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Loudoun County School Board, Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting, Wednesday, November 4, 2026

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- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): https://player.vimeo.com/video/1244086212?rel=0
- BoardDocs (School Board): https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-11-06. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:00] Hey, good afternoon, everyone. I'd like to call this November 4th meeting of the Curriculum and Instruction Committee meeting to order. My name is Dr. Rasheed, and I'm the chair of this committee, and we appreciate everyone's presence here today. The purpose of this meeting is to approve the minutes from our last meeting and to go over, I believe, 4.01.

[00:00:19] There's been a little bit of a change with that. We will be revisiting that very soon, and then an information item for 5.01 common assessment update. I don't think anybody signed up for public comment. So we'll then go ahead. We'll need to approve the minutes from our last meeting, which was October 7th.

[00:00:40] Has everyone had a chance to review the minutes? Are there any corrections or additions? I don't see any. I entertain a motion to approve those October 7th minutes. So moved. It's been moved by Mr. Svensson. Do I hear a second? Second. Seconded by Ms. Chernoff.

[00:00:56] Thank you, everyone. All those in favor say aye for the minutes. Aye. Okay. So those minutes have been approved. So we'll go on to our first agenda item, which is 4.01, updates to policy 5430, use of generative AI. I will turn it over to Mr. Aaron Smith to comment. Thank you.

[00:01:14] Excellent. Well, thank you. First, I want to say thank you to Mr. Sleipman for presenting this in October. I was out of town, and so he kind of carried the torch, and so happy to bring this back tonight. It was intended to be an action item tonight because it was an information item at the October 7th meeting. However, VSBA released their model generative AI policies and we got them on Thursday.

[00:01:34] And so we've been working with division council to kind of incorporate those. A unique feature of the VSBA model policies is they have two options. So we're dissecting those and seeing where they kind of need to go into policy. So I'm more than happy to walk through some of the feedback.

[00:01:49] We can hold the entire item as we're gonna probably bring a reshaped policy to the next meeting And then get feedback of if that should be an action item or information item at the next meeting So we do I wouldn't say we expect substantial changes But we are going to be making changes to the policy based on the VSBA model policies Sounds fair. Thank you so much. Mr. Smith. I have no questions or any questions from board members. All right Okay, so then we will move this forward to our December 2nd December 2nd meeting as an action item if I'm not mistaken. Okay, great. We will now move on to

[00:02:24] Information item 5.01 common assessment update. I will turn it over to mr. Sullivan. Thanks. Thank you, dr. Rasheed We are going to provide the committee an update on our approach to common assessments this fall It has been a strong collaboration between the Department of teaching and learning and school leadership Represented here by mr. Roundsley and mr. West And I believe mr. Roundsley is kicking us off. All right. Good evening, everyone We are going to spend a little bit of time today talking about our common assessments that we have launched in grades K through 12 this year each of them have a little bit of nuances to

[00:03:04] them and what we're what we're asking our teachers and our students to do so we want to spend a little bit of time unpacking that and also talking about some of the benefits that we are already seeing from this work so on the next slide here's three things we want to do today first clarify the the role of common assessments and the expectations around a common assessments that have been established the second one is to connect and to show how some of the data that we are gathering supports both our curriculum development and the teaching and learning happening in our classrooms and the third one is to contribute and to really we have we have built a really solid partnership with our teachers and our principals and some feedback loops that are

[00:03:42] already helping us make some adjustments and changes and the opportunities we've already identified to continue to grow and improve and enrich some of these assessments that we are providing so our first section is going to be around clarifying our common assessments the why behind that and what we're doing and mr. West is gonna walk us through that good afternoon so next slide please so when we're talking about the Y and looking at the purpose of common assessments so the first item that we're looking at is the raised expectations that we have now in Virginia with the new cut scores being

[00:04:17] implemented and in terms of what the new expectations for a proficiency are now at grade level standards within the state so it's really important that our assessments and our instruction and assessment within the classrooms are at the correct level of difficulty matching what there's new expectations are from the state in terms of those standards secondly in terms of building coherence that's extremely important so our state standards inform our written curriculum and which is our pacing guides and from there we will have our taught curriculum which is our instructional profile in terms of how are the learning it takes

[00:04:56] place within the classrooms then we have our supported curriculum which is the different high quality instructional materials we have and how we support that with professional learning then the next through line with that is when we get to our assessments and so that was sort of a piece that we really needed to to strengthen here making sure that we had a assessments that are aligned throughout that process and then finally leads to our learned curriculum making sure that the learning is reflective of those standards and the connection all the way through that so that really creates coherence throughout our entire curriculum um then from there as we have that coherence you want to make sure

