

Setting the Context

Facilitator's Notes

Intended Audiences

District leaders who are leading or considering an assessment inventory in their districts

Prerequisite Knowledge

Basic understanding of the *Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts*

Time

1.5 hours

Materials Needed

- Agenda for each participant
- A copy of *Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts* for each participant
- Assessment scenarios and stakeholder mapping exercise for each participant
- Session PowerPoint slides

Session Goals

- Provide an opportunity for district leaders to work together to reflect on their local assessment context.

- Address common “problems of practice” in local assessment systems.
- Identify common and district-specific needs for support in assessment inventory planning and use.
- Map stakeholders critical to the success of the assessment inventory process.

Session Overview

Participants will review the goals of the assessment inventory process and the local context for the inventory, identify multiple stakeholders to involve in the inventory process to build support and momentum, think through the assessment inventory leadership team, and discuss approaches to hypothetical but realistic scenarios that may emerge during the inventory process. Participants will conclude the session by discussing a timeline and next steps in the inventory process.

Conduct the session at tables that allow for unobstructed conversation in small groups and have enough space for materials.

Note

The facilitator's notes, slides, and related activities are openly licensed, and districts are encouraged to adapt these materials as needed based on local priorities and context.



PART ONE—SESSION GOALS AND ASSESSMENT INVENTORY REVIEW

Time: Five minutes

Slide 2—Welcome participants and ask them to introduce themselves, their districts, and what they would like to learn from the training. Review the session goals and note that there is a longer training that goes more in depth, especially

on local context. Those training materials can be found at www.achieve.org/assessmentinventory.

Slides 3 and 4—These slides review the need for an assessment inventory and its purpose. *(Five minutes for slides 2–4)*

PART TWO—DISTRICT CONTEXT, COMMUNICATIONS, AND ENGAGEMENT

Time: 30 minutes

Materials needed: stakeholder mapping exercise

OBJECTIVES

- Consider local context as your district prepares for an assessment inventory.
- Identify those stakeholders who are most critical in your district to the assessment inventory process.
- Determine the current level of support and criticality of support for each stakeholder.
- Build a strong district team for the assessment inventory.

OUTLINE OF FACILITATION FOR EXERCISE

Slide 5—*Script: “In this next section, we will begin to think about your local district and community context, the key stakeholders you will need to engage throughout the process, and how considering these stakeholders might influence the makeup of an assessment inventory leadership team.”*

Slide 6 (district context and goals)—*Script: “District and community context is the very first question in the inventory’s ‘Reflect and Plan’ section because it is critical to have a solid understanding of local context prior to engaging in an assessment inventory process. This short exercise is designed to get you thinking about your local context and what a successful inventory process would look like. For the next two minutes, think about the three most critical pieces of district and community context that would affect the success of an assessment inventory process. A few examples are included on the slide, but please do not feel limited by them. After the two minutes, I will ask for volunteers to briefly mention one piece of context that they wrote down.”*

After two minutes, ask for volunteers as described above. The participant feedback should take no longer than three minutes. *(Five minutes total)*

Script: “Great. Our next short exercise is to take another two minutes to consider what would indicate to your districts and communities that this process was a success. What evidence would indicate this process was a success? How different would the experiences be for students, educators, parents, and other stakeholders?”



After two minutes, ask for volunteers as described above. The participant feedback should take no longer than three minutes. (Five minutes total)

Slide 7—Script: “Now that you have had an opportunity to think about your local district and community context, we will take another step and consider the key stakeholders in your communities who are critical to the success of the assessment inventory process. Please look at the stakeholder mapping exercise included in your materials. First, brainstorm the stakeholders who will be involved in the inventory process. Be sure to consider those at the district, school, and classroom levels, as well as external stakeholders. Using the 2 x 2 matrix template, place the key stakeholders on the template according to their current levels of support and the importance of their engagement. Reflect on which stakeholder groups fall into which categories (champions, allies, opponents), according to the matrix.”

