

ACADIA STRATEGIC PLAN TO IMPROVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Acadia Parish historically gave district benchmark assessments but discontinued them with the adoption of standards in 2013. At the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year, the district team chose to analyze their overall assessment strategy and make a focused effort to use assessments to influence classroom instruction. They administered an on-line survey to teachers to gather data and to lay the foundation for the focus on assessments. The following trends emerged.

1. A significant number of teachers are giving weekly classroom tests to meet grading criteria.
2. The quality of classroom assessments varies significantly across the district.
3. Expectations of quality student work vary classroom to classroom and school to school.
4. Teacher conversations focusing on student work and assessment is inconsistent among the schools.

Based on these trends, Acadia Parish drafted and began implementing an assessment strategic plan.

Goal 1: Identify and focus on the purpose of classroom assessments, which is to determine if students learned what they were taught and adjust instruction accordingly.



	COMMUNICATIONS	TOOLS	TRAINING	POLICY
15-16	Teacher Survey: Reflections on # of required classroom assessments	Research bank of items for assessment development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formative & summative assessments Point value expectations and the impact on student learning/grading 	Optional bi-weekly testing schedule for ELA/Social Studies and Math/Science
16-17		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create test bank/common classroom assessments; focus on high needs areas first Develop models of quality classroom assessments 	How to use quality classroom assessments and to guide instruction and improve learning	Revise Pupil Progression to decrease # of required classroom assessments
17-18	Analyze how the reduction in testing policies and training on effective classroom assessments has impacted student learning	Continued: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create test bank/common classroom assessments Develop models of quality classroom assessments 	Continued: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality classroom assessments and how to use them to improve learning 	

Goal 2: Provide quality, aligned district assessments that:

- define expectations to help teachers help students meet their EOY goals and
- help the district determine where to best utilize time, resources, and finances.



15-16	Write, using a bank of quality items, and pilot winter assessments for specific grade levels in Math (3, 5, 7) to pilot in January
16-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise and administer piloted math assessments (grades 3,5,7) Write, using a bank of quality items, and pilot winter assessments for specific grade levels in Math (4, 6, 8) Begin ELA research process for creating benchmark assessments
17-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise and administer piloted math assessments (grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8) Pilot ELA assessments

Goal 3: Provide information from assessments to help teachers and students reach their goals.



15-16	Analyze data and share math results with partner schools. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. identify the level of proficiency by standards 2. address gaps in test taking strategies 3. provide data upon which to base classroom instruction and make appropriate adjustments.
16-17	Assist with data collection, item analysis, and sharing of results with grades 3-8.
17-18	Assist with data collection, item analysis, and sharing of results with grades 3-8.

VERMILION STRATEGIC PLAN TO IMPROVE ASSESSMENTS

At the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year, Vermilion Parish initiated a comprehensive needs assessment and included audit questions around district and classroom assessments. The following concerns were deemed priority based on the survey results:

The current district assessments do not:

- assess student writing in any subject;
- align to the curriculum;
- provide the basis of meaningful discussions among teachers about student work.

Based on these priorities, Vermilion Parish drafted the following strategic plan and began the work of implementation during second semester of the 2015-2016 school year.

Goal 1: Delineate between the purposes of assessments and ensure that each is playing the right role in decision making for students and teachers.



<p>YEAR 1 (15-16):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure student progression throughout the year in ELA, math, science, and social studies in 5th-8th using iReady and Study Island. • K-4 – ELA: Administer standardized writing prompts following each unit of study (3 times/year) • 3-8 – Math: Use iReady Standards Mastery (CCSS) Assessment to identify proficiency level of standards taught the 1st semester • Study available benchmark assessments for use in fall and winter of 2016-17.
<p>YEAR 2 (16-17):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess student progress throughout the year using curriculum embedded, aligned assessments. • ELA: Common culminating writing tasks following each unit of study • Math: End of module assessments to analyze standard mastery • Science: end of unit assessments which include a writing task • Social Studies: end of unit tasks

Goal 2: Benchmark assessments become a natural part of the overall assessment system, decrease the time students spend on classroom only assessments, and focus conversations around student work.



<p>YEAR 1 (15-16):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct data studies in PLC's using district assessments • Focus PLC discussions on student work from the writing prompts and end of unit math assessments. These assessments will be a natural part of the instructional process culminating classroom units of study. This will occur within the timeframe of the Scope and Sequence set by the district (within 2-3 week window).
<p>YEAR 2, 3, 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine above process

Goal 3: Benchmarks assessments are aligned to standards and current classroom instruction in all subjects. (Scope and sequence significantly impacts content assessed in ss, science, and math).



<p>YEAR 1 (15-16):</p>	<p>Analyze science and social studies standards and assessment framework to determine appropriate tasks and placement of those tasks within the scope and sequence</p>
<p>YEAR 2 (16-17):</p>	<p>Pilot benchmark assessments (tasks) in science and social studies</p>
<p>YEAR 3 & 4</p>	<p>Analyze, refine and implement science & social studies tasks</p>

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ASSESSMENT STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2017 AND BEYOND

St. John the Baptist Parish (SJBP) began administering district assessments in the 2014-2015 school year. District curriculum supervisors designed some assessments using banks of items such as EAGLE; other assessments were purchased programs that provided a pre-test/post-test model. After the first year of implementation, changes were made including:

- fewer assessments and a more flexible testing window,
- a small group of teacher leaders providing input on the content of the assessments,
- and stronger alignment of the assessments to the standards.

However, at the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year, SJBP still had the following concerns:

- Teachers do not seem to be invested in the district assessments; they don't use them as indicators of quality assessments or use the data to inform instruction.
- District assessments are kept secure; this practice may prevent the assessments from having a real impact on student learning.
- The pre-test/post-test model is only utilized for SLTs; the data does not inform district decisions.

