2014-15

Report on the Survey of District and School Assessment Practices

SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

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Introduction

In October of 2015 the Council of Great City Schools, a cooperative effort of 68 large urban public school systems, published a report documenting various aspects of student testing, including the number of assessments administered, the time necessary to administer the assessments, whether assessments are used for accountability, and other issues. Some of the conclusions of the report, which documented assessments in its member districts, are:

1) As a result of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), testing in reading and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 is present in all districts.
2) The average student will take about eight standardized assessments per year, two NCLB summative assessments and three formative assessments in two subject areas.
3) The average amount time a grade 8 student spends taking required assessments was 4.22 days. Grade 8 students spend more time testing because they take both NCLB assessments for grades 3 through 8 and End-of-Course tests associated with high school courses.
4) About 40 percent of districts require elementary and secondary students to take assessments for the purposes of documenting student learning objectives (SLOs) or for use as part of a value-added teacher or school evaluation system.
5) About 59 percent of districts administered assessments in addition to assessments required by NCLB, SLOs, graduation exams, and college entrance exams.
6) The amount of time spent on testing depends largely upon the number of times some assessments are given each year, not simply the number of assessments administered.
7) Seventy-eight percent of parents give more positive responses to assessments for the purpose of accountability of their child's education, but substantially fewer parents are in favor of testing. (Hart, et al., 2015)

Concern over the amount of testing is not new to South Carolina. In July of 2007 the South Carolina Assessment Task Force met to address concerns over the amount of testing, the time devoted to testing, and costs associated with testing. One result of this task force was that students in grades 3, 5, 6, and 8 were randomly assigned to take either the South Carolina Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (SC-PASS) in Science or Social Studies, which reduced slightly the amount of time students spent testing, but increased the difficulties of organizing administration of the tests as well as reporting results.

Despite the concern over the amount of assessment to which students are subjected, as reported by the Council of Great City Schools, parents appear to be in support of assessment that is being used constructively for the personal benefit of their child's education. As noted above, 78 percent of parents view assessments for the purpose of accountability of their child's education favorably, but respond less favorably when the verbiage of the question asked about "testing" instead of assessment. The use of assessment as an integral, constructive part of the teaching/learning process is what formative assessment (Sadler, 1989) and progress monitoring (NCEO, 2004) are designed to accomplish. Heritage (2010) states clearly that formative

assessment is not a particular type of assessment instrument; rather it is a process in which assessment is indigenous to the teaching/learning interaction. In both of these frameworks three important activities occur:

1) The teacher gets feedback from the assessment;
2) The teacher uses this information to change their teaching; and
3) The teacher provides information to the student on how to improve their learning.

For the 2014-15 school year, students in South Carolina public schools were assessed with a variety of assessments required by state law, many of which are used for state and/or federal accountability. A summary of the assessments required for by grade level is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Assessments Required by State or Federal Law (2014-15 School Year)

Grade or Subject	Assessment	Requirement
4K	CIRCLE	Proviso 1A.76. of 2014-15 General Appropriation Act
Kindergarten	CIRCLE	Proviso 1A.76. of 2014-15 General Appropriation Act
2	CogAT Academic Achievement Test (e.g., MAP or ITBS)	State Requirement for Gifted & Talented Qualification
3	ACT Aspire for ELA & Math	Section 59-18-325 & ESEA Waiver
4 through 8	ACT Aspire for ELA & Math SC PASS in Science & Social Studies	Section 59-18-325 & ESEA Waiver
English I	End-of-Course Assessment	Section 59-18-310 & ESEA Waiver
Algebra I	End-of-Course Assessment	Section 59-18-310 & ESEA Waiver
Biology	End-of-Course Assessment	Section 59-18-310 & ESEA Waiver
US History & The Constitution	End-of-Course Assessment	Section 59-18-310 & ESEA Waiver
11 - College Readiness	The ACT Plus Writing	Section 59-18-325
11 - Career Readiness	WorkKeys	Section 59-18-325

Equally important as the number of assessments administered to students is the amount of time each student spends testing. The following information summarizes the time spent testing using state and federal-required assessments for students in various grade levels.

<u>Pre-K and Kindergarten – Required Testing</u>

The CIRCLE assessment, a measure of early literacy skills, is administered in a 1:1 student to teacher setting, and anecdotal evidence suggests that it takes approximately one-half hour for

each student assessment. Students in state-funded 4K programs and kindergarten were required to take the assessment within the first 45 days of school. The time commitment for each teacher is substantially larger for the teacher because they must make time for a 1:1 interaction with each student. The amount of time spent testing each student is relatively short.

Grades 3-8 – Required Testing

For many of the assessments, the amount of time students actually spent taking the tests is not obtainable. Table 2 presents the maximum amount of time students in grades 3 through 8 could have spent on each of the ACT Aspire tests, which were timed, summative assessments. Table 3 presents the amount of time in which 95 percent of students completed the SC-PASS Science and Social Studies assessments in the Spring of 2014.

Table 2. Testing Time Limits for ACT ®Aspire™

Test	Grades	Time Limit
Writing (Tuesday, April 28)	3-8	30 minutes
English (Tuesday, April 28)	3-5 6-8	30 minutes 35 minutes
Reading (Wednesday, April 29)	3-8	60 minutes
Mathematics (Thursday, April 30)	3-5 6-7 8	55 minutes 60 minutes 65 minutes
Science (optional)	3-8	55 minutes

Table 3. Testing Times for 95% of students to complete SC-PASS Science and Social Studies (in minutes) by grade.

Test	Grade				
	4	5	6	7	8
Science	135	135	105	105	105
Social Studies	135	135	105	105	105

One way to think of the amount of time an individual student spent testing for required summative testing is by the number of days spent in testing (Tables 2 and 3). Consider that the

ACT Aspire Writing, English, Reading, and Mathematics tests ACT Aspire tests were completed in less than one-half day of school on three days. Each of the SC-PASS Science and Social Studies tests were completed by nearly all students in less than two hours, which again is less than one-half day for each assessment. Grade 4 and 5 students spent the greatest amount of time on SC-PASS Science and Social Studies tests, totaling 270 minutes. The total amount of time spent on testing in grades 3 through 8 was less than five half-days of school.

Another way to think of the total amount of time required for summative testing is to estimate the actual amount of time (in minutes or hours) for testing. Using the ACT Aspire time limits, students in grades 3 through 5 spent at most 175 minutes of time testing, while students in grade 6 and 7 spent 185 minutes, and students in grade 8 spent 190 minutes. Students in grades 4 and 5 spent the most time testing on SC-PASS Science and Social Studies (135 minutes each). Using this information, the best estimate of the **maximum** amount of time spent by a student in any grade level on ACT Aspire tests and SC-PASS tests, both required summative assessments used for state and federal accountability purposes, was 400 minutes for students in grade 8.

Grades 9-12 – Required Testing

Assessments from three testing programs were administered to high school students in the 2014-15 school year: tests associated with the End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP), The ACT college readiness assessment, and WorkKeys®.

Tests associated with the End-of-Course Examination Program (Algebra 1, English 1, Biology 1, and U.S. History) are administered to students as the final exam associated with each of these courses. Although the majority of students are enrolled in Algebra 1 and English 1 in grade 9, a significant number of students are enrolled in these courses in grade 8. Whether to view these assessments as an additional time for state assessments is not clear, as students in these courses may have a final exam whether that exam is part of a state testing program or not. Each of the End-of-Course tests is untimed, and information is not available to determine the amount of time tested using these assessments.

In Spring 2015, five tests associated with The ACT college readiness assessment (English, Mathematics, Reading, Science, and Writing) were administered to students in their third year after their first enrollment as a grade 9 student. All five of these tests were completed in one morning. The English test was administered in 45 minutes; the Mathematics test administered in 60 minutes; both the Reading and Science tests administered in 35 minutes; and the Writing test was administered in 40 minutes. The total amount of time for actual testing was 215 minutes. This total does not include the time spent between assessments for breaks. As indicated by the ACT Administration Manual, the total amount time for test administration (testing and breaks) for the four tests plus Writing is approximately five hours, so that testing that begins at approximately 8:15 a.m. would complete at approximately 1:10 p.m.

Three assessments associated with ACT WorkKeys® (Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information) were administered, also to students in their third year after their first enrollment as a grade 9 student. Each of these tests is administered in 55

minutes, for a total of 165 minutes. With breaks, all three assessments can be given in three hours. All three assessments were given in a single day.

Table 4. Estimated number of minutes and hours spent in testing in school year 2014-15 by each student on assessments required by the State of South Carolina (excluding End-of-Course tests).

Grade or Subject	Minutes	Hours
4K	30	0.5
Kindergarten	30	0.5
3	175	2.9
4	345	5.8
5	345	5.8
6	395	6.6
7	395	6.6
8	400	6.7
11	480	8.0

Note: Grade 11 includes times for breaks within the day for assessment.

Required Testing Summary

As described above, the amount of time spent by students in the completion of the assessments required for state and accountability purposes can be determined, is summarized in Table 4. Students in grades 4 and 5 spent approximately 5.8 hours taking tests for accountability, while grades 6 through 8 spent 6.6 and 6.7 hours. Grade 11 students tested for the greatest amount of time at 8 hours. The time for end-of-course testing is not included for grade 8 students because the courses for which grade 8 students take end-of-course tests (Algebra I and English I) would likely have a teacher-created final exam if a state created end-of-course exam was not available, with minimal change to the amount of testing time.

Testing beyond the requirements

Three important pieces of information relevant to the discussion of time devoted to assessments are often unknown. First, what is the extent to which assessments are administered by schools or districts to the general population of their students, often taking students and teachers away from valuable instructional time? Second, what is the amount of time teachers devote to preparation for assessments that are a part of either the state and/or federal accountability system? This preparation time could be perceived as the reinforcement of important concepts contained in state standards that will be included in summary assessments, though more frequently the anecdotal comments communicated to EOC staff are that this preparation time both takes away from instructional time better devoted to the presentation of additional concepts and skills students need to learn. Additionally, having standardized tests as a goal of instruction is perceived to change the focus of instruction from a more in-depth pursuit of concepts to a narrower, shallow learning associated with the use of multiple choice assessments. This report seeks to understand the first two of these elements of student assessment which are often overlooked or misunderstood in the testing debate.

District- and school-level assessment

Beyond the requirements of assessment for state and federal accountability, schools and school districts utilize assessment in a variety of ways to support teaching and learning. Some general purposes for assessment are to: inform students, teachers, and parents as to each student's current levels of achievement; identify areas of academic concern; set academic goals for students; and monitor the progress of students over time. To accomplish these goals, many schools and districts use diagnostic assessments to determine more specifically the difficulties students are having with the content or processes addressed in instruction. Diagnostic assessments also include the use of benchmark and interim assessments to monitor the progress of students, particularly with respect to the mastery of specific academic content and/or specific levels of proficiency.

Purpose of the Study

At its summer retreat the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) asked the staff to conduct an online survey of school districts to determine what assessments beyond the assessments required by state or federal law were administered in school year 2014- 15.

The staff determined that there would be two components of the survey:

- Part I was a survey of district instructional personnel to determine what continuous, formative, benchmark, diagnostic or interim assessments were administered districtwide in school year 2014-15 and how the results were used.
- Part II was a survey of classroom teachers in districts to also determine what assessments they administered in 2014-15, their perceptions of how the assessment results were used and communicated, and for teachers in grades 3 through 8, their preparation for summary assessments used for state and/or federal accountability.

Methodology

As in previous surveys, the staff contacted each district superintendent in writing to ask for voluntary participation in the survey. Of the 82 school districts, including the South Carolina Public Charter School District, 39 districts agreed to participate. These districts were representative of the state in size and geographic area.

The superintendents provided to the EOC staff the names of individuals who would complete Part I of the survey and the names of individuals who would ensure that classroom teachers in their district were contacted to complete Part II. Part I and II were online surveys administered through SurveyMonkey®, an online survey tool. Appendix A contains the survey instruments that were distributed to district and school personnel.

The introduction to Part I of the survey contained the following guidance:

> At the Education Oversight Committee's retreat in August, the committee asked that the staff conduct an online survey of school districts to determine what assessments beyond the assessments required by state or federal law were administered in school year 2014-15.
>
> As defined, these assessments would include continuous, formative, benchmark, diagnostic or interim assessments administered to ALL students in a specific grade or content area

throughout the district. Assessments that are given for a subset of students, for example, diagnostic assessments for struggling readers, for limited English proficient students, for students with significant cognitive impairments, or for high achieving students, should NOT be included in this survey. Similarly, industry exams or exams unique to Career and Technical Education students are not a focus of this survey.

Districts that participate in the survey will not be identified.

Based upon the information provided at the district level, the EOC will then survey classroom teachers in the districts that participated in the survey to determine how the assessments were used in 2014-15. Only teachers who taught in 2014-15 will be surveyed. All teacher responses will be anonymous.

The introduction to Part II of the survey contained the following guidance to teachers:

Thank you for your willingness to complete the following survey regarding assessments.

At the Education Oversight Committee's retreat in August, the committee asked that the staff conduct an online survey of school districts to determine what assessments beyond those required by state or federal law were administered in school year 2014-15. The EOC, composed of educators, legislators, and business people, also want to know about assessments from the perspective of classroom teachers. Your district volunteered to participate in this study.

As you complete the survey please keep in mind the following:
1) All responses will be anonymous; only summaries of responses and shared with superintendents.

2) All responses should reflect assessments administered in school year 2014-15 in your current school district.

3) The survey addresses assessments that include continuous, formative, benchmark, diagnostic or interim assessment that you administered to ALL students in a specific grade or content area. Assessments that were administered to a subset of students, for example diagnostic assessments for struggling readers, for limited English proficient students, for students with significant cognitive impairment or for high achieving students, should NOT be included in this survey.

We are asking for responses to this survey by the end of the day, Friday, November 6, 2015.

If you have questions about the survey, please contact Kevin Andrews of the EOC staff at kandrews@eoc.sc.gov.

Response Rate

In Part I of the survey, responses were obtained from 34 districts of the 39 that had agreed to participate, which is 41 percent of the 82 school districts in South Carolina. Teacher surveys (Part II of the survey) were distributed to the original 39 school districts that had agreed to participate in the survey. Large, urban school districts were slightly over-represented among respondents. Teacher responses were obtained from 37 of these districts; however seven of

these districts had fewer than ten respondents. A total of 7,007 school individuals responded to the teacher survey, 1,379 of whom either were not teachers or were not in the same district in 2013-14 and 2014-15. The total number of respondents who indicated they taught only grades Pre-K through 2 was 1,451; the number of respondents who indicated they taught only grades 3 through 8 was 2,489; and the number of respondents who indicated they taught only grades 9 through 12 was 1,578. The total number of teachers responding was 5,518 (Table 5).

Table 5. Number of teacher survey responses by grade level taught

	Grade Range			
	Pre-K through 2	3 through 8	9 through 12	Total
Number of Teachers	1,451	2,489	1,578	5,518

In both the district and teacher surveys, a list of assessments was provided for respondents to select those assessments that were given to all students in a grade level or subject area (Appendix A). In the district survey, 25 assessments were provided as options for primary grades; 20 assessments were provided as options were provided for grades 2 through 8; and 29 assessments were provided as options were provided for grades 9 through 12. Based on the responses to the district survey, the assessment options provided in the teacher survey were revised, and therefore differed from those provided to school districts. In the teacher survey, 25 assessments were provided as options for teachers of students in Pre-K through grade 2; 20 assessments were provided as options for teachers in grades 3 through 8; and 29 assessments were provided as options for teachers of grades 9 through 12. Included as options in both the district and teacher surveys for grades 3 through 8 were district created assessments in Reading, Mathematics, Writing, Science, and Social Studies. An option was also provided to indicate that some “Other” assessment in each of these same five categories was administered. These options were provided because the list of assessments to choose from was known not to be exhaustive. Teachers were asked to identify which assessments that were not on the provided list were used so that the frequency of use of these assessments could be determined.

Two data anomalies were observed. First, for teachers who indicated that they gave some “Other” assessment, the assessment they identified was not consistent with their choice of “Other.” For teachers of grades 3 through 8, 305 teachers indicated they used an assessment not on the provided list, but did not identify the assessment they administered. Of teachers that identified an assessment, the largest number (494) identified a state assessment (ACT Aspire, SC-PASS, End-of-Course) as the assessment they administered. Another 357 teachers identified assessments created by themselves, their school, or the district as the assessment they administered (Table 6). The focus of this study is on assessments other than state assessments or assessments that teachers utilize as a normal part of the instructional process. For this reason, these responses were not considered to be “Other” assessments that were administered, and were recoded to reflect that no “Other” assessment was administered.

Of the 1,159 respondents who identified the “Other” assessment they administered, 851 (73%) gave responses that were not appropriate responses for this survey. Using this information, we assumed that a similar percentage of teachers who indicated they administered some “Other” assessment, but failed to identify the assessment given also made the same error

(approximately 222 incorrect responses). For this reason, the responses for the 308 teachers who did not identify the "Other" assessment administered were also recoded to reflect that no "Other" assessment was administered, which may result in approximately 86 incorrect responses. Fewer errors were likely made by recoding these responses to reflect that no "Other" assessment was administered than by keeping the responses as coded by teachers.

Table 6. Number of grade 3 through 8 teachers with free responses to "Other" assessment by category.

Assessment	Number of Teachers
No Test Identified in Comments	308
State Assessment or Assessment on Survey List	494
Teacher, School, or District Created	357
AIMS Web	5
CASE/TE 21	57
EveryDay Math	15
ThinkLink	4
USA Test Prep	9
Other – Not Categorized	218

The same situation also occurred for high school teachers where many teachers indicated that they administered "Other" assessments but the "Other" assessments they indicated were actually state required (e.g., SC-PASS, ACT, WorkKeys, End-of-Course Tests). As with teachers of grades 3 through 8, those teachers who indicated they administered some "Other" assessment but did not identify that assessment, identified a state administered assessment, or indicated a teacher created assessment for their "Other" assessment were recoded to reflect that no "Other" assessment was given.

A second anomaly observed among grade 9 through 12 respondents was identified and judged not to be plausible. Among the assessments for teachers to identify as being administered to students was a complete list of the Quality Core assessments published by ACT. This list included assessments in four general subject areas (English, Mathematics, Science, and History). More specifically, the list included four assessments of English (grades 9 through 12); four assessments of Mathematics (Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, and Pre-Calculus); four Science assessments (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Science); and a U.S. History exam. Some teachers indicated that they administered assessments in more than one of these four general subject areas (e.g., English and Mathematics). Because high school teachers do not generally teach in more than one of these four general subject areas, these responses were not regarded as plausible, and were recoded to reflect that these assessments were not administered.

A total of 170 teachers had their responses for the Quality Core assessments recoded to reflect that these assessments were not administered. The remainder of these teachers' responses were kept intact and were used in the balance of the data analyses. As a result, recoding these data impacted only two pieces of information presented in this report; first, the number of

assessments administered by each teacher, and second, the number of teachers administering "Other" assessments in each subject area.

Results

The number of assessments reported as being administered by districts and teachers by ranges of grades taught are presented in Table 7. In general district personnel indicated that fewer assessments were administered than did teachers, with more substantial differences for grades 3 through 8 and grades 9 through 12. Teachers of students in grades 3 through 8 indicated that they gave the greatest number of assessments, followed by teachers of students in grades 9 through 12, and by teachers of students in Pre-K through grade 2. Although the largest number of assessments reported to be given by grade 3 through 8 teachers was 16, 90 percent of teachers indicated they gave nine or fewer assessments. For teachers of grades 9 through 12, 90 percent of teachers indicated they gave eight or fewer assessments, and for teachers of Pre-K through grade 2, 90 percent of teachers indicated they gave five or fewer assessments.

Table 7. Number and percent of assessments other than assessments required for state and/or federal accountability given in the 2013-2014 academic year.

