring

E. The different types of assessment methods and when teachers should use each:
  1. Selected response: Multiple-choice, true-false, matching.
  2. Constructed response: Short or extended written or oral response.
  3. Performance: Written responses, presentations, or products.
  4. Personal communication: Interview.
  5. Observation.

KNOWLEDGE *continued*

F. Non-technical explanations of statistical concepts associated with assessment:
1. Measures of central tendency (i.e., mean, mode, and median).
2. Measures of variability (i.e., range, variance, and standard deviation).
3. Reliability (i.e., the consistency of assessment information).
4. Validity (i.e., based on evidence supporting the intended use of the assessment, not the assessment itself).
5. Bias (i.e., nothing about an assessment item disadvantages/advantages any student).
6. Sensitivity (i.e., the assessment item contains nothing that will upset students).
7. Correlation vs. causation (i.e., correlation between two variables does not mean one causes the other).
8. Measurement error (the level of uncertainty around test scores).

G. How to support classroom teachers in developing high-quality classroom tests of learning, as described in Teacher Assessment Literacy Standard Knowledge – I.

H. Assessments can be purchased or developed locally; each approach has advantages and challenges.

I. A test should only be used for purposes for which there is validity evidence supporting those uses.

J. How to develop or select high-quality common assessments of learning:
1. Determine the purpose(s) for assessing.
2. Determine the standards or learning targets to be assessed.
3. Select the assessment methods appropriate to learning targets and assessment purpose(s).
4. Verify the validity evidence that supports the intended purpose(s).

K. The steps in developing an assessment:
1. Design a test plan or assessment blueprint that will permit confident conclusions about achievement.
2. Construct/select the necessary assessment items and scoring tools needed.
3. Review the assessment items for content alignment, fairness, and sensitivity.
4. Try out the items in advance, or review initial item data before reporting the results.
5. Improve the test through review and analysis of the assessment tryout information.

L. The process for selecting an assessment:
1. Select assessment items and scoring tools needed.
2. Review the assessment items for content alignment, fairness, and sensitivity.
3. After initial use, review item data before reporting the results.
4. Improve the test through review and analysis of the initial assessment information.
5. Verify that the assessment will permit confident conclusions about achievement based on the assessment.

M. There are different ways to report results of assessments of learning, and specific circumstances when each is useful:
1. Normative interpretations.
2. Criterion-referenced interpretations.

N. There are multiple sources of assessment information that can validly reflect a teacher's effectiveness.

O. How teachers should translate standards into clear learning targets used by teachers and understood by students.

P. When and how to give students appropriate access to accessibility features that are available to all students and accommodations appropriate for some students (e.g., students with disabilities, Section 504 students, and English learners).

Q. How to provide effective feedback from assessments suitable for different audiences: descriptive versus evaluative feedback.

R. Support teachers in using and creating scoring tools (guides, rubrics, checklists, scoring rules, standards).

S. Sound assessment reporting practices from assessments used for different purposes.

T. How to support teachers in learning how to help students reflect on their own learning and plan for future learning.

PERFORMANCE I
Building Administrators who are assessment literate can:

A. Review school-level goals and performance with staff.

B. Set personal improvement goals for themselves, informed by school-level performance.

C. Use assessment results within appropriate, ethical, and legal guidelines.

D. Understand, help determine, and communicate levels of student achievement and proficiency accurately.

E. Use assessment results to make appropriate program decisions for individual students and groups of students.

PERFORMANCE I *continued*

F. Use appropriate techniques (e.g., protocols) to collaboratively analyze, understand, and use data to improve instructional programs.

G. Use multiple sources of data over time to identify trends in learning by individual students and groups of students.

H. Use data management systems to access and analyze data.

I. Communicate effectively with students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community stakeholders about student learning.

J. Seek to increase their knowledge and skills in assessment.

PERFORMANCE II
Building Administrators who are assessment literate promote a culture of responsible assessment practice by:

A. Improving assessment literacy for self and staff through:
1. Participating in and facilitating professional learning communities.
2. Providing targeted and differentiated professional learning opportunities.
3. Consistently and clearly communicating that assessment literacy is a priority for the school.

B. Providing time and support for staff to implement a balanced assessment system, by providing opportunities to develop skills in:
1. Using instructionally embedded formative assessment practices, as well as summative assessments.
2. Selecting, creating, and developing assessments.
3. Administering assessments.
4. Scoring assessments.
5. Analyzing assessment results.
6. Developing instructional plans based on results.
7. Developing continuous improvement plans based on results.

