



# Assessment Workgroup

to Explore Current New York State Requirements and Best Practices for Teacher and Principal Evaluation

Webinar: January 8, 2019

Google Drive Folder: <http://bit.ly/AssessmentWorkgroup>

Facilitated by

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## What is this workgroup about and how will it work?

### What are the workgroup's goals?

The sessions will attend to learner-centered design that allows participants to:

- collaborate and co-construct knowledge
- engage in reflective practice using systems thinking tools and process
- examine the ways in which the current assessment system impacts multiple constituencies
- deepen their understanding of what it takes to implement next generation assessments
- **make specific, credible, and viable recommendations to their school community and NYSED, and**
- **develop a toolkit which includes materials for Statewide use.**

### What is the specific context that will guide this work?

NYSED has expressed a commitment to continue to strengthen the teacher and principal evaluation system and its implementation. This workgroup will explore lessons learned since 2013, a desired state for moving forward, and ways to close gaps between them.

### Where is this work situated in the larger picture?

APPR has impacted the educational system in NYS in a variety of ways. Understanding the source, nature, and consequences of that impact can help mitigate unintended consequences and help the state moving forward. This work seeks to help participants negotiate challenges as well as provide examples, tools, and lessons for the field at large.

### Questions from December 20<sup>th</sup> participants that informed today's design

1. How do you synthesize all this information?
2. What is the goal of providing these recommendations?
3. How will we get to the best recommendations possible?
4. Are we thinking ahead to how this would look in order to avoid unintended consequences?

### Objectives for January 8, 2019

Participants will explore, analyze, and review the nature of quality assessments by:

- reviewing data generated by the group on December 20 (recommendations, questions, reflections)
- establishing criteria and considering an approach for testing possible recommendations, and
- preparing to engage in an asynchronous text-based discussion.

### Agenda for January 8, 2019

Time	Guiding Questions	Activity
3:00	What is our goal?	Revisiting key understandings, questions generated, and preliminary recommendations
3:15	What did we uncover during our first day together?	Reviewing end of program data
3:25	What criteria should we hold our recommendations to?	Uncovering criteria
3:45	How can we best assess our recommendations?	Testing a recommendation
4:45	How can we critically engage with others' perspectives to deepen our understanding?	Preparing for an asynchronous text-based discussion

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## End of Day Reflection Summary

Number of participants: 42 | Number of responses: 29

1. How are you feeling about the work we are engaged in?

Image	Count	I feel this way because.... (summarized)
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unclear about process</li> </ul>
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concern about time/impact</li> <li>Worried the problem cannot be solved</li> <li>Need time to process</li> </ul>
	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lots to think about/need time to process</li> <li>Will be using activities/thinking from today with students/in assessments</li> <li>Connects to things participants think about</li> <li>Thinking sparked by being around a diverse group of educators</li> <li>Thinking about where teacher evaluation fits into a quality assessment system</li> <li>Rewarding discussions today/challenged my thinking</li> </ul>
	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excitement over a focus on quality assessment: <i>"It is so exciting to see the shift come back to putting the students and their learning front and center."</i></li> <li>Motivated by the process and goals of the group</li> </ul>

What have you learned in today's session that has influenced your understanding of what assessment systems should be or attend to?

- Content validated existing beliefs
- Understanding of what's possible
- Shifted thinking about the nature of assessment
- Deeper understanding of performance assessment
- Ability to articulate gaps between intent and practice
- Activities that can be used with students and colleagues
- Sense of how tedious this kind of work can be

Other comments:

- Thank you's (5)
- *Great day, ladies!*
- *Many thanks for your time - your voice and your brain power.*
- *I appreciate the goal of the workgroup and how the process is being carried out.*
- *It was engaging and informative.*
- *I appreciate and value all that we are discussing in this group and am already planning on how I can utilize this information with our staff. Although I am very excited to attend in-person, I also appreciate the remote option for this session, and all of your prompt and informative communication throughout.*
- *I think the idea of decoupling the state assessments from teacher evaluation is the only way that we will get teachers and parents (who have had their children not take the assessments) on board. There is very helpful information that can be used to guide curriculum and instruction currently with the item analysis reports, performance report with gap analysis by standards, etc. through the RICs. These reports have been getting better and better. We need students to take the assessments and to take them seriously so that those reports will be seen as valuable by all stakeholders.*
- *Water in the room and coffee*

***What resonates for you after reviewing these data?***

## *Preliminary<sup>1</sup> Team Recommendations from December 20<sup>th</sup>*

### **Recommendations for change in teacher practice (short term):**

1. Allow students the flexibility to participate in the design of their own assessments.
2. Evaluate current assessment system within their own classroom and grade level.
3. Integrate student choice for students to show their learning for one (upcoming) assessment.
4. More authentic assessment.
5. Provide specific feedback to students. Look at data and create next steps for instruction.
6. Really try to balance the types of assessment being used in the room.
7. Stop taking the same photos over and over again. Don't have all your assessment looking like the state tests.

