



Assessment Learning Network Schedule for 2020-21

All events will be held virtually

The 2020-21 ALN sessions will explore implications for teaching and assessing in virtual environments. As educators and students embrace the responsibility to impact learning in new distance, virtual, and hybrid environments necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic, we will amplify and enhance what we know about good assessment practice and its ability to support learning.

Assessment Learning Network, Event #1

Tuesday, September 29, 2020- 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Interim Assessments and Tools for Teachers

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Our first ALN session for 2020-21 will provide an overview of the **Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) Interim Assessment** and the accompanying **Tools for Teachers** website. The SBAC Interim is the no-cost option offered by Michigan Department of Education to meet the interim assessment requirements in Michigan PA 149 of 2020. We'll look at the purposes for interim assessment and where it fits within a district's assessment system. We'll also demonstrate the strategies and tools offered in the SBAC's accompanying Tools for Teachers website.

Framing questions:

- What options are available to districts under PA 149 of 2020 and where do they fit within a balanced assessment system?
- What are some high-level understandings of the SBAC interim assessments and Tools for Teachers?
- What do SBAC interim assessments and Tools for Teachers look like to a teacher using them?
- How might the SBAC interim assessments and formative assessment strategies in Tools for Teachers be expanded by engagement with Michigan's Formative Assessment for Michigan Educators (FAME) program?

Assessment Learning Network, Event #2

Wednesday, October 21, 2020- 12:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Prioritizing and Assessing Standards to Accelerate Learning

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Facilitated Discussion by Kathy Berry, Ed Roeber, Ellen Vorenkamp

Prioritizing grade-level standards and focusing instructionally embedded assessments and formative assessment practices on *current* grade-level standards promises to accelerate student learning. This strategy can help schools avoid the loss of valuable time identifying what wasn't taught last year, and it provides the most equitable option available for Michigan's students.

Four principles guide the assessment of prioritized grade-level standards:

- Assessment should be used to determine *how* to bring students into grade-level instruction, not *whether* to bring them into it. Assessment should not be used as a gatekeeper to grade-level content.
- The formative assessment process is our strongest tool to support and accelerate learning and growth; we must use it.

- Targeted checks using instructionally embedded assessments (IEAs), followed immediately by the use of that information, will support instruction; use of diagnostic assessments, as suggested by IEAs and/or formative practices, will be helpful.
- The first several weeks of school should focus on students' social, physical, and emotional well-being and strengthen relationships and establish cultures conducive to learning.

Assessment Learning Network, Event #3

Thursday, November 12, 2020- 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Assessing Social Emotion Learning, with Christina Cipriano

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There are many initiatives at the local and federal level to assess social and emotional learning. It is of paramount importance for practitioners and school administrators to understand their options and the possibilities for assessing student and teacher growth in social and emotional competencies and related development. Assessment is important to any aspect of teaching and learning. What instruments are available to assess social-emotional competencies and skill development? What types of information do they provide, and how can such information be used to support individual students as well as the educators and systems we build to support students? This session will look at some of the instruments available, describe the types of scores and other information they provide, and suggest some ways this information might be used to improve the school environment and individual student learning.

Framing questions:

- What is SEL and why would we assess it?
- How do we assess SEL?
- How does assessing SEL fit in the overall building and district assessment system?

Assessment Learning Network, Event #4

Thursday, December 3, 2020- 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Best Classroom Summative Assessment Methods & Strategies in a Virtual Environment, with Doug Fisher

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The shift to distance learning presents opportunities to expand our repertoire of classroom assessment methods. This session will demonstrate how educators can incorporate alternatives that emphasize meaningful tasks, afford opportunities to differentiate, and use feedback well, within the context of students' social-emotional needs. This session also will share lessons learned about the importance of helping parents understand the role and purpose of assessment to support and advance learning.

Framing Questions:

- How has distance and virtual learning expanded the repertoire of classroom summative assessment formats we might elect to use?
- What are the characteristics and features of virtual classroom summative assessment methods that engage learners, provide opportunities to differentiate learning, and assess complex skills and higher order thinking?
- What feedback opportunities exist in distance and virtual environments? Why is it important to use feedback—including empathetic feedback—effectively to support teaching, learning, and assessing?
- What do parents need to know about the role and purpose of classroom summative assessment so that they support their student's learning from home?

Assessment Learning Network, Event #5**Tuesday, March 2, 2020- 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.****Grading for Equity: What It Is, Why It Matters, and How It Can Transform Schools and Classrooms, with Joe Feldman**[REGISTER HERE](#)

Despite our deepest commitment to equity, many of our current grading practices are artifacts of the Industrial Revolution and actually undermine effective teaching and perpetuate achievement disparities. Equitable grading and assessment are particularly relevant during the pandemic, and how school and district leaders can support more consistent, equitable grading practices.

The session will examine current grading practices, introduce equitable grading practices, describe the quantitative and qualitative data describing the impact of current grading practices on historically underserved students.

Framing questions:

- What is the genesis of our grading, and what is the conflict between traditional grading and our contemporary beliefs about teaching, learning, and equity?
- What opportunities have emerged to accelerate letting go of traditionally inequitable grading practices in favor of using equitable grading practices in virtual or hybrid school environments?
- What is the framework for equitable grading? What are examples of specific equitable grading practices?
- How do more equitable grading and assessment practices improve achievement outcomes, strengthen teacher-student relationships, motivate and empower students, reduce stress, and align our grading with our beliefs and purpose as educators?

Assessment Learning Network, Event #6**Wednesday, April 21, 2020- 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.****Formative Assessment Strategies that Improve Distance Learning Opportunities for Students with Disabilities, with Susan Brookhart**[REGISTER HERE](#)

This ALN session will examine the use of formative assessment practices with students with disabilities during distance learning. We will examine this issue through the lens of the learning cycle that asks: Where am I going? Where am I now and Where to next? The session will focus on just five strategies recommended by Susan Brookhart as first steps to improve distance learning outcomes for students with disabilities.

Framing Questions

- What about the formative assessment process works well to support the learning of students with disabilities?
- What strategies are recommended for use in distance learning? How and why do these select strategies support the needs of students with disabilities?
- What experiences are current practitioners who have employed these strategies having with their students? What advice or recommendations might they offer?



Questions about the ALN can be addressed to
Jim Gullen (jgullen@michiganassessmentconsortium.org) or
Kathy Dewsbury-White (kdwhite@michiganassessmentconsortium.org)