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 formative assessment 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 career and college readiness.

Q2 What common assessments were created?

Two writing prompts per grade level (6 – 12) and one spring writing prompt for grade 5 were created. Three mathematics problem solving tasks per grade level (6 – 8) were created. Administration will be in the fall and in the spring. Four mathematics problem solving tasks were created for grades 1 – 5, with the goal of fall, mid-year, and spring administration. Two tasks have been created for kindergarten, beginning mid-year.

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

These common interim assessments are aligned with Michigan’s definition of Career and College Readiness for content focus, D.O.K. and student performance. As examples of curriculum anchor tasks, these assessments are intended to be curriculum embedded and to integrate 21st century skills.

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

The purpose of administering the common formative 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 common understanding of the ‘look fors’ in argument writing and mathematics problem solving, as we strive for career and college readiness. 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 assessments will take two to four days; a 50 minute session to read and organize notes and then a 70 minute session to write. On line assessment in Moodle will be available. The mathematics 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 recommended that all students experience the assessment tasks. It is expected that teams of content teachers, including those who administer the assessments, will score student responses using the rubrics provided. Self-contained classroom teachers will score all student work. Departmentalized teachers may or may not score all student work. It is requested that departmentalized teachers score at least 50 – 60 student pieces, i.e. approximately two sections. The same 50-60 students should be scored fall and spring. 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. The overarching intent of this project is to support school improvement efforts. The assessment results will not be used in teacher evaluation nor will the results be shared with the public.

Q8 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 fall 2014.
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 2013 - 2014. Student responses will not be sent home.