Number of Assessments	Teacher Grade Range					
	Pre-K through Grade 2		Grades 3 through 8		Grade 9 through 12	
	District	Teachers	District	Teachers	District	Teachers
0	2	178 (12)	2	236 (11)	2	413 (29)
1	1	230 (15)		165 (7)	6	171 (12)
2	7	408 (26)	4	268 (11)	3	131 (9)
3	4	313 (20)	5	433 (17)	4	148 (11)
4	6	212 (14)	6	319 (13)	2	128 (9)
5	7	130 (8)	5	206 (8)	2	105 (7)
6	3	45 (3)	6	165 (7)	3	71 (5)
7	2	15 (1)	4	143 (6)	6	98 (6)
8	2	8 (1)	1	194 (8)	2	60 (4)
9		1 (<1)		168 (7)	2	41 (3)
10				83 (3)	1	21 (2)
11				29 (1)		10 (1)
12			1	10 (<1)		4 (<1)
13				6 (<1)		1 (<1)
14				9 (<1)		2 (<1)
15				9 (<1)		
16				2 (<1)		
17					1	

Appendix B contains a complete list of the assessments identified by teachers by grade range of the teacher. Table 8 presents the four most frequently cited assessments for each teacher grade range. In Pre-K through 2, the most important issue to address with assessment is literacy; in grades 3 through 9, MAP is used to document current student status and document student progress; and in grades 9 through 12, three of the four assessments relate to post-secondary readiness.

Table 8. Most frequently administered assessments by teacher grade range.

Pre-K - 2	Grades 3 through 8	Grades 9 through 12.
Other Literacy	MAP	PSAT
MAP	BAS	AP
Fountas & Pinnell	District Assessments (all subjects)	ASVAB
District Numeracy	Fountas & Pinnell	COMPASS

Note: AP = Advanced Placement; ASVAB: Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery; BAS: Benchmark Assessment System; MAP: Measures of Academic Progress; PSAT: Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test

Districts and teachers were given six potential uses of assessment. Table 9 presents the number and percent of respondents who indicated that they either agreed or strongly agreed that assessment was used for that purpose in their school or district. Teachers generally regarded the first four of the uses identified (inform curriculum decisions, inform instruction, determine student interventions/accelerations, and predict student achievement) more highly than did school districts. Although there were differences among the percentages from teachers by grade level, the differences in support for these four uses were not large, so that determining a preferred order for these uses among teachers may not be possible. Responses from school districts differed from those of teachers in that they regard the remaining two options (develop professional learning opportunities and input for SLOs) more highly than did teachers. This may be explained because these last two uses are generally the responsibility of school districts rather than teachers.

Table 9. Number and (Percent of Responses) that Agree or Strongly Agree with each use of assessment

Usage	**School Districts**	**Teachers Pre-K - 2**	**Teachers Grades 3 - 8**	**Teachers Grades 9-12***
Inform curriculum decisions	30 (90)	1164 (83)	1671 (77)	933 (70)
Inform instruction	31 (94)	1291 (92)	1863 (86)	1019 (77)
Determine student interventions /accelerations	21 (97)	1299 (93)	1861 (86)	905 (68)
Predict student achievement	28 (85)	1160 (83)	1772 (82)	900 (68)
Develop professional learning opportunities	30 (91)	1051 (75)	1540 (71)	826 (63)
Input for student learning objectives (SLOs)	19 (88)	978 (70)	1680 (78)	936 (71)

These results are confirmed when considering the results of the rank ordering of the six assessment usages (Table 10). Respondents were asked to choose the use of assessment they viewed as most important (rank of 1) to least important (rank of 6). These ranks were then averaged. The lowest mean rank order indicates the use viewed as most important, and the highest mean rank indicates the use viewed as least important.

Results obtained are relatively consistent with those obtained from the percentage of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with each usage. School district personnel associated using assessment to inform instruction and to determine student interventions/accelerations as the most important use of assessments followed by informing curriculum decisions and developing professional learning opportunities. For teachers, across all grade levels, the most important uses of assessment were to inform instruction and to determine student interventions and assessments. Overall, teachers across all grade levels placed the least amount of value on assessments being used to develop professional learning opportunities.

Table 10. Mean rank order of uses of assessment

Usage	School Districts	Teachers Pre-K - 2	Teachers Grades 3 - 8	Teachers Grades 9-12*
Inform curriculum decisions	3.4	3.3	3.2	2.8
Inform instruction	1.8	1.9	2.2	2.4
Determine student interventions / accelerations	2.3	2.4	2.7	3.2
Predict student achievement	4.6	4.1	4.0	3.8
Develop professional learning opportunities	4.2	4.5	4.5	4.4
Input for student learning objectives (SLOs)	4.7	4.3	4.1	4.0

* Items were ranked so that a value of 1 indicated “Most Important” to 6 for “Least Important”. A lower mean rank order indicates the usage was judged to be more important.

Seventy-nine percent of districts indicated they provided professional learning for teachers in how to communicate assessment results to students and parents, and 91 percent of districts indicated they provided professional learning for teachers in how to use the results of assessments to inform instruction (Table 11). Seventy (70) percent of districts indicated that they had sufficient resources to communicate the purposes and results of assessment. The percentage of teachers who indicated that they have received professional development to help them communicate assessment results is substantially lower than the percentage of districts who indicated they provided this professional development. The percentage of teachers who indicated they had received this professional development ranged from 41 to 57. The gap between teacher and district perceptions is approximately 30 percent.

The percentage of teachers who indicated they had received professional development on the use of assessment results ranges from 71 (grades 9 through 12) to 87 (Pre-K through grade 2),

which is not dramatically lower than the 91 percent of districts that indicated they had provided this professional development.

Table 11. Percentage of districts and teachers who perceive the district provided professional learning to help teachers communicate and use assessment results.

Professional Development	School District	Teachers Pre-K to Grade 2	Teachers Grades 3 – 8	Teachers Grades 9-12
Communication of assessment results	79	57	46	41
Use of assessment results	91	87	78	71

Most school districts (69 percent) indicated that they have sufficient resources to communicate the purposes and results of assessment (Table 12). The general question asks whether sufficient resources are available, a positive statement of resources. The remaining questions asked whether there was need in the district, where a positive response is an expression of need. The two resources that districts expressed some degree of need for were with financial resources and staff resources to enable better communication.

Table 12. Availability of District Resources to Communicate Purposes and Results of Assessment

Type of Resource	Number (Percent) Responding Yes
Does the district have sufficient resources to communicate the purposes and results of assessments?	22 (69%)
Does the district lack financial resources?	10 (31%)
Does the district lack knowledge of assessment?	2 (6%)
Does the district lack sufficient number of staff?	10 (31%)
Does the district lack access to appropriate resources?	1 (3%)

There is a clear pattern in teacher perceptions of who is the primary communicator of assessment results to parents and students (Table 13). Among Pre-K through grade 2 teachers, 83 percent believe they are the primary communicator of test results. This percentage decreases to 47 for teachers of grades 3 through 8, and further declines to 18 percent for teachers of grades 9 through 12. As the grade level increases more responsibility for communicating the results of assessment are perceived to be the responsibility of the school. There is some increase in the percentage of teachers who perceive the school district as the primary communicator of assessment results, but at no grade level does a substantial portion of teachers believe communicating assessment results is the responsibility of the school district.

Table 13. Percentage of primary communicator of assessment results to parents and students

	School District	Teachers Pre-K to Grade 2	Teachers Grades 3 – 8	Teachers Grades 9-12
Teacher	27	83	47	18
School	70	13	44	66
District		2	6	7

Other	3	1	3	9

School districts and teachers of grades 3 through 8 were asked about the materials used and the test preparation strategies for the summative assessments that are a part of the state and/or federal accountability systems. Teachers of Pre-K through grade 2 and teachers of grades 9 through 12 were not asked these questions because assessment for accountability is not as relevant for teachers at these grade levels. The CIRCLE assessment was administered to Pre-K and Kindergarten students in the 2014-15 academic year for the first time. In grades 9 through 12, the only assessments used for state and/or federal accountability are the End-of-Course assessments, which are only administered in Algebra 1, Math for Technologies 2, English 1, Biology 1, and U.S. History. Assessment for state and/or federal accountability affects all students in grades 3 through 8 in multiple subject areas.

District and teachers are in rough agreement with respect to who created test materials that were used to prepare for assessments that are a part of either the state or federal accountability system (Table 14). Approximately 30 percent of both groups indicated that the school district organized the creation of these materials, and approximately 17 percent of both groups indicated that the school organized the creation of these materials. Two differences occur between district and teacher results: a larger percentage of teachers reported that they created their own materials (36 percent vs 25 percent), and a larger percentage of districts (50 percent vs 15 percent) indicated that commercially prepared test preparation materials were available to schools and teachers.

Table 14. Test preparation materials for assessments used for state and/or federal accountability as reported by districts and teachers

Test Preparation Materials	**Number of Districts (Percent)**	**Number of Teachers Grades 3 through 8 (Percent)**
District organized creation of materials	10 (31%)	578 (26%)
School organized creation of materials	6 (19%)	323 (15%)
Teachers created their own materials	8 (25%)	788 (36%)
No test preparation materials were created	8 (25%)	8 (25%)
No test preparation materials were used	*	180 (8%)
Commercially prepared test preparation materials	16 (50%)	318 (15%)

* Option not presented as a choice on the District Survey

The options given districts regarding test preparation strategies were not the same as the options give teachers. Based on the responses from districts and comments on the options provided, this question was revised on Part II of the survey to better reflect the strategies employed by teachers. District responses (Table 15) indicate that they believed that the most prevalent test preparation timeline for teachers involved preparing two to four weeks before testing (mean rank orders of 3.7 and 3.8), and that fewer teachers would prepare for the assessments as the time for test preparation became less frequent. The highest mean rank

order, which is what districts believed occurred least frequently (6.4) is for no special time allocated to test preparation.

Table 15. Mean Rank Order of Time Spent on Test Preparation as Reported by School Districts

	Mean Rank Order
No special time was allocated to test preparation	6.4
Practice at the end of the academic quarter	4.8
Weekly practice that totals less than one period per subject	4.3
Regular practice that occurs approximately each month	4.1
Practice for 1 week before testing	4.2
Practice for 2 weeks before testing	3.7
Practice for 3 weeks before testing	3.7
Practice for 4 or more weeks before testing	3.8

* Items were ranked so that a value of 1 indicated “Most Important” to 8 for “Least Important”. A lower mean rank order indicates the district perceived schools as more frequently.

For teachers of grades 3 through 8 (Table 16) more specific information was obtained regarding their preparation in the weeks before summative testing, which could be combined to provide a summary of teacher preparation for the weeks before testing. Directions also were clearer that interest was in preparation for the month prior to summative testing. Thirty-six (36) percent of teachers indicated that they prepared for one week before testing, with the largest number of teachers preparing for this length of time indicating that they prepared for four or five days. The percentage of teachers who indicated they prepared for two weeks decreased to 24 percent, and a further decline to 12 percent of teachers indicated they prepared for three weeks. Twenty (24) percent of teachers indicated that they prepared for the entire month (four weeks) before testing.

Table 16. Time set aside for test preparation for summative assessments used for state and/or federal accountability in the month before testing as reported by teachers of grades 3 through 8

Test Preparation Time	Number of Teachers (Percent)
No test preparation was done	97 (5%)
1 day	36 (2%)
2-3 days	265 (13%)
4-5 days	460 (22%)
1 week before testing (sum of 1 day, 2-3 days, and 4-5 days)	761 (36%)
2 weeks before testing	497 (24%)
3 weeks before testing	251 (12%)
4 weeks before testing	495 (24%)

Note: 388 respondents did not provide information.

Teacher Comments

Finally, teachers were given the option of providing open comments. These comments have been separated by the range of grades taught by the teacher and are presented in Appendix C.

The dominant concerns expressed by teachers are with respect to the following issues:

1. the amount of testing;
2. redundancy of testing;
3. time taken from instruction;
4. the desire to obtain more information from the assessments that are administered; and
5. the prevalence of assessment is altering instruction in a harmful way.

When expressing these concerns teachers do not discriminate between assessments that are administered as a result of some state or federal requirement and assessments administered at the initiative of their school district. Some teachers express anger, others express frustration regarding assessment.

The comments of teachers from Pre-K through grade 2 (Appendix C1) could be separated into eight categories:

1. positive comments;
2. suggestions for improving assessment;
3. concerns regarding taking time from instruction and planning;
4. overall comments regarding too much testing;
5. comments about student learning objectives (SLOs);
6. comments about professional development;
7. comments about specific assessments;
8. and general comments.

The comments of Pre-K through grade 2 teachers were the least negative of all three teacher groups. One theme among these comments was a desire to obtain more information about how to utilize assessment information more effectively.

Below is the comment from one teacher who clearly presents the amount of testing her kindergarten students experienced before the 45th day of instruction. Note in her comments that the assessments were used for benchmark assessments, progress monitoring, and for SLOs. SLOs are a federal requirement for teacher evaluation and progress monitoring is necessary as a part of Read to Succeed. A judicious choice of assessment for SLOs, however, could remove the need for additional benchmark assessments.

> *Today is October 26th, 2015 the 45th day of school. To date my KINDERGARTEN students have been assessed with the following assessment tools: DIBELS (B.O.Y. Benchmark) BURST (progress monitoring 1-3...every 10 days) DRA- 2 District Math Assessment AIMSweb LNF Assessment (To satisfy SLO requirement) Imagine Benchmark 1 and this week we will assess students*

> *in the first progress monitoring for AIMSweb. This is a great deal of assessment for such little people. We are assessing so much that there is NO time between the assessments to teach! Today was the FIRST small ELA group that I was able to hold THIS YEAR! In December we will assess students for their M.O.Y. DIBELS benchmark and I have hardly worked with these students in small groups on the skills that they lack. There has got to be a better way to do this! The information gained from assessment is useful and gives us a lot of data, but it is useless to us if we can't instruct our students and build their skills in their areas of need. Thank you for taking the time to allow us to communicate our concerns.*

The comments of another kindergarten teacher further delineated that, at this grade level, many of the assessments were administered by the teacher in a one-to-one setting with students. Although the amount of time each student spent in testing may not appear unreasonable, the teacher must plan to have activities so that the remaining class members can work with minimal supervision. The amount of time available for group teaching and learning is reduced. This teacher also commented upon the redundancy of assessment that occurred.

> *All of our assessments in kindergarten must be administered to each child individually which makes it difficult to establish routines at the beginning of the year. It takes almost a full month at the beginning of the year and again at the end of the year to administer all of the required assessments. In my opinion, this is* not very developmentally *appropriate for 5 year old children. Several of the assessments are assessing the same things. Also, I have to question the validity of a readiness assessment when the children have been in school receiving instruction for up to 45 days. In order to determine if children are ready to start school, readiness assessments should be administered before school starts or during the first week of school.*

An example of a positive comment from a teacher was, “I think our school does a great job of using assessments to guide our instruction. Through the use of various assessments we are able to make decisions for each child so that we are able to scaffold their learning.”

The comments from teachers of grades 3 through 8 are presented in Appendix C2, were separated into eight categories:

1. positive comments;
2. suggestions for improving assessment;
3. evaluating the results of assessment;
4. taking time away from instruction and planning;
5. too much testing;
6. SLOs;
7. comments about specific assessments;
8. and general comments.

The following comment provides a detailed list of the assessments this teacher administered. This comment was an example of a teacher not discriminating among assessments administered for district, state, or federal purposes. Among the assessments noted by this teacher, the ACT (Aspire) and SCSC-PASS are required as part of both the state and federal assessment programs. EOCEP exams are final exams administered to only those students enrolled in the appropriate courses (Algebra I and English I), and are state required. Benchmark assessments and MAP assessments are at the initiative of the district. The remaining assessment noted, the PSAT, is a district initiative.

> *There is entirely too much testing. Including district benchmarks, students in the 14-15 school year took a minimum of the following: 12 benchmarks (3 per subject) 2 Math MAP (2 days each) 2 ELA MAP (2 days each) 3 ACT (ELA, Writing, Math) 2 SCPASS (Science and SS) That's a bare minimum of 21 Tests. None of these tests impact student grades in any way. We don't even get good data because the students are so over-tested that they've started picking and choosing what they really put effort into (and, they honestly should). Some students took even more tests. Around 25% took the PSAT. Around 50% took the Algebra I EOCEP. Around 25% took the English I EOCEP. By any standard of measure, testing is absolutely and completely out of control. If districts won't reign this in, I suppose we just have to hope our legislature will.*

Although there are few positive comments from teachers of grades 3 through 8, here is one example:

> I as a veteran classroom teacher of 10+ years personally feel assessment is a key to ensuring students are achieving at the highest level in the classroom. Many of the assessments provide us with valuable information which allow us to be able to alter and remediate our instruction to best meet the needs of our students.

The comments from teachers of Grades 9 through 12 were divided into the following seven categories:

1. general comments;
2. concerns about time;
3. assessments for diagnosis or information;
4. over-testing;
5. frustration;
6. SLOs; and
7. positive comments.

Again, the positive comments are not as prevalent, but one example is, "-_____ High School does a great job using assessments to guide way ahead".

Below are two examples of comments with a common theme, both with respect to End-of-Course (EOCEP) exams. These comments may be construed as negative; however neither

teacher indicated a desire to eliminate the assessments. Rather, they expressed a desire to obtain more information from these assessments for the purpose of improving teaching and learning.

> *What is the point of the EOC if the only feedback teachers get is the score? We need standards based results reported individually to teachers. Then we can meet in our content areas and make what we do even better, relying on each others' strengths.*

> *For US History we need a pretest, we need released exams, and we need specific results that identify trouble areas concerning the indicators so that we can better inform instructional and curricular decisions especially if it will impact teacher evaluation.*

Although many teachers expressed the sentiment that there is too much assessment, very few explicitly stated that they wanted all assessment eliminated. More likely teachers indicated that they wanted to eliminate the redundancies in assessments, which would increase the amount of time they would have for instruction. They also wanted the results of assessments to be more informative. Some teachers expressed the belief that the present focus on standardized tests as outcomes changed the nature of instruction that is provided in an undesirable way.

Findings

1) Employees from 34 districts and 5,518 teachers provided responses to the survey.
2) In the school year 2014-15, the mean number of hours students spent in testing for state or federal accountability in grade 3 is 2.9 hours, and ranges from 6.6 hours (grade 6) to 6.7hours (grade 8) for students in grades 4 through 8.
3) In general, district personnel indicated that fewer assessments were administered than did teachers, with more substantial differences for grades 3 through 8 and grades 9 through 12.
4) The median number of assessments teachers reported giving in 2014-15 was two for teachers of Pre-K through grade 2; three for teachers of grades 3 through 8; and two for teachers of grades 9 through 12.
5) The maximum number of assessments teachers reported giving in 2014-15 was nine for teachers in Pre-K through grade 2; 16 for teachers of grades 3 through 8; and 14 for teachers of grades 9 through 12.
6) Both district personnel and teachers perceived that the most important purposes of assessments given in 2014-15 were to inform instruction, to determine student interventions and accelerations, and to inform curriculum decisions. School district personnel placed greater value on the use of assessments to develop professional learning opportunities than did teachers. On the other hand, teachers across all grade levels consistently ranked the uses of assessments for the development of professional learning opportunities as least important.
7) Thirty-six percent of teachers spent one week or less preparing for assessments used for state and/or federal accountability, but 24 percent of teachers spent four weeks of the month before testing preparing for these assessments.

8) The purposes for the testing of students are often not understood by teachers.
9) Teachers do not distinguish among assessments administered for district, state, or federal purposes when judging whether too much assessment is occurring.
10) Among teachers, there is little agreement about who is the primary communicator of assessment results to students and parents.
11) Issues teachers raised in their comments were: (a) the amount of assessment; (b) the redundancy of assessment; (c) the time taken from instruction; (d) the desire to obtain more information from assessment in order to use it effectively and communicate it to others; and (e) the focus on standardized assessments leading to a loss of focus on instruction.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Teachers administering assessments should know the purpose of each assessment they administer to students and how each is used to promote the teaching and learning process.

Recommendation 2

Districts should accept the responsibility of educating their teachers on the usage of assessments they elect to administer.

Recommendation 3

As part of the SC Department of Education's commitment to serving school districts, the SCDE should develop communication materials for districts to use regarding state and federal-required testing. Additional materials should be developed to assist teachers in communicating the purposes and results of testing to students and parents.

Recommendation 4

Teacher preparation institutions should evaluate the preparation of novice teachers in how assessment is used as a teaching and learning tool so that future generations of teachers are trained to integrate assessment with teaching and learning.

Recommendation 5

School districts should develop a district assessment plan that promotes continuous improvement of student achievement, and which includes:

1. Identification of all assessments administered, whether they be at the initiative of the district, state, or federal government.

2. Justification for administering each assessment, including specification of the purpose of the assessment and the tested population.

3. Specification of professional development to provide staff the knowledge and skills to utilize the results of assessment to enhance teaching and learning.