[00:05:33] that we're having consistency in regards to those expectations and the experiences our students are having throughout our entire division so no matter what school that you're going to for instance if in your third grade no matter what classroom or teacher you have that we're having consistent expectations and outcomes for all of our students so having you know these assessments are really important part of that process then it also leads to opportunities to problem-solve you know as our staff as we have these common assessments these are really important at the individual teacher level for reflection and learning for grade level teams and also for entire school

[00:06:10] leadership teams in terms of especially informing their school improvement processes and having some data to really respond to for their PDSA cycles and then finally most important is that instructional response and that's at that student level to making sure that all of our students are moving forward whether they've already mastered the items or whether they need additional support making sure that they're successful with their learning these are the key components with our instructional profile so we have design engage assess reflect and respond and so as we develop these common assessments

[00:06:49] that really fits into that component of assessment here and each of these components really interconnected and integrated so they really inform each of the other so as our teachers are designing curriculum if they have these or designing the learning experiences if they have these common assessments at the beginning they really had that end in mind really to inform their their planning and then what the instruction looks like throughout this and most importantly once again getting back to that reflect and respond at the end really having that data to make sure that they have an idea of every student in terms of what their needs are and making sure that responsive to their

[00:07:26] age. I think I first shared this slide at the November 2024 CNI meeting and I have been talking about it for a long time since then but as part of Dr. Spence's entry plan we had a curriculum audit and had outside experts evaluate the curriculum that we provide to our students and teachers and came away with these five recommendations. The first one is to improve our clarity around our definition of curriculum and what that means. The second one is consistency around how we share that with our teachers you know an elementary teacher is accessing all of the different content areas so

[00:08:02] how are we being consistent in the format of how we share that curation is how do we organize that and then the last two are around how are we engaging teachers in that process and using our curriculum as a foundational piece of our professional learning that we're doing to strengthen the teaching and learning that happens and how are we communicating to our school leaders and to our teachers the expectations around that curriculum we wanted what we want to have people do with that.

[00:08:26] And common assessments really do play a key part in all of those things. When we had those evaluations done, the feedback we got was, the resources are amazing, the lessons are great, and our weakest point is assessment and how we're measuring student learning. So this really does relate back to

that audit that happened back in 2024 and how we're thinking about measuring our learning and how we're improving the curriculum and the work that we're providing.

[00:08:50] I'm gonna show you some practical ways that it helps us do that a little bit later the presentation. So we have really been focused on the first three aspects of this and again I just want to show how assessment is connected to that. The first one is developing a consistent definition of curriculum. It's a very long definition but it's where we are right now.

[00:09:09] Probably could use some wordsmithing but a key part of that is that assessment is is included in when we talk about curriculum that we are providing assessments and ways that teachers are measuring learning. The second one is consistency and that template is built around our instructional framework assessment is a key component of our instructional framework and so we want to make sure in our curriculum that we are providing opportunities for assessment to our teachers and the third one is our curation and organization of power school curriculum and instruction i'm going to talk about this at the next board meeting on november 10th and dive a little bit deeper into that but how we pace our instruction how we make sure that we have consistent

[00:09:44] experiences and consistent care for our students and assessment helps us do that as well so the process of common assessments you know began last spring in terms of engaging principals in the decision to move forward with this process so as you see principals and this data here reflects all three levels not just elementary but 77% of principals we're in favor of utilizing the common assessments you know throughout our schools so that's a pretty high mark especially getting a bunch of principals in the room to agree on on one direction that's not an easy

[00:10:22] tasks but this was definitely something that was being asked for within our schools from from our school leaders to make sure that once again we really had that connection from what our standards are to the SOL's but in between that we really have those aligned assessments to make sure that we're able to respond to those in real time to make sure that all of our students are progressing and where they need to be so one question we've received as the launch of common assessments is who created these and where did they come from these are just three important points we want to make sure that everyone is aware of the first one is that these assessments were teacher created either by using our

[00:11:00] approved materials and approved resources HMH for elementary literacy as an example the grade level and content expertise of teachers during our curriculum week over the summer teachers worked on these to develop these and the third one are the resources developed collaboratively with other school divisions and so while common assessment is relatively new for us it is not new to many other school divisions.

