

Mentor SUPPLEMENT

Beginning Teacher Seminar 2
Winter 2019



Instructional Focus: Assessing Student Learning

Assessing Student Learning, the second in DPI's series of Beginning Teacher Support Seminars, explores the instructional practices around assessment and collecting evidence of learning. Assessing learning is a complex practice, and essential to a teacher's ability to plan instruction in ways that meet all students' academic needs. Assessment practices are key to addressing the ambiguity in learning. Analyzing assessment data (to include formative assessments) allows teachers to be responsive and strategic in planning next steps.

At mid-point in the year, teachers will present evidence of student academic growth to their evaluator within the Educator Effectiveness system at the mid-interval review conference. Mentors serve in a formative role by assisting the beginning teacher in reviewing student growth evidence-to-date, and coaching their mentees to both identify relevant evidence, and speak to the evidence within the mid-interval review. The mid-interval conference event is the appropriate time to adjust goals and/or practices within the Educator Effectiveness Plan (EEP). Adjustments must be evidence-based, and agreed upon by both the educator and evaluator.

Mentors are encouraged to review the [EE System User Guide](#) for Teachers, Teacher Supervisors and Coaches and the [Professional Conversations](#) self-guided module to strengthen practice around assessment. Over the next weeks, engage the beginning teacher in conversations which gauge current understanding of assessment-related practice and support them in further development. This work will inform:

- Adjustments to SLO growth targets (if necessary);
- Collaboration with specialists;
- Plans for varied instructional strategies; and
- Needs related to professional development



All links and resources within this Supplement may be readily accessed via the online PDF:

<https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/educator-development-support/pdf/beginning-teacher-seminar-2-mentor-supplement.pdf>

CONTENTS

FfT Component Focus

- 1f: Designing Student Assessments
- 3d: Using Assessments in Instruction

Student-Centered Practices

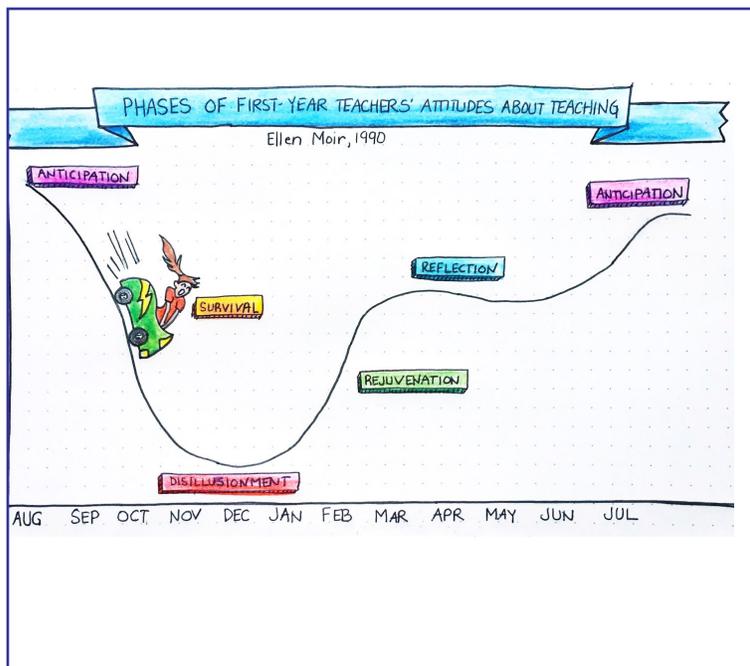
- Assessment Accessibility

Assessment Strategies and Resources

- Strategic Assessment Systems
- Formative Assessment

"When a teacher teaches, no matter how well he or she might design a lesson, what a child learns is unpredictable. Children do not always learn what we teach. That is why the most important assessment does not happen at the end of learning – it happens during the learning, when there is still time to do something with the information."

– Dylan William, 2011



Timely Support for Beginning Teachers

At the mid-year mark, teachers begin to rebound from a period of disillusionment. Winter break allowed for time with family, rest, and reflection, giving teachers new perspective. New Teacher Development for Every Inning (2016) identifies the gradual rise in optimism as the rejuvenation phase. Beginning teachers in this phase begin to focus more on long-term planning and instructional strategies like assessment, analysis of student work, and differentiation to meet the needs of all students. Mentors can encourage and nurture reflection, assist in continuous improvement processes, and coach teachers toward student-centered assessment practices as described in the professional practice rubrics.

For more ideas, see the Mentoring Essentials *Month-to-Month Success Strategies* resource.

Tools, Reads & Resources

Aguilar, Elena. 2018. "[The Art of Building Trusting Coaching Relationships](#)." Course.

Educational Leadership. 2015. Volume 73, Number 1. "[Questioning for Learning](#)."

Knight, Jim. 2013. Mini-Manual. [Instruction: Effective Questions](#). Instructional Coaching Group.

New Teacher Center. 2017-18. "[Let's Elevate! Toolbox of Basics for Mentors and Coaches](#)."

Vagle, Nicole Dimich. 2015. *Design in Five: Essential Phases To Create Engaging Assessment Practice*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. "[Assessment and Data Literacy E-Learning Series](#)."

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. "[Wisconsin's Strategic Assessment Systems \(SAS\)](#)."



Using the Framework for Teaching

Providing timely, actionable feedback helps teachers strengthen practice. The [Framework for Teaching](#) (FFT) components, indicators and (most importantly) critical attributes provide feedback language for use within mentoring conversations as it provides a common understanding and language describing effective practice.

In the next mentoring meeting(s), explore the FFT alongside the beginning teacher. Be sure to walk through the structure of the rubric, noting the leveled descriptors for assessment-related components.

Activities to support the exploration of assessment practice may include:

- An exploration of assessment-related components, such as 3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques.
- Observe a teacher who is fluent in the use of formative assessment alongside your beginning teacher, and use the critical attributes of the Framework for Teaching to guide the debrief conversation.
- Assist the beginning teacher in planning for, and designing assessment tools that capture evidence of student learning and inform timely adjustment to instruction.

Coaching Corner

Trust takes time to build, but can be broken within seconds. A trusting mentoring relationship with the beginning teacher has never been more important! Mentoring conversations occurring at mid-year may uncover a need to change practice and/or belief systems as you dig deeply into data, assess what is working and what is not, and establish well-informed next steps. Be careful not to overwhelm! Sometimes, a mentor's enthusiasm to share, can be overwhelming or may be interpreted differently by the beginning teacher. The inability to recognize and monitor how your suggestions are received can damage the

trust within the mentoring relationship. In the event trust is jeopardized, consider using a protocol suggested by Elena Aguilar (2019, *Building Trusting Coaching Relationships*):

- Acknowledge there is a problem;
- Assess your role in the situation;
- Apologize using "I" language and state specifically what you are apologizing for, and;
- Take action to remedy the situation.