C. Ensuring that each and every staff member is:
1. Skillful and confident in teaching the targets that they are assigned to teach.
2. Sufficiently assessment literate to assess their targets for instruction productively in both formative and summative ways.

D. Supporting building-level staff in implementing the formative assessment process and high-quality summative assessment with their students.

E. Supporting use of appropriate grading practices (e.g., standards-based) that are equitably applied across students so that grades are a meaningful, accurate reflection of current learning and support future learning.

PERFORMANCE III
Building Administrators who are assessment literate promote the use of assessment information by school staff to improve student learning through the alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment by:

A. Implementing district learning progressions.

B. Explaining how to analyze and use assessment results.

C. Using assessment results, including student group performance, to improve the school's curriculum and instructional program.

D. Using multiple data sources over time to identify and monitor learning trends.

E. Assuring horizontally and vertically aligned curriculum, instruction, and assessment in their school.

F. Leading dialogues with staff in interpreting results and creating goals for improvement.

G. Assisting teachers in collaboratively analyzing and using evidence of student learning in professional learning communities.

H. Using assessment and other relevant data to collaboratively reflect on the effectiveness of teachers' instructional practices.

I. Incorporating sound assessment practices in program, teacher, and administrator evaluations.

J. Clearly communicating results to various constituents using a variety of methods.

K. Using data management systems to access and analyze data.

L. Using assessment data within appropriate, ethical, and legal guidelines.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS

DISPOSITIONS
District Administrators who are assessment literate believe:

A. All educators must be capable in their understanding and use of assessment in their districts.

B. An effective balanced assessment system must meet the information needs of all users and use appropriate methods of assessment to address those needs.

C. Sound educational decisions require accurate and appropriate assessment information.

D. Multiple measures can provide a more balanced picture of a student, classroom, school, or district.

E. Accurate assessments are a critical facet of effective teaching and learning for every student.

F. Teachers should be given support to provide sufficient student learning time and assistance so that all students achieve ambitious learner outcomes.

G. Teachers should be given sufficient time and support in learning to use the formative assessment process, as well as summative assessments, in their classrooms so all students achieve ambitious learner outcomes.

H. Assessment information can be used in making instructional decisions that positively impact learning.

I. Clear learning targets, used by teachers and understood by students, are necessary for learning and assessment.

J. Effective feedback is critical to support learning for all students.

K. Teachers should encourage students to be active partners in the learning process by using assessment to improve their learning.

L. Users of assessments require time to learn to select, develop, and administer assessments, as well as use assessment results appropriately; resources are needed to carry out these activities.

M. Grading should reflect the current levels of student learning as student learning and achievement change.

N. Assessments used should be aligned to and support the curricula, instruction, and learning targets being used, as well as professional learning activities related to each of these.

KNOWLEDGE
District Administrators who are assessment literate know:

A. A balanced assessment system supports:
1. Different users who have different assessment purposes.
2. Different assessment purposes that may require different assessment methods.

B. Student assessment can be used for a variety of purposes:
1. Provide formative information to students and their teachers throughout learning so all students achieve ambitious outcomes.
2. Monitor student group achievement.
3. Review and improve instructional program offerings.
4. Hold student, teacher, or school/district accountable.
5. Predict future performance/achievement.
6. Evaluate programs.

C. Definitions of and uses for different types of assessments:
1. Assessment for learning (i.e., the formative assessment process).
2. Assessment of learning (i.e., summative and interim/benchmark assessments).
3. Criterion vs. norm-referenced assessment score interpretations.

D. The differences between the types of formal assessment tools:
1. Achievement
2. Aptitude
3. Diagnostic
4. Screening
5. Progress Monitoring

E. The different types of assessment methods and when educators should use each:
1. Selected response: Multiple-choice, true-false, matching.
2. Constructed response: Short or extended written or oral response.
3. Performance: Written responses, presentations, or products.
4. Personal communication: Interview.
5. Observation.

KNOWLEDGE *continued*

F. Non-technical explanations of statistical concepts associated with assessment:
1. Measures of central tendency (i.e., mean, mode, and median).
2. Measures of variability (i.e., range, variance, and standard deviation).
3. Reliability (i.e., the consistency of assessment information).
4. Validity (i.e., based on evidence supporting the intended use of the assessment, not the assessment itself).
5. Bias (i.e., no assessment item or test disadvantages or advantages any student).
6. Sensitivity (i.e., the assessment item or test contains nothing that will upset students).
7. Correlation vs. causation (i.e., correlation between two variables does not mean one causes the other).
8. Measurement error (the level of uncertainty around test scores).

G. Assessments can be purchased or developed locally; each approach has advantages and challenges.

H. A test should only be used for purposes for which there is validity evidence supporting those uses.

I. How to support classroom teachers in developing high-quality classroom tests of learning, as described in Teacher Assessment Literacy Standard Knowledge – I.

J. How to develop or select high-quality common assessments of learning:
1. Determine the purpose(s) for assessing.
2. Determine the standards or learning targets to be assessed.
3. Select the assessment methods appropriate to learning targets and assessment purpose(s).
4. Verify the validity evidence that supports the intended purpose(s).

K. The steps in developing an assessment:
1. Design a test plan or blueprint that will permit confident conclusions about achievement.
2. Construct/select the necessary assessment items and scoring tools needed.
3. Review the assessment items for content alignment, fairness, and sensitivity.
4. Try out the items in advance, or review initial item data before reporting the results.
5. Improve the test through review and analysis of the assessment tryout information.

L. The process for selecting an assessment:
1. Select assessment items and scoring tools needed.
2. Review the assessment items for content alignment, fairness, and sensitivity.
3. After initial use, review item data before reporting the results.
4. Improve the test through review and analysis of the initial assessment information.
5. Verify that the assessment will permit confident conclusions about achievement based on the assessment.

M. There are different ways to report results of assessments of learning, and specific circumstances when each is useful:
1. Normative interpretations.
2. Criterion-referenced interpretations.

N. There are multiple sources of assessment data that validly reflect a teacher's and building administrator's effectiveness.

O. When and how to give students appropriate access to accessibility features that are available to all students and accommodations appropriate for some students (e.g., students with disabilities, Section 504 students, and English learners).

P. How to provide effective feedback from assessments suitable for different audiences: descriptive versus evaluative feedback.

Q. How to support teachers in creating/selecting and using scoring tools (guides, rubrics, checklists, scoring rules, standards).

R. Sound assessment reporting practices from assessments used for different purposes.

S. Grading practices that reflect best practices and that emphasize students' current levels of learning and achievement.

PERFORMANCE I
District Administrators who are assessment literate can:

A. Review school-level and district-level goals and performance with staff.

B. Set personal improvement goals for themselves, informed by school-level and district-level performance.

C. Use assessment data within appropriate, ethical, and legal guidelines.

D. Understand, help determine, and communicate levels of proficiency accurately.

E. Use assessment results to make appropriate program decisions for individual students and groups of students.

F. Model and support good assessment practices for educators in their district.

PERFORMANCE I *continued*

G. Use appropriate techniques (e.g., protocols) to collaboratively analyze, understand, and use data to improve instructional programs.

H. Use multiple sources of data over time to identify trends in learning by individual students and groups of students.

I. Use data management systems to access and analyze data.

J. Communicate effectively with students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community stakeholders about student learning.

K. Seek to increase their knowledge and skills in assessment.

PERFORMANCE II
District Administrators who are assessment literate promote a culture of responsible assessment practice by:

A. Improving assessment literacy for self and staff through:
1. Allocating financial and other resources for professional learning opportunities.
2. Providing targeted and differentiated professional learning opportunities.
3. Participating in district professional learning opportunities.
4. Consistently and clearly communicating that assessment literacy is a priority for the district.

B. Providing time and support for staff to develop skills and implement a balanced assessment system by providing opportunities to develop skills in:
1. Using instructionally embedded formative assessment, as well as summative assessments.
2. Selecting, creating, and developing assessments.
3. Administering assessments.
4. Scoring the assessments.
5. Analyzing assessment results.
6. Developing instructional plans based on results.
7. Developing continuous improvement plans based on results.

C. Instituting policies with supportive resources (time and budget) for staff to implement a balanced system of assessment in the district.

D. Ensuring that each and every staff member is:
1. Skillful and confident in teaching the targets they are assigned to teach.
2. Sufficiently assessment literate to assess their targets for instruction productively in both formative and summative ways.

E. Supporting building-level staff in implementing the formative assessment process and high-quality summative assessment with their students.

F. Supporting use of appropriate grading practices (e.g., standards-based) that are equitably applied across students so that grades are a meaningful, accurate reflection of current learning and support future learning.