[00:11:21] There's a group called VASCOL, which is a consortium of different school divisions that develop and share assessment materials aligned to SOLs. We're a member of that, and we're able to utilize those and pull those into our common assessments as well. The second thing is that they were reviewed for standards alignment, and so teams of teachers, again, this summer, looked at the assessments, tracked them against the standards of learning, and tied the common assessments to standards to make sure that they did line up with the instructional objectives and the standards as well the third one is that they're continuously evaluated and revised and as i have told teachers when i talk with them about this where we know that these assessments

[00:11:57] have room for growth and to get better and part of this is using the process of delivery of the assessments and analysis the results to think about how we can improve them and keep making gains and keep making them better and better and more reliable for our teachers so a key point to take away here is that we know they are a work in progress and we know that we are leveraging our teachers their expertise and their experience to help us make these more effective and better tools and so when we talk about common assessments we are talking primarily here about using a tool

[00:12:32] called performance matters so there are three different kinds of when we say assessments that are built into performance matters the first one are performance matters short formatives these are very short maybe one assessments that's what i was just referring to teacher teams creating these aligning them and continually evaluating them to make them better and these are meant to be delivered at the end of a unit of instruction primarily so these are are meant to measure mastery after a time of instruction and the third one is called performance matters practice comprehensives these have been developed by performance matters aligned to our sols these are longer assessments they're more like a practice sol maybe something that a teacher might

[00:13:12] give once or twice a year towards the end of the year prior to an SOL to measure and practice student learning so the for the short formative those very short one or two question assessments tied to a standard those are optional at all levels they're not required but are available for teachers to use as are the practice comprehensives the common LCPS common assessments were developed with principals and our level offices to think about what would be required and what would be

[00:13:47] optional. So at the elementary level in grades K through 5 math and English language arts are required and in 3 through 5 science is required. K through 2 science is optional. We originally had those as required but again based on teacher feedback we were able to pull that back and say that those would be optional assessments that teachers could use if they wanted to but were not required to use in middle school math is required and science is optional and in high school math is also required social studies has a separate process around performance assessments

[00:14:22] that are part and tied to their it's sort of the the social studies equivalent of the standards of learning so that has been a regularly part of the process in performance matters and science remains optional so we have a chart that was uploaded on board docs as well that kind of spells all this out in the different nuances by grade level but this is a look at what is required and optional at the different content areas so with a common assessments there's requirements for schools and you can see those with our shared expectations and then there's also areas where schools grade levels or

[00:15:01] individual teachers have some you know choice in terms of how to proceed so you have our tight and our loose here so with the type and the shared expectations what we're looking at is required assessments and I believe you also have a at-a-glance document in your materials that highlights a lot of the information on this page as well so you can see sort of where some of that autonomy is and also where required assessments are because there's specific to subject and grade level there's some variance there in terms of what that looks like as well if assessments are being used at the elementary level for grading then students are required to receive their accommodations throughout

[00:15:41] that process and the idea that we hopefully have been hearing throughout this is that assessments are just never supposed to be given but also always supposed to be used to inform instruction so once again how are our teams coming together to collaborate around these shared outcomes and then

finally how they're responding to them at the student level and how is it instruction in the classroom being adjusted to reflect that make control our students are progressing some of the options are with the pacing so there's there's recommended windows that align with the pacing guides but there's an understanding that different classrooms will be at different places in regards you know to the pacing of the curriculum so that there's an openness with those

[00:16:20] windows in terms of when to administer the assessments also with test administration so in terms of how the test is being administered there's options in terms of for instance with the English language arts assessments that those can be broken up into the writing and reading sections administered over different day periods so there's options within that and in terms of that instructional response how the teams are using that so for instance are you you know doing one-on-one support for students are you pulling the small groups or different types of things or so there's options for for schools in terms of how they respond to that and then finally what this and how this is

[00:16:57] informed at the grading and the choices schools have with that to inform great so we want to show you a few examples of how schools and teacher teams may use the data that is gathered from these common assessments part of as mr. West was referencing the power of these is not giving the assessments but what we do with it afterwards and how we analyze it and use it to further and advance teaching and learning.

