

**Illinois State Board of Education**

Assessment Inventory Facilitation Process



November 2014

**Illinois State Board of Education**

Gerry J. Chico, Chairman

Dr. Christopher Koch, State Superintendent

**Division of Student Assessment**

Dr. Mary O’Brian, Director of Assessment

Division of Student Assessment

Illinois State Board of Education

110 North First Street

Springfield, IL 62777

[www.isbe.net/assessment/](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/)

This document is intended to provide non-regulatory guidance and is subject to revision.

**Assessment Inventory Facilitation Process**

This document is a companion to the **Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts**, and has been adapted with permission from Achieve, Inc. [www.achieve.org/assessmentinventory](http://www.achieve.org/assessmentinventory). This document provides a step-by-step facilitation process for districts to follow when using the assessment inventory.

The inventory process includes five steps:

1. Reflect and Plan
2. Conduct the Inventory
3. Analyze the Inventory
4. Make Recommendations
5. Evaluate

**Step 1:** Reflect and Plan

District leaders should ensure that they have the necessary district and school staff involved in the district team who will conduct the inventory. The following roles are recommended:

* District Assessment Director/Coordinator
* Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
* District financial staff
* School board member
* Data Coach or other role that works with school-based staff around data
* School leaders including principals, instructional coaches, and lead teachers
* Teachers
* School counselors
* Parents

It is also critical that the district team have the support they need to meet the goals of the inventory process.

* Team members will need access to assessment information, including practice assessments, sample items, specifications, and assessment windows.
* Team members will also need access to contracts, vendors, and budget information.
* The team needs to have the authority to make recommendations to the right decision-makers.
* District leaders, including the superintendent and school board, should communicate internally to the district and to the community about the purpose and importance of the inventory process.

District teams should answer the following questions to plan the inventory. Remember to contextualize the plan within the implementation of the New Illinois Learning Standards Incorporating the Common Core.

1. What are the objectives of the student assessment inventory?
2. What would indicate to the district that the process was a success?
3. What individuals are responsible for the success of this process? Document their specific roles and responsibilities.
4. How will the results of the inventory be communicated to district policymakers (e.g., school board), school leaders, parents, students, and the community?
5. Who will collect the information needed for the inventory table? How will they access this information?
6. How will the district communicate to necessary parties that these individuals will be collecting this information?
7. What is the scope of the inventory? Which assessment should be included and excluded from the inventory table? Based on this scope, what information is needed?
8. What groups should be convened or surveyed to help provide answers (e.g., groups of teachers and other assessment users)? How will they be convened (e.g., in focus groups by grade level or subject) and/or surveyed?
9. What individual or entity has the authority to act on the results of the inventory? Who will be making the recommendations?
10. Are there other districts with whom it would be useful to collaborate during this process?

**Step 2:** Conduct the Inventory

The assessment inventory table (see Appendix A) is designed to capture information the district collects about the assessments. District teams are encouraged to adapt the table as needed for their local context. In addition, the **Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts** provides examples of how the assessment inventory may be completed for common district assessments such as the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC).

There are three types of questions being asked in the table:

* Basic information questions
* Use/purpose questions
* Operational questions

Some information to complete the table will not be directly available from assessment specifications and will require communicating with users of the assessment, especially with respect to issues of assessment use. A short survey or set of focus groups is strongly recommended to better understand how assessments are being used by multiple audiences.

**General Guidelines**

* Initially focus on district assessments given across multiple classrooms or schools rather than individual classroom-based assessments.
* It is more important to provide key details of each assessment than to spend significant time classifying an assessment as, for example, “summative” or “interim.”

Basic Information Questions

* Information on most basic information questions should be available from assessment specification booklets and other information provided by vendors, or from state and district policy documents (e.g., contracts and/or budgets).
* Basic information may be available from the vendor or state (if commonly used across districts), or districts may undertake an independent alignment process to answer the question, “To which content standards is the assessment aligned?”
* A district might also want to consider a more thorough alignment analysis , to better understand how multiple related assessments can build (or hinder) understanding of student achievement and needs, or how assessments can better support alignment to instruction. Resources such as the [Student Achievement Partners Assessment Evaluation Tool](http://achievethecore.org/page/606/assessment-evaluation-tool-aet-list-pg) may be helpful for this task.