“Before you begin, here are a few suggestions:

- Strive to use the full spectrum provided by the matrix to indicate which stakeholders are higher or lower than others on current levels of support and importance of their engagement.
- Try to avoid placing stakeholders ‘on the line’ and instead make a judgment as to whether those stakeholders are slightly more on the high or low side.

- Focus on developing strategies for increasing the group of champions (moving allies to champions) and having a strategy for engaging opponents. Note that some opponents may be persuadable while others may not be.”

Slide 8—Participants should spend three minutes brainstorming stakeholders involved in the inventory process and another three minutes placing the key stakeholders on the 2 x 2 matrix template. (Six minutes)

After six minutes (with a reminder after three minutes to move to the second part of the exercise), ask for volunteers to share what stakeholders they have placed in each quadrant (e.g., high importance of support and high level of support, high importance of support and low level of support, low importance of support and high level of support, and low importance of support and low level of support). (Four minutes)

Slide 9—Script: “Now, based on this initial local context analysis and stakeholder analysis, has this changed your thoughts about who should be involved in the assessment inventory process? If so, how? Here is a list of stakeholders who could be part of an assessment inventory leadership team and/or consulted at various points in the process. Are there any roles that you might include on an assessment inventory leadership team? Stakeholders who should be consulted, surveyed, or take part in focus groups?” (Three minutes)

PART THREE—LOCAL ASSESSMENT INVENTORY SCENARIOS

Time: 15 minutes

Materials needed: assessment scenarios exercise

OBJECTIVES

Using hypothetical but realistic scenarios that may emerge during an assessment inventory process, districts will work in

small groups to discuss approaches to addressing these issues and then report out to the full group.

OUTLINE OF FACILITATION FOR EXERCISE

Slide 10—Script: “Now we will have an opportunity to think through two hypothetical but realistic scenarios that may emerge during an assessment inventory process. Each



scenario presents a set of issues for a district to consider once it has completed the inventory table and is thinking about making recommendations to a decision maker like a superintendent or school board. There are four scenarios presented here. Please choose two that are potentially relevant to your district context. As you think through each scenario, there is a set of questions about assessment quality, development, and alignment. In groups of three or four, spend three minutes brainstorming potential responses to one of the scenarios you selected. After each round, we will come back together as a group to share reflections on the questions posed."

Slides 11-14 – Ask participants to select one of the four scenarios and address the questions in small groups.

Following three minutes of conversation, ask the small groups to share reflections with the room. *(Five minutes total)*. Complete the same process with a second scenario chosen by participants in small groups *(Five minutes total)*

Slide 11—Begin the first scenario and ask participants to address the questions in small groups. Following three minutes of conversation, ask the small groups to share reflections with the room. *(Five minutes total)*

Slide 12—Begin the second scenario and ask participants to address the questions in small groups. Following three minutes of conversation, ask the small groups to share reflections with the room. *(Five minutes total)*

PART FOUR—NEXT STEPS AND REMAINING QUESTIONS

Time: 10 minutes

OUTLINE OF FACILITATION FOR EXERCISE

Participants will come back together as a large group to discuss three next steps they will take in the assessment inventory process.

Slide 13—Script: *"As your districts continue to plan assessment inventory processes, it is important to develop timelines based on your local needs and context. Take the next four minutes to address the questions listed in this slide."* *(Four minutes)*

[After four minutes] **Script:** *"While we do not have time to address all of your milestones now, what will be your*

immediate next steps in the assessment inventory process?" *(Ask for a response from each participant—three minutes.)*

Script: *"Finally, are there any questions that have not been addressed?"* *(Three minutes)*

Slide 14—Script: *"Thank you for participating in this Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts training. Please go to Achieve's assessment inventory website for additional resources, including sample teacher, parent, and student focus group and survey materials."*

Slide 15—Debrief the assessment scenario exercise by having volunteers address the questions on the slide. *(Two minutes total)*