[00:17:21] So on the next slide this is a protocol that was developed by our coaches and our division of professional growth and innovation to help teams work through the data that is a part of performance matters. Now the expectation would not be that a team does all six of these steps with every test that's probably pretty time intensive but that they could use the steps that are included in this document to help them guide them through thinking about some of the data and what they might use so step three is standards analysis this would be using the data that you gathered from a performance matters assessment to think about how you might approach learning in your classroom and the next couple of

[00:18:01] slides would would walk us through how that might work so on the next slide this is the results that a teacher might receive from a from a test those blue bars well sorry under attribute those are the standards and if we were in performance matters you could hover on any one of those ovals and it would give you the full standard then it tells you the number of items that were measuring that and the count of students so that blue bar represents mastery the student really understands that and the red bar would represent that the student did not get that the green and yellow bar in the middle we might call them approaching or developing but the blue bar represents mastery of that content standard so

[00:18:40] here's an example as a teacher where you might look at that bar and say we need to do a whole class reteach. I only had four students who mastered that standard and the rest kind of fell short of that in some way. Now you could hover on any one of those bars in Performance Matters and it would give you the names of the students who fell into that category. So if you're looking for who these students are and who may need additional attention, you would have ready access to that. But this would inform you as a teacher to say, I think I probably need to review this topic with the whole class because it's clear that some of my students, most of my students did not grasp this. You might on the next slide look at these and say okay these are standards that my

[00:19:17] students really did master except for a few. So I need to find an opportunity to touch base with these few kids and help them kind of review some of these standards and get some additional help with

this learning. But I know that for the most part my class mastered this standard and I'm able to move on at this point. Or you may have a kind of a mixed bag on the next slide. So here's ones where we have a majority of the class or maybe half the class who did master that particular standard but some other students who may need some additional help. So if you're thinking about small groups and small group instruction this can really help you quickly inform who needs to be in which

[00:19:52] groups, how you might structure that to help them and important for this dialogue too is for teachers to to be engaging with these standards and you may say we're going to return to this standard multiple times over the next several months. I'm not worried about this right now. I don't need to do a lot of this right now but in the but I'm going to continue to monitor it and make sure that my students are progressing. So that's one way that you would use this as a classroom teacher or as a team to make decisions around student learning. The next slide is how we are using this in the content offices to continue to improve what we're doing. So this is a standards report and it's kind of on the back end of what that test looks like. So on the next slide you'll see

[00:20:32] an item highlighted and that is called the coefficient alpha. I'm not a statistician But the coefficient alpha really helps us measure how reliable our assessments are. So, for example, if I'm going to hopefully explain this correctly, if there are multiple items measuring the same standard on an assessment, we would expect a student to do the same on those assessments, either to get those assessments correct or to get those questions incorrect.

[00:20:58] But if a student is getting one right and two wrong, that would be a sign that this might not be a reliable assessment. So that's what's calculated through the coefficient alpha and a 0.6 is considered a reliable assessment. You can see that this particular assessment is a 0.745. So we would consider this a reliable test. The next thing on here is the p-value and the p-value is a measure of how hard or easy the questions are on the test. So a zero means it was really hard. A zero means nobody got it right. A one means everybody got it right. So somewhere in the middle tells us how hard or easy that test is. This particular math assessment for fifth grade was a 0.63

[00:21:36] and then below that is what you would call the p-value sandwich. So what we're looking for when we're designing tests are to have some questions that are really challenging, some questions that are really easy, and a nice healthy sandwich there in the middle. And this assessment really leaned towards more questions that were easy than questions that were hard and we may think about what we do with this information so now that we know this now that we know that assessment was reliable and that assessment had a lot of questions that were easy what might we do and this is something that our content teams are doing on the next slide here's some responses

[00:22:14] that our math team made to this data last year so learning experiences if we have a particular question that was really hard and students struggled with a question that teams are reflecting on is why is it because we didn't have a lesson devoted to that into our curriculum do we need to enhance the teaching of that standard in our curriculum do we need to add something new that happened is it the question so is there something that was unclear about the question that we need to fix or make better is the assessment reliable so one issue that we may have is that the the coefficient alpha that I showed you doesn't show the assessment to be reliable often that's

[00:22:54] because we don't have enough questions to to do that so how are we going to make this assessment more reliable do we need to add additional questions to increase the reliability and the last

one is the the depth of knowledge or rigor balance so that last question we saw had a lot of questions that were considered very easy maybe we need to make this test more challenging maybe we need to to add to the rigor of that test really what this does is allow content and curriculum teams to use the student learning to make the the curriculum that we're providing to our teachers better more aligned more rigorous more standards aligned and to hopefully see

[00:23:32] that pan out in the assessment results and to use this kind of data to continue to make with our curriculum and our assessments better next slide please so throughout this process the implementation this fall of the common assessments there's been you know outreach to make sure that we're really listening to to schools and how they're implementing this to make sure that we can be responsive because ultimately one make sure that all of our teachers and schools are being successful you know within this so you see a lot of

