

Seven Actions for Assessment Literacy

Action One: *Balance the district's assessment system to meet all key user needs.*

Balanced assessment systems blend effective assessment use at the classroom level with interim/benchmark assessment and annual testing to serve both formative and summative purposes. This action urges examination of current levels of balance and movement toward greater balance if needed.

Action Two: *Refine achievement standards to reflect clear and appropriate expectations at all levels.*

Achievement standards are fundamental to any assessment system. That is, clear learning targets are needed to underpin classroom, interim/benchmark, and annual assessments. This action calls for developing local achievement expectations as a foundation for balanced assessment.

Action Three: *Ensure assessment quality in all contexts to support good decision-making.*

Because a variety of decisions are made based on assessment results, all assessments at classroom, interim/benchmark, and annual levels of use must yield dependable information about student achievement. This action urges the evaluation of current assessments to verify quality.

Action Four: *Help learners become assessors by using assessment for learning strategies in the classroom.*

By involving students in their own assessment during the learning, teachers can maximize their confidence, motivation, and achievement. This action urges that teachers involve them in assessment, treating them as users of results just as they do themselves and others.

Action Five: *Build communication systems to support and report student learning.*

This action asks that districts and schools develop the capacity to deliver useful and understandable information about assessment of and assessment for learning results.

Action Six: *Motivate students with learning success.*

The practice of relying on the anxiety and intimidation of accountability to motivate learning works for some students. It can energize those who have hope of success. But for students who have experienced chronic failure, turning up the anxiety will drive them more deeply into academic failure. For all students, a motivator that can work is success at learning. This action urges educators to understand these emotional dynamics as they link assessment to student motivation and success.

Action Seven: *Provide the professional development needed to ensure assessment literacy throughout the system.*

For successful completion of actions 1-6, school districts must provide faculty and staff a foundational understanding of the principles of sound classroom assessment practice. This action urges the provision of professional development in assessment literacy.