4. Clear delineation of the responsibilities for the communication of assessment results to appropriate audiences (students, parents, teachers, administrators, and public entities).

The EOC will cooperate with any school district wishing to obtain further information from their staff regarding assessment issues.

Appendix A

Introduction

Thank you for your willingness to complete the following survey regarding assessments.

At the Education Oversight Committee's retreat in August, the committee asked that the staff conduct an online survey of school districts to determine what assessments beyond those required by state or federal law were administered in school year 2014-15. The EOC, composed of educators, legislators, and business people, also want to know about assessments from the perspective of classroom teachers. Your district volunteered to participate in this study.

As you complete the survey please keep in mind the following:

1) All responses will be anonymous; only summaries of responses will be shared with superintendents.

2) All responses should reflect assessments administered in school year 2014-15 in your current school district.

3) The survey addresses assessments that include continuous, formative, benchmark, diagnostic or interim assessment that you administered to ALL students in a specific grade or content area. Assessments that were administered to a subset of students, for example diagnostic assessments for struggling readers, for limited English proficient students, for students with significant cognitive impairment or for high achieving students, should NOT be included in this survey.

We are asking for responses to this survey by the end of the day, Friday, November 6, 2015.

If you have questions about the survey, please contact Kevin Andrews of the EOC staff at kandrews@eoc.sc.gov.

Current School District

* 1. What school district are you currently employed in?

Same District last year?

* 2. Did you teach in this school district last year (2014-15)?

- Yes
- No

Respondent Role at School

3. What was your role at your school last year?

- Classroom Teacher (including PreK or Kindergarten)
- Special Education Teacher
- Library Media Specialist
- Guidance Counselor
- Principal or Assistant Principal
- Other

Identify Primary Grades Teachers

* 4. Did you teach students in grades Pre-K through grade 2 last year (2014-15)?

- Yes
- No

Primary Grades Assessments

5. For the 2014-15 academic year (last year), please identify the assessments you administered to all students in a grade level or content area (please check all combinations of assessment and grade level that apply).

	Pre-K	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2
BASC-2 (Behavior Assessment System for Children)	☐	☐	☐	☐
BAIP-Math (Blending Assessment with Instruction Program)	☐	☐	☐	☐
DIAL	☐	☐	☐	☐
DIBELS	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dominie Reading and Writing Portfolios	☐	☐	☐	☐
DRA-2+ (Developmental Reading Assessment)	☐	☐	☐	☐
DRDP (Desired Results for Children and Families)	☐	☐	☐	☐
ELSA (Early Literacy Skills Assessment)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fountas & Pinnell	☐	☐	☐	☐
IGDIs (Individual Growth Development Indicators)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Istation	☐	☐	☐	☐
MAP	☐	☐	☐	☐
PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening)	☐	☐	☐	☐
STAR 360 - Reading	☐	☐	☐	☐
STAR 360 - Mathematics	☐	☐	☐	☐
STAR 360 - Early Literacy	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teaching Strategies Gold	☐	☐	☐	☐
District Created Assessment - Literacy	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Pre-K	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2
District Created Assessment - Numeracy	☐	☐	☐	☐
District Created Assessment - Physical Well-Being	☐	☐	☐	☐
District Created Assessment - Social / Emotional	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Assessment - Literacy	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Assessment - Numeracy	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Assessment - Social / Emotional	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Assessment - Physical Well-Being	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please list the names of all "Other Assessments" that you administered to all students in a grade level or content area.

Identify Grade 3-8 Teachers

* 6. Did you teach students in grades 3 through 8 last year (2014-15)?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

Grade 3 through 8 Assessments

7. For the 2014-15 academic year (last year), please identify the assessments administered to all students, or all students in a content area, in any of grades 3 through 8 (please check all combinations of assessment and grade level that apply).

	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	All Grades
Benchmark Assessment System - 2nd Edition	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fountas & Pinnell	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
DIBELS Next	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
DRA-2 (Diagnostic Reading Assessment)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
MAP - Reading	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
MAP - Mathematics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
MAP - Language Usage	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
STAMP	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
STAR 360 - Reading	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
STAR 360 - Math	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
District Created Assessment-Reading	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
District Created Assessment-Mathematics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
District Created Assessment-Writing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
District Created Assessment - Science	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
District Created Assessment - Social Studies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Assessment-Reading	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Assessment-Mathematics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Assessment-Writing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	All Grades
Other Assessment-Science	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Assessment-Social Studies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please list the names of all "Other Assessments" that are administered to all students in a grade level or subject area.

Test Preparation Strategies

Please respond to the following statements for the assessments that were administered for state and/or federal accountability last year (2014-15)

8. Did you have access to commercially prepared test preparation materials?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

9. Did you use test preparation materials created within your district (choose one)?

- ◯ Yes, our district office organized the creation of test preparation materials.
- ◯ Yes, our schools organized the creation of test preparation materials.
- ◯ Yes, I created my own test preparation materials.
- ◯ I did not use test preparation materials created within the district.
- ◯ I did not use test preparation materials from any source.

10. During the month before testing, which option best describes the amount of time set aside for test preparation with students (content review or test format preparation) for summative assessments used for state and/or federal accountability (choose one)?

- ◯ Preparation for 1 day
- ◯ Preparation for 2-3 days
- ◯ Preparation for 4-5 days
- ◯ Preparation for 2 weeks before testing
- ◯ Preparation for 3 weeks before testing
- ◯ We prepared for the entire month.
- ◯ We did not do any special test preparation.
- ◯ I did not teach a class for which students participated in state or federal summative testing.

Identify Grade 9 through 12 teachers

* 11. Did you teach students in grades 9 through 12 last year (2014-15)?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

High School Assessments

12. For the 2014-15 academic year (last year), please identify the assessments administered to all students, or all students in a content area, in any of grades 9 through 12 (please check all assessment / grade combinations that apply).

	Grade 9	Grade10	Grade 11	Grade 12
ASVAB	☐	☐	☐	☐
ACT Compass	☐	☐	☐	☐
MAP - Reading	☐	☐	☐	☐
MAP - Mathematics	☐	☐	☐	☐
MAP - Language Usage	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality Core - English 9	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality Core - English 10	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality Core - English 11	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality Core - English 12	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality Core - Algebra 1	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality Core - Geometry	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality Core -Algebra 2	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality Core - Pre-Calculus	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality Core - Biology	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality Core - Chemistry	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality Core - Physics	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality Core - U.S. History	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality Core - Science	☐	☐	☐	☐
PSAT	☐	☐	☐	☐
SAT	☐	☐	☐	☐
STAMP	☐	☐	☐	☐
Advanced Placement (AP)	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Grade 9	Grade10	Grade 11	Grade 12
International Baccalaureate (IB)	☐	☐	☐	☐
District Created Assessment-Reading	☐	☐	☐	☐
District Created Assessment-Math	☐	☐	☐	☐
District Created Assessment-Writing	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Assessment-Reading	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Assessment-Math	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Assessment-Writing	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please list the names of "Other Assessments" that were administered to all students in a grade level or subject area.

Purposes of Assessment

Please respond to the following statements about the assessments you used last year.

13. The results of assessments informed curriculum decisions in our school.

- ◯ Strongly Agree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly Disagree
- ◯ No Opinion / Don't Know

14. The results of assessments informed instruction in our school.

- ◯ Strongly Agree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly Disagree
- ◯ No Opinion / Don't Know

15. The results of assessments assisted in determining interventions and accelerations for students.

- ◯ Strongly Agree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly Disagree
- ◯ No Opinion / Don't Know

16. The results of assessments were used to predict student achievement on summative assessments.

- ◯ Strongly Agree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly Disagree
- ◯ No Opinion / Don't Know

17. The results of assessments were used to inform the development of professional learning opportunities to strengthen teaching and learning in your school.

- ◯ Strongly Agree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly Disagree
- ◯ No Opinion / Don't Know

18. The assessments were used as information for student learning objectives (SLOs).

- ◯ Strongly Agree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly Disagree
- ◯ No Opinion / Don't Know
- ◯ Not Applicable

19. Please rank order the uses for the assessments you administered in your district in the order of their importance (1=most important, 6=least important).

☐	Inform curriculum decisions
☐	Inform instruction
☐	Determine interventions and accelerations for students
☐	Predict student achievement on summative assessments
☐	Inform the development of professional learning opportunities
☐	Information for SLOs

Communication of Assessment Purposes and Results

20. Have you been provided professional learning opportunities in how to communicate assessment results to students and parents?

- Yes
- No

21. Have you been provided professional learning opportunities in how to use assessment results to inform instruction?

- Yes
- No

22. Who was primarily responsible for communicating assessment results to students and parents at your school?

- District Office
- School
- Classroom Teacher
- Other

Insufficient Resources - Additional Information

23. As a teacher, what resources or professional learning opportunities do you need to enable you to better use assessment results to improve the academic success of students in your classroom?

24. What resources or professional learning opportunities do you need so you are better able to communicate assessment results to students and parents?

Optional Comments

25. Please add any comments you may have.

Thank you.

We are specifically looking for responses to this survey by teachers who taught in the same district last year. You have been directed to this page because you either:

1) Are not a classroom teacher of non-special education students, or

2) Did not teach in your current district last year.

Thank you for your time in attempting to respond to this survey. Please click the "Done" button to exit the survey.

Appendix B. The number of teachers who indicated they gave each assessment by grade level range.

Table B1. Number of Districts and Teachers Indicating They Gave Each Assessment - PreK through Grade 2.

Assessment	Number of Districts	Number of Teachers
BAIP	0	0
BASC	2	34
DIAL	*	120
DIBELS	6	348
Dominie	7	4
DRA	20	287
DRDP	34	2
ELSA	1	27
Fountas & Pinnell	9	510
My IGDIs	8	4
Istation	1	63
MAP	30	768
PALS	9	18
STAR Reading	6	117
STAR Math	2	26
STAR Literacy	2	40
District Literacy	6	0
District Numeracy	4	439
District Physical	0	28
District Social/Emotional	0	45
Other Literacy	14	1560
Other Numeracy	10	393
Other Physical	3	60
Other Social/Emotional	2	25

* Assessment not presented as a choice on the District Survey

Table B2. Number of Districts and Teachers Indicating They Gave Each Assessment – Grades 3 through 8.

Assessment	Number of Districts	Number of Teachers
BAS	2	796
DIBELS	1	133
DRA	6	161
Fountas & Pinnell	8	461
MAP Reading	31	1888
MAP Math	31	1889
MAP Language Usage	*	1077
STAMP	0	4
STAR360 Reading	5	187
STAR360 Math	2	74
District Reading	5	651
District Math	6	751
District Writing	*	748
District Science	9	761
District Social Studies	10	740
Other Reading	10	182
Other Math	10	147
Other Writing	*	116
Other Science	11	124
Other Social Studies	9	111

* Assessment not presented as a choice on the District Survey

Table B3. Number of Districts and Teachers Indicating They Gave Each Assessment – Grades 9 through 12.

Assessment	**Number of Districts**	**Number of Teachers**
ASVAB	14	582
Compass	7	564
MAP Reading	19	528
MAP Math	18	541
MAP Language Usage	9	419
Quality Core English9	1	21
Quality Core English 10	1	5
Quality Core English 11	2	9
Quality Core English 12	1	5
Quality Core Algebra 1	3	5
Quality Core Geometry	1	2
Quality Core Algebra 2	2	2
Quality Core Pre-Calculus	1	0
Quality Core Biology	3	17
Quality Core Chemistry	1	3
Quality Core Physics	0	3
Quality Core US History	1	35
Quality Core Science	0	3
PSAT	0	882
SAT	7	387
STAMP	*	19
AP	29	690
IB	7	139
District Reading	5	127
District Math	7	170
District Writing	4	128
Other Reading	8	172
Other Math	5	154
Other Writing	5	140

* Assessment not presented as a choice on the District Survey

Appendix C
C1. Comments from PreK-Grade 2 Teachers

Positive

I think our school does a great job of using assessments to guide our instruction. Through the use of various assessments we are able to make decisions for each child so that we are able to scaffold their learning.

I believe that assessments/data collected from assessments should drive our instruction. These assessments are given so that we can use the data and focus on each students individual n e e d .

Another great year with a fantastic staff and a wonderful group of kids.

Teachers and others stakeholders need to have measurable, concrete goals for students based on our standards, especially for use on report cards and other communication with parents. For example, defining what "fluency" means for math students or "understand" means for reading. Without these guidelines, teachers are left to interpret ability and success subjectively and arbitrarily.

I feel supported at my school.

I think this assessment process is a learning situation for a11!

Thank you!

good survey

I feel like I can talk to my coworkers for help with any questions I may have.

Suggestions for Improving Assessment

I strive to use assessment data in my classroom in every aspect. Not only to assess the students but myself as well. I often feel as if there are grand expectations but no one (curriculum coaches or district staff) are willing to give a solid answer for exactly what they would like to see after assessing is over and instruction is to be resumed.

I think I might like to have the windows of assessment periods opened up to include some days before school starts. It is very difficult to welcome and comfort new students to "big school" when so very many assessments are due before the 45th day of school. I would rather be able to gain some of the information prior to school starting. This might enable teachers/administration to group children more heterogeneously while giving teachers time to get to know children.
Make sure teachers have training in adequate time before administering assessments

If we are utilizing assessment data correctly, then first we (as educators) need to be very careful about developing standards that will be assessed. Also, we need to look long and hard at which assessments provide effective feedback and which do not provide effective snapshots into the abilities of learners. Finally, if our standards and assessments are rigorous enough, we should allow for flexibility at the school level in utilizing new curriculum models that are geared toward improving learning for ALL learners. This means that we might need to look closely at the true effectiveness of the "one size fits all" model of curricula that is offered in certain subject areas at the district and/or state level.

Assessments need to be created to mirror the current teaching practices. I realize this is quite costly to develop assessments and grade the open ended responses. What is best for children?

Today is October 26th, 2015 the 45th day of school. To date my KINDERGARTEN students have been assessed with the following assessment tools: DIBELS (B.O.Y. Benchmark) BURST (progress monitoring 1-3...every 10 days) DRA- 2 District Math Assessment AIMSweb LNF Assessment (To satisify SLO requirement) Imagine Benchmark 1 and this week we will assess students in the first progress monitoring for AIMSweb. This is a great deal of assessment for such little people. We are assessing so much that there is NO time between the assessments to teach! Today was the FIRST small ELA group that I was able to hold THIS YEAR! In December we will assess students for their M.O.Y. DIBELS benchmark and I have hardly worked with these students in small groups on the skills that they lack. There has got to be a better way to do this! The information gained from assessment is useful and gives us a lot of data, but it is useless to us if we can't instruct our students and build their skills in their areas of need. Thank you for taking the time to allow us to communicate our concerns.

We desperately need teacher input when deciding on mandating specific assessments on the state level. We have been mandated to use 3 different assessments in as many years. A tremendous amount of resources and time were wasted on assessments that did not meet teachers' needs.

State mandated testing should be started before the beginning of school to help group classes and to alleviate time spent testing at the beginning of the year when we should spend time with students.

We need one common Reading assessment for all grade levels K-5, instead of using Dominie, DRA, and Fountas and Pinnell. Parents have requested this as well.

We need testing for helping teachers to better place students but I believe we are doing it too much and students are testing for too long at times. Some are overwhelmed by it in the 2nd grade and intimidated with the difficult questions. Some are having to take them on lap top computers and they have never used them before and are made to take them on their first MAP test.

All of our assessments in kindergarten must be administered to each child individually which makes it difficult to establish routines at the beginning of the year. It takes almost a full month at the beginning of the year and again at the end of the year to administer all of the required assessments. In my opinion, this is not very developmentally appropriate for 5 year old children. Several of the assessments are assessing the same things. Also, I have to question the validity of a readiness assessment when the children have been in school receiving instruction for up to 45 days. In order to determine if children are ready to start school, readiness assessments should be administered before school starts or during the first week of school.

Assessments are valuable tools, however, too many (too much time spent asessing) can interfere with rigorous insruction.

Clear communication to teachers about what assessments are needed before August. Assessments for math to make sure we (in 1st grade district wide) are on the same page.

Way too many assessments for K5!!!!!! Need time to administer, record, report during contracted time. Tired of doing it all on my time. Many assessments are overlapping! We need to find one good one and just use it.

It would be helpful if the assessments given were consistent across the state and not vary from district to district.

Assessments are not the be all end all. I know we have to document our students' progress but let's make it age and developmentally appropriate. This school year we have had a plethora of assessments that have taken away from instructional time and have not been helpful in instructional planning for my 2nd graders. We did not give these assessments last year so they are not listed on your survey since it asked for the 2014-15 school year. I understand the thinking and good intent behind them but let's assess the way we teach and not put these babies in front of a computer screen and expect them to perform when half the time the technology won't work, the test has flaws, even some of the answers from the companies they are purchased from are wrong. How is this fair to a child? Sometimes I think we need to get out of our own way and get to the business of growing learners. A child is more than a score on a standardized test. I agree we need to be diligent with testing, documentation, and reporting but we need to make sure we are using appropriate assessments that truly reflect a child's learning. What happened to authentic assessment and evidence based learning? We are trying to do everything new and innovative and we as teachers are on overload.

This directly impacts the children. I appreciate the fact that you are asking for educator input. Thank you! Hopefully the powers that be will listen to classroom teachers and can make things better!

More time.

Giving individual assessments in a first grade classroom with all other students present is difficult. I feel the results would be more valid if we were able to have a sub and pull students out one-on -one in a quite place to do the assessments. This is especially difficult at the beginning of the year when students have not learned procedures and expectations for learning centers.

Let's consolidate these assessments and make time to give them and use them. As a K5 teacher I have 25 students individual assessments that took at least 25 min for reading an 15 for math. Do the math and see the instructional time lost and classroom management lost on beginning if the year assessments. Days and days of lost instructional

time.

Assessment – Taking Time Away from Instruction and Planning

The assessments take away weeks of instruction. They also increase negative behavior.

Sometimes it seems we spend so much time testing it limits our time to develop wonderful lessons and takes away from the time we have to teach!

We are given more and more to teach in the same amount of time and more and more data to collect. Many of us are putting in ten or more hours a day and still can't catch up, plan, and fill the demands put on us.

Our plates are full. We are given more and more to do in the classroom by the state and district. We need time to PLAN for our students, individually and by grade level. And in Kindergarten, we assess TOO much, too often.

I believe that over testing sometimes interrupts instruction.

All I need is time in my room to teach the children. Too much time is being taken away from seasoned teachers. Just let me teach!

Although the results of assessments are very important in guiding instruction, we need to find a way to streamline this process. Currently, our students are spending FAR too much time taking assessments, and many are becoming resistant to taking assessments as a result. Additionally, so much time is spent on MAP tests, Pre/Post Tests, and retesting that much time for instruction is lost in order to test.

I feel that assessments are given so frequently that I do not have enough time to use the results effectively to inform instructional practice.

I think we spend too much time analyzing data and giving assessments. This takes away from time to plan with co-teachers and create better lessons.
I believe we assess too much. We do not have time to give appropriate instruction.

We need assessments that will only evaluate what we are accountable for teaching at our grade level. We also need more time for instruction and less time for assessing. Teachers assess daily through observations, etc... Good teachers know where their kids are at and their assessments are accurate and of value. We need more time to teach what we know our kids need to learn without interruptions and schedule changes due to constant testing that is not useable to help improve instruction.

Students are assessed too often and not allotted enough time to learn and explore. While teachers do need a form of standardized assessment to guide instruction, inform parents, and be held accountable; ultimately a teacher's anecdotal records and observations day in and day out with a child are far more valuable and should be taken into consideration when discussing a child's progress / making decisions about a child's schooling.

Too much testing that takes away from instruction.

We tested too much in comparison to the time we taught.

We need to spend MORE time TEACHING and less time testing.

There is so much emphasis on assessment that it does not allow much time at all to teach. Teachers need to be able to teach their students.

While assessment is important, I feel that I have spent a huge amount of time administering tests/assessments.

We are spending WAY too much time assessing 5 year old children. We need to TEACH them more than test them! We need ONE good assessment instead of multiple ones that are a waste of time and tell us the same thing. It is ridiculous how much time we are sending assessing and how much valuable teaching time it is taking away!