PERFORMANCE III
District Administrators who are assessment literate promote the use of assessment data by district and school staff to improve student learning through the alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment by:

A. Developing/Identifying learning progressions to implement the state and district content standards.

B. Explaining how to analyze and use assessment results.

C. Using assessment results, including student group performance, to improve the district's curriculum and schools' instructional program.

D. Using multiple data sources over time to identify and monitor learning trends.

E. Ensuring horizontally and vertically aligned curriculum, instruction, and assessment throughout the district.

F. Leading dialogues with staff in interpreting results and creating goals for improvement.

G. Assisting teachers and building administrators in collaboratively analyzing and using data in professional learning communities.

H. Using assessment data and other relevant data to collaboratively reflect on the effectiveness of principals' instructional leadership.

I. Incorporating sound assessment practices in program, teacher, and administrator evaluations.

J. Clearly communicating results to various constituents through a coherent process using a variety of methods.

K. Using data management systems to access and analyze data.

L. Using assessment data within appropriate, ethical, and legal guidelines.

M. Using assessment results and other data appropriately to allocate personnel and financial resources across the district.

Assessment Literacy Standards//

STATE AND LOCAL POLICYMAKERS

DISPOSITIONS
Policymakers who are assessment literate believe:

A. Teacher and administrator certification standards should include competence in assessment as a criterion for licensing.

B. A balanced assessment system is essential at the local school district level, using assessments of learning (i.e., summative and interim assessments), as well as assessment for learning (i.e., the formative assessment process).

C. Assessments closer to the classroom usually have a greater impact on improving achievement for all students.

D. Teachers and administrators need formal training in the development and use of assessments and the formative assessment process to increase success for all students.

E. Important decisions about schools, educators, or students should be made based on multiple sources of accurate, relevant data.

F. Assessment literacy for themselves will help them better support instructional improvement efforts.

G. Assessment-related policies can help (or hinder) the public purpose of an education to support all students to become capable and contributing citizens.

KNOWLEDGE
Policymakers who are assessment literate know:

A. A balanced assessment system supports:
1. Different users who have different assessment purposes.
2. Different assessment purposes that may require different assessment methods.

B. Student assessment can be used for a variety of purposes:
1. Provide formative information to students and their teachers throughout learning so all students achieve ambitious outcomes.
2. Monitor student group achievement.
3. Review and improve instructional program offerings.
4. Hold students, teachers, or schools/districts accountable.
5. Predict future performance/achievement.
6. Evaluate programs.

C. The definitions of and uses for different types of assessments:
1. Assessment for learning (i.e., the formative assessment process).
2. Assessment of learning (i.e., summative and interim/benchmark assessments).
3. Criterion vs. norm-referenced assessment score interpretations.

D. There are different ways to evaluate student achievement; each has advantages and challenges.

E. There are several essential technical standards for high-quality assessments:
1. Reliability—Do the assessments produce replicable scores?
2. Validity—Is there evidence that supports the intended uses of the assessment?
3. Bias—Nothing about an assessment item disadvantages or advantages any student group.
4. Correlation vs. causation—Correlation between two variables does not mean one causes the other.
5. Measurement error—All measurement contains some amount of error; the level of uncertainty around test scores needs to be quantified.

F. Assessments can be purchased or developed locally; each approach has advantages and challenges.

G. There are multiple steps in the assessment development process to produce high-quality assessments, and adequate time and resources are needed to do this effectively.

H. Users of assessments require time to learn to select and administer assessments, as well as use the results appropriately; resources are needed to carry out these activities.

I. There is little evidence to suggest that local, state, national, and international summative assessments, in themselves, improve education or student achievement.

J. Which student measures are appropriate to use for teacher and administrator evaluation.

PERFORMANCE
Policymakers who are assessment literate:

A. Provide the necessary authorization and resources (time, funding, and staff) to create and implement quality balanced assessment systems.

B. Ensure that only high-quality assessments are selected/developed and used.

C. Strive to understand how assessment for and of learning can be used to improve student learning.

D. Support activities to improve their own assessment literacy and that of their staff.

We at the MAC
believe that
when all users
of assessment
accomplish these
Standards, we
will collectively
improve curricula,
instruction, and
assessment,
leading to
improved student
achievement.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS USED FOR THE ASSESSMENT LITERACY STANDARDS

Ackerman, T.A., Bandalos, D.L., Briggs, D.C., Everson, H.T., Ho, A.D., Lottridge, S.M., Madison, M.J., Sinharay, S., Rodriguez, M.C., Russell, M., von Davier, A.A. and Wind, S.A. (2024), Foundational Competencies in Educational Measurement. Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice. https://doi.org/10.1111/emip.12581

Brookhart, Susan M. "Educational Assessment Knowledge and Skills for Teachers," Educational Measurement: Issues and Practices, Spring 2011, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 3-12.

