A Balanced Assessment System

A balanced assessment system is a core component of a well-rounded instructional program that serves all students. A balanced assessment system effectively measures the depth and breadth of student learning and monitors student progress towards college and career readiness. It also produces actionable data that informs planning for instruction, academic supports, and resource allocation at all levels. To meet these goals, a balanced assessment system must include multiple measures and be responsive to the needs of all students.

Key to designing a balanced assessment system that supports the instructional core is the use of multiple measures. A single style of assessment or a single point in time measure is insufficient to truly gauge the depth and breadth of student understanding. A complete overview of D97 common assessments is presented on the following pages, in both a table and frequency view. Note that classroom-level formative assessments are occurring all the time in this model. Those assessments can include in-the-moment checks for understanding, exit tickets, etc. The bulk of assessments in a balanced assessment are formative, whether they are at the classroom or team level. The final page of this document provides more detail about each type of assessment in our Common Assessment Calendar.

Assessment & Data Beliefs

- Assessment contributes to student growth, improved performance, and understanding of content.
- Assessment is crucial for guiding instruction and finding students in need of support.
- Assessment should be aligned to curriculum and standards. Standards, in fact, are meaningless without assessments – assessments define what is meant by the standards.
- Assessment should be focused on both student growth and student attainment.
- Assessments should be valid and reliable, as well as evaluated for cultural bias and remedied if bias is found. Assessments of high quality have value.
- Assessment practice utilizes a variety of methods, including; standardized, formative, summative, teacher-created, and in-the-moment observations and checks for understanding.
- The term "data" simply refers to facts and information. It includes assessment data, but it also includes a teacher's knowledge and observations about a student or group of students.
- Data from assessments should be used to monitor student progress and mastery, teacher effectiveness, program evaluation, and curriculum.
- Data must be communicated to all stakeholders in a meaningful and useful way.
- Data must be collected using multiple sources in order to effectively triangulate and use for decision making.
- Staff must be trained to effectively administer assessments in order for the results to be useful.
- Assessment practice should be monitored and changed as needed for effectiveness.

District-Managed Assessments

Fall Testing

Fall Assessment Window	Assessment	Grades
First 40 Days of School	**Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS)** Observation tool measuring learning, development, and readiness.	**Kindergarten**
September 18, 2023 - September 26, 2023	**Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)** Assessment measuring Reading and Math growth. * Reading Fluency Dyslexia Screener **(MAP)**	**K-8th** ***K & 1**
September 27, 2023 - October 6, 2023	***AIMSWeb Plus** This assessment screens and monitors reading and math skills for students in grades K-8 to identify at-risk needs of students and assess individual growth.	**K-8th** *Students who are assessed will vary by school*
November 3, 2023 - November 17, 2023	**MasteryConnect** A competency-based learning platform that allows teachers to assess students' mastery of standards, monitor student performance, and inform instruction.	**4th-8th**

Winter Testing

Winter Assessment Window	Assessment	Grades
January 22, 2024 - January 26, 2024	**Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)** Assessment measuring Reading and Math growth. * Reading Fluency Dyslexia Screener **(MAP)**	**K-8th** ***K & 1**
January 29, 2024 - February 2, 2024	***AIMSWeb Plus** This assessment screens and monitors reading and math skills for students in grades K-8 to identify at-risk students and assess individual growth.	**K-8th** ***Students who are assessed will vary by school***
January 17 - March 5, 2024	***ACCESS** Assesses social and instructional English as well as the language associated with language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies within the school context across the four language domains.	**K-8th** ****Students receiving multilingual services***
February 12, 2024 - February 23, 2024	**MasteryConnect** A competency-based learning platform that allows teachers to assess students' mastery of standards, monitor student performance, and inform instruction.	**4th-8th**