Students shouldn't be just numbers on a test. They shouldn't have just one snap shot of their year that shows how they learn or how much they have learned. I think it is a travesty that we test the students so much and it takes time away from instruction. We do lots of hands on learning that is appropriate for our developmental needs. To ask

students to sit for 25 minutes to assess each child individually is not beneficial. Approximately 30 days of the 1st quarter were spent assessing students on an individual basis. As a classroom teacher this hurts my heart because I am here to teach, not assess what they knew on a detailed level before they came to me! I understand that assessments are important to see where students are struggling. What I am suggesting is that we become more child centered and less test centered. I feel that we assess more than we get to teach. I do not need more training on how to implement the test.... I need more time to teach my kiddos what they need to know.

Assessments should be used as a guide for instruction. All the rest is in the "one more thing to do" category!

I use meaningful assessments and anecdotal to drive instruction and support the needs of my learners. They are invaluable to me. However, the amount of assessments added to already meaningful assessments have allowed me to not know my students better and what meets their needs due to the time it takes to assess. I'm in my 10th year of teaching with a master in language and literacy and I feel more disconnected at this time of year with my students than I have in the past...because of the added assessments.

I have been teaching for over 30 years. It is imperative that teachers have time to plan for the instruction for their students. Right now we are doing paperwork for government that takes up hours and hours EVERY DAY. Please let us teach.

I feel like I am spending too much time assessing rather than teaching and spending time with my class as a whole. I think the assessments all show me the same information.,

Overall -- Too Much Testing

Way too much testing. Teach students, not a test. We go backwards, it seems, because we have taken so many of the basics out of school curriculum to prepare students for testing that, in the long run, only prepares them for testing and how to choose an answer rather than think and understand and be able to go into the world with some good general knowledge. Education seems not to be about education anymore. It is all about testing. AND who is really being help accountable, students? I think not. If a teacher's students don't perform well on tests, he/she must be a "bad" teacher. And so on.....

We spend entirely too much instructional time assessing in our kindergarten classroom. We are losing valuable teaching time administering so many tests individually and way too often. I neglected to mention that we are also required to give Benchmark Tests in the Imagine It Program six times per school year in addition to quarterly math testing and Dibels and progress monitoring.

I feel we over test our students which takes away teaching time. I understand the importance of using the data to drive our instruction so we can meet student needs. I feel that is the only reason we should test students.

Too many different test required for kingarten students

I believe as a classroom teacher in the second grade that we test way too much. I don't believe the MAP test is a valid test. I believe that all informal classroom assessments show a valid score and what the student is capable of. MAP tests are way too long and too stressful on students. Due to the amount of testing we are seeing more testing anxiety and long term damage on students. The classroom teachers are losing instructional time in order to prepare students for standardized tests. The MAP test is considered a standardized test, however it covers standards from all grade levels and not just one grade level. Too much testing will lead to more parental concern and more parents leading to Opt Out of testing!

I feel that we are using too many assessments. These assessments are not always a true picture of what the child shows in the classroom. It causes a lot of stress on children (especially young children).

The assessing in this county is out of control. I spend more days testing than I do teaching. My students are frustrated, my assistant is frustrated, and the methods that we are using to teach our lower children are NOT working. It is time to go back to the days when we were allowed to actually teach and not depend on test scores as part of our curriculum.

We test entirely too much.

We are testing our kids to death.

We need students to take less tests! We are over assessing!
Too much micro management going on. All about data now .

Over-testing is inversely impacting the amount of time I can spend actually teaching my students. Testing occurs with such frequency that my students do not receive adequate instruction and opportunity to explore and engage with the learning environment.

These children are tested too much. Teachers just want to teach and children need the time to learn. Learning should be FUN! The children are tested to death. We have lost sight of what it important...their learning. We are putting too much emphasis on testing. Children are more than a test score.

I understand assessments are necessary, however, if all we do is assess, we aren't really teaching the students.

I feel as though our district makes our students do too many assessments. As a classroom teacher, I feel that I am always giving an assessment and never able to teach. It is not fair to me to always be giving an assessment and it is definitely not fair to the students.

We need to require only one assessment for the beginning of the year rather than the state, district and school assessments. Having 3 or more is redundant, time consuming and takes away from the learning process.

I feel too much emphasis is putting on testing, and students are tested to death to be so young.

I am vehemently opposed to the number of assessments being given to young children in this state and the undue emphasis being placed on the results of said tests. The tests are stressful and the children often do not understand how to take computerized tests. The results seem to be more important to give a reason to hold children back from the next grade than for helping them learn. If we are going to continue to spend so much of instructional time administering tests, teachers are going to need additional aides in the classroom to make use of the time that is left outside of testing. In other words, give us time to teach, and we may be able to help children learn instead of continually testing them.

We test five year olds way too much. A lot of the assessments are district mandated and as a teacher we know who can do what before we administer some of these assessment.

Students are over assessed and more time could be used for instruction.

When the number of hours my second graders spend on testing was totaled, it was the equivalent on three full school days. This does not include the time spent on actual testing days on transitioning back into a normal schedule.

I feel that we have too many tests for kindergarteners. This current school year we have administered: Fontas and Ponell, DRA2, and MAP. I feel as if the two reading assessments are redundant and cause a lot of time away from the classroom assessing children instead of teaching. I really think both kits provide useful information, but we really do not need to spend time giving both.

There are way too many assessments that need to be given by the classroom teacher each year. Between Imagine It Benchmark-6 times a year, Math Benchmark - 4 times a year, DIBELS (3times a year) which also includes progress monitoring every 9 days, 2 weeks and 6 weeks (depending on the student) we have no time to teach our students. In Kindergarten we spend a majority of our Guided Reading time assessing and most of these assessments take 15-20 minutes per child. It is almost November and I am still assessing and have yet to have a guided reading group (which is why we are supposed to be assessing -so that it can guide my instruction .....)

I feel at times we TEST our students way too much.

I feel that the students are assessed far to much.

Students in our school, county, state are being assessed way too much! It has been proven that students are not learning more, rather they are learning ONLY how to take tests. As a teacher I was taught in college to NEVER TEACH TO THE TEST which is exactly what I am directed to do and have been doing for the past ten years!
I feel that we are testing too much. We are putting too much emphasis on a snapshot of one day in a child's life. We need to back up and look at the whole child, not just one day.

We are assessing students TOO much! Between administering MAP twice a year (which requires at least an hour on three different days), summative assessments in instructional units, administering Fountas & Pinnell benchmarks, completing pre- and post- writing assessments...we spend HOURS in assessing. For younger grades (K-2) more

authentic, meaningful assessments are needed.

Kindergarten students in _____ County are given entirely to many assessments. The children are 5 years old and are made out to be in college with the amount of testing. It would be great if we could get back to doing what is right for our students.

I think these children are over tested and the end of the year tests are never used the next year. Too much stress and pressure put onto these children and I think something needs to change.

Inform Instruction

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

SLO for Related Arts (Music) has taken an inordinate amount of class time (almost 1/3 of the entire instruction of 4th grade). We need to evaluate how to make our written and performance tests easier and shorter next year - maybe even change the content all together. The SLO schedule in Related Arts as a team has negatively impacted our inter-related curriculums and performances.

We are already using students assessments to drive our teaching and our SLOs.

Our students are over assessed and we are required to take too much time away from teaching to do this. SLOs are also one more piece of paperwork that isn't relevant to instruction.

Professional Development

I have had many trainings in DIBELS and feel well-qualifies to administer the test, use its data to drive and individualize instruction and communicate test results from DIBELS to parents. I do not feel that it is a deficiency in my school that I have not had Des Cartes or MAP training because these are courses that should be offered at the district level.

____ district needs to provide professional development days for parent conferences and days to communicate assessment results to staff and parent. Most teacher days are between 12 to 14 hour days to accommodate planning, meeting, conferences.

Thank you for any learning opportunities.

What I do need is more time to plan for the diversity that typically result from these assessments. We have been given multiple directives on what to do and how to do it. We do however, need sufficient time to implement these directives. (Not more inservices!)

Teachers must be given more time in their classroom. This is much more effective than faculty meetings and professional development.

I have the information but really would like to have a PD day to put the information together and group my students for skills that they need, based on assessment reports.

We are a historically HIGHLY successful school; newly imposed tests, especially on the K5 level, which are repetitive in results SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED, much less REQUIRED! Professional developments that are held just to say the time was filled, with no applicable substance to them are INTERRUPTING what we do best, and that is a travesty! Teachers who have proved their worth by their students' success records over the course of many years should not be required to water down their strengths. Teachers should be allowed the 'old fashioned' recertification route, through which we took 3 hour classes that were of meaning and use to our individual classrooms. The collection of 120 recertification points is perhaps as much as 80% wasted time sometimes. That 80% of time would be used by the majority of teachers as prep time, including meaningful assessments.

About Specific Assessments

Please don't use DRA-2 anymore. My entire grade level's instruction has suffered because of the time it has taken to be trained and to administer all of the subtests. The information from the subtests did not come at a helpful time and we had to supplement with other assessments to get a more complete picture of our students' strengths and needs. Otherwise, we would not have been able to communicate with parents. We are just now forming guided groups because all of the assessments are finally complete. This is unacceptable for the future.

This year's DRA2 was a time hog and in my opinion did not provide the data to cover the cost of lost instructional time

The DRA 2 Word Analysis which we used earlier THIS Fall went smoothly and the data entry site worked properly. We did not receive substitutes but were required to test students in a separate, quiet room. We also did not receive substitutes and had to leave the classroom to be trained and enter the students' data. This took about 2 hours. This process had to be done out of the classroom. Please consider providing subs for our classrooms in order for us to complete this assessment.

Now that DRA2 has been added as a test that second graders have to take we spend too much time testing. Teachers are forced to use classroom (teaching) time to administer the test and instead of teaching we are spending hours testing. Plus, we are trying to keep 20 or more other students busy while we administer the test because we have no one to watch the rest of our class. The MAP and Star Reader are s u f f i c i e n t .

This year we have the DRA2 assessment. It is a new tool that monitors students growth over the entire school year by assessing word analysis, reading, and writing skills. We only assessed students on reading skills at the end of the year last year.

Cogat testing that was done seemed redundant in relationship to the map and dominie.

M Circle was a huge waste of time and money. My reponses regarding the assessment do not apply to it.

The M-Class Readiness Assessment was not beneficial for Kindergarten. Teachers got trained on the test one week before the test was due to be completed. The information was not helpful for teachers and there was not post-assessment. I would love for the district and state to ask Kindergarten teachers what information (assessments) they need to drive instruction so that time consuming assessments aren't given that aren't needed. One on one assessments the first 2 months of school takes away from rules, routines, class community, and authentic learning. I wish there was a way to get away from assessment after assessment at the beginning of Kindergarten.

Since last year, we have had multiple assessments added to our required beginning, middle, and end of the year testing. Last year's assessments were for the most part beneficial (with the exception of the 4K Circle assessment that did not meet the needs of the child, and did not show growth because it was only administered once). I have found that most of this year's new required assessments (2015-2016) have taken away an unnecessary amount of time from classroom instruction, and they reiterate the same information that we've already assessed through our other in-class assessments.

Fountas and Pinnell is a much better assessment than DRA 2+. The CIRCLE assessment was not beneficial, so when I referred to assessments being useful in this survey, I was referring only to F & P. Please do away with DRA and make F & P the main assessment for next school year.

The Fountas and Pinnell assessment worked so well and provided such accurate results. There was no reason to change assessments after only one year which is costly and time consuming. The new DRA2 is basically a waste of time and does not accurately show a student’s ability.

Implementing the DRA-2 took away critical instructional time from our students, especially at the beginning of the year.

The implementation of DRA2 took away too much valuable instructional time from our children!
Students in elementary school are assessed far too much. Teachers have high levels of stress when it comes to assessing as well as students. Often times we are trying to complete several assessments all within the same time period. This year I had to spend the ENTIRE month of September assessing my students. They had to be assessed based on AIMSweb, they have been assessed using the district math assessment, they were assessed using DRA 2 both the reading and word analysis assessments. Not to mention kindergarten assessments have to be given one on one, which eats up valuable instruction time. We are testing these students to death.

implementing the DRA2 took away critical instructional time from our students especially at the beginning of the year

The District math assessment for K5 has only a limited number of items on each standard, so does not adequately assessment student knowledge on some skills. Again, the MCircle assessment was not used in any way last year, so time it took to administer it individually was wasted. We have spent the better part of the first quarter of school assessing students. We need to have the required assessment, DRA2 or whatever, in place to begin earlier than mid-

September.

The district uses Aimsweb and F & P to assess the 5K students. These assessments give accurate information which is shared with parents at PTC in the fall. The other assessments (M-Class from last year and DRA2) were not as accurate and results were not shared at the school level and therefore were not informative to the teachers or parents.

DIBELS provides valuable information that can help to guide instruction. However, Imagine It benchmarks do not provide any valuable information that guides instruction. It is developmentally inappropriate for first graders as they know very little about multiple choice tests. Students often break down into tears because they are not able to understand how to complete the test. This takes valuable instructional time without providing information that can then be used to inform instruction.

Some assessments such as DIBELS inform teachers of what students need. Others such as Imagine It! Benchmark are not so accurate. MAP for students below second grade is not accurate to what the student knows, it is not developmentally appropriate.

I believe that the district-appointed assessment for Pre-K students (CIRCLE assessment) is not the most appropriate assessment for my students' abilities. I often use my own assessment checklists to get a truer picture of my students' skills and knowledge.

The new school year 2015 has started off very rocky with testing materials from state not here in a timely manner. Subs were brought in so teachers could test DRA during the school day and that was not enough time to adequately test all areas on each child. If tests were received before school started we could have done this first week of school. The Mcirlcle assessment given last year by the state was not helpful AT ALL! Information was not used as it was for 4 year olds and not kindergarten children. Also, subs were used so we were taken out of the class again.

DIBELS does not inform parents, teachers, or schools of academic progression because of too many invalidities with the test itself. We cannot communicate clearly to parents about a student's academic achievement by giving them color labels for their children. 1 minute testing causes too much testing anxiety for K students and needs to be replaced with DRAs in the classroom.

Map testing gives us enough info on a student's performance. We do not need additional tests to determine if a student might be eligible for an accelerated program or a response to intervention. Also, I believe we place too much emphasis on these tests, especially in the lower grades. Many students are not developmentally ready due to immaturity or ESL issues.

MAP is not a valid assessment tool for kindergarten students. A majority of the students do not have the computer skills needed at the beginning of the school year in order for this to be an accurate assessment tool.

I feel that Kindergarten students are being asked to take unreliable test. Star and Map testing is not accurate because they do not have a full understanding of the computers and programming to give an accurate result.

Our district uses MAP to assess our kindergarten children. This is not an accurate and valid way to measure student achievement and mastery. I teach at a Title 1 school. My students do not come to school with the computer skills necessary to take this type of test with accuracy. We do not have enough technology for our young students to build these skills throughout the school year. We have four classroom computers to share with 20+ students. Students receive only 30 minutes of technology instruction in our lab once a w e e k .

MAP testing second graders is not age appropriate. Imagine IT! benchmark tests are timed!!! We teach our students to take their time to do their personal best work.

I wish MAP was the only assessment, and could be for Science and Social Studies too. This information is very valuable for planning and achieving learning based on individual student n e e d s .

We need to quit testing these little ones so much and let them be kids. MAP IS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD!
Imagine-It benchmarks are the cause of stress to the students and are of no value to classroom teachers.

Did not like how the scores from reading benchmarks were different from _____County fountas and pinnel or

rigby. The scores are not the same and they change in range of what is independent for different levels for the books as you go from level A, 1, 2, 3.... For example 80 is devolping on level A but 80 is emerging for level 1, 88 is devolping on level 1 but 88 is emerging on level 2. These are just some that I noticed. On the other greenville county benchmark books it does not matter what book company or level you test. A certain score is always the same code. For example a 98 on any level is always independent , 94 on any level is always instructional, 88 is always hard, and a 70 is always not ready. The number % does not change for different levels. This test not only uses different codes which is fine, but the number score changes between levels.

General

Everything is changing so frequently, that we don't have enough time to become adept at teaching something before it is changed. We are told to differentiate and individualize based on the needs of our students and class, yet we are told when and how to assess, when and how to teach, and are told to adhere to a pacing guide set for our grade level across the district? How are we supposed to differentiate and individualize with those guidelines? The two expectations are mutually exclusive. You can't differentiate and individualize based on classroom needs and be expected to follow a guide telling you how and when everything should be taught. We went to school to teach. I wish we would be treated like the professionals we are, and be allowed to do just that. Teach.

“When the profit motive gets unmoored from the purpose motive, bad things happen.” We are so worried about the 'profit'-test scores- that we forget that the purpose is- our kids! ENOUGH ABOUT THE TEST SCORES! Let's put kids and teachers first. Administration at the building, district, and state level have NO IDEA what applying and using data in a REAL, EVERYDAY classroom actually looks like. We say, "let's use data to drive instruction", but officials outside of the classroom have no idea what they actually means. More and more is legislated, mandated, and required of teachers so they have less and less time to do the things that actually have a chance of helping children. Just get out of the way, please.

I feel at the preschool level, our district uses the data to see progress and teacher performance with very little encouragement to share with parents.

We spend more time during what plannings we have talking about results rather than actually planning for the children
. More meetings do not make better teachers.

Teacher made assessments should be monitored to make sure they are purposeful and meaningful and not just busywork or "a grade" to fill in on a grade sheet.

I think we are forgetting that we teach "children."

I'm sorry I couldn't be more help.

The number of assessments last year were minimal. However, this year district level benchmark assessments have been put into place. I am concerned with the number of assessments (classroom assessments, district assessments, MAP, running records, state testing) taking away instructional time.

We have 30 plus students in our second grade classes and new teachers with out enough support. Mentors need to be trained and given the time to mentor new teachers. Two things matter with regard to student success ; class size and effective teaching.

Use the intervention program to fit the students- not choosing children to fit the "groups" in the intervention based on assessments.

I realize that most things that we are required to do are from the state level but I feel that some things need to be streamlined and more developmentally appropriate.

We have way too many assessments in early childhood. We are required to test using two assessments tools that test the EXACT same thing...it is a waste of instruction time wo use bothe kits. MAP testing in kindergarten is not developmentally appropriate. We have lost 20 hours of instructional time due to standardized testing and classroom assessments for report card.

What happened to Children First?

I just wanted to note that curriculum cannot really be adapted. We are bound by district and stand standards for what curriculum is taught. We can modify instruction, but the questions about how the results may or may not help us to plan curriculum, aren't really relevant when you are given a scope and sequence that you are expected to follow.

The teaching staff of a school should primarily be used to work with students (teach)in order to help the regular classroom teacher especially with those students who need extra help with skills and focusing. The next priority should be to work with those teachers who lack experience or who request assistance in a particular aspect of teaching or assistance with a particular student.. Many non classroom teachers are being used for administrative duties, clerical work and meetings to teach experienced, capable teachers who just need more time to plan, grade, contact parents etc.

We need an intervention specialist working in each school. We need a complete set of content resources. We need to redo the report card to show content concept and project based learning. We need to remove grade level titles and focus on being support staff because so many children are not on grade level.

_____ County has a high turn over rate in recent years of teachers. Too much spending at the upper layers of management instead of money spent on supporting and nurturing new teachers. Something needs to change in order to see change. Continually adding to teacher's plates is not the way to handle it. I've worked in 3 states for 3 districts. This one by far is the most mis managed. Teachers are not happy overall and looking to change careers due to the pressure the district office puts on assessments and performance. Some assessments aren't even used other than to post on a spreadsheet like Imagine It. So what is the purpose then? Let's be purposeful about student achievement. Let us teach like

Give the teachers a break let them do what is best. Why do we have to differentiate for students and give a standardize test?

I feel professional development should be on how to help children achieve the next goal, not how to write lesson plans. I also feel that taking 2/3 weeks for state wide testing is a WASTE of instructional time. It does not tell the achievement of the student.

6 year olds struggle with just being a child and becoming responsible. Why do we continue to push them in so many areas. They need to know how to be a good person and function in society. We are not given time to work in these areas due to all the standards, tests, meetings, trainings, changes daily, weekly, monthly, etc. My students need more time in the lifeskill areas. How to socialize, get along, show kindness, be responsible, be respectful, and learn how to write, add, subtract, and read. NOT TEST!!!! Teachers are more exhausted than ever. I go in at 6:10 a.m. and sometimes don't leave till after 5:00 p.m. Then I take work home. There is no time for a life outside of school. SC is going to lose a lot of teachers if something doesn't change. We can't go on at this pace and still not feel appreciated. All we here is do this, change that, test this, make this, fill out this form, not good enough, due tomorrow, create this, type that, fill in this testing data, but still find time to teach those kids?????????