Brookhart, S.M. (2015). Performance Assessment: Showing What Students Know and Can Do. West Palm Beach, FL: Learning Sciences International.

Brookhart, S.M. & McMillan, J.H. (2019). Classroom Assessment and Educational Measurement. New York, NY: Routledge.

Buros Institute of Mental Measurements. (1990). American Federation of Teachers, National Council on Measurement in Education, and the National Education Association Standards for Teacher Competence in Educational Assessment of Students. Lincoln, NE: Author. https://buros.org/standards-teacher-competence-educational-assessment-students

Chappuis, Jan. Learning Team Facilitator Handbook: A Resource for Collaborative Study of Classroom Assessment for Student Learning. Pearson, 2007. pp. 55-59.

Chappuis, Steve, Stiggins, Rick., Arter, Judith, and Chappuis, Jan. Assessment FOR Learning: An Action Guide for School Leaders. Pearson, Second Edition, 2009, p. 99.

Chappuis, Steve, Commodore, Carol, and Stiggins, Rick. Assessment Balance and Quality: An Action Guide for School Leaders. Pearson, Third Edition, 2010.

Chappuis, Steve, Stiggins, Rick., Arter, Judith, and Chappuis, Jan. (2014). Seven Strategies of Assessment for Learning 2nd edition

Chappuis, Steve, Stiggins, Rick., Chappuis, Jan. (2011). Student Assessment for Learning: Doing it Right, Using it Well.

Components of an Equitable Assessment System. Michigan Assessment Consortium. 2024. https://qr.link/gLVbaw

Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010). Model Core Teaching Standards: A Resource for Dialogue. CCSSO's Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC). Washington, DC: Author. https://ccsso.org

Heritage, M. & Wylie, E.C. (2020). Formative Assessment in the Disciplines: Framing a Continuum of Professional Learning. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Kintz, T., Chandler, D., Lane, J., & Roeber, E. (2018). FAME Learning Guide: Developing and implementing the formative assessment process in Michigan. Lansing, MI: Michigan Assessment Consortium and Michigan Department of Education.

National Policy Board for Educational Administration. (2008). Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISLLC 2008, Appendix 2: ISLLC 2008 at a Glance. Reston, VA: Author.

O'Connor, Ken. How to Grade for Learning K-12. Corwin, 2009.

Popham, James. Everything School Leaders Need to Know About Assessment, Corwin, 2010.

Popham, James. (2018). Assessment Literacy for Educators in a Hurry.

Roeber, Edward. "Assessment Literacy in Michigan Education" and "Preparing Michigan Educators in Assessment," East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University, Presentation, 2011. roeber@msu.edu

In 2016, the Michigan State Board of Education endorsed the Assessment Literacy Standards for the State of Michigan.

GLOSSARY

Accountability
Holding organizations, educators, or others responsible for the performance of students, educators, or school programs.

Achievement Level
The standard of performance typically set through a standard-setting procedure. Also called a "performance standard." Defines how well students need to do on an assessment to meet or exceed predefined targets for achievement, such as "proficient."

Achievement Test
A test used to determine the current level of knowledge and skills of an individual or groups of students in a specific disciplinary or content domain.

Alignment
Refers to whether an assessment item measures any part (ideally, the most important part) of a content standard. Also refers to how much of a set of content standards an assessment instrument measures.

Two-way alignment refers to how much of a set of content standards is measured by an assessment instrument as well as whether the assessment instrument covers most, if not all, of the set of content standards.

Alternate Assessment
Assessment in English language arts, mathematics, and science for students with significant cognitive disabilities, based on the extended versions of the same content standards as assessed for other students, adapted for the academic level of these students

Aptitude
A term to describe the ability of an individual to carry out a task or activity.

Aptitude Test
A test used to determine the ability of an individual to carry out a task or activity. Also predicts the extent to which an individual may be successful in a future activity.

Assessment
An evidence-based tool or procedure designed to determine the status of an individual student or group of students on an attribute of interest. This includes a variety of types of methods such as tests, observational protocols, interviews, performance measures, and so forth. A test is only one type of assessment.