[00:24:07] different sort of categorization here of some of the feedback and then some of the responses that have been taken place so for instance within frequency of assessments there's been some changes has specifically been made especially at the lower grades classrooms in regards to the requirement was science common assessments assessment format we have also have a lot of schools that are part of a low-tech pilot so making sure and also other schools are just interested in not using you know technology opportunities in terms of you know paper and pencil assessments and how they can administer the assessments as

[00:24:42] well there's also been a big discussion sort of around the grading consistency of these comment assessments so with that there's been really two main changes that are been are going to be starting here with the second quarter in regards to this the first one is making sure that the terminology within the results of the common assessments of performance matters matches what's on a report card so there was inconsistent terminology there so meaning that the terminology that was for a four three or two or one so now it will reflect the report card technology of exceeds meets progressing towards and below so there's

[00:25:20] consistency within that and then the second is is how those the four three two and one those terms are now being defined what the performance bands are so those now are being revised in the second quarter and those are once again specific by subject and and that's based upon so they examined the performance on common assessments and how that's relating to performance on as well performance and what's in the advanced and proficiencies and aligning with the new cut scores so these performance bands now in the second quarter moving forward are going to be aligned with the new proficiency expectations of the

[00:25:56] SOL so they're that therefore when a teacher sees that a student gets a four that they can really trust that that's going to be advanced or if the student gets a three that helps to inform them it doesn't guarantee those results but students on track for meeting expectations of these new cut scores that are gonna be implemented and then finally our schools also have been asking for how to explain sort of what our common assessments and what does this look like and some of these issues and so there's a principles update that went this week to support schools with communication to families as well one

[00:26:34] key part to our common assessments has been the use of let's talk or on flow as a way for our teachers to ask questions directly and they have asked a lot of questions and it's been really great to see the conversations that have happened between teachers and our content offices and to also see the really

thoughtful responses and support that our content offices have provided so these are three samples of the types of questions we're receiving. The first one is about clarity and alignment and just an example here of a teacher asking how a particular question or concept is really tied to the standards that they're teaching in their class and then our math office being able to point out

[00:27:12] the real purpose behind the question and what the goal of that question might be. There's been lots of questions around teachers getting clarification around what the standards are what they say and what they might look like in practice. It's been a really valuable way for us to help with that consistency and coherence and rigor piece of what Mr. West was talking about earlier and how this can support that work across our schools. The next one is an example of assessment structure and feedback that we've gotten from teachers around how to make the assessments better.

[00:27:42] So here's one where a teacher is talking about to support that grading point that Mr. West just made. How can we separate out the reading and the writing standards for our teachers to make it easier for them to identify grades and to use the information and our elementary ELA office was able to clarify that they've done that and there you'll see those those changes reflected starting with the fourth module and that teacher said amazing thank you for that feedback they got and the last one is an example of scoring accuracy so there are a lot of assessments there and sometimes things are not quite right there might be a mistake or a typo in those assessments as I've often told

[00:28:21] teachers what seemed to make sense when it was six teachers sitting around a table in a library in the summer working on these suddenly has a different look when it's four thousand students taking it and so there's a need sometimes to make those tweaks and changes to an assessment as quickly as we can here's an example where the scoring was off and our team was able to go in and make those changes quickly and we got a 10 out of 10 on that one for how quickly we were able to address those concerns and improve those tests. So the one big point that I just want to drive home here is that we need our teachers to help make these better and we need

[00:28:57] our teachers to give us this feedback and to share the experience because on the other end of the line the content offices who are developing these and creating these are taking it really seriously and really thinking about how we might make this work for the intended purpose of supporting teaching and learning. And finally even though this is very early in this process we do have a couple of things that we are highlighting and celebrating. The first one is despite in those let's talks, and many of them start, I understand the rationale behind common assessment. I know the purpose behind this. It makes sense, but you need to look at this question or you need to look at this test. I think there is a broad agreement around the philosophy of this, around a sense of

[00:29:36] consistency, around the information they can provide to us in the support of student learning. The second thing is that we are seeing teams continuing to use these assessments to support student learning and support responses to student learning and to give schools really immediate tier one data around how students are doing with the instruction in their classrooms.