I personally believe some of the assessments are not a fair advantage based on some of the skills that have not even been taught yet.

While it is not relevant to this assessment, I feel very strongly that all content needs to be defined with honors and accelerated groupings. In social studies and science it is much more difficult to differentiate when the student ability levels are so diverse. I feel students need to have gifted/at risk differentiation in all content areas to best meet their needs.

This survey needs a separate section or an opt out for related arts teachers. Not applicable to me.

Mandated assessments should be based on current research and should also be developmentally appropriate. Assessment should be used to guide instruction and develop appropriate curriculum material. That does not seem to be happening.

Most of these assessments are not developmentally appropriate for young learners.
We spend too much time sitting in meetings instead of actually using the material discussed to prepare for instruction.

I don't think that a teachers salary should be based on how children perform on assessments. Assessments are tools used to help a student and teacher see what needs to be re taught. Basing a salary on a students ability to perform on an assessment is ridiculous. What has happened to thecteaching profession. We are setting kids and teachers up for failure!!! Or worse yet cheating to jump through the hoops and move on. We need to stop assessing and start teaching and putting the responsibility in the parents too. Teachers can only do so much in a 6 hour day. II as a teacher teach my heart out everyday and dont get the pay or the recognition I truly deserve. The end of my soap box.

At this point we have so many different assessments in place that may or may not correlate that we are overwhelmed with pulling information to intervene where needed. And, frustration over those who do fine on assessments and need to just be taught by the regular ed teacher, but we feel pushed to help those who are very low academically. Those who can excel, suffer being pushed to excel in economically disadvantaged schools.

Appendix C
C2. Comments from Grade 3-8 Teachers

Positive

Assessments are good, but I think middle schools rely too heavily on MAP scores when placing students. Teacher input from the previous grades should be considered.

In my opinion, I feel my school does an excellent job in providing information, preparation, and communication of assessments/results within our community.

We work as a team diligently to help our students grow and develop.

I as a veteran classroom teacher of 10+ years personally feel assessment is a key to ensuring students are achieving at the highest level in the classroom. Many of the assessments provide us with valuable information which allow us to be able to alter and remediate our instruction to best meet the needs of our students.

I believe my school administrators and district do a great job in supporting teachers with resources and training.

Suggestions for Improving Assessment

Assessment is a great tool. Currently it is sorely overused. Too much time testing. Not enough time teaching. Please consider limits to amount of hours/days allotted to assessment.

Assessments that are online are great because it saves a lot of time grading and we can get more specific data from that.

This district needs to start doing professional development training for all of its teachers. We do not have any professional development training currently.

It would be helpful to know what type of assessment will be given at the end of a given year prior to the start of that current academic school year.

I think testing is great if used appropriately. We are told not to teach to the test, but yet we are pressured to get certain results on the test. I want my instructional materials and resources to match what we are going to be tested on. Students are expected to show all they know in one day during one test setting. There is no way to determine how they might be feeling that day, so it is hard to know if your scores are really an accurate depiction of what the truly know. If you want us to be certain we are teaching the correct material, give us input on the test, and allow us access to good examples of test questions and expectations.

Teacher made assessments should be monitored to make sure they are purposeful and meaningful and not just busywork or "a grade" to fill in on a grade sheet.

It is November and we do NOT know what testing instrument our state will be using in the spring. This is not conducive to accurate planning of instruction. Assessment drives instruction.

It is very frustrating to be this far into a school year and not know what state standardized test will be used at the end of the year. I do think good teaching will translate to whatever test is chosen, but the specifics would help, too.

It would be nice to know the rubric of our state test before school starts back. It would even be nice to stay consistent with our testing because this is my third year and I have administered three different test.

The data from assessments has been very beneficial in learning about students and where differentiation is need. I think the number of times they are tested is too much. Right now every content area has testing, combined with the district, and state tests.

Our district has far too many standardized assessments that are required to be given in middle school. MAP, ASPIRE, TE-21, etc are redundant and take up too much instructional time to administer. Choose ONE and let us teach

We all work so hard in this district to accomplish these essentials: meet standards, use data and have it drive all of our decisions about a child's learning, teacher preparedness and professional training, as well as evaluate our staffs.

Please help teachers streamline data to be able to access it and use it to meet each child's potential learning, instead of each teacher creating their own base and possible unintential omission of data or because they did not know how to compile data to determine the best learning path. When a student moves from one school to the next, often, a taecher does not know, fully, the data already compiled for that student.

I feel we over test our students which takes away teaching time. I understand the importance of using the data to drive our instruction so we can meet student needs. I feel that is the only reason we should test students.

The state (SCDOE) should help alternative schools be more effective by providing them with standardized testing data on the students they serve.

State testing needs to be later in May. We had 5 weeks after testing last year to continue our instruction.

We need benchmark assessments to help us as a growing school district. perhaps for each strand of math or each quarter of math. We don't need to use it as a grade but rather use it as a comparison to see how our kids are doing. We also need pacing GUIDES. We need recommendations of when to teach what subjects and how long to take. Not mandated but suggestions to help us.

The problem is not in how the results were communicated to the parents. The problem lies in the ever changing standards, assessments, and lack of communication to districts. We can't prepare our students adequately if we don't know how and through what tool they will be assessed. Indecisiveness from the top down is what influenced this chaos.

Assessments need to be created to mirror the current teaching practices. I realize this is quite costly to develop assessments and grade the open ended responses. What is best for children?

Standardized assessments vary widely in format and testing parameters (time limits, etc.). We need early notification of the type of assessment we will be administering to students. Unfortunately, teaching content standards alone is not sufficient to prepare students for these tests. We are obligated to teach them test-taking strategies throughout the year that align with the type of test they can expect to take at the end of the year. This is the only way the data has validity in terms of assessing mastery of content alone.

Changing to a "better" assessment frequently does not give a teacher the time they need to use it effectively in diagnosing student needs

I wish that the district would give us more time to understand the assessments and work on implementing the information in our classroom. The students need less assessments through out the year.

The assumption is that when results come back from any state level assessment, that we use the data as a district or even as a school. Look, my social studies group uses the data and we plan for it using our LRP's. Other than that, there are no tools or anything else that is provided. For example. I teach in a middle school. Why haven't we identified the students that are weak after their first MAP or their first PASS exam? As long as they pass, no one cares. But the information should be used immediately. Why not do ONE simple thing? Take those who struggle and put them with certain teachers. Then the administration can work developing strategies. This is too easy however as usual we make it so much more complicated. And when we make it so complicated no one uses anything and simply do it themselves.

Each year our state adopts a new end-of-grade assessment. Teachers are not informed of what test is given until very late in the year. As an educator, it is important to know what will be expected of our students prior to them taking the assessment (aside from standards - testing requirements). For example, it's important to be able to prepare students to provide a writing sample in 30 minutes or less if a test is timed. That leads to inaccurate test results.

not knowing what assessments will be given to our students in a timely manner is frustrating. we didn't find out that they were taking the Aspire test until spring. the fact that it is a timed assessment was a HUGE change that the students were not well prepared for. We still don't know what assessment will be given in 2016!!!

Again, if we do not know the assessment, we do not have the information to prepare our students. The ACT/Aspire test is based on NATIONAL STANDARDS. There is NOT a SC version of the test, therefore, teaching separate

standards other than the standards of the test is a waste of time and energy.

Quickly decide which assessments will be used at the end of the year and relate that information to teachers so they can better prepare their students. Have test-like questions available in each strand and indicator for teachers and students to better prepare.

Our state needs to determine the Standardized testing they are going with because the inconsistency is a huge disservice to teachers and students because the amount of energy that goes into collecting practice....then for it to be changed every year?

I think it was absolutely ridiculous that educators were not informed of which tests we were going to administer until January or later. I also think it was ridiculous that we choose to give elementary students a TIMED test. If the higher ups could have seen the faces of these CHILDREN as they were completely stressed out! Not only did they need to worry about answering the question correctly...but also worry about RUSHING to answer correctly. I also think the amount of testing these kids had to endure was ridiculous. Between ACT Aspire, PASS, MAP, DRA... it was too much on them. We weren't getting accurate results from anything, because they were done!

Why are assessments not counted for 8th graders unless they take an End Of Course test? There is nothing for a student to lose if they bomb science or social studies PASS. Make it count for more than just how "effective" a teacher is in the classroom.

Please get rid of some of these assessments. The students are completed burned out after the first 2 days. The results you get for social studies and science are as much a result of how well the student reads as much as it is how well they have mastered the content. Not a good assessment.

I understand testing results and the opportunity they provide in instructional decisions for individual students. We do not need any more staff development. We need time to review test results and time to create instructionally appropriate materials for learners as well as time to share the information with parents.

Knowing what test we are to administer before the school year begins would be so helpful. While I do not teach to the test, I can use the entire year to help prepare kids for the type of testing they will take. For example, if the test is timed, I can intentionally spend time making sure that students can practice working under a time limit. If the test is mixed multiple choice and open response, I can spend time during the year making sure students have the opportunity to practice those test taking strategies. Waiting until after October to let us know what test we are giving is ridiculous. While I understand budgets and politics we are handicapped by state government in the classroom.

If assessments are going to be given, then fine, but they should be minimal and they should be valuable. Minimal means they should take up less than five school days in the year, and valuable means that teachers can actually use and analyze the data in a productive and meaningful way.

It would be very helpful if there was a specific state assessment in place before the school year started, if this is the way the state and districts wants to grade teachers on proficency.

Testing is a mandatory and necessary evil; however, I feel that the students are tested too much. This is something I would like examined and let's do what is best for students and what makes sense.

Pick one test and stick with it. I understand the importance of data but the students that walk into the classroom are not robots, they are young adults. We need to stop testing them so much.

Teachers need access to research that helps them make informed decisions regarding assessment, instruction, and communication.

Assessments still need to be more rigorous and at higher depth of knowledge.

Data is provided through assessments that is used for instructional adjustments, however the amount of time teachers are given to study these results is limited. With pacing and a structured learning environment, teachers need time to accurately place students in the correct intervention plans.

- standardized tests should be given at YEAR END; not 5 weeks before the end of the year. It cuts short the instructional time and leaves teachers with students who think they are "done" once PASS/ASPIRE testing is over. - too many standardized tests (i.e. science was required to give PASS and ASPIRE and 2 benchmark tests). This is simply too much testing. - Science had NO preparation for ASPIRE; 5 sample questions is NOT preparation. –

Every school should have a designated Data Day to analyze data.

Switching assessments yearly makes it difficult to properly prepare students for test style. We really had to train them to watch a clock for ASPIRE and how to write good math written responses and modeling. The state should have by now decided which assessment we are using in the spring. This last second decision making puts a lot of strain on teachers. The content doesn't matter so much as the style of test matters. We have to prepare our students to be successful with test taking strategies. Please make a decision soon for the spring. It will determine how much time I devote to teaching them to keep track of time as they are working and how to write good explanations versus just completing content and reviewing good strategies for multiple choice style questions..

I feel that we test the students too much and need to find something effective, learn it, give it to the students and stick with it for more than one or two years--that includes the way the schools are assessed. Because there are so many changes, it makes it difficult to perfect and become better if the assessment tool and the test is constantly changing. If I ran my classroom the way the State Dept. changed the test and the rubric, I would be questioned because there would be no consistency within my instruction and assessment.

Evaluating Results of Assessment

I have a difficult time evaluating the results of my own assessments much less any other required assessments due to a LACK OF TIME to just sit down and ponder the results.

There are so many test given that we are not able to use the data from one to reteach due to having to turn around and give another one. There is more information collected than time to teach based on the data.

We were never given the opportunity to check that we had given ACT Aspire last year. A document should be created at the district level to crunch data numbers so that my time can be spent planning for instruction based on said data. I spend so much of my planning time crunching numbers that I have no time to plan for the ones who really matter - my STUDENTS!!! On top of this loss of planning time, we also have mandatory Monday & Wednesday meetings during my planning and if I don't have and IEP or SAT, I have only 3 planning periods per week at most.

Taking Time Away from Instruction and Planning

My responses are not 100% accurate. We gave many assessments and I can not remember the official names of each. I believe assessment is valuable in guiding instruction. However, over-assessment eats up valuable instruction time.

As a teacher who is expected to plan a rigorous and challenging curriculum, I am not given the opportunity to do this or to assess any results of assessments given because we are required to meet during my planning period at least 3 out of 5 days a week. While I know that assessment is imperative to planning strategies, it's impossible to analyze them without the time to do it during the day and it's unrealistic and unfair to expect me to do this on the weekends.

we spend so much time testing our kids that they don't get the opportunity to learn through fun activities. The test scores hold so much weight for teachers we don't feel we often spend so much time pushing content at them and rarely get to do hands on activites to help their learning

While each individual assessment may provide worthwhile information, the sum total of testing is excessive. As teachers, we do not have the needed time to analyze all of the results and then plan to implement new strategies. The amount of time now spent on testing is a serious infringement on the learning/instruction time needed to promote maximum student learning.

I think that we are testing more and teaching less. I need the time to evaluate and process what the students' needs are and find ways to teach differently. So many students do not learn with a computer..so I need other avenues....which have to be developed!!!!

Testing takes up valuable instruction time

We assess our students too much and do not have time to teach them real-life curriculum and to delve deep into our content and get that higher-order thinking.

Assessment is an important part of instruction. Right now, there is so much assessment going on, there is much less time to actually teach the concepts. More time should be spend on instruction instead of getting ready for an assessment that does not help drive instruction. We need to make sure the assessments we do are beneficial to the students and teachers.

Less tests, more time to teach. Tests at the end of the year. Having a month left after testing is terrible.

I feel as though I spend more time "testing" than I do teaching. I like to have time to evaluate the results of tests.

We need more time to plan and teach engaging lessons. Data is good, but I can tell you student level 99% of the time without the data.

Time is a limited resource in the elementary setting. Planning time is often used for IEP meetings, grade level meetings, currriculum meetings,etc. Planning time is only 40 minutes for our school a day. We have 40 minutes to plan individualized instruction for 24+ students, analyze multiple data points, communicate with parents, and remain current with best practices. Time is the most critical resource.

I feel that we spend entirely to much time assessing students. All of the testing that we do takes away from classroom instruction. When you consider the amount of time that we are assessing students it adds up to approx 4 weeks or more. I feel that the MAP assessment is the best and most useful assessment that we give. The results are immediate and you can determine what areas students are struggling in and plan instruction accordingly. I also like that you can determine student growth. It is important to realize that just because a student scores below met on an assessment that it doesn't mean they have not made gains and that the teacher has not provide adequate instruction. We need to remember that we are all different and should not be expected to fit inside the same box. We did not all learn to walk and talk at the same time so it should reason that we do not all learn at the same time and rate. Let's get back to letting teachers teach and stop limiting us based upon a test score.

Instruction is interrupted way too much for the many testing dates through out thecyear. Each test is its own data and not comparable. Pick one !!!!!!

More time in classroom instruction and less time in formal assessments would benefit our students better.

I struggle with time as it is to teach all the standards. There are so many it is nearly impossible to complete them all prior to the testing window. Don't restrict curriculum units to nine week quarters. What I really need to do is begin the next unit before the end of the current quarter. I need to do this every quarter so that I can finish all content instruction by the middle of April. That gives me time to review and prep for standardized testing. We don't need multiple tests. Choose ONE reading (PASS or ACT), choose ONE math (PASS or ACT).....etc.,. The most important thing of all: move the end-of-year testing window to later in May and give teachers a couple extra weeks of instructional time. This testing does not need to begin any earlier than May 15th. This allows more than enough days for assessment administration and make ups.

We test a lot. This takes up a lot of our teaching time.

Standardized testing, benchmarks, SLOs, etc. are overtaking the planning and teaching times afforded to teachers. Instead of sharing our content knowledge with our students and teaching them how to take that knowledge and apply it to life, we are teaching them how to take standardized tests, reporting our "goals" ten different ways to ten different organizations! We spend more time proving that we know how to do our jobs than actually doing them!!! Please just let us teach the standards based on the knowledge that we have, and let us test the students on what they learn in the classroom. Standardized tests are not appropriate gauges for learning and knowledge for MOST students. There are way too many outside factors that can interfere with a student's ability to take a standardized test. Until the powers that be figure out that students not only learn in different ways, but also show their learning in different ways, we will never truly succeed!!!!!!

I believe that over testing sometimes interrupts instruction.

We tested too much in comparison to the time we taught.

We test children so much, it gets in the way of meaningful instruction. If we could test less and test more, our scores would be better across the board.

Time for instruction is limited due to scheduling.

Teachers need MORE TIME to PLAN!!!

Too much assessment. I can't even teach all I need to teach and then there is another test to give.

There are too many assessments. Assessments are given too frequently and interfere with planning for and implementing high quality instruction. Assessment "windows" don't reflect what is best for learners.

We noticed ACT Aspire was not on the list of assessments given last year. As educators we find we are spending more time on crunching numbers and meeting at least twice a week during our planning time with a reading coach and math coach discussing our kids and data which leaves maybe at best two to three days of planning to grade papers return phone calls and emails to parents.

I wish there were a way to streamline the amount of assessments we give to students. At the elementary level, assessments seem to take away from instructional time more than enhance it. I believe this is due to the amount of standardized testing required and to teachers not having adequate prep and planning time to plan instruction. At the elementary level, I believe we should have less number of formal assessments. The assessments that are the least valuable to me as a third grade teacher are the Science and Social Studies benchmark assessments. I get much more valuable data from formative and summative assessments within my classroom in those content areas.

Too Much Testing

We test children too much. Then we hold teacher accountable....soon the state will be looking for teachers. The teachers who truly love their job (which is most all) can't keep up with the demands. We are trying to teacher the students we love. Please let us teach!

Too much testing- not enough explanations

Students in our school, county, state are being assessed way too much! It has been proven that students are not learning more, rather they are learning ONLY how to take tests. As a teacher I was taught in college to NEVER TEACH TO THE TEST which is exactly what I am directed to do and have been doing for the past ten years!

Please allow us to teach what the kids need to learn. I loose so many instructional days due to testing for data teams, MAP (3 times a year), DOMINIE, end of the year testing, and doing pre-tests. They kids are tired of doing assessments.

I feel we over assess the children and don't have to to truly teach. We have to use data to drive instruction but not give students tons of tests to see what they know when we don't give them the chance to learn it.

I believe that we put way too much emphasis on testing as opposed to learning in this state. When is this going to change because the excess testing is not producing better prepared students?

Get rid of so much testing!

Testing takes up too much time and energy in our classrooms. The demands put on the teacher to meet goals are exhausting.

I am concerned the students are taking too many assessments and tests with data teams, SLOs, MAP testing, state testing as well as the quizzes and tests that accompany regular instruction.

If feels that we assess too much. Benchmarks in science and social studies feel like a waste of time since we already assess in the classroom for each unit.

We assess too much, and use them too little. Students should not be tested to death, they should be allowed to learn.

Too much testing - I know my students and their abilities through daily interaction and small assessments. I also adjust my teaching to the results of these.

Way too many assessments given to students during the school year! They are constantly tested!!!

We test TOO MUCH.

There is entirely too much testing. Including district benchmarks, students in the 14-15 school year took a minimum of the following: 12 benchmarks (3 per subject) 2 Math MAP (2 days each) 2 ELA MAP (2 days each) 3 ACT (ELA, Writing, Math) 2 SCPASS (Science and SS) That's a bare minimum of 21 Tests. None of these tests impact student grades in any way. We don't even get good data because the students are so over-tested that they've started picking and choosing what they really put effort into (and, they honestly should). Some students took even more tests.

Around 25% took the PSAT. Around 50% took the Algebra I EOCEP. Around 25% took the English I EOCEP. By any standard of measure, testing is absolutely and completely out of control. If districts won't reign this in, I suppose we just have to hope our legislature will.

We test entirely too much. We spend a ridiculous amount of time, energy and money on testing and test prep. I am also a parent and my kids are burnt out. They take MAP in 3 subjects, 3 times a year, Benchmarks for major units multiple times a year, over a week of standardized end of year testing (all day long, every day), EOC testing all day, PSAT prep, PSAT testing all day, CoGat testing for 3 days (2 hours each day)...plus normal course testing for units and understanding. I would conservatively estimate that over HALF my kids' education is spent on test preparation systems like ALEKS, USA Test Prep, Achieve 3000, classroom test prep or in a standardized test. It is absolutely over the top and is DESTROYING a life long desire to learn for students.