There are two broad types of assessment:

1. Assessment for Learning — Assessment that takes place while instruction is occurring. The information is used to enhance instruction and student learning.

2. Assessments of Learning — Summative measures of student achievement used at the conclusion of instruction, when little or no new instruction is anticipated on the content assessed.

Assessment Administration Procedures
The set of policies, guidelines, and/or procedures in place to help ensure that the administration of an assessment provides valid results consistent with the designed purpose of the assessment.

Assessment Methods
Selected-response Item—Students select a correct answer from among several answer choices. This item type includes multiple-choice, true-false, and matching items. The multiple-choice item format is the selected-response format most used in a large-scale assessment program.

Constructed-response Item—This item type requires the individual to create their own response(s) rather than select from predetermined options. There are usually several ways in which these items can be answered correctly. These items may be scored using a standardized scoring rubric that is objective and clearly defined.

Performance Assessment—Requires the student to perform some activity. There are two types—performance task and performance event, distinguished by their complexity and the length of time students have to respond to them.

> *Performance Task*—In this type of assessment, students have days, weeks, or months to compose a response. Thus, these assessments may involve multiple responses of different types to multiple prompts. The resultant work may be lengthy and comprise multiple parts. Embedded in the task may be written response items, presentations, papers, student self-reflections, and so forth.

> *Performance Event*—An on-demand performance assessment in which students are given little or no time to rehearse their performance and limited opportunities to improve their initial performance. Such assessments may take a class period or less to administer.

Personal Communication—An assessment conducted one-on-one between an adult and a student—sometimes an observation or interview.

Assessment Purposes
Assessments are built and used for different purposes. Among these are:

> *Student Improvement*—Using test results to review past instruction or to alter future instruction provided to the student, due to performance on the test.

> *Accountability*—Using test results to hold educators or others responsible for the performance of students, educators, or school programs.

> *Program Evaluation*—Using test results to determine the success of a program and perhaps to suggest improvements in it.

> *Prediction*—Using test results to determine the likelihood of success of an individual in some future activity.

Balance of Representation
The match between the relative emphasis of concept areas in a set of content standards and the assessment that measures those standards. The key question is, "Does the balance of representation of the assessment match that of the content standards?"

Balanced Assessment System
The use of different types of assessment for different purposes by different users. Can also mean the use of assessments for learning (to guide instruction as it is occurring) and of learning (to measure how much students have learned at the conclusion of instruction). All users have access to relevant assessment information.

Bias
The manner in which a test question is posed that disadvantages some students, due to factors other than their knowledge of the topic being assessed.

Causation
A demonstration that one variable has a direct and predictable impact on another variable. Note: a correlation between two variables (e.g., poverty and student achievement) does not mean that one variable (poverty) causes the other one (low achievement).

Cognitive Complexity
The type(s) of mental processing (i.e., thinking skills) required by an item or set of items. This may refer to the Depth of Knowledge (Webb), Bloom's Taxonomy, or other definitions of thinking skills.

Comprehensive Assessment System
A coordinated system of assessments aligned to standards and success criteria for the whole child. The assessments and assessment processes are used to inform instruction, measure progress, specify additional learner needs, guide in-depth supports, indicate growth toward competencies, and provide information regarding outcomes.

Computer Adaptive Assessment
An assessment administered online in which the questions asked of students are determined by their performance on previous questions, permitting a more precise determination of the level of student performance on the assessment.

Constructed- or Written-response Items
Test items that require students to write out their responses. Often, responses take the form of short or extended responses to one or more prompts. Items might include essays, student drawings, and online technology-enhanced assessments such as constructing a mathematics table, drawing a flow chart, and so forth. Constructed- or written-response items may use a checklist or rubric for scoring.

Content Standard
The knowledge, skills, and disposition expectations comprising entire disciplines (mathematics, science, etc.).

Correlation
A demonstration that two variables move in the same or opposite manner. This does not mean that one variable causes the other. See Causation.

Criterion-referenced Score Interpretation
Relating a test score to a pre-established, absolute standard of performance.

Data Management System
A computer software system that is used to store educational data and to permit these data to be retrieved, analyzed, and used.

Depth of Knowledge (DoK)
The four levels of conceptual rigor developed by Norm Webb that can be used to classify the cognitive complexity of test items, content standards, and learning objectives. The DoK levels are 1-recall; 2-skill/concept; 3-strategic thinking; and 4-extended thinking.