SJBP performed an assessment audit and organized administrator, teacher, and student focus groups (elementary, middle, and high) to determine if their initial concerns were on target. The following plan was developed based on the audit findings and input of the focus groups.

ABBREVIATIONS KEY:

CF= Curriculum Facilitator

MT= Master Teacher

TL= Teacher Leader

DCT= District Curriculum Team

Goal #1: District assessments are high quality and teachers are using them to help students meet EOY goals.

INDICATOR 1.1: EVERY ASSESSMENT ALIGNED TO STANDARDS AND PRIORITY INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES



FOCUS	PROCESS/STEP	WHO	TIMELINE
Unit assessments for all core subjects (K-HS) improved and vetted by content and grade level specific groups of teachers	Teacher Leaders review scope and sequence for 2016-2017, suggesting revisions as necessary	CFs and TLs	Jan-March 2016
	Complete full draft unit assessments for 1st semester (2016-2017); any 3-HS paper-pencil unit assessments converted to online assessments; content-specific assessment gaps addressed	CFs	March-May 2016
	Finalize a protocol/process/session for vetting and revising unit assessments. Key steps of process as follows: (1) teachers unwrap standards (2) teachers complete unit-aligned items from released assessment item banks and/or EAGLE (3) teachers take current unit assessment and compare (4) teachers suggest revisions to specific items and/or item distribution	CFs	May 2016
Interim and Post-assessments	Assessments undergo any necessary revisions based on changes to scope and sequence and/or item analysis	CF's and TL's	May-July 2016

INDICATOR 1.2: SLTS PROVIDE MEANINGFUL GOALS FOR STUDENT LEARNING



FOCUS	PROCESS/STEP	WHO	TIMELINE
<p>Restructure SLTs</p> <p><i>Rationale: Pre-assessments currently demand a great deal of time to administer, but generally do not inform instruction</i></p>	Eliminate pre-assessments as they have traditionally been given (i.e., they will no longer be provided by district)	N/A	May 2016
<p>Develop updated guidance for SLTs</p> <p><i>Rationale: Teachers and their evaluators are responsible for formulating SLTs. However, in our first year without a pre-assessment, schools may need ideas as to what SL's might look like.</i></p>	<p>Develop examples for writing SLTs in the absence of a pre-assessment. Baseline may be based on prior year's EOY test scores (state and/or district testing). Possible ways to measure SLT attainment:</p> <p>(a) how students perform on district interims, postassessments, and/or EOC Exams in 2016-2017</p> <p>(b) Average performance on unit assessments in 2016-2017</p> <p>(c) STAR Formative assessments</p>	CFs	Jan-May 2016
Ongoing district/school site collaboration on SLTs	After aligning SLTs to school improvement goals, administrators submit requests for district support (e.g., "thought-partnering," calculators, etc.)	school admin; DCT	2016-2017, ongoing

INDICATOR 1.3: SYSTEMIC UNDERSTANDING OF DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS



FOCUS	PROCESS/STEP	WHO	TIMELINE
<p>Principals understand the results of the assessments and how to improve instruction to better meet EOY goals</p> <p><i>Comment: Process may undergo revision following district-to-district collaboration with Ascension Parish, St. Charles Parish</i></p>	<p>Focus principal meetings on student work, utilizing interim assessment data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analysis of a representative student response from low, middle and high students at each school exemplar responses analysis 	CFs prepare data; DCT leads session; school admin	February 2016, ongoing
Teachers understand the assessments and how to improve instruction to better meet EOY goals	<p>Finalize a protocol/process/session for developing teacher understanding of district interims/postassessments. Key elements include:</p> <p>(1) Purpose of benchmark assessments: a model of what student mastery looks like</p> <p>(2) Summary of assessment development</p> <p>(3) Teachers take the assessment for their course(s)/grade level(s) for upcoming year (2016-2017)</p>	classroom teachers	August, 2016 (PD day)
Ongoing evaluation of district assessment alignment	Annual Report on District assessments released/presented to school administrators (How do district scores align to state scores?)	DCT & CFs	May 2016
Ongoing evaluation of how district assessments are being perceived and used	Survey of teachers—longitudinal design using same questions from 2015-16 Assessment Pilot Focus Groups	DCT & CFs	January 2017

Goal #2: Classroom assessments are high quality and teachers are using them to help students meet EOY goals.

INDICATOR 2.1: PUPIL PROGRESSION REFLECTS THE USE OF CLASSROOM ASSESSMENTS TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING



FOCUS	PROCESS/STEP	WHO	TIMELINE
Pupil progression simplified	Revise pupil progression to make it less prescribed. Revisit proposal to have just two grading categories: formal and informal/summative and formative	Pupil Progression Committee	Summer 2016

INDICATOR 2.2: CLASSROOM ASSESSMENTS ARE THE FOCUS OF PROFESSIONAL CONVERSATIONS



FOCUS	PROCESS/STEP	WHO	TIMELINE
Master Teacher meetings focused on strategies for utilizing assessments to drive instruction	<p>Proposed MT Modules</p> <p>Module 1: Diagnosing student needs using assessment data and setting Big Goals</p> <p>Module 2: Utilizing assessments to cultivate a growth mindset in students—strategies at the classroom level (i.e., how to communicate assessment goals to students at the classroom level)</p> <p>Module 3: Utilizing assessments to cultivate a growth mindset in students—strategies at the school level (i.e., communicating assessment goals as part of school culture)</p> <p>Module 4: Improving student feedback with rubrics, rewrites, and redos</p> <p>Module 5: Monitoring and supporting teachers as they lead their students to attainment of goals</p>	MTs, CFs, DCT	2016-2017, ongoing