Students test approximately 20 days in the school year in middle school which includes science benchmarks, ELA MAP, math MAP, Achieve3000, ACT Aspire, PASS. Our school also builds in a month of review time to prepare for end of the year tests. Students spend two to three days to complete the reading MAP and one to two days for the language. Students then take two-three days on the math MAP. MAP is taken three time in the school year then followed by the end of year tests. We also include 30 minute timed writings monthly in preparation for the spring writing assessment. We spend most of our time preparing students for tests. The stress on students is great. I've seen students cry if they did not meet his or her MAP goal. We have lost our focus as educators and have become test proctors.

There is too much testing, period.

We assess too much. Need more time for instruction.

Our students are tested way too much! I feel like we test more than we teach!

We test children a LOT.

We test entirely too much.

Students are tested too much and ELA teachers have too much to teach to be successful in any one thing.

Too much testing, not enough time to deconstruct data if we must test! Testing doesn't help or benefit the classroom teacher.

We spend entirely too much time assessing students!

We over-test the students. In any one week, they could have nearly a dozen tests (some count, some don't) between all of their classes. This is too much!

Our students are chronically over-assessed.

There are too many assessments given to our students. Because we don't teach the same students each year and because we don't get state test results in the same school year as a test, the test results do nothing to benefit instruction to those students. For each unit I teach, students are required to take one pretest, at least one quiz, one post-test, a unit test, and a district mandated benchmark test. Other than the benchmark test, these are given within a two week window, and this is not counting what the requirements are in the other 3 content areas. Over testing of our students REALLY needs to be reevaluated.

We are giving SLO, Pre and post tests, District organized benchmark tests and then state tests. All of this is in addition to the regular tests. Our kids are tested to death.

Students in ___ County Schools are over tested. There is way too much emphasis on data in this county. Teachers are required to teach to tests because that is what we are held accountable for.

Our students are forced to take over 20 district, state, or commercially prepared tests each year. None of these tests have any impact on the students themselves. Therefore, the results you see are not accurate and are not relative. Furthermore, if you continue to add tests, you will continue to see drops in results. Finally, contrary to what the liberal media would have you believe, S.C. is not last in any educational category. If this were the case, then tell me why S.C. continues to be the most solvent state in the Union, while the more liberal states with the "best" education are going bankrupt and relying entirely on federal government funds in order to operate. Reduce testing. Reduce the

stress on our kids. Stop forcing lock step, Soviet Union style teaching and let teachers teach without interference from "bean counters." thank you."

We assess too much! Give me back the classroom time to teach
Too much testing in ____County

TOO MUCH ASSESSMENT and DATA...this is what is pushing teachers out of the career. DATA is sucking all of the FUN and CREATIVITY out of teaching!

In 4th grade we test students entirely too much. Teachers do not have time to use examine the data or use the information each one may provide. We are so busy teaching the standards and assessing mastery of those standards in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the day to day learning.

We test our kids all the time.

Kids are tested too much. My own children dislike school, even at the elementary level. The emphasis on testing has taken teacher creativity away and is taking the life out of our children. As a teacher, I do not feel that I am trusted professionally to do my job. Testing can certainly inform instruction, but the amount of testing we are using is overwhelming for teachers and exhausting for children. I think we should reevaluate the number of tests we ask students to take.

Assessments and testing in our schools are out of control. I need time to teach my students the content in the standards. Less testing is necessary!

I think we test our kids to death. They don't take testing as seriously because they don't see how important it is. Also, could we MAYBE know what test we are using before February this year?? I think last year (14-15) was a mess. No one knew the standards or the assessment on which we would be measured.

The students are tested so much that it causes stress for the overachievers and indifference from the average student. If the test is not counted as a report card grade, the students do not care about the result. As the students get older, as in middle school, these results really do not reflect accurately what some of the students know or are capable of learning.

Our students were involved in testing a total of 11 days during the 14-15 school year. This does not count if students took more than 1 class period to complete MAP testing or district testing. This is a significant amount of time for students at such a young age developmentally.

There is far too much time spent testing our students. It would be more beneficial to have less testing and more learning happening.

We test a lot. For students that have severe test anxiety, it is too much too often...MAP and Pass/Act are too close together.

We test WAY too much. Students do not have time to build relationships and learn valuable social skills because we are turning them into testing robots. Everything is about "THE TESTS" and this takes away from teachers' ability to engage and instruct through authentic learning tasks. When in the real world will these students have to take tests? When in the real world will these students be grouped based on a test score? When will the "people in charge" realize that all of these tests to get to tests to get to tests are hurting far more than they are helping? What has happened to the system? We need to focus on putting the joy back into learning by allowing teachers to teach content because it's what students need to know for life, not for a test that someone wants to see results for so they can judge our progress and rank our standing.

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

SLO for Related Arts (Music) has taken an inordinate amount of class time (almost 1/3 of the entire instruction of 4th grade). We need to evaluate how to make our written and performance tests easier and shorter next year - maybe even change the content all together. The SLO schedule in Related Arts as a team has negatively impacted our inter-related curriculums and performances.

Last year we did not do SLOs, but have started them this year.

I feel that SLO is a very discouraging measure of teacher performance because a teacher is calculated by

unattainable goal at times. You do not take into consideration that many of the students we receive are entering our classes performing well below where they should be to begin with. A teacher that moves 69% of his/her students is still categorized as Needs Improvement and score of proficiency is only given if 70 to 89% of the students improve from one test admission to another. You do not "evaluate" doctors, lawyers or other CEO's based on the performance of their patients, clients or personnell. Teachers by nature want their students to be successful. You do not see the children that are living with grandparents, have parents in jail or have no home at all worried about a "score" on one test. I do not mind creating an SLO or even being evaluated, but do not judge my performance based on test scores. There is more to being a successful citizen than scoring a specific ratio on a test. Also do not belittle the professionalism and responsibility of your teachers to an unsatisfactory, needs improvement, proficient and excellent status without taking "the whole child" into perspective.

None...thank you! SLOs- the writing took away a huge amount of instructional time!

My District has forced teachers to spend excessive amounts of time in data and SLO meetings. We teachers need that time back. We already know how to note the student test results and then to respond to it--if we had time to think instead of meet!

Our district didn't use SLO last year. So, those questions didn't apply and it was ranked low. This year, SLO was used and would be higher ranked.

Too much time is spent on analyzing data and writing SLO's. I taught more content and deeper understanding 15 years ago than I do today.

SLO's are draining teacher's time and effort that they could be using to ensure good instruction to teach the students. No quality training was offered to make the SLO's smooth and less paperwork for teachers. In addition, the quality and rigor of the SLO pretests and post tests are not equal for all subject areas.

With the addition of the SLOs test (pre-, midway, post-), we now test our kids almost 20 class periods per year. That does not even take into account district benchmark tests (2 more days), and teacher made formative and summative assessments. that could add another 10 class periods per year. It seems ridiculous to spend so much time testing. Our curriculum map has 180 days worth of material to get through in a school year. There is no allowance for 30+ days of testing.

As a teacher for many years, there is too much emphasize on data & tests scores instead of home life of students and student's mastery of skills!! This new SLO requirement for teachers will have the affect of new teachers and older teachers leaving the profession soon.

Over 30 days are taken away from instruction time per year for testing. Then more days are taken away for review. MAP testing should not be administered so often. Students should be tested end of the year each year to see their progress. District tests of Science and Social studies takes away from continued instruction and should not be used as well. No way teachers have time to go back and work on weak areas in content, they barely have enough time to fit in the tremendous amount of material covered (especially in Social Studies).

About Specific Assessments

Students should only be tested once a year using the resources of the ACT Aspire program.

The ACT test was not listed on the choices for mandated testing. I prepared my students for three different tests (reading, writing and English). I lost many days of true instruction in order to test-prep. For example, since this is a timed test, I had to teach my students how to fully write to a prompt in a 30 minute limit. This type of writing is contrary to the "best practices" I have learned over the past two decades of teaching ELA. It does not allow students to move through the entire writing process to produce their best work. Instead, it forces them to write in a formulaic manner in order to finish within this constrained time limit. It created too much undue stress for students (and teachers). Our students deserve a better method to assess their literacy skills.

I would have loved to see the students have more reasonable time limits on the Aspire test. I would like to see what they could have accomplished if they hadn't felt so rushed.

The ACT Aspire is possibly the worst test I've ever seen. I didn't think it was at all developmentally appropriate for elementary children. Even my highest achieving students left that test feeling frustrated and defeated. If that test continues to be used, as a parent, I will likely opt my own children out of testing.

The ACT was a waste of time and money. We are not provided with ANY information on how to use the test to do our

jobs better AND we weren't given scores to share with parents. I work harder than that test does! Give me the money used to purchase, administer, and grade that test. I promise the students will benefit from my experience more than they did from that test.

I liked the way the ACT Aspire document showed how many questions the students got correct and their percentages. I also liked the way that it gave parents an idea of what they could work on with their students.

Please keep ACT aspire and do not go back to PASS

I would like to receive data from ACT math scores from the previous year.

I do not feel timed assessments give students a chance to show the best practices we have taught them to use throughout the year. The ASPIRE timed test did not give my students enough time to do their best work.

We were specifically told not to tell the students or parents their scores on the ACT because no one understands what they mean. What is the point of the test if we do not know how to read the results.

MAP is a very useful tool for progress monitoring! MAP is a test that I feel is very beneficial, but as far as end of the year testing, I do not feel that ACT Aspire was beneficial for our students. They were not given enough time to complete the test, so therefore, the scores are not an accurate reflection of the child's ability.

The ACT Aspire state test does not appear to be aligned with our specific standards, and the timing of the writing goes against the way we teach kids to write. It forces students to "dummy down" their writing.

Everyday Math does not match standards. We need curriculum that does!

Do not agree the the "Timed Test" for the ACT. Most of my students don't work well under time constraints and are use to taking their time to work out problems or refer to the text for support-which is what we teach them to do. Then, we place time constraints on them to test their knowledge? Doesn't seem cohesive towards the effective use of instructional practices.

The CASE tests were supposed to be predictive of how students would perform on the ASPIRE tests, but were so far from being predictive, that I feel they were a total waste of time and effort for our students and staff. I am glad we went back to MAP testing.

I think that MAP testing is sufficient to meet state mandates. I do not think that the cost (Financially and in class time) of Act Aspire has any value. It is too early in the year, reduces teaching time, compacts curriculum for some students. It is not summative and it cannot be used to drive instruction.Results are not communicated in a timely manner to teachers. A waste of time and money.

I do not think the ACT/Achieve test should govern our instruction or put teachers on the "hot seat" Our students had NEVER taken a test like this and were not prepared. Time limits have not been a part of these students' education. It is unreasonable to change ALL instruction and make teachers feel badly about the job they are doing based on the ACT/Achieve test.

Does it really matter what teachers think? The wording of this survey does not give teachers the opportunity to express their opinion. For example, MAP testing gives information about student progress. Is it really necessary to give it three times a year. Dominee is great to track lower achieving students. Is it necessary to administer to all students when it takes 45 minutes per student one-on-one with the teacher? The day to day stress-free informal observations give me more information. Teachers are good at knowing student strenghths and weaknesses. Broadbased local and state tests are used to constantly remind students that they are not as good as other students. If decision makers could see the frustration level and general test fatigue of students, they would realize that our students are individuals with different gifts, talents, and needs who do not need constant assessments. Most students are have consistant and predictable test scores, but we test them over and over again hoping that the results will change. Because of pressure for these students to improve many teachers are teaching to the test or giving test prep materials. Spring to spring assessment is enough information. I have taken 45 minutes of my time for another survey that will be used to prove something that will not benefit my teaching or students but will probably put more on my plate to do and less time planning meaningful instruction.

I liked the type and specificity of the ACT Aspire test. The time element may be a drawback for some students, but the amount of useful data on each student's readiness levels makes the concerns about the time element less substantive. This is an area that can be practiced with the students through the year.

I wish MAP was the only assessment, and could be for Science and Social Studies too. This information is very valuable for planning and achieving learning based on individual student needs.

We should not be two months into the school year and not know whether ACT Aspire will be administered again this year. ACT folks have clearly said Aspire is not meant to be used for high-stakes testing.

The state needed to decide a test way in advance so that we could prepare the students for the timed aspect of Aspire.

We over assess! What do we do with science and social studies benchmark results? Nothing- because there is no time to go back and reteach. You have to stay on pace in a small amount of time during the day. What did we take away from the ACT Aspire last year? Nothing.

ACTAspire did not provide clear examples of expected outcomes for 3-5th students.

As teachers, we are expected to pre- and post test in the classroom. We also have benchmarks that are to be given to the students. On top of that, there is MAP testing, NAEP testing, career assessments, unit quizzes, unit tests

We need one common Reading assessment for all grade levels K-5, instead of using Dominie, DRA, and Fountas and Pinnell. Parents have requested this as well.

Look, if the standards for students are reasonable expectations of all learners, then a standardized test is certainly an appropriate tool to measure teaching and learning, so long as it is aligned to these standards. Additionally, it would be a valuable tool to direct curriculum and instruction, IF it were valid. Last year, it is safe to say we were not informed about how our students were going to be tested, other than they would not be taking PASS. This year, I still have not been informed as to what test, or how the standardized tests will be administered, which is okay as far as content, as long as it reflects our current standards. However, this indecision, or lack of information scream inability, district wide, to understand the potential value of an effective standardized test's implications. That being said. What did ACT/Aspire measure?? I have been teaching 25 years, same grade, same subject. My experience with this test is, well, it makes me more than question its validity, and it should make all its stake holders scratch their heads. My TOP HONORS student ---and believe me, I can recognize them---scored "not ready" or whatever that second level was called. No way. I am certain there is a severe disconnect, right there. Oh, and not to mention the only other state that uses this assessment is ALABAMA (no offense) but, seriously?? Enough said. Sorry.

This survey did not ask any questions about the state mandated test, ACT Aspire, from last year. Along with the state mandated testing, MAP testing three times a year is a bit much. Students are judged on a test that they take one day and teacher input is not taken into account when placing students for the following school year. I spend a majority of my time crunching data numbers instead of planning my instruction. Someone needs to crunch these numbers for us so that teachers can actually have the time to plan for our classes. I also feel like teachers are being judged based on their students test scores (MAP, ACT Aspire), instead of their classroom performance.

I really like the science Aspire text. It would be an excellent tool for determining growth in science. I think we need to raise the bar on our expectations, the Aspire test does this. I also like being able to see where my student are in relation to the rest of the country.

There is too much pressure on students and teachers for the end of the year, high stakes assessments such as PASS and ACTAspire. The tests are useless to teachers because they do not actually tell us anything specific on how to help our students. We get the results too late to make adjusts for our students, and the information we receive from the testing corporations is pointless because it is too vague. If the results were at least broken up by standard and indicator, we could find areas we teach well and areas we need to improve upon. But the information is not reported to us that way. The fact that $65 million dollars was spent on ACTAspire last year and the ELA tests only assessed five standards, a small number of what we actually teach, is an outrage and shameful. All teachers want are assessments that truly help us help the children, not just a number score and a ranking that can be used for punitive purposes.

The assessments that we take do not reflect learning. The ACT Aspire is a gigantic joke, and 12-15 of my students DID NOT FINISH THE ASSESSMENT. I taught them how to use strategies for reading comprehension and accuracy, which can take time. Slow readers are not necessarily bad readers. We need to understand the students before assigning these asinine assessments.

Timed writing test is not writing. The students do not have time to think about what they would like to say.
Too much time is spent with benchmarks, MAP, PASS testing. We are given 6 major units to cover in less than 7

months (by the time we take out all the spent with other activities and the state PASS exam coming so early!

MAP Testing is not always based on third grade standards. most students get questions about content that is not on third grade level and aligned with the standards. Domine is more authentic and actually can assist teachers in what that child needs.

Assessments in other areas often (MAP mainly) interrupt instruction time often

Students are tested too much. The MAP assessment should be moved to April or May to truly assess what they have learned over the entire year.

Since we do not get Social Studies PASS results until after the school year has ended why do we have to give the test so early. We need more time to teach the standards for our students to be successful academically and on the test.

As a 4th grade teacher, I would like to know why we devote money and instructional time to retest children using CoGat if they have already qualified and are receiving instruction in AGP classes? This year alone, 100 students were tested and 60 students were already identified as AGP and are currently being served in an AGP classroom. Also, MAPS testing is done three times a year in most schools. Can this be reduced to beginning and ending of a school year so that parents are looking at year to year results? Can teachers and parents have a voice in the amount of testing that is done each year?

MAP testing is great because you receive results immediately according to grade level and skill. The ACT Aspire test was a joke!! Not developmentally appropriate. Not fair to teachers and students!

MAP is by far the best assessment we have. It's immediate, helps drive instruction and is reasonable. District content benchmarks are often awful and have terrible results yet year after year they're the same. If kids across the district are failing them, why isn't the test changed?

I feel as if our district relies to heavily on MAP test scores, rather than on appropriate grade level content such as benchmarks.

We tested the TE 21 as a practice timed test. My students found the answers to the questions on the TE 21 to confusing. I would not use it again because I feel that the class-time used for testing did not produce accurate usable data that could be used to guide instruction.

We tested about 14 days last year. We did MAP in the Spring, Winter and Fall for Reading and Math, We used the TE21 in Science. We gave the ASPIRE test at the end of the year in all core subjects. Students were prepped and tested for more than a month at the end of the year. We are loosing too much time to testing! We are also more accountable than ever before. If students don't do well, then it reflects poorly on teachers. Therefore, teachers will be prepping and testing more than ever. We will be teaching students to the test, and not developing students abilities. We need to do something to make the system fair, accountable, but not test happy as we are now. I personally have spend more than 20 hours writing my SLO and analyzing DATA! This affects my planning and quality of my instruction. After 10 years in the classroom, it has gotten worse. We are testing too much! WE have got to teach students to love to read because they love stories and their meaning, not because they can analyze small passages that they will forget the minute they get up from the test!

I think we have too many assessments and now we are adding USATest prep

As a parent (that is also a teacher), the ACT aspire results sent home to parents were extremely hard to understand. PASS made it easy with the three levels of results and the detail of high, average, low on the sub categories. I'm very worried that the less educated parents won't even bother to read and use the results to help their child.

I might actually be able to teach my students if we weren't losing so much time to testing, especially MAP testing for other subjects. I think the schools that perform highest on standardized tests should be writing the benchmarks for the entire district to avoid having the blind leading the blind at poorly performing schools. If you really want data analysis to be effective, we need access to the data, which means we need to be able to see the test questions used to evaluate students. Data is meaningless without access to the tools that were used to do the measuring. We should have a public test question bank from which standardized test questions are selected each year and our students should not be afraid to tell us there was a question on something we didn't cover, or that they didn't recognize such word or concept, or that they felt they were particularly prepared for the test on this topic. Our most important source of feedback for data- the students- have been embargoed by the current test system in the name of

test security.

District benchmarks from CASE company are full of errors. Wrong answers, writing prompt answers paired with the wrong Yes/No statement. Benchmarks also measure standards not yet taught giving teacher invalid information so many teachers do not use this data and see it as wasting valuable teaching time.

During the 2014-15 school year, the wording on the Reading assessments were too hard for the average grade level student to understand. I feel that some questions should be higher order to challenge the students, but we also need to have successful students at the same time.

MAP testing is supposed to be designed as a formative assessment but sometimes our district uses it as a summative assessment used to place students in leveled classes.

We were very poorly prepared as a district for the ACT and it showed in the results. Particularly in the writing section which we were given examples by the schools district and taught to those examples, but the students did not preform up to standards.

We assess MAP twice a year for 7th graders. We assess a District Writing Assessment three times a year. We now assess using F&P and are assessing every student each year, and numerous students require being assessed multiple times. We also assess using Words Their Way and state testing. It is an abundance of information and an abundance of testing that takes away from teaching.

Data driven decision making is a wonderful concept. The students take too many tests and are fatigued from them. It gets to the point that they don't take the tests serious. We give 3 district benchmark tests for each of the 4 content areas, PSAT, 3 math MAPS, 3 ELA MAPS, Algebra EOC, English 1 EOC, Pre/post tests for each unit in each of the 4 content area state tests. When can we focus on teaching when we are giving test all of the time? By the time May comes the students are just bubbling in answers to get the test done. Something has to change to get better results.