### **Recommendations for change in school leadership practice (mid-range):**

1. Do an inventory of assessments at your school; where is there overlap, are they balanced.
2. Give teachers permission and time to create a greater variety of assessment task.
3. Provide examples of success and buy in of the use of authentic assessments.
4. Provide PD and CPT where teachers can really explore different modes of assessing students.
5. Provide PD on how to develop quality assessments including performance-based assessments.
6. Provide time and resources to re-norm common understanding of a healthy assessment system.
7. Provide time for teachers to meet with colleagues.
8. Start developing performance tasks (and choices) for local implementation.
9. Support different types of assessment.
10. Support educators to realize the importance of shifting to targeted authentic assessment around transfer goals.
11. Support teachers in change their frame of mind on assessments being used.

### **Recommendations for change in NYS Board of Regents/NYS Education Department practices (long term):**

1. Accept and validate authentic assessments.
2. Consider teacher preparedness or delivery instead of student performance.
3. Decouple the state assessment from teacher evaluations.
4. Determine the role of additional layers of authentic assessment to our current system (3-legged stool.)
5. Greater focus on developing quality assessments free of errors and flaws. Faster turnaround time on results.
6. Support in designing performance assessments.
7. Write (a few) curriculum-based performance assessments that could be piloted by schools (3-legged stool.)

<i><b>What do you notice?</b></i>	<i><b>What do you wonder?</b></i>

<sup>1</sup> Note: These recommendations were generated by members of the Assessment Workgroup as part of a brief activity on December 20, 2018 and do not reflect any final or formal recommendations.

## Preliminary Checklist for Quality Recommendations

**Background:** One of the workgroup goals is: *To make specific, credible, and viable recommendations to their school community and NYSED.* Part of meeting that goal means reconciling, as a group, the criteria of a quality recommendation. For this activity, we're focusing on a generic recommendation (Recommendation X).

**Question that informed this activity:** How will we get to the best recommendations possible?

**Task One:** As we review the various criteria, listen to our explanations of why the first three criteria are important. Then, select 3-4 of the other criteria and provide your own rationale for those criteria.

Criteria <i>Recommendation X should be accepted because it ...</i>	Why is this criteria for a quality recommendation important?
1. ... will lead to improved student learning.	
2. ... will do no harm.	
3. ... will lead to improved teacher practice.	
4. ... can be implemented within a reasonable period (2-3 years).	
5. ... will lead to improvement in other areas (curriculum design, etc.).	
6. ... validates quality teachers' practice.	
7. ... promotes standard attainment.	
8. ... will increase parental goodwill/confidence.	
9. ... will improve communication between stakeholders.	
10. ... will increase the public's confidence in NYS schools.	
11. ... is cost effective.	
Other?	

**Task Two:** Visit [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AW\\_January](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AW_January) and select the three criteria that are most important to you. You can rank order the criteria, but we'll be focusing on the group's top three choices when we analyze the data. Note that the survey will be updated with any criteria that you brainstorm.

## Exploring Intended Results, Unintended Consequences, and Influence on Stakeholders

**Question from Workgroup participant that informed this activity:** *Are we thinking ahead about how this would look in order to avoid unintended consequences?*

**Background:** Once we narrow our proposed list of recommendations down to those that meet our quality criteria, we'll want to work through what might or could happen if these recommendations are implemented. For the purpose of this activity, we're going to be working on a specific recommendation that was mentioned by three different groups, at the teacher and administrator level, towards the end of our session on December 20.