[00:29:58] And the third one is intentional planning. And we continue to hear about teams that are starting with the assessment, thinking about the skills our students need and working backwards, planning backwards from that to make sure that students are equipped with the knowledge that they need when they take the assessment and support that intentional planning of our clts and so we do believe that these common assessments are strengthening our collaboration and really giving teachers and educators

and principals more information that's valuable in making instructional decisions supporting school improvement plans and measuring student progress and with that we are happy to take any questions

[00:30:34] that you might have okay thank you so much that's a lot of information board members any questions yes mr spencer thank you dr rashid um thank you for the presentation um i was wondering because we've focused on how the teachers are utilizing the assessments to inform their instruction as i was wondering from the student perspective particularly for the assessments that are done on performance matters where it's not a piece of paper that they're handed back with their their answers uh marked yes or no what's the feedback loop for you know each and like for the formative assessments and the cumulative assessments in terms of going through with with the student, their particular answers.

[00:31:11] I don't know who's best placed, but I was curious about that 'cause I have heard concerns about, especially when utilizing tech, that what is the process for going through with a student, what they got wrong, why, and informing them for the next test.

[00:31:30] - So that is definitely a question that we've been navigating and how we could make that better. So here's a couple of things I would say about that. First of all, what students can see after the assessment is a standards report, so how they fared on each one of those standards. They could also see with their teacher in like a conference style, how they were doing, and a teacher could walk through them with that.

[00:31:51] We did have a reference on that one slide to test security, and that is something that we're trying to navigate, because as I've mentioned a couple of times, the goal is to make these assessments continually better, and if we also release the assessments for validity, we probably would have to start over again, and then we have, the goal is to keep making these work better and better and better.

[00:32:10] So our schools, not surprisingly, have really helped us think through how we might do this. We had an example from an elementary school that isn't necessarily giving back the actual assessment, but providing students with an example of what a question aligned to that standard might look like to help them see where exactly, if there's a standard they were struggling with, what they might do.

[00:32:30] And we are really thinking about how we develop implementation guides to help schools do that with that being a part of it. what are some sample questions, but I would agree that has been a point of contention in how we continue to use these as a piece of learning, and we're really actively trying to think through how we might do that in the best way possible.

[00:32:51] - Thank you, I appreciate that. Another piece of feedback is on the frequency point that you mentioned on the slide, and just was curious in addition to the science piece, how you all are, and rolling back the requirements for the younger grades on science, how you all are thinking about incorporating that feedback on frequency.

[00:33:09] And I appreciate the statistics here about the low percentage of instructional time that's actually allotted for the assessments. But having heard from constituents that it does feel like there's a lot of assessments, how you all are incorporating that feedback into the process.

[00:33:29] So one thing I would say about that is that the intention of these is not necessarily to have these assessments and other assessments too, or additional assessments, but that these hopefully can replace some of the things that teachers are doing and not add to the assessment burden that they might be feeling. We have tried to, so the assessments that students are taking are from the HMH platform that we

use for elementary literacy, and that test has a couple of different options for assessment. One is the weekly assessments, that's what we're using.

[00:34:01] The other one is a module assessment, so that would happen after students complete a module. That assessment is really the weekly assessments put together. So it is a much longer test, and that was one of the things that we kept in mind while we were working on these is to try and keep the amount of time that students were working on these assessments down, and this felt like the most efficient, like the way that was going to take the least instructional time.

[00:34:29] We have also had some flexibility around the first two weeks of those assessments should be considered formative and the third one should be considered summative. We've given some schools some flexibility around that as well. But it is something that we continue to monitor the amount of time taken, the feedback that we're getting from teachers.

[00:34:47] And those are the kinds of things that we're considering as we think about how we make these better in the future. Thank you. Appreciate it. Yes, Ms. Sherna. Thank you, Chair Sheed. i uh want to say a few things um i am want to be clear that i agree with your last sentiment that you said about people agree that common assessments are important and that consistency is important and i think in a division as large as ours it is something that we have struggled with um and we have a very we have very diverse schools we have very diverse needs and so

[00:35:26] I agree that staying on track and staying consistent is very important. I also think that knowing where we stand throughout the year and according to the standards is of immeasurable value. Obviously, that is important. What I am struggling with, and I'm going to focus my comments, I want to be clear on the K2 portion, is really if we're getting out of this what we think is best in a developmentally appropriate way. I think all of this sounds really great.

