

Assessment Glossary

Balanced Assessments - A range of multiple types of assessments matching different assessment formats to specific assessment needs, i.e. balanced techniques for measuring certain knowledge, skills, and understanding to ensure that students meet standards and perform well on state and district assessments.

Benchmark Assessments - Common assessments given to students at specified intervals for comparative purposes.

Benchmark Work - Student work that meets the standard; exemplary work showing exactly what meets the standard and the level of work students are striving to meet.

Disaggregated Data - Formative or Summative data that has been dissected into sub-groups, content areas, etc. for the purpose of reporting on how “all” students are achieving.

Formative Assessments - Ongoing assessments designed to identify strengths and weaknesses and impact or inform instruction.

Performance Assessments - A measure of assessment based on authentic tasks such as activities, exercises, or problems designed to provide feedback throughout a unit of study for the purpose of modifying instruction and improving student learning. The purpose is not to give a grade, but to learn what students know, how teaching should be adjusted, and to improve student knowledge and skills.

Performance Target - A goal based on student performance data that targets specific areas of student need as related to the standards..

Portfolio Assessment - Portfolio assessment makes clear the relationship between student work and the performance standards. It provides evidence of extended pieces of student work with revision and accumulation of the work over time. Through extensive consultation with their teachers, students learn the requirements needed for each piece or product and the quality of work (criteria) that meets the standards. The decisions students make regarding the portfolio demonstrate what they know and what they can do. They also learn what is needed to improve their work. Teachers can use portfolios to see how successful students have been as learners and how effective their own teaching practices have been. They can send these portfolios to the next-grade teachers, who can readily determine their incoming students’ strengths and weaknesses.

Rubric - A scoring guide that enables teachers to make reliable judgments about student work and that enables students to self-assess their work. A rubric is based on a continuum of performance quality, built upon a scale of different possible score points to be assigned; identifies the key traits or dimensions to be examined and assessed; and provides key features of performance for each level of scoring (descriptors) which signify the degree to which the criteria have been met.

Summative Assessments - Cumulative or culminating assessments used to determine mastery of the curriculum objectives or standards.

Tasks - Tasks are complex assessment challenges that require the use of students' knowledge and skill to effectively perform or create a product to show understanding or proficiency.

Unpacking Standards - To analyze standards to identify the critical components that will be used to plan instruction and assessment; the process of articulating what students should know, understand, and be able to do by the end of an instructional unit.