Use/Purpose Questions

* What is the difference between the assessment’s intended purposes and uses? The purpose of the assessment is what it was designed to measure, while the intended use of the assessment reflects the kinds of decisions that the assessment is designed to inform. For example, the purpose of an assessment may be to measure students’ reading comprehension while the intended use is to identify students in need of extra support/intervention.
* In order to understand whether users find assessment results useful or not, it is strongly encouraged that districts survey teachers, parents, students, and community members. This information will provide critical support for any recommendations that emerge from the process.
* Closely examining assessment use will help districts better understand why particular assessments are seen as useful or not by stakeholders (parents, teachers, principals, central office staff, school board members, etc.). Questions districts can ask stakeholders about assessment use might include:
  + How well are assessment purpose and assessment use aligned?
  + How are assessment results used to inform instruction (or not)?
  + How timely are assessment results?
  + Are assessment results reported transparently so that stakeholders find them useful?

Operational Questions

* Information to address operational questions will typically be found in vendor’s assessment descriptions and technical guides, as well as in the contract between district and vendor.
* Assessment administration frequency and time are critical questions to address through the inventory table. Aggregating that information across grades and subjects will help give districts a better sense of the overall ‘assessment burden’ faced by administrators, teachers, and students.

Potential Extensions of the Tool

* Your district may want to partner with other similar districts (e.g., demographics, location, size, instructional focus) to share outcomes of the inventory and strategies for streamlining the number of assessments. In collaboration with other districts, your district might also want to consider a more thorough alignment analysis, to better understand how multiple related assessments can build (or hinder) understanding of student achievement and needs, or how assessments can better support alignment to instruction.

**Step 3:** Analyze the Inventory

In analyzing the inventory, it is critical to do several levels of analysis.

* Develop a student-level perspective by looking across all assessments students take at a particular grade level or grade band, and then by particular student needs and characteristics.
* Identify assessments that the district will continue to administer, and clarify any needs or changes that may be necessary to ensure the assessments are helpful for intended uses.
* Identify the assessments that seem to be on the table for elimination or significant changes.
* Help districts build toward recommendations while re-engaging with key stakeholders to review potential options and decision points.

More information may be found in the **Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts** concerning this step in the process.

**Step 4:** Make Recommendations

Based on the inventory analysis, what recommendations will the district make to streamline and/or strengthen its assessment program? The **Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts** provides a table that district teams may use to document and evaluate the district’s decisions. Districts are encouraged to adapt this table as well (see Appendix B).

**Step 5:** Evaluate

Finally, district teams should create an evaluation plan. This plan will ensure that district teams continue the process of examining their assessments on a regular basis to ensure assessments are providing quality information to the district.



**Appendix A**

**Assessment Inventory Table**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of Individual(s) completing the table: | | | | | |
| Date: | | | | | |
| Name of assessment: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Entity requiring assessment  state – SEA or other agency; district; or school: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Grade(s) assessed: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Course(s) or subjects assessed: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Which students are eligible or required to take assessment? |  |  |  |  |  |
| Type of assessment  summative; interim; formative; diagnostic: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Number of years assessment has been administered in the district: |  |  |  |  |  |
| To which content standards is the assessment aligned? (source of alignment verification): |  |  |  |  |  |
| Intended purpose(s) of the assessment: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Intended use(s) of the assessment: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Users of the assessment: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Do users of the assessment use it for its intended use(s)? |  |  |  |  |  |
| To what degree do users of the assessment find it useful or not useful?  1 – not useful  2 – somewhat useful  3 – useful  4 – very useful  Explain why. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Type of administration: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Item type(s): |  |  |  |  |  |
| Accommodations: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Assessment administration time: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Assessment window: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Assessment frequency: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Time between Assessment administration and results to users: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Vendor: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Contract expiration date: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Entity that holds contract: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Annual cost (total and per student): |  |  |  |  |  |
| Funding source(s): |  |  |  |  |  |

**Appendix B**

**Recommendations Table**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Assessment | Recommendation | Rationale | Authority | Timing of Recommendation | Action Steps |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |