Common Assessment Creation

Argumentative Writing

Mathematics Problem Solving

FAQ Speaking Points

Q1 What is the goal of this project?

The goal is to provide local building staff with relevant data connected to student performance in argumentative writing and mathematics problem solving and communication in order to refine and adjust instruction for improved student learning aligned to the CCSS.

Q2 What common assessments were created?

Two writing prompts per grade level (6 – 12) were created and two mathematics problem solving tasks per grade level (6 – 9) were created. Administration will be in the fall and in the spring. Three mathematics problem solving tasks were created for grades 1 – 5, with the goal of fall, mid-year, and spring administration.

Q3 Why should we use these assessments when we already use … for assessing writing and/or mathematics?

These assessments are aligned with SMARTER Balanced Assessment, which is what Michigan will use for students assessment within two years. These common interim assessments are aligned with SMARTER for content focus, design, style, D.O.K. and bias and sensitivity. Using them will allow us to begin to see how well our learning standards and instruction are aligned with CCSS (Claims #2 and #4 in ELA and Claims #2 and #3 in Mathematics) so that we can begin needed changes.

Q4 How will use of these assessments help me as a classroom teacher?

The purpose of administering the common assessments is to gather rubric scored, performance based information and to graphically display that information. This process will provide information on both individual student performance and on overall classroom performance. The goal is to provide actionable feedback, in a timely manner, to individual teachers and teacher teams for improved instruction and student learning.

The continuous use of the rubrics is encouraged throughout the school year. Both students and teachers will need a clear understanding of the ‘look fors’ in argument writing and mathematics problem solving, as we implement CCSS. The rubric will support both instruction and classroom assessment above and beyond this collaborative interim assessment project.

Q5 How much time will this common assessment take?

The writing assessment will model SMARTER Balanced Assessments. The writing assessments will take part of two days; a session to read and organize and then a session to write. On line assessment in Moodle will be available to support transition to the on line assessment SMARTER is implementing. The mathematics assessments, which also model SMARTER Balanced Assessments, will take about one class session to administer. No Moodle option is currently available for mathematics.

Q6 Who does the scoring of the assessments?

It is expected that teams of content teachers, including those who administer the assessments, will score student responses using the rubrics provided. Data will be organized by these teacher teams and forwarded to CGRESD. CGRESD will upload data into Data Director.

Q7 Who will use/see the results?

CGESD General Education will generate and review assessment results. As well, local teaching teams will use assessment results to determine how instruction in writing and mathematics needs to change in order to improve student learning aligned to CCSS. The assessment results will not be used in teacher evaluation nor will the results be shared with the public.

Q8 I teach … sections of mathematics/ELA. How can I possibly administer and score this many open ended responses and meet your deadline for data submission?

The goal of the project is to gather performance data on as many students as possible in order to make informed instructional decisions. We are asking all participating teachers to administer the writing or mathematics assessment to all of their students. Teachers will score student responses using the rubric provided. The scores **from at least two full sections** of mathematics or writing will be submitted for entry into Data Director. All other student responses would be scored, in house, and the data used for decision making and further instruction.

Q9 What happens to these student papers after the assessment?

Student responses will serve several purposes.

1. CGRESD will collaboratively collect and organize select anchor papers or anchor responses from across our participating buildings. Student names and building data will be removed and the papers formatted to illustrate a continuum of performance as described on the rubrics. The goal is to have anchor papers, in both writing and mathematics, ready for local use by spring 2013.
2. Classroom teachers will collect all student papers following the assessment administration and use them with students as teaching/learning tools, i.e. in a formative way. Note that these assessment results should not contribute to student achievement results or grades.
3. Ultimately student responses will be destroyed by classroom teachers in order to maintain the integrity of the assessment beyond 2012 - 2013. Student responses will not be sent home.