Module 1 - Overview of the MAC Common Assessment Module Series

[Slide 1] - Welcome to the Michigan Assessment Consortium Common Assessment Development series. This first module is an overview of the series titled "Building and Using Common Assessments: A Professional Development Series."

[Slide 2] - My name is Kathy Dewsbury-White and I will be your guide for this module.

[Slide 3] - This professional development series was conceptualized as a response to several factors. In the state of Michigan we have required high school course credits that comprise our Michigan Merit Curriculum. By law, credit awarded for these courses is to be determined, in part, through demonstrated achievement based on a common assessment. In theory common assessments should promote equitable access and opportunity to learn resulting in a viable, coherent curriculum for all students. However, if the common assessments are of poor quality because they are developed by individuals with no training in assessment and used in a high stakes manner – we have problems. The issue, in Michigan, and all over the country is this confluence of standards-based systems (that we have developed over the past 20 years) with no commensurate training, expectation or licensure requirements for teachers or administrators with respect to assessment practices.

A third factor influencing the conceptualization of this training is our belief in the essential properties of a balanced assessment system to close the achievement gap. This factor requires adopting practices that align with the belief that the mission of a school is to promote success for all students. This means adopting practices that use assessment to promote learning as opposed to using assessment to sort and select students.

Every school district is obliged to use state assessments, common/district assessments and classroom assessments. Balance is achieved through understanding the proportion of time and resource to dedicate to each type and making sure assessments and assessment practices are of high quality.

To deepen your understanding of balance in your system and practice we recommend, Assessment Balance and Quality: An Action Guide for School Leaders 3rd Edition c. 2010 Pearson Assessment Training Institute. A final factor influencing conceptualization of this series is our belief educators working together to develop common assessments that are of quality and using that evidence to improve instruction is one of the most hopeful tools we have at our disposal to improve student achievement.

[Slide 4] - This series provides an overview of technically sound but understandable methods for creating assessments that are useful in improving

student learning. It will take you step-by-step through the process. It will help you create reliable and valid measures. Many of the modules speak to the learner as if they are creating an end-of-course assessment – that's because when the series was first conceptualized we were focused on attempting to help districts meet the requirement in the state of Michigan about a common assessment at the conclusion of required high school courses.

You will hear terms that include: test, item development, validity, reliability, and test blueprint. It is our intention to equip you with a process and the tools to create an end-of-course assessment that yields accurate information that you can use effectively. However, you will also hear terms such as: performance assessment, rubric and portfolio. You will be deciding the purpose and outcomes of your common assessment and you may decide that you need to develop a single performance task to assess a group of students across a grade level as an interim measure to inform program effectiveness over time.

The principles addressed in this series about validity and reliability will still apply - we hope our thoughtful investigation about the entire range of issues important to development of a common assessment will be understood and applied to the full range of types of assessments you may choose to develop.

[Slide 5] - In this set of modules you will learn:
- What common assessments are & when to use them
- Criteria to select targets and match them to appropriate assessment methods
- How to develop, edit, field test, review and revise items
- How to use and report common assessment result, and that…
- Common assessments can be an important tool in quest to improve student achievement

[Slide 6] - There are twenty-two modules in this series. We will be reviewing the content of these modules – over four days. You are here as individuals who will be working with teacher teams to develop a common assessment. These modules are materials for your use and discretion with the teams you are leading. Today, we will work our way through Modules 2 through 7.

2. What Is a Common Assessment?
3. Determining the Outcome of the Common Assessment
4. Determining the Targets of the Assessment
5. Matching the Assessment Methods to the Learning Targets
6. Assessing Students with Special Needs
7. Writing the Test Blueprint

With your thoughtful feedback, we anticipate refining these modules, recording the scripts and archiving them online for your future use. The live or face-to-face sessions will follow the module content closely, however, we are not teaching this

content in a manner that implies you are the primary learner (that would be the teacher groups you work with). We will therefore demonstrate or engage you in a sample of discussion questions and activities. We hope you will add and share your teaching ideas for this content to the feedback forms we have provided.

When we see you in December, you will have met with your teacher teams and developed your Test Blueprint.

[Slide 7] - When we meet with you in December, we will work through Modules 8 – 15. These topics include:

8. Writing Selected-Response Items
9. Writing Constructed-Response Items
10. Writing Performance Assessment Items
11. Using Portfolios to Assess Students
12. Developing and Using Scoring Guides and Rubrics
13. Editing the Draft Test Items
14. Detecting and Eliminating Bias in Assessment Items
15. Assembling the Assessment Instrument

We hope to speak to you in a webinar or videoconference between December and April about field testing your assessment (Module 16).

[Slide 8] - When we see you in April we will work through Modules 16 – 22. They include:

17. Looking at Field Test Data
18. Reliability
19. Establishing Validity
20. Assembling the Final Common Assessments
21. Standard Setting
22. Presenting the Results of the Assessment
23. Using the Results of the Assessment

[Slide 9] - We have indicated we view you as facilitators who will be working with teacher teams. Ultimately we hope these modules and accompanying resources will be of use to…

• Individual teachers interested in improving their assessment practice
• School or district teams who want to build common assessments
• District or intermediate district specialists who are leading others in assessment development