Diagnostic Test
Measures specific skills, behaviors or characteristics that comprise more complex student outcomes, to identify learners who may need additional targeted interventions. Diagnostic tests can follow the initial use of screeners to more fully understand the achievement and learning needs of individual students.

Dispositions
Attitudes or beliefs about something.

English Language Development Assessment
Assessments in the areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking (as well as comprehension) for students in grades K–12 whose home language is other than English. Participation qualifies students for English language development opportunities, and it continues until (and beyond) when students reach pre-defined levels of English language proficiency.

Field Test
Trying out newly created items in a formal manner with a representative sample of students.

Formative Assessment
A planned, ongoing process used by all students and teachers during learning and teaching to elicit and use evidence of student learning to improve student understanding of intended disciplinary learning outcomes and support students to become more self-directed learners (CCSSO FAST SCASS, 2018).

Grading
Rating an individual or program based on external standards. As student learning and achievement changes, grades change to reflect current levels of student learning and achievement.

High Quality Assessment
An assessment that provides reliable, valid, bias-free, and useful information.

Horizontally-Aligned Instruction
The alignment of instruction provided by multiple teachers teaching at the same grade level or in the same course.

Instructional Objective
A statement that specifies what a learner will know and be able to do as a result of instruction. Most often found in curriculum framework documents.

Instructional Program Improvement
The use of test results to determine areas of the instructional program that need to be modified and/or improved in the future.

Instructionally-Embedded Assessment
Assessments or assessment-related activities that occur while instruction is taking place.

Interim/Benchmark Assessments
Assessments are administered periodically throughout the school year for one or more of the following purposes: predictive (identify learner readiness for success on a later summative assessment); evaluative (to appraise ongoing educational programs); and/or instructional (to supply teachers with individual learner performance data).

Interviews
In this type of assessment, a teacher typically asks an individual student a series of questions and records students' responses to the questions.

Item
An assessment question, problem, or exercise. The individual questions that are used in a test.

Learning Progressions
The sequence of learning topics that students typically go through to learn an important topic/skill.

Learning Targets
The individual learning outcomes based on content standards used for teaching and/or testing.

GLOSSARY

Levels of Proficiency
The different levels of performance on an assessment.

Measures of Central Tendency: Mean, Mode, and Median
Mean—The arithmetic average of a set of data, calculated by adding all the scores and dividing the total by the number of scores.

Mode—The most frequently occurring score in a set of scores.

Median—The score at the middle point in an ordered set of scores.

Measures of Variability: Variance and Standard Deviation
Variance—The sum of the squared deviations of scores in a set of scores from the mean score of the set, divided by one less than the total number of scores.

Standard Deviation—The square root of the variance.

Multiple Measures
The use of different types of measures (e.g., assessment for learning and assessments of learning) to assess students or programs from different perspectives to obtain a broader picture of students or a program.

Norm-referenced Score Interpretation
The comparison of a student or school score to a representative sample of students or schools—the norm group. Scores are interpreted as above or below the average (mean score) of the norm group, such as a percentile rank.

Observation
An assessment of one or more aspects of student performance by a trained observer, either in a natural setting or one that has been structured especially for the observation. A protocol or rubric may be used by the observer.

Performance Assessments
Assessments where students are asked to perform in some manner (e.g., completing an experiment, conducting an investigation, singing, acting in a theatrical production, or completing a painting). Performance assessments require a checklist or a rubric for scoring.

Performance Event
An on-demand performance assessment on which students are given little or no time to rehearse their performance and limited opportunities to improve their initial performance. Such assessments may take a class period or less to administer.

Performance Task
On this type of assessment, students have days, weeks, or months to compose a response. A performance task may involve multiple responses of different types to multiple prompts. The resultant work may be lengthy and comprise multiple parts. Embedded in the task may be written-response items, presentations, papers, student self-reflections, and so forth.

Personal Communication
An assessment conducted one-on-one between an adult and a student—sometimes an interview.

Pilot Test
A preliminary use of assessment items to see if they yield useful information as anticipated.

Placement/Selection Test
A test used to suggest the best educational program or service for an individual.

Prediction
The use of test results to determine the likelihood of success of an individual in some future activity.

Priority Standards
A set of prioritized outcomes, derived from a larger set of content standards, that helps teachers focus on the most important aspects of the curriculum for instructional planning purposes.

Professional Learning
The learning programs and experiences in-service educators engage in to improve their knowledge and skills and, thus, their performance on the job.

Professional Learning Communities
Groups of educators who routinely collaborate to use evidence of student learning to improve teaching and learning.

