# Northland Community Schools
# District # 118 Assessments

Assessment is an integral part of instruction, providing information about how well students are progressing toward state standards. Standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment are interwoven in the learning process, and each informs the others. Standards are the *what* – they define what we expect students to know and be able to do. Curriculum is the *how* – it defines a body of learning experiences that are designed to reach the standards. Instruction is the *in what ways* – it provides the specific learning experiences and ways of differentiating those experiences to scaffold student learning. Assessment is the *how well* – it gauges the attainment of learning to inform instructional practices and curriculum. A balanced approach to assessment includes a continuum of strategies within a range of frequency and purpose.

**An effective assessment plan has four main objectives:**

- ✓ **Identify students who are at-risk or who are experiencing difficulties on an on-going basis and who may need extra instruction or intensive interventions if they are to make adequate progress toward grade-level expectations.**
- ✓ **Inform instructional planning in order to meet the needs of individual students.**
- ✓ **Monitor students' progress during the year to determine whether students receiving intervention are making adequate progress in literacy development.**
- ✓ **Evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and whether the instruction provided is intensive enough to help students achieve grade-level outcomes by the end of each year (evaluation measurements).**

**Using multiple data points is important for getting a broad understanding of readers' needs for intervention. When choosing assessment tools, it's imperative to understand what information the data provides, and what information is missing. Entrance and exit criteria should represent the accelerated growth needed to ensure students are making adequate progress toward grade-level expectations (Welding and Mather, 2008).**

*Formative assessment* occurs continuously in the classroom, both within and between lessons. Information is used to adjust teaching strategies. Students receive frequent and meaningful feedback on their performances. Examples of formative assessment strategies include teacher observation, discussion, questioning, and non-graded class work. The focus of formative assessment is to determine what learning comes next for a student.
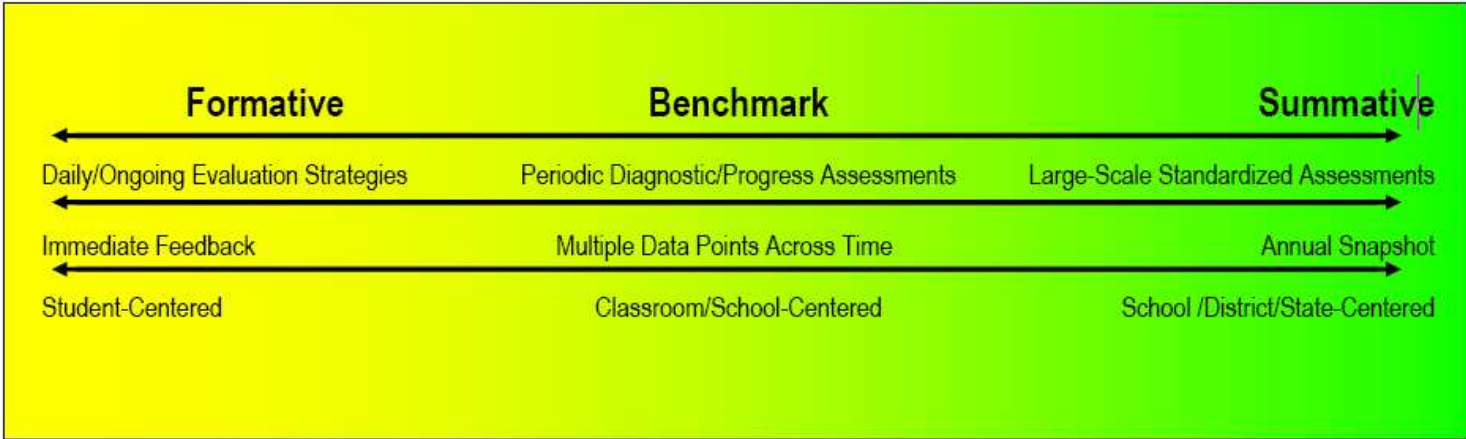
*Benchmark assessment* - Standardized benchmark assessments:

- are given periodically; for our purposes – 3x per year – Fall, Winter, and Spring
- reflect state or district academic-content standards; and
- measure students' progress through the standards, skills, and curriculum

The focus of benchmark assessment is to determine how student groups are progressing or how well a program is working.

*Large-scale Summative assessment* occurs annually. Information is used to develop strategic, long-term evaluation of curriculum and programming based on trends over time, and to monitor state, district, and school progress. Assessment instruments and procedures are standardized so that comparisons can be made across student groups. Examples of large-scale assessment include the MCA, GRAD, ACT, SAT, NAEP, and AP exams. The focus of large-scale assessment is to determine how schools, districts, and states are progressing.

These assessment strategies provide information at differing intervals and for different purposes. Each one provides a different perspective, and one cannot take the place of another. Together, they provide a balanced approach to assessment that informs decisions at the classroom, school, district, state, and national levels.