General

We need to be able to attend more off campus training with other agencies, not (district) Coaches..

I skipped the vast majority of these questions because my area did not deal with these assessments.

I'm sorry I couldn't be more help.

Our district make us take to many assessments, makes us spend most of our day on lesson plans, communication is very low along with the moral. Students are not disciplined as instructed, along with good teachers are leaving to go somewhere else where they are appreciated.

Hard to access students in 3rd grade who come to us on a PPrimer level

I personally believe there are other ways to assess and validate a student's achievements other than standardized testing...dear Lord, we the teachers of the future thinkers actually think outside of the box.

Good work. We just need more time to learn everything exemplary.

Those who have high scores on assessments (the majority of our students) are being held back by those who don't. The changes made to accommodate those who score low have impacted our test scores by lowering them as a whole. How do we keep our standards high?

I know that assessing student learning is very important, but it is not the most important aspect of teaching. I hope we get to start really teaching our students again soon.

Fourth Grade is HEAVY in testing we have over 10 days where our students are taking some type of national assessment. This is not include our chapter test and quizzes that we have to assign. Our kids are tired of taking test.

We are not mandated to give any assessments besides what we decide as a grade level and the PASS test. The questions in this survey were very unclear about what assessments they were talking about.

Need to stop putting too much pressure on end of year test
not sure about all that the district level does

We need to de-emphasize testing. It's ridiculous that so much of my teaching time is dedicated to high-stakes testing, benchmark testing, etc. I don't need more PD on how to read results or how to give or prepare for tests. Ever.

I have no additional comments at this time.

Most does not apply, as I am a related art teacher.

We spend a whole month with the disrupted schedule of standardized testing in all core subjects, EOCs, and Aspire testing. This is not spent preparing, but just testing.

High risk testing is destroying the very foundation of public education.

I use my students' MAP results to help improve my students academically. It is very frustrating for teachers to not know what test there students will be taking in May. It is also embarrassing to tell parents that our state does not know how they will be assessing the students.

I wish our state would focus more on students and less on assessments.

I do not teach a core class

I am a related arts teacher and am only a test administrator for small groups.

We need technology.

I do not believe there is any current, reputable research that proves that a focus on assessments as an academic preparation tool for teachers and students enhancing student learning and ultimate civic contribution. Not only is there no research that is statistically significant, furthermore, there is a growing consent among social scientists that this focus on assessments as a measure of teacher success and student learning is detrimental to our students' ability to perform on a global scale. I believe it is in the best interest of our state, our teachers, and most importantly, our students, that we take the initiative to consider how assessment-based curriculum is negatively affecting our educational system as a whole. Please do not continue to measure my ability to do my qualitative job on a quantitative scale. Quantifying a year of hard work and my ability to impact students, especially those disadvantaged in a low- income community, into a single, arbitrary score is both insensitive and offensive to me as a professional and my students as dedicated learners.

We really need good support documents that provide specific guidelines for each standard. This is especially important in math.

Most of this survey is not relative to what I teach - I'm not an academic teacher.

Testing is destroying kids' minds and priorities--we are taking away their ability to think and create independently and we are instead making them blindly obedient. School is not as rewarding and fun as it use to be.

Until it is recognized that we need levels in ALL subject areas, students will continue to suffer. We need to STOP administering a test with NO consequences.

Our state gives too many assessments. The students get so tired of the testing and they certainly tell us this; they do not do their best therefore the assessments are not as effective as they would be if the students were not over tested so that they are tired of all of it.

Assess students on classroom basis rather than state wide tests Give more classroom time. Go all year round

I have not seen my test results from last year.

Teaching is like an abusive relationship: you only stay for the children. I am absolutely overwhelmed. I became a teacher because one of the "perks" of teaching was you were supposed to be able to have a family also: you could pick you child up from his/her school, or be there for a sports game or dance recital. With the expectations currently in place, I stay at school until 5 or 6 p.m. every day. If those are the hours required to do my job, I may as well find another career that pays more with less stress. This is why 50,000 American teachers leave the profession each year. We don't have the support we need in place to do all that is expected of us.
We spend large periods of time off the clock planning ,preparing, researching, and analyzing!

I helped with testing last year by doing anything that was asked of me my the master teachers. My content of art area does not get any sort of SCPASS test questions or ACT questions.

Too much emphasis is placed on assessment and their results - assessments are numbers, I teach children!

Students HATE school today!!! They are burnt out with SO many assessments. They quickly rush through so they can 'play' on their iPad. What a waste of our tax dollars. They go through the blocks, look up inappropriate sites, get it taken away (maybe a day or two) and parents are not even informed. WOW!!! What an education!!! Want results? Less is more...too much to teach and none mastered. Please help us get back to basics!!! This is THE answer to our failed education system!!!

We do not need to be required to document in addition to what we already have to perform. We need more time to work on our lessons, more time with each other discussing real problems we have with content, behaviors, and challenges in the classroom. I feel that what is required for us to do takes away from our job of teaching. It is impossible to do all that is required with 100% effort. Seminars or staff dev that study and inform us of assessment, 21st century skills, google or technology classes - that would be useful and beneficial!

The current interventions we have for our ELL students that have come through our school system since CD are not working. We need another program for these students.

Let's give our kids some time to master skills. Let teachers use their formative and summative assessments in the classroom. Let's work on testing them on a state level or with normed tests maybe every couple of years. When we were all young, there was one test in elementary, one in middle school, and one in high school. We all turned out pretty good. Considering that we are all intelligent and have good jobs. We made it without being tested every year with a state test and then three times a year with some sort of normed test like MAP. Let teachers do their jobs. We are trained for 4-6 years on how to teach students, create engaging lessons and support or enrich students' learning. Give us and the kids a break and save your testing money for more research on lowering classroom sizes and multiage classrooms. Let's look to other countries like Finland or other theories like Montessori and see what is working so well for them. It is not constant testing.

Assessments that teachers don't have access to are not very helpful in informing instructional decisions. No matter what kind of reports we get, not being able to see exactly what students did (what they wrote, answers they chose, etc.) really isn't helpful at all. I get much better information from listening to my students and from looking at their performance on assessments my co-teachers and I create for them. I see required, formal assessments as mainly a waste of time for my students and as something that takes away time they could be using to receive actual instruction.

Stop changing the curriculum and standards. We cannot master them if they keep changing.

When the majority of the whole state receives a 34% ready rate on a Reading Test, is there something wrong with the test or our standards

Tests should correlate to current standards.

This survey did not seem to apply to my subject area - world languages. It was not representative of what I use to assess my students.

I did not understand some of these questions.

High stakes testing is not in the best interest of the child. It is a snapshot of their performance on a single day.

We stress kids out with too many assessments. We almost assess as much as we teach!

Focus on test preparation and not achievement. District policies are not inline with high stakes tests. Push to pass not mastery.

Teachers are overwhelmed at the amount of information literally thrown at us each week. We have no time to process the information and apply it. We need time to work, create, and do what is best for our students.

Some of these questions should have let us mark more than one answer. I use a variety of assessments, yet on one survey question(#8), you only let me choose one answer to mark.

Oh, dear. I have already added too many comments, I think. Thank you for giving us this survey!

The kids are tested to death. Assessments should be given to guide instruction, not judge the instruction as it has been.

Question 8 only let me put in one response, but I used several of those methods for test prep.

Students and teachers spend so much in the assessment mode. My question is: How many times do we need to be shown what a child can and cannot do...

Changes in tests/formats have been very frustrating. Although we teach our students the content, it is difficult to be able to teach them test taking skills if we don't know what to expect ourselves.

I do not know how anyone can expect ANY teacher to provide anything resembling QUALITY EDUCATION when our time is not respected, but filled with monotonous activities such as receipting, filing paperwork, filling out book request forms, and constantly changing our schedules around. We are meant to be educators, not secretaries. The future of this country depends on the education these children are receiving, and I have seen one too many teachers lose the passion of growing/influencing young minds because of red tape. Please stop doing things that simply look good on paper, and begin really changing the quality of education where it really matters. Behind closed classroom doors. The single biggest influence on a child's life is their teacher, whether positive or negative, we WILL change these children. Can we please begin respecting teachers where it counts, and stop throwing us into the ocean without a life jacket. We are asked time and time again to emphasize the individuality of today's student. What about the individuality of today's teachers?? We are not Christmas Cookies that can simply be cut into shape and decorated. If we want to really have an affect on students lives, then begin with quality, respected, adept educators. NOT only on paper, but where we live and breath.

There is way too much content to teach in order to be finished before State testing. It is given too early. In addition, this year our district has cut the number of Science teachers and the amount of time to teach Science therefore we have more students to address in less time.

While it is not relevant to this assessment, I feel very strongly that all content needs to be defined with honors and accelerated groups. In social studies and science it is much more difficulty to differentiate when the student ability levels are so diverse. I feel students need to have gifted/at risk differentiation in all content areas to best meet their needs.

I am unclear on how this survey will benefit teachers since every district has different levels of funding, approaches and attitudes about assessment, and varying levels of curriculum coordination.

Very difficult to fill out for an exploratory teacher.

Teachers jump through too many hoops in order be "evaluated" which takes too much time away from what is important, the students.

You probably couldn't handle the truth, so I will refrain from commenting.

I teach music, so much of this is "outside the box." Arts people are "special."

all this is stupid.

We need more time to work together as teams to create better ways to teach using the new technology and increasing rigor. We need more devises for students to use.

Instructional facilitators should be able to assist all teachers in all content areas and should not focus their interestes on areas in which they feel they are experts.
We are hoping whatever test is adopted this year will not change for a while. It is hard to prepare students if we do not know the format or wording of the test. we would like to see test prep questions in the format so students will feel comfortable with the test and not stressed.
We have calculated that we spend roughly 8-9 weeks a year testing! That is an entire quarter of school. That doesn't even include the classroom assessments we use to get grades for 3-8. We need to slow down and stop trying to jam so much down their throats and the learning will happen. More classroom observations of instruction instead of using assessments to determine whether a teacher is doing his/her job would be a much better use of instructional time.

This survey needs a separate section or an opt out for related arts teachers. Not applicable to me.

There should be a program in place to help when a young student has an off day and their score does not reflect their knowledge. Would it be possible to retest these students?

Today's students are tested too much. I know that is not what anyone wants to hear, but it is the truth. It has gone to the extreme and they are constantly measured without adequate time for instruction and practice to develop and grow. We probably spend at least one month of the academic year testing and another month preparing them for tests. I firmly believe that this generation of students will be telling "I walked to school five miles in knee high snow" type of stories about how much testing they endured. In my opinion, the state should choose one assessment. That assessment should be given at the beginning of the year and at the end of the year. Growth goals should be reasonable and it should be taken into account the variables that are note measurable. Teachers should not take responsibility or blame for variables out of their control.

If we are utilizing assessment data correctly, then first we (as educators) need to be very careful about developing standards that will be assessed. Also, we need to look long and hard at which assessments provide effective feedback and which do not provide effective snapshots into the abilities of learners. Finally, if our standards and assessments are rigorous enough, we should allow for flexibility at the school level in utilizing new curriculum models that are geared toward improving learning for ALL learners. This means that we might need to look closely at the true effectiveness of the "one size fits all" model of curricula that is offered in certain subject areas at the district and/or state level.

The bar for educators and students gets higher and higher, more expectations for them to learn and less time in which to do it. There aren't adequate resources for teachers or students. Therefore, teachers are working a huge work load with creating so many resources, knowing that the objectives will likely change each year and we will re-do each year. This is especially true in math! We should have more resources available that align with the district pacing and expectations so that we don't have to self create to the level that we are.

I very much dislike the inflexibility of testing windows. Teachers are being asked to assess students on a year's worth of material a month before the end of the year. Throughout the year teachers have to deal with all kinds of developments and delays such as inclement weather, or school-related activities out of their control yet the testing window does not waver and all material is required to still be covered. Teachers are expected to be miracle workers and it gets to be very discouraging.

Too much testing - stresses the student Too much focus on data - teachers can provide instruction without so much focus on data

Please let me teach.

We need a school to help ESOL newcomers.

I feel we spend too much time preparing for, administering, and scoring assessments.

Out of the 8 hours a week of scheduled planning time we are given, at least 6 of those hours are pre-filled by administration, guidance and curriculum with meetings. This is very frustrating as I feel that I never have time to accomplish tasks that are directly related to teaching and supporting my students.

Teacher's have to create the resources from scratch. This is too time consuming when paired with data tracking. We need a curriculum in science to pull from with all that we need available.

Teaching to tests is ruining students education! Students need to be academically, emotionally, and professionally ready for the work place! The stress of multiple lengthy assessments is disappointing and is presently not correlated to state standards!

We are try to innundate teachers with mundane work to leave the profession! When math gives over 80 different assessements and all have to be analyzed, there simply isn't time to teach. We need to teach to excellence, not assess to excellence. If teachers had more time to teach, students would retain more! Go to year round school. Overall, students retain more info!

The assessment we used this spring has added almost no value to my instruction or to my students' learning. I have never, in the course of a decade plus career, felt such pressure to prepare my students for so many tests. It's gotten overwhelming, and more and more I see myself sacrificing true learning to test prep. Add to that the whole thing

where we don't even know what our new test will be for the spring and the word frustrating does not even begin to suffice. It's enough to make good teachers deeply consider a new career path.

If we had a math intervention that would be so helpful to students in need.

We spend more time crunching numbers for data than we do finding great resources to teach. There should be a data base or excel document that teachers can plug in the scores and it formulates percentages ect. We need time to play for the instruction needed

At my school the content classroom teacher is overwrought with directives from virtually every paraprofessional, nurse, etc., not to mention the many expectations associated with managing a group of students. Needless to say, creativity is hampered. Lesson planning has been pushed to the back burner due to the demands associated with the data gathering. I do not feel there is meaningful interpretation of data worthy of the time devoted to it.

Need to begin with the end in mind. Would like definites on type of state testing, name, written or computer based, etc. Having specifics would help greatly.

MAP testing is supposed to be designed \as a formative assessment but sometimes our district uses it as a summative assessment used to place students in leveled classes

We test kids incessantly with pretests and post tests for data team purposes, and now that the SLOs have been introduced, even more! Something's gotta give. I had to give up a good chunk of my class period just today giving required pre and post tests, when I would rather have been doing something more engaging and creative. Aren't we supposed to be developing 21st Century learners? I understand that data drives instruction, but as a teacher overwhelmed with grading excessive tests, who has time to adequately plan instruction? These tests are REDUNDANT. Our system in district __ needs to be revisited to see which tests are good for kids, and which aren't.

Emphasis on tests have taken away creativity within instruction due to time restraints placed on amount of time we have to teach standards coupled with time used to teach 'test' related skills. Pressure to complete all teaching of standards by the end of April or early May in order to allow them to demonstrate their knowledge of content they are being tested on is difficult on everyone. High stakes tests for teachers and students has resulted in lessons that are less creative and more direct in order to move quickly. The addition of having timed tests last year also created unnecessary stress on young children. A great deal of instructional time was lost preparing for this element in order for students to feel more comfortable.

Many of these questions didn't really pertain to me because I don't teach a course that is tested. I create my own tests and assessments and I am able to use the data to inform parents and students of a student's progress in my classroom.

Students in my district DO NOT have the same educational opportunities that students living in larger, wealthier districts have. My district doesn't offer "tech prep" courses (auto body, shop, cosmetology, welding, drafting, pre-nursing) or JROTC, band, and chorus. High school students are choosing to graduate early because of the lack of courses available to them. We don't offer dual enrollment courses for academic students to gain college credit prior to enrolling in college.

Please take the focus off of standardized tests and let us teach.

Putting time limits on state wide testing is extremely unfair to all students. All students perform at different levels and different paces.

I'm a related arts teacher. My subject area does not have any standardized assessments. My school does administer multiple assessments each year, I'm just not sure what they are or how the results are used.

When something relevant comes to me from the State Department regarding the assessments I provide my students for South Carolina History, I may be able to have a comment for you.

Too many assessments are destroying our students!! We need to truly look at them and decide which are necessary. We need to stop teaching to the test and allow teachers to actually teach and engage students without a gun to our heads about test results! It has gotten out of control and something, anything, needs to be done!!

Students become very burnt out when testing occurs consecutively and I believe results aren't a true measure of their growth as a result of this.

If the state is going to use the same test is there any way to get the results quicker. Also, why are teachers in ELA and math only being held accountable for the results? The accountability should fall on the administration, who do not handle class disruptions as well. What about the accountability in social studies and science?

I feel that the test results that "drive" our instruction are taken entirely too seriously! We give a million and one assessments that eat away at precious teaching time. I feel that we also have so much at stake and so much pressure on test results that we have driven many students to taking drugs to cope with test anxiety as they feel pressured to do better than they are capable of doing on a test. I understand and appreciate the fact that the state wants to have a test that truly messages where our kids are in comparison to others in the country. However, it is absolutely absurd to even begin to think that 4th grade students have the ability to write a paragraph with the time limit imposed by the ACT Aspire test, much less a well defined, polished master piece. I wish I could have invited everyone in the state of South Carolina to have a window in my little rural classroom on those "high-stakes" test days. Envision with me, if you will, many of my higher students with their heads down and tears pouring because they felt like a completely incompetent imbecile. This type of reaction to the test was seen all over the school. Our kids deserve the best education possible. I treat my students with dignity and respect each and every day. I make sure that they know that they are successful each and every day! One test, one day... altered ego forever! Give these kids a break! Let them succeed by administering a test that really measures their performance on the information that was covered in class. Fourth grade is not ready for a college entrance exam nor to have 30 minutes to capture the many outstanding thoughts that still linger in their heads never to be penned due to a limitation of time!

It would be nice to be able to get an idea of the questions that were on the final year's assessments. Since teachers are not allowed to see or read the test, we have no idea what questions are used or even what terminology is being used to question the students.

Assessments have an important place in the education system. However, we are over-testing our kids to the point they do not enjoy school. Allow the teachers to do what they do best: reach their students. We are professionals and are capable (most of us) to know our students' achievement prediction, level of needed assistance, and areas in need of more support.

Standards should be changed to allow us to go deeper and not more and deep. We as teachers are rushed to make sure everything is covered and not allowed the time to retract those that are struggling while still maintaining total engagement for some students that are not yet able to work independently.

Students should be assessed using an assessment that truly test the abilities that is not timed or completely comuter based. Assessments should be administered in an area with no distractions.

We spend WAY too much time teaching children to test. We need to teach the WHOLE child. Not all children test well no matter the situation. Test anxiety is killing these children.

Every kid learns differently and have different issues. We overtest. Instead of focusing on what they can't do we should focus on what they do well and work to enhance that. Tests are only one day, one snapshot of a kids knowledge. They don't expect us to teach all standards in one day so why should kids be tested on all standards in one day. Testing as much as we do isn't valid

Testing last year was not so bad. This year we have lost countless hours to testing with benchmarks and MAP. I have lost at least a week of instructional time due to testing so far this year.

I believe that too much time is spent on standardized testing.

We test the 4th graders way too much!

We are encouraged to teach to the test which does not inspire critical thinking skills or allow the flexibility to pursue non-tested endeavors which could build character, strengthen relationships or provide inspiration to our students. In addition, our test scores are posted in front of the whole school as a means of shaming teachers who are not successful on the state administered test. We would disclose student scores amongst a class, therefore I do not understand why that same courtesy is not extended to teachers.

we need school wide implementation of Des Cartes rit band instruction during reading and math time--every classroom needs at least 1 hour of lab time for compass odyssey/istation time at least--then maybe more uniform

growth will take place. and uniform technology access--not certain teachers having tech tools and others having none. A "removal" place for students who disrupt teaching time would be great for extreme behavior problems.

A discussion needs to take place about the role of technology in the visual arts. At present, there is a tug of war going on with technology receiving an extra push. We seem to be focusing on quantity rather than quality in the visual arts. From personal discussions with businesses in the field, I have discovered that students may be able to work the computer programs, but struggle to understand good design. We must rethink what we need to assess.

Way too much testing. Teach students, not a test. We go backwards, it seems, because we have taken so many of the basics out of school curriculum to prepare students for testing that, in the long run, only prepares them for testing and how to choose an answer rather than think and understand and be able to go into the world with some good general knowledge. Education seems not to be about education anymore. It is all about testing. AND who is really being help accountable, students? I think not. If a teacher's students don't perform well on tests, he/she must be a "bad" teacher. And so on..