### Part 1: Exploring Intended Results and Unintended Consequences

<p>Recommendation<sup>2</sup>: <i>Teachers should evaluate their current classroom assessment system by completing an assessment inventory. Administrators should support this work by facilitating data collection, organization and analysis.</i></p>	
<p><b>Intended result:</b> What we expect will happen as a result of taking action based on this recommendation.</p>	<p><i>We expect teachers will be able to determine the quality, focus, and uses of the assessments in their classrooms. We expect school leaders to learn more about teacher assessment practices in each classroom, department, or grade level.</i></p>
<p><b>Unintended positive consequences:</b> Positive outcomes which may occur and which we did not anticipate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Teachers will revisit the outcomes they value in student learning.</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers may be able to eliminate assessments that are not serving them well or may modify assessments to improve them.</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers may uncover opportunities for the use of assessments they had not previously considered.</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers will identify changes that are within their control.</i></li> <li>• <i>Administrators will get a better sense of patterns across their school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers and administrators will learn more about student assessment experiences across the school.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Unintended negative consequences:</b> Negative outcomes which may occur and which we did not anticipate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Time devoted to evaluating assessments may take away time from instruction.</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers may not know what to do with the results of their audit.</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers may compare their results.</i></li> <li>• <i>Principals may compare the teachers' results.</i></li> <li>• <i>Without quality criteria for the audit, teachers may end up comparing apples to oranges, and compromising the analysis.</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers may feel it's extra work or that there's a "right" answer or ideal distribution of assessments.</i></li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> This recommendation analysis is for the purpose of this activity and does not reflect any final or formal work by this workgroup.

## Part 2: Influence on Stakeholders

<p>Recommendation<sup>3</sup>: <i>Teachers should evaluate their current classroom assessment system by completing an assessment inventory. Administrators should support this work by facilitating data collection, organization and analysis.</i></p>	
How might students be impacted by this?	<i>Students may end up with greater access to a more balanced assessment system.</i>
	<i>Students may take more or fewer assessments during the audit process.</i>
How might parents be impacted by this?	<i>Parents may end up with greater clarity about the different assessments in the school and their purposes.</i>
	<i>Parents may feel discomfort as the assessment system begins to look less familiar.</i>
How might support staff be impacted by this?	<i>Support staff may develop a better understanding of why teachers use the assessments they use.</i>
	<i>Support staff may be burdened with some of the audit tasks.</i>
How might test publishers be impacted by this?	<i>Test publishers may have a greater sense of what is needed by schools.</i>
	<i>Schools might purchase fewer commercially-produced assessments.</i>

**Task:** Select one of the following proposed recommendations and contribute to the Google document in either Table 1 or Table 2. You do not have to complete the entire chart and if you comment in the same cell as someone else, be sure to change the font color.

Option 1: If you want to explore intended results, unintended consequences, and influences on stakeholders for the recommendation: ***Building administrators should provide job-embedded professional development on developing quality assessments, including performance-based assessments***, please visit [http://bit.ly/AW\\_Option1](http://bit.ly/AW_Option1).

Option 2: If you want to explore intended results, unintended consequences, and influences on stakeholders for the recommendation: ***The New York State Board of Regents and the NYS Department of education should accept and validate authentic assessments*** please visit [http://bit.ly/AW\\_Option2](http://bit.ly/AW_Option2).

<sup>3</sup> This recommendation analysis is for the purpose of this activity and does not reflect any final or formal work by this workgroup.

## Asynchronous Text-Based Discussion Before Our Next Session

Directions:

- If your last name begins with the letter A-K, please visit [http://bit.ly/AW\\_4As\\_AK](http://bit.ly/AW_4As_AK)
- If your last name begins with the letter L-Z, please visit [http://bit.ly/AW\\_4As\\_LZ](http://bit.ly/AW_4As_LZ)

Read Jay's responses to the questions from Day 1. Note that line numbers have been provided, as well as a generous right margin so you can annotate the text. As you read, consider the five prompts in the table below. **Share your reactions to each of the prompts in the table by January 25th.** If you're sharing your thinking after someone else, change the font to a different color and be sure to start on a new line.

<p>What <b>Assumptions</b> do you see in the text?</p> <hr/>	<p>What do you <b>Agree</b> with in the text?</p> <hr/>
<p>What do you want to <b>Argue</b> with in the text?</p> <hr/>	<p>What parts of the text do you want to <b>Act</b> upon?</p> <hr/>
<p>What new questions did this activity raise for you?</p>	

**End of Webinar reflection:** Please take a moment to share your questions and reaction to today's webinar at [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AW\\_Jan\\_End](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AW_Jan_End).