| Formative | Benchmark | Summative |
|---|---|---|
| Daily/Ongoing Evaluation Strategies | Periodic Diagnostic/Progress Assessments | Large-Scale Standardized Assessments |
| Immediate Feedback | Multiple Data Points Across Time | Annual Snapshot |
| Student-Centered | Classroom/School-Centered | School /District/State-Centered |

| | BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **FORMATIVE** | **BENCHMARK** | **SUMMATIVE** |
| **PURPOSE** | Informs instruction<br>What Learning comes next for this student?<br>How am I monitoring students' learning? | Diagnoses student level and/or monitors progress<br>How are students progressing?<br>How well is this program working? | Monitors national, state, district, school, or classroom progress<br>How are they progressing? How do they compare? |
| **TYPE** | Ongoing formative strategies "in the moment" | Benchmark or diagnostic periodic/interim tests | Large-scale, standardized assessment |
| **KEY FEATURE** | Quick assessment to differentiate based on student progress | Assessment of learning | Assessment of learning |
| **FOCUS** | • Students<br>• Teachers | • Students<br>• Teachers<br>• Parents<br>• Schools, Districts | • State    • Students<br>• Federal    • Teachers<br>• Higher-Education    • Parents<br>   • School<br>• Researchers    • Districts |
| **FREQUENCY** | • Occurs within and between lessons | • Occurs within, between, and among instructional units | • Occurs annually or bi-annually |
| **USE OF RESULTS** | • Within instructional activity, information is used to change or to adjust teaching<br>• Student receives frequent and meaningful feedback on performance<br>• Teacher engages student in the monitoring of student learning<br>• Teacher decides if the student needs intervention or enrichment | • Grade-level or content-based professional learning communities use data to identify strengths and gaps in curriculum and instruction<br>• Grade-level course curriculum/intervention/enrichment may be changed, refined<br>• Teachers modify instruction for student groups based on their progress | • School or district teams develop strategic, long-term evaluation of curriculum and programming based on trends over time<br>• States monitor school and district progress<br>• U.S. Department of Education monitors state performance |
| **PROFESS-IONAL DEVELOP-MENT** | • Understanding how to gauge student progress toward a standard and how to scaffold instruction to reach that goal<br>• Teacher reflection on what types of strategies are currently employed in the classroom<br>• Implementation of new strategies -see Progress Monitoring Tools Chart www.rti4success.org<br>• Opportunities to practice and to perfect usage<br>• Continuous reflection – internal and external through PLC's<br>• Teacher collaboration through district or multi-district (telepresence, wiki) PLC's | If teacher-developed, school-team-developed, or district-developed products:<br>• Identification of learning outcomes based on state content standards<br>• Development of assessment items & test<br>If using a commercial product:<br>• Learn features of the instrument and how content links to district curricula and state standards.<br>• See Progress Monitoring Tools Chart www.rti4success.org<br>Commercial products:<br>• Disaggregation & Interpretation of data<br>• Discussion of results<br>• Sharing effective strategies across teams<br>• Use of Cognos to access data | • Understanding and interpretation of large-scale assessment trends over time<br>• Data disaggregation and progress evaluation at the building level and at the grade level<br>• Opportunities for revising district or school instructional practices and curricula |

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| **EXAMPLES** | <ul><li>Feedback</li><li>Essential Questioning, Exit tickets</li><li>Self and peer assessment</li><li>Observations</li><li>Discussions</li><li>Non-graded class work</li><li>Benchmark (standards)/skills quiz</li></ul> | | Teacher, school-team, or district-developed: <ul><li>Graded class work</li><li>Midterm and end-of-unit assessments</li><li>District assessments</li><li>IASC Common Assessments</li><li>MAP</li><li>Reading inventories</li></ul> | | <ul><li>End-of Course Exams</li><li>MCA</li><li>NAEP</li><li>ACT/SAT</li><li>AP Exams</li></ul> | |
| **K-6 CURRENT ASSESS-MENTS** | **Math**<br>• Standards-Based Assessments<br>• Daily formative assessment<br>• Weekly Progress Monitoring | **Reading**<br>• Standards-Based Assessments<br>• Daily formative assessment<br>• Weekly Progress Monitoring (STAR, Words Their Way)<br><br>**Screening Tools:**<br>• Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading (STAR)<br>• MAP<br><br>**Diagnostic Tools:**<br>• Words Their Way<br>• Informal Reading Inventories | **Math**<br>• MAP-Math (2-6) | **Reading**<br>• MAP-Reading (2-6)<br>• **K – Letter Naming Fluency, Letter Sound Fluency, Nonsense Word Fluency**<br>• **1st Gr. – Letter Naming Fluency, Letter Sound Fluency, Nonsense Word Fluency, Oral Reading Fluency, Barbara Taylor Phonemic Awareness, Dolch Sight Word List, Fountas And Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System**<br>• **2nd Gr. – Oral Reading Fluency, Fountas And Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System**<br>• **3rd Gr. – Oral Reading Fluency** | **Math**<br>• MCA Grades 3-6<br>• NAEP | **Reading**<br>• MCA Grades 3-6<br>• NAEP |
| **7-8 CURRENT ASSESS-MENTS** | **Math**<br>• Standards-Based Formative Assessments | **Reading**<br>• Standards-Based Formative Assessments | **Math**<br>• MAP-Math | **Reading**<br>• MAP-Reading | **Math**<br>• MCA Grades 7-8<br>• NAEP | **Reading**<br>• MCA Grades 7-8<br>• NAEP |
| **9-12** | **Math**<br>• Standards-Based Formative Assessments | **Reading**<br>• Standards-Based Formative Assessments | **Math**<br>• Standards-Based Benchmark Assessments<br>• MAP - Math | **Reading**<br>• Standards-Based Benchmark Assessments<br>• MAP - Reading | **Math**<br>• MCA Grades 11<br>• NAEP<br>• ACT/SAT<br>• GRAD<br>• ACCUPLACER | **Reading**<br>• MCA Grades 10<br>• NAEP<br>• ACT/SAT<br>• GRAD<br>• ACCUPLACER |