Spring Testing

Spring Assessment Window	Assessment	Grades
March 4 - March 22, 2024 *Non-test dates **April 2 - April 4, 2024** *Additional test dates as needed	**Illinois Science Assessment (ISA)** Science Assessment based on the Next Generation Standards Testing Times **Science**: 2 units; 60 minutes each (5th & 8th grades)	**5th & 8th**
March 4 - March 22, 2024 **(Online)** **March 4 - March 22, 2024** **(Paper)** *Non-test dates:	**Illinois Assessment for Readiness (IAR)** Assessment measuring Reading and Math growth. Testing Times **ELA/Literacy:** 2 units; 75 minutes each (3rd grade) **ELA/Literacy:** 2 units; 90 minutes each (4-8th grades) **Math:** 3 units; 60 minutes each (3rd-8th grades)	**3rd-8th**
March 13 - May 8, 2024 *Non-test dates:	**Dynamic Learning Maps - Alternate Assessment (DLM - AA)** Assessment based on achievement standards. Testing Times **ELA/Literacy**: 70-90 minutes **Math**: 35-60 minutes **Science**: 45-135 minutes	**3rd-8th** *Students who take the DLM test do not participate in IAR or MAP testing.
April 29, 2024 - May 9, 2024	**MasteryConnect** A competency-based learning platform that allows teachers to assess students' mastery of standards, monitor student performance, and inform instruction.	**4th-8th**
Summer 2024	**Kindergarten Readiness Screener** Screener to identify what children know prior to the start of school.	**K**

School-Managed Assessments

Fall/Winter/Spring Assessment Window	Assessment	Grades
Ongoing throughout each trimester - timed per the principal, teacher, and pacing guides	**Schools use a variety of assessments, such as Benchmark Assessment System, unit assessments, early literacy and numeracy through Educational Software for Guiding Instruction, checks for understanding, do nows, exit tickets, etc. to monitor student achievement and growth throughout the year.**	**K-8th**

Assessment Descriptions

Assessing Comprehension & Communication in English State to State (ACCESS) – is a standards-based, criterion referenced English language proficiency test designed to measure English language learners' social and academic proficiency in English. It assesses social and instructional English as well as the language associated with language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies within the school context across the four language domains.

AIMSWeb+ – AIMSWeb+ is a formative assessment, data management, and reporting system for grades K-8 supporting multi-tiered instructional models. Designed to universally screen and progress monitor, AIMSWeb+ uses brief, valid, and reliable measures of foundational skills in reading and math. The assessment helps identify at-risk students early, monitor progress, and differentiate and track the success of targeted instruction.

Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) – The Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) is an alternate assessment that offers an innovative way for all students with significant cognitive disabilities in grades 3-8 to demonstrate their learning throughout the school year via the DLM Alternate Assessment System.

Illinois Assessment for Readiness (IAR) – The Illinois Assessment for Readiness (IAR) is the state assessment and accountability measure for Illinois students enrolled in a public school district. The IAR assesses the New Illinois Learning Standards Incorporating the Common Core and will be administered to students in English Language Arts and mathematics. The IAR assessments in English Language Arts and mathematics will be administered to all students in grades 3-8 according to their current grade level.

Illinois State Science Assessment (ISA) – The Illinois Science Assessment is designed to measure student learning on the Illinois Science Standards incorporating the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) that were adopted in 2014. For grades 5 and 8, test items are aligned to physical science, life science, earth/space science and engineering.

Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) – The Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) is an observational tool designed to help teachers, administrators, families, and policymakers better understand the developmental readiness of children entering kindergarten.

Kindergarten Readiness Screener - The Kindergarten Readiness Screener is designed to assist educators in understanding their student's current skills and abilities, as well as prepare them to meet their students' academic, social, and emotional needs during the school year.

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) - Growth The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), developed by NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association), is a computerized adaptive test, given to students in grades K-8, that measures a child's academic growth from season to season and year to year in the areas of mathematics, reading, and language usage. In the MAP system, the difficulty of the test is adjusted to the student's performance. The difficulty of each question is based on how well the student has answered all of the questions up to that point. As the student answers correctly, the questions become more difficult. If the student answers incorrectly, the questions become easier.

Measure of Academic Progrss (MAP) - Reading Fluency Dyslexia Screener is a screening tool that assesses the critical components of early reading (oral reading fluency, literal comprehension, and foundational skills) to provide a complete picture of the student's reading ability. It applies a predictive model to flag student results that indicate possible risk factors for dyslexia and other reading difficulties. It further provides actionable data to inform

instruction and drill down into each student's strengths and needs.

MasteryConnect - MasteryConnect is a competency-based learning platform that allows teachers to assess students' mastery of standards, monitor student performance, and inform instruction. Integrated standards-based reports provide real-time information about mastery of core standards for grades 4-8.