[00:36:04] I really do. I see the slides. I see the charts. I see all the things that teachers can do and do in CLT, and all I see is minutes, minutes, minutes, minutes, minutes stacking on top of each other. And one of the things that I am particularly concerned about is, one, it being on technology, especially particularly in second grade i see and i'm mostly talking about the reading i think the math people are coming around about i think change is hard but i think the math is pretty straightforward and it feels responsive and you can look at the question and see the skill and

[00:36:41] you can evaluate that reading is a lot more fluid we know that and we've gone through many iterations of assessment for reading in terms of reading levels and strategies and skills and then additionally making sure you understand grammar and phonics and all those things so all of that layered on top of each other for our littlest learners feels like a lot to me and I'm struggling when we are really pushing back on some of the practices with technology and really trying to find that balance but then requiring this and I've spoken about this at the state level too

[00:37:18] but then requiring this at such a frequent level feels like a contradiction I also when i see all of this and i read all of this i am picturing these little people that are sitting on a carpet and i i understand why you guys break down the time frame for us and how long these assessments are and we've talked about this with screen time we've talked about it with different things i think there are things that are not accounted for in here and it's one of the things i really struggled with with the master schedule when we rolled out the minutes and basically we were pretending that kids teleported from their classroom to lunch from lunch to recess and kids

[00:37:57] don't teleport and they don't teleport from the carpet to taking a common assessment either and so i went to see this in a second grade um class multiple classes and it really looks much different than what this is i i think the reading one is is particularly challenging because they sit down in front of on the carpet with their teacher and she says we're going to do another assessment today and you guys know the drill and you know we've been doing these and that takes time and so she's framing that that's not instructional time that's time to frame the assessment we're each going to

[00:38:34] go get our chromebook then we're going to get our little login we're going to log in and then you're going to see this screen when everybody gets to this screen give a thumbs up so then you have that transition time and then they sit down and they all get to the screen and that is not a smooth process for little learners it isn't they're scrambling to find their qr code on their screen and they're doing a million different things um some of their computers aren't charged so then you have to deal with that in the moment and you're talking about one teacher with upwards of 20 to 24 kids trying to all get on their computer so then they get on the computer then it's power

[00:39:11] school here we go find the blue button that says start and i mean it's just it's thing after thing And then they finally get in, and now they're reading a passage independently that, in my opinion and looking at it with my reading background, is closer to a mid or late second grade level, talking about the Inuit people of Alaska, which aren't even decodable words in second grade, and then trying to answer questions about it, asking things like, what is the antonym of this word in this passage?

[00:39:46] well if you can't decode the word antonym you might still know what an antonym is so i'm giving all of the examples to say i'm struggling with the if we're getting out of it what we want is this the purpose is the purpose that we are are we testing their reading level and if they can't access that reading level then they're probably not going to do well on the questions so then they're sitting there trying to answer questions that they can't read maybe and it goes on and on on, right? And so kids are sitting there and teachers are really struggling, I think, not

[00:40:24] because they don't want to do it. I think they're open to common assessments, but I think they're struggling with the fact that this isn't information they can use. And for the kids that can't access the assessment, could we maybe be open to them getting a small group while these other kids that can't access it can, so that they're actually getting teaching and it's not just time lost.

[00:40:48] And I will say in the class that I was in, there were, there were tears, you know, this was a couple of weeks ago, so it wasn't too early on in the year, but there were tears. There were kids that were frustrated, kids that submit the assessment before they're supposed to. And then the teacher has to individually go in and reassign the assessment.

[00:41:07] All of these things are hurdles to the goal is what I'm feeling in the reading world. Don't have much on the kindergarten and first grade yet, because I think we're still working through what that's going to look like. But I am concerned that largely we talk about all the time we have too much testing and too much standardized testing. And now we're asking our youngest learners to basically do standardized testing all the time, every week, not to mention layering on

[00:41:40] wind time and MTSS and progress monitoring and, and, and, and. And so for me, I guess I know time is something we've talked about like we just need time to figure it out and they just need to adjust but some of these things to me just don't feel appropriate to our youngest learners and so my question is really what are we assessing in second grade reading because we're not allowed

[00:42:14] to read them the assessment but we're assessing on skills that require them to read things so what is purpose of the assessment in reading is it to be able to read at grade level for that passage or is it to answer the questions and know the skills that apply to that passage so that um that point that you're you're bringing up is one that we heard very clearly from schools when we started and something we would acknowledge too is that um that we need to be clearer around the

[00:42:49] flexibility of a student's ability to or teacher's ability to read aloud or to make some of these accommodations and to help spell out some scaffolds along the way. That's what I was referencing on the one slide around implementation guides and really helping schools. A school, Discovery Elementary, prepared one for me when I went to meet with them. And I thought this makes a lot of sense, is that not all second graders come in ready to read and not all third graders are at the exact same spot. So how do we scaffold students to be able to navigate these tests, I think is an important part of how we continue to improve these and make them better.