Teachers are being pushed too hard with the drive for more data and more testing. Teachers need to be allowed to teach their students, not test them for the first 7 weeks of school. A lot of people need to read Dr. Seuss's Hooray for Diffendoofer Day.

Appendix C
C3. Comments from Grade 9-12 Teachers

General:

The assessments I give in the classroom as part of the curriculum I am teaching are my best resource for helping my kids succeed. The standardized test scores are not useful to me, because I have classes with mixed grade levels. Some kids have taken the tests and some kids haven't. To my knowledge, the standardized test scores are not even used for determining students' placement in classes at the CP, Honors, or AP levels. The tests are given to measure student knowledge, but the results have no immediate impact on what is taught in the classroom. Over time, we may adjust our curriculum maps to address weak areas, but I have not seen that at this time.

If administrators keep on overloading teachers..... classroom effectiveness with diminish.

less professional development that takes time away from real planning and collaboration

We really need to cut down on the pacing guides. Teachers are not allowed to be absent or really teach students.

there are a lot of factors I look at when designing my curriculum for my students, and test results are only a small portion.

There are too many assessments designed by people who will never meet our students and know little about them. Testing should revert back to the classroom level.

As a teacher we have 4 tiers in our up line. Each tier requires us to administer a test to acheive their goal.. This has added tremendously to our testing hours. I don't believe any of them are for the sake of student growth.

While assessments are important to gauge student achievement, I don't believe that they should be relied upon so heavily. Every student is different, and some students are better test-takers than others.

We get an overload of data but no clear direction of how to improve our students with college and career readiness skills.

Please quit focusing on test and return to true learning and rigor in the classroom.

We need a school to help ESOL newcomers.

What happened to the day when professionally trained people were able to determine if students were mastering the material? Answer: politics State testing is a waste of tax money and it is harming educational not helping. Compare statistics from 30 years ago to today.

Since the assessments are summative in nature, we get the results for our students after the semester is over.

A discussion needs to take place about the role of technology in the visual arts. At present, there is a tug of war going on with technology receiving an extra push. We seem to be focusing on quantity rather than quality in the visual arts. From personal discussions with businesses in the field, I have discovered that students may be able to work the computer programs, but struggle to understand good design. We must rethink what we need to assess.

Accountability only works when students and parents have ownership in the process and results. If there is no accountability on the students' part, then there is no reason to perform well.

A majority of the assessments our students have to take are pointless and have no impact on their education. They are used so government officials who do not know anything about teaching can make decisions about education. It is a huge waste of time and money just like this survey.

Whoever came up with this survey has not been in a classroom for a long time.

We are trying to do too much and it is taking away from the students learning. We need to stop taking on new initiative every few weeks and actually master one before moving on to the next,

This focus on testing takes away from a focus on learning and instruction. There must be another way.

There is no reason to ask every teacher in the state to give you information that could have been ascertained through looking at testing expenditures. I teach all levels at a high school. Students are pulled from my classes frequently to do testing of one type or the other, as required by a variety of bureaucracies at different levels. My focus as a teacher is not on who is taking which test but rather on how to instruct the students remaining in my classroom and how to catch up those students who missed because of the test.

MAP testing is the most useful and practical of all the testing, The other is less useful to me.

this EOC is unrealistic and not statistically valid, please redefine with reasonable goals and expectations

I do not mind EOC tests. For me as a teacher it validates whether or not I am reaching and teaching my students. I do have a BIG problem with EOCs not issued in Spanish. Most states offer their EOC/Regent exams in numerous languages. Why can't SC? Also, ESOL kids are thrown into school with little to no support. Most have not attended school in their native land, yet when they arrive, we test them as if they are equals to their English speaking peers. ESOL scores should not be counted in our school grades. Our ESOL population is increasing and scores are decreasing. Is this fair? Is this the right thing to do? Do you think this sort of treatment negatively affects the mindset of these young learners? Yes, it does.
No wonder the ESOL drop out rate is 4xs higher than their English speaking peers. Research shows it takes 4-9 years for ESOL students to become proficient in reading and writing. What happens when they arrive in 9th grade???
Signed, A concerned taxpayer and voter who just so happens to be a caring HS teacher.

Way too much of a teacher's time is wasted on paperwork and irrelevant meetings. Actually TEACHING has moved so far down the priority list it's sad.

Teachers are being worked to death, it gets worse every year.

Teachers have no say in what is best for the students when it comes to courses they take despite the teachers being with the students all year and knowing their strengths and weaknesses. Makes no sense for thadministration and guidance to 100 percent make these decisions without teacher input.. I have ZERO voice.

It does no good to require data driven instruction if teachers are stuck spending all of their time evaluating data and creating paperwork instead of honing their craft of teaching students.

I would appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues from other parts of the state at workshops and conferences. That would help with instruction and curriculum ideas

The state needs to chose an assessment and stick with it for at least five years to see true results and improvement. It changes year after year now, which means we have no way to see how we compare year after year like we did with HSAP.

Many of the standardized tests are given and taken with little to no emphasis after the test is taken. There is no time spent explaining the impact of scores to students or parents, or teachers for that matter.

Please see my previous comments (editor’s note: previous comments not available). In order to have effective learning, we need open channels of communication between parents, teachers, districts, and the State Dept. of Education. Without the sharing of knowledge and open feedback, we will never be able to improve the learning process. It will always be a guessing game.

Time:

Does anyone really believe it is possible for a teacher to produce and review assignments for 140 students, lose half of the allocated planning time to meetings, teach four or five preps and six classes, and still find time to allow data to inform decision making?

Time is crucial to develop sound innovative lessons, please, consider allow teachers to have work days. We work at school, at home, extra hours, so having a work day is having a PD day. We can work, keep with our professional readings, communicate with more parents, create new activities, and have some time to implement modifications, among others. Planning periods and lunch are not enough with a large number of students, taking into account that there may be other school activities like meetings and duties going on at those times

We spend all of our time fitting our outcomes to meet reports and teacher evaluations instead of common planning in our subjects.

We have too many initiatives going at the same time. If we are pulled in too many directions, we won't be able to do anything well. We need TIME.

Every "extra" assessment teachers are required to do to meet district and state policies takes away from time in the classroom where teachers can actually teach and students can actually learn

More and more of my time is spent testing, analyzing benchmarks, data teams results, SLO's, etc. I do not have the time to teach and plan any more because so much of my time is spent testing. Something needs to be done to return the teacher to teaching. The benchmarks, etc. that I am constantly giving have NO bearing what so ever on my EOC results at the end of the year.

I understand the need for assessments but I don't have enough time to be more than the bare minimum prepared. Too many PDLs and meetings during my planning every week that the time could be better utilized.

Too much testing and too little instructional time.

Too many assessment. We need more time to teach real content.

There is more than 20% of time spent on assessing.

We spend entirely too much time testing, filling out surveys and not teaching students the skills they need for a successful and happy life.

We live in a time where there are so many test, and how much merit does the test have in the end?

We are educated professionals that love our jobs. The purpose of a teacher is to educate young people so they may be successful citizens in our community. The more we test or assess our students the less we are able to teach them how to be successful citizens. For every additional assessment we spend more money that could actual go towards the student. We are here for the students success in life not on assessments. Please let us do the job we love and help our students become successful members of our community.

Standardized testing is over emphasized and takes up too much time.

Time out of class destroys the students' chances of passing the End of Course.

We test WAY TOO MUCH! I don't need another test telling my students they haven't learned something that I haven't had TIME to teach them because someone decided they needed one more test and one less lesson.

Too many assessments. They are seriously taking away from instruction time and quality as more and more we are teaching to the test rather than teaching best practices

Assessments for Diagnosis or Information

We need to know what areas caused difficulty for our students on the EOC, not just the results. Too much time is spent on assessments not to have them be more useful informing classroom instruction.

Testing is a waste of classroom time if teachers are not given any feedback about the results of the test. For example, when I am told that a student scores a 77 on the EOC, I am not given any information about the strengths or weaknesses of that student or of my teaching of the subject.

District benchmarks have been useless, as they are poorly written. They do not provide us with useful information. Students have too many assessments as a general rule. We do not have enough time to truly analyze the results. We do not have enough time to do our duties in general. We have too many students with too many varying needs, and work time that could be used to analyzed assessments and plan better instruction is taken up with pointless "PD" sessions.

We only have data on classroom assessments. The assessments listed do not provide any usable data other than pass or fail the course content. Please provide a breakdown from the EOC that shows the standards that were shown to be mastered. Otherwise the biology EOC test is useless to teachers.

What is the point of the EOC if the only feedback teachers get is the score? We need standards based results reported individually to teachers. Then we can meet in our content areas and make what we do even better, relying on each others' strengths.

For US History we need a pretest, we need released exams, and we need specific results that identify trouble areas concerning the indicators so that we can better inform instructional and curricular decisions especially if it will impact teacher evaluation.

The list of tests at the beginning was not comprehensive. We give MAP and EOCEP tests to all English 1 and Algebra 1 students. We give EOCEP to all biology and US History students. We give ACT and WorkKeys to all juniors. We give PSAT to all sophomores. We also give AP exams to all of our students enrolled in AP courses, and at my school this number is very high. And none of this gives us any useful information to actually drive instruction. I get a number. Maybe a percentage. That doesn't tell me anything.

Standardized tests are not efficient for classroom teachers unless we are given specific information about what items students miss or fail to respond. It is impossible to show growth from one year to the next when we are testing different students in several different areas each year.

The English I EOC is the big test for 9th graders. In today's computer age, the type of question (ie main idea, vocab) a students missed should be easy to get from the computer as each question should be testing one or more known standards. Feedback on what type of question missed would allow me to adjust my instruction should I see an area that all/many of my students are missing. Why give an EOC across the state and not provide meaningful feedback beyond a score? If many of my students miss, say a main idea question, then I would know to revamp/amplify my instruction to ensure future classes don't suffer. Isn't that the point of assessment? The EOC my be summative for the students, but it is formative for the teachers.

Teachers are simply handed assessment result and never told what to do with them and how to use them. Much professional development is needed at the state level. Most district level supervisors don't know how to use the data themselves and therefore can not communicate to teachers how to use the data, especially for high school classes other than English.

When reporting test results, the results should be broken down by topics and not just a total score. Breaking down scores allows teachers to identify weaknesses and better address those weaknesses in the classroom. For EOCs all we see are the scores. I have no idea what my students did well on and what they didn't.

Our students lose too much instructional time being assessed. Also, as teachers we receive a mixed message about the importance of assessment results. What data should drive our instructional strategies? Should we be focused on

improving multiple choice test results that increase college acceptance, or the 21st century skills of real world problem solving and communication? The two outcomes require different instructional approaches.

Please provide item analysis for high school EOC courses, similar to PASS. If you REALLY want us to use test results to drive our instruction, we NEED EOC breakdowns!!!! I have been asking for this every time I get an opportunity but it hasn't changed! Cost or rewriting test questions should not be an issue because we aren't asking for questions, just a breakdown standard by standard as to how the students tested. As before, if you really care about using assessments to drive instruction, please consider this request.

Having standardized assessments are pointless if standardized instruction is not being provided. Standards are great but some people do not teach standards, they teach textbooks. Likewise, if all they feedback given back is a score, I am not sure what standards students are not assessing well on or what standard I need to focus on.

Our district puts a lot of emphasis on using one score to predict another score, but we seldom if ever get to the part of the conversation that centers on helping students improve their scores.

Again, I would like to stress the importance of information of a student's score with EOC testing. We are told it's a state test and a measure of student learning, but there is no information to support this that is given to teachers.

We need information about each standard missed by our students - right now there is NO transparency.

Again, I need the state to provide better feedback to EOC teachers regarding their student scores. Strengths & weaknesses of each student should be provided to the teacher in order for the teacher to improve their content area teaching practices for future student groups.

Standards based assessment in all content areas would prove much more beneficial for students. The reporting of scores in such a way so that teachers can improve instruction in weak areas. Benchmark testing (not just summative) so that teachers can intervene with struggling students before they take the End of Course Test.

1) It's ridiculous that we are expected to give an EOC exam without knowing what is on it. The standards are very vague, which leaves the window wide open for what we should be focusing on. 2) We give WAY TOO MANY tests. By the time we give pre-tests, post-tests, MAP tests, EOC, mid-terms and finals (not to mention the other millions of tests like ACT, ASVAB, etc.), there is barely enough time to teach, especially on a block schedule.

ELA and math teachers usually know a lot of information obtained from assessments but teachers in other academic areas do not. Everyone assumes we know it. We have difficulty with the technical language.

Overtesting:

To quote a former colleague: You don't make a pig fat by weighing the pig; you make a pig fat by feeding it.

We place far too much time and importance to test scores and far too little trust in the educator. The new Work Keys emphasis is a bad decision.

We do so much testing-but I do not believe the parents know the purpose of each tests or what the results mean. Often teachers teach to an elusive test-such as the highly secretive EOC.

We just need less testing. The ridiculous number of assessment tests required in SC takes away instructional time and discourages the development of problem solving skills by encouraging a "teach to the test" mentality.

Reducing the amount of assessments would be a booster to improving student performance on assessments and teacher instructions. Teachers would teach to learn a subject, not teach to pass a test.

Way too much importance is being placed on these assessments. Teachers barely have enough time to digest these results so that we can use the information. We spend more time putting the data down on some chart rather than actually creating great lesson plans.

Stop testing kids so much. It takes away from learning. And inform teachers what the state tests will be this year.

The reason I marked the first few questions as strongly disagree is that all PD and focus is on SLO - regardless of the exceptionally high scores on all standardized testing in this district. We are among the top schools in the state and yet we are busy doing the nonsense of SLO as if we are not effective teachers. It took 40+ hours to complete the SLO template!!!! Thank goodness for the flood and the time off to do it. I could have used the time to continue putting together engaging lessons for my students, but am having to cut back and teach in a manner that is less engaging so that I have time to teach to the test. My prediction is that scores on standardized tests will drop and there will soon be a shortage of teachers. No one is going to be willing to do this annually.

We are too involved in testing overall, preparing for testing, to prepare for a test that prepares for the "Big" test. There leaves little time to teach and address any concerns or misconceptions, due to a pacing guide based on a testing calendar. It leaves many students and their individualized needs behind, and many teachers feeling less than satisfied with the career.

The question that I hear from my students is that they want to know why they are being tested so much. This comment is from a teacher and a parent point of view. I try to explain that the data helps us see where individuals stand and that they will need to be able to be competitive in the job market. The teachers are trying to explain it, but the kids hate it. I've seen more students developing anxiety issues as a result of increased testing.

We give to many assessments. In US History I had to give 5 assessments in one week. Unit test, post test, Bench mark, pretest, SLO. It's ridiculous. We cannot teach students how they should be taught because we are rushing through content to be ready for a state test.

It is absolutely scary how important the people that make decisions have decided tests are. I am all for having ways to measure student progress but if feels an awful lot like we are replacing real teaching and learning with "let's make sure you know how to take a test". This trend is driving a lot of really competent, compassionate, and professional educators out of a job that they love. I have yet to see any data proving that all of the testing has been beneficial to anyone involved other than the companies that get paid to write and administer the tests.

Teachers are not trusted as professionals to do their jobs. The fact that teachers whose work produces good assessment results are not rewarded adds to a sense of under-appreciation. Our kids are over-tested and we are overworked.

I don't think teachers need more assessments. Students are not just measured by standardized tests. I also do not have time for all of the tests. and our school does well with the tests.

I believe that we administer too many tests.

Too much testing in SC and not enough teaching!

Our students are tested WAY TOO MUCH. They are on overload- the tests do not mean anything to them, or to me. I have found some useful data, but when I have to look at it all together, it's just a bunch of numbers and is meaningless. Actually, I would love some time for instruction.

Our district has far too many standardized assessments that are required to be given in middle school. MAP, ASPIRE, TE-21, etc are redundant and take up too much instructional time to administer. Choose ONE and let us teach

Way too much testing. Teach students, not a test. We go backwards, it seems, because we have taken so many of the basics out of school curriculum to prepare students for testing that, in the long run, only prepares them for testing and how to choose an answer rather than think and understand and be able to go into the world with some good general knowledge. Education seems not to be about education anymore. It is all about testing. AND who is really being help accountable, students? I think not. If a teacher's students don't perform well on tests, he/she must be a "bad" teacher. And so on.....

Give one test and tell us what will be on it. Give us samples. Stop over testing. Testing takes from instructional time.

We administer too many tests to our students. We truly need to partner more with colleges and get our students ready for college: math, reading, writing, and science. I hear from students and professors that these are our weak areas.

We test too much! PSAT, Work keys, AP testing, IB testing, EOC's, and benchmarks. Look how many days of instructions are missed because of testing - most of which is useless in the classroom!

Personally I feel that we are testing our students to much and looking at the more and more as numbers and less and less as people and individuals. I feel that if we as teachers were allowed to teach more and administer tests less students would be doing better in school. I also fail to see as a teacher that it is my resposibility to communicate with students and parents about assessments results for assessments that I do not administer in my classroom and have no affect on the way that I teach students.

Frustration:

It feels more and more like, "What's the point?" If anyone listens, it doesn't matter, because the classroom teacher is getting more and more placed on them, and their is no collective agreement and action that this trend has to stop before it's too late. I don't see today's young teachers making a career of it.

Time is of the essence. We are asked to do more and more each day and without time we just can't perform effectively and students' learning is being affected by this.

I don't mean to be so pessimistic, but there is SO much paperwork we have to do now, it's very daunting. We don't actually get so called "workdays" anymore, so are staying late, working weekends, etc. I want to do a good job, but this year has been overwhelming. And now I have to stop planning for my classes to take yet another survey. Please forgive me. :(

Far too much instructional time and far too many resources are tied up in standardized assessments that have virtually no positive impact on student learning but, rather, seem devoted solely to imposing additional sanctions and burdens on teachers and schools. Last year was the worst it's been where this paradigm is concerned.

I love data. I love accountability. Please bring it on. Get rid of teachers who don't keep up with the learning goals of their kids along with the ones who don't already know how to keep up with the data of learning as it occurs in their classrooms. That's basic teaching. I deplore having to check boxes for people who don't understand the art of teaching. Get your head off of data points and start looking back at the students. They are people, not widgets. Testing has its place, but the current climate is one of over-testing that seems to support excessive use of tax payer money and teacher time to justify jobs for people who otherwise wouldn't have them. Measure the growth of my students over time with me, not one day, one moment, on one test. I'd like to see other professions to a job review based on one event in the entire year of a career. (Why are we using All-In learning when we can do the same thing on Google for free?? Just a thought. I'm a tax payer.)

I don't feel that communicating this information to students and parents is a teachers job yet at my school that responsibility seems to be pushed on the teachers. I do feel that teachers need to be aware of the students scores and use them to plan instruction but teachers are not given the time to do so. Something needs to be done about the responsibilities placed on teachers! If you want teachers to be able to use assessment then something needs to be taken off their plates. It isn't fair to expect teachers to work all day and then take 3 hours worth of work home with them in the evenings as well. I love my job as most teachers do but when we have to chose between our own families or our students neither is getting the attention they deserve. My point is....if you want teachers to use the assessment funded by the state then make time for them to do so.

Get rid of SLOs---find another way to evaluate teacher. Good teachers will follow rules and report accurate data. It seems very easy to manipulate results to achieve higher "ranking", if willing to not report accurate data. Also, Admin (who has barely been trained) can't tell us expectations---how can we be fairly evaluated? This may push me out of my teaching practice and back to corporate America, which I left because of crazy bureaucracy, irrelevant number

crunching, and micromanagement that were in place only to justify their job, and NOT reflective of actual job performance. All DO and school admin should have to teach in a school once in a while to remember what real teaching is like.

Teachers desperately need to be trusted to do what is right for our kids and not have to teach to a test, which, by the way, is not even made with the teacher's input -- nor are we even allowed to know ahead of time what will be tested (aside from throwing standards at us)?! I wish any of you could see the looks on my students' faces when I have to tell them each year that their final exam, worth 20% of their FINAL GRADE, is a test created by some unknown persons who have never met the students, and have never ever spent a single second in their classroom. Add to that the test is 3+ hours long...And we ask that of freshmen in high school?! It is completely ridiculous.

Teachers need more time to plan and teach and less time for testing and high stakes accountability.

Benchmark testing, Data Team Pre/Post Testing ..... Test test test test would be great if we could teach/learn teach/learn more

Today's teachers are absolutely bogged down with testