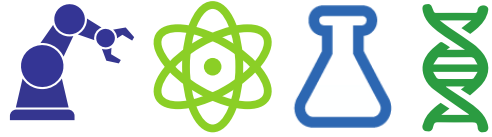


Science

ASSESSMENT PRACTICES



What does it mean to have a system of assessment for a district science education program?

Educators strategically use evidence from standards-aligned formative, benchmark, interim, and state-level assessment, along with student surveys, to reflect on their practice and the progress of students.

What are the opportunities and challenges?

- Opportunity to solidify and collaborate on a vision for science learning
- Opportunity to reframe assessment culture as a relationship—mentor and mentee support—rather than being about getting the “right” answer, accountability, or giving a grade
- Opportunity to make assessment a meaningful part of student engagement, linking to their identities and interests
- A challenge is finding structured time for educators to come together and develop tools and reflect on outcomes.

How does this connect to a vision for equity?

Collaborating around assessments solidifies what the vision is for all students and offers a guide for supporting all students. Authentic and varied assessments provide multiple means to demonstrate understanding.

Why it Matters

Administrators:

With assessments all aligned to standards and with each other, students have a greater chance of success. The Hypothesis (or “Theory”) of Practice is that student outcomes will improve.

Teachers:

Will have a better understanding of where students are at in their learning in relation to grade-level standards.

Will build stronger relationships with students to support rather than only monitor their learning.

Students, Families, and Communities:

Students and caregivers will have a better sense of what students know and don’t know, and what grades mean across classes.





What are some strategies for implementation?

- Establish a clear vision for science learning and continually reflect on how well assessments provide data on progress toward that vision.
- Determine a collaborative understanding of what makes a quality, standards-aligned assessment ([example](#)).
- Districts offer learning opportunities for educators to collaboratively create assessments and structured time to reflect on student outcomes.

What are some good reflection questions to consider?

- How are educators using assessment data from multiple sources to reflect on their learning and student learning?
- How is data used to improve access to equitable opportunities for all students?

What do national professional groups or education researchers say on this topic?

- [National Academies report](#) on assessment in science, [chapters 6 and 7](#) particularly address systems
- [Nextgenscience.org resources](#) on systems of assessment in science, including [a guide for decision making](#)
- [DPI Science Assessment website](#)
- [DPI Strategic Assessment](#) resources, including [Ms. G's year of science](#)
- [Stanford NGSS Assessment Project](#)
- [Stanford presentations](#) on NGSS assessments and [samples for a system](#)

Further Resources

Administrators:

- [Education First Local Assessment Playbook](#) – fewer and better assessments
- [Assessment Inventory Resource](#) – WestEd tool to analyze current practice
- [Measured Progress infographic](#) on elements of a balanced assessment system and their purposes
- [Article on science assessment systems](#)

Teachers:

- [Sample assessments](#) developed by Wisconsin educators and national groups
- [Stanford NGSS Assessment Project](#) - samples

Students, Families, and Communities:

- Be aware of how students are grouped (or tracked) in classes based on test scores; [advocate for changes to this inequitable practice](#).
- [DPI assessment resources for families](#) (ACT, Forward Exam, etc.).

For more information contact:

Kevin Anderson, kevin.anderson@dpi.wi.gov, Teaching and Learning Team, Division of Academic Excellence

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