Program Evaluation
The use of test results and other data to determine the success of a program and perhaps suggest improvements to it.

Progress Monitoring
Used to quantify a learner's rate of improvement or responsiveness to instruction, intervention, or supports and to guide future learning. Progress monitoring can be implemented with individual learners and small groups. The frequency of measures should match the level of intervention intensity. Progress monitoring can be used to inform whether individual student interventions are effective.

Protocols
Guidelines for students to use when completing an assessment.

Reliability
A statistical determination of the internal consistency, comparability, or stability of an assessment. A necessary, but not sufficient, condition for a summative assessment to be useful.

Reporting
Describing the performance of a student or a group of students on an assessment in written, graphical, or verbal terms.

Rigor
The level of knowledge necessary to achieve a content standard or to correctly respond to an assessment item. Often measured in the Depth of Knowledge category, one of four dimensions of the Webb Alignment Tool, developed by Norm Webb, Wisconsin Center for Education Research.

Scoring
The process of determining how well a student did on an assessment.

Scoring Checklist
Specifies the steps a student must carry out to complete an item. May also be a list used to score the responses of students.

Scoring Guide
A scoring guide is composed of a rationale for the correct or preferred responses to the assessment. A guide also includes one or more scoring rubrics; examples of student responses for each score level of each rubric; and sets of pre-scored student papers used to train, certify, and monitor the scorers.

Scoring Rubrics
Often used to score constructed response items, performance tasks, and performance events. A rubric establishes the expectations for performance and delineates what a response must include. Performance levels are described for each dimension or criterion of the performance task, performance event, or constructed response item.

Screening Test
A relatively short test used to determine eligibility of an individual for a program or activity.

Selected-response Item
A test item that requires students to pick a response from among two or more answer choices provided. Multiple-choice, true-false, and matching items are all examples of selected-response items.

Sensitivity
The use of a topic in an assessment item that some students may find troubling or offensive.

Simulation
A performance assessment based on a real-life situation used to assess students' ability and readiness to carry out the activity in a real-life situation.

Student-friendly Language
Educational language written in a jargon-free manner understandable by students.

Student Improvement
Increased student performance on a test over time.

Student Group Performance
The performance of a subset of students from a larger group, examined to ensure that all student groups in a school are achieving content standards equitably.

Success Criteria
Lists, statements, models, or exemplars that tell or show students what they should know, understand, and be able to do at the end of instruction. These criteria identify elements of quality that should be present in student work. These criteria may be used by teachers to determine student proficiency.

Summative Assessment
An assessment that provides information regarding the level of learner, program, or school success at an endpoint in time. Administered at the conclusion of learning to 1) determine the effectiveness of a recently concluded program,
2) make inferences about a learner's mastery of curricular aims, and/or
3) meet local, state and federal accountability requirements.

Technologically-Enhanced Assessments
Assessments administered online that use the capabilities of assessment software to permit students to respond to open-response types of assessment items, but yield machine-scorable responses.

Test Blueprint
A document that describes the key attributes of an assessment, such as standards to be assessed, the depth of knowledge of the items to be used, and the types and numbers of items to be included.

Universal Screeners
Designed to measure skills, behaviors, or characteristics that may be predictive of later outcomes to identify learners who might need additional diagnostic assessments and/or interventions. Screeners are efficient and provide comparative data for all learners within a defined group or setting.

Unpacking Content Standards
Determining the key attributes and aspects of a content standard, such as depth of knowledge and learning targets.

Validity
The extent to which a test measures what it is intended to measure. A test itself is neither "valid" nor "invalid." Validity is determined based on the adequacy of the information in support of the intended use of the assessment.

Vertically Aligned Instruction
The alignment of instruction provided by multiple teachers teaching in the same content area across two or more grades.

The mission of the Michigan Assessment Consortium is to improve student learning and achievement through a system of coherent curriculum, balanced assessment, and effective instruction. We do this by collaboratively promoting assessment knowledge and practice; providing professional learning opportunities; and providing and sharing assessment tools, products, and resources.

MAC

Michigan Assessment Consortium is a professional association of educators who believe quality education depends on accurate, balanced, meaningful assessment. MAC members work together with educators to advance assessment literacy and advocate for assessment education and excellence.

Michigan Assessment Consortium
Improve learning. Increase success.

To learn more about the Michigan Assessment Consortium and the resources it has created:

MichiganAssessmentConsortium.org