[00:43:25] So first, I just want to acknowledge that, that there is a lot of room for us to add a little bit more flexibility to how these tests are administered and what teachers are doing with them. To your question around the purpose of them, I think the purpose is really, so these are from our publisher, the grade level texts for students.

[00:43:46] And so it is really a measure of that student's progress with the curriculum so far. And I think an important point that is a little bit confused right now is that some of these skills, like one of the questions we hear is that, you know, a particular question was not taught in that week.

[00:44:04] The way that the HMH curriculum is laid out, too, is that it's going back to skills that students might have learned in a previous year or a skill that they should have when they come to the test. And we have, this is another great point that teachers have brought up, is that while the purpose there is just to kind of do a single measure of a student's knowledge at a particular point, we have tied to it grading and other high stress factors that were not really our initial intention.

[00:44:33] And the frequency of that assessment has made that necessary for teachers. but those are all things that we need to go back and and clear up and continue to get better with doing to the point around the assessment and the time too we are piloting some tools that will make this low tech for teachers it's in progress right now it's a product called grade cam where students would take the test on paper and teachers could enter into performance matters by holding it up to their to their camera on their screen it would automatically grade it and put it into their grade book that will substantially cut back on all of the time on the computer for our youngest grades.

[00:45:09] So again, these are works in progress, and the assessments are not always perfect. They are things that we go back and we look at the reliability, we look at how students performed on the questions, and we are actively considering how we can make them better. The reason why the math tests, I think, are not so much of a concern is that this was a requirement last year in our priority enhanced support schools we had thousands of students take these tests and we were able to go back and make them better and really the only way that we can do that is to have students take the tests and see what the results look like and see how we can go back and make them make them better and more efficient and work better in future years and improve our guidance as well

[00:45:47] so as I keep saying a lot of these are works in progress and we know we have room to grow in what some of these assessments look like. I appreciate that and as we work through these things should we

continue to encourage teachers to reach out to you all and keep flagging them and keep expressing their concerns and I know you've made your rounds um pun intended um but is that something we want them to keep doing are we going to continue to engage in that way? Yeah absolutely I think that

[00:46:22] that is one of the most powerful tools that we have here um to clarify x to clarify like standards and questions some of the questions we get we write back and say um you know this really is part of the standard and it should happen some of them we say we can make this question better some of them we fix in the moment some of them we we keep and so um it is incredibly valuable like this is meant to be a collaboration between the content offices and teachers because the ultimate goal is to make these work and be effective for teachers and that feedback that we get from teachers is the most valuable information that we receive so i would encourage teachers to keep writing to us

[00:47:00] and get responses from our supervisors or from me or from other people as well and we continue to go out and meet with teachers too to hear these concerns and think about how we might make them meet some of those concerns and continue to make these tests better thank you i um i just i'm starting to hear rumblings i'm glad to hear that there's going to be some flexibility maybe in in the ability just not locking them into you have to take it this way especially for the littles um because i am starting to hear rumblings from teachers like does the division not trust us like do they not trust us to make sure we're teaching the standards do they not think we're

[00:47:38] not looking at the sol so they think not we're not planning you know we've already implemented like I said, MTSS. So I just, I want, I don't, that's, that's a question I don't want teachers to have. I don't want them to feel like the division doesn't trust them to do their jobs and that they're using these assessments so that they can get division-wide data to micromanage every single SOL that's out there. That's not what this is about. I don't think that's what this is about. But I am starting to hear that, that this is just, this is the last straw, right?

[00:48:09] it's just it's too much and it's it's so much added on them and it's added on the kids and so I am appreciative of you being open I will continue to direct people to you all and appreciate updates along the way and and I really do think that this is a pivotal conversation towards the elementary grading conversation where maybe we align the SOLs with the pacing guide and then it's a you have the SOL or you don't and then you know it's gonna be hit again or not I'm hearing a lot of teachers asking about that grading piece to In elementary as these assessments are being developed So I think there's more to come on that in the future and I'm looking forward to those conversations

[00:48:48] But I think it's important that we be mindful of the purpose and the objective and making sure that our teachers still feel like They have the autonomy and the flexibility to meet the needs in front of them And if that's not working if there is a place to go where there can be a dialogue and not just a mandate so appreciate the conversation will continue to grapple with it myself and I'm grateful for for the feedback that we have gotten from teachers and their honesty in this process so thank you well now move on to I guess new business

[00:49:25] any new business all right all right our next meeting is scheduled for December 2nd 2026 and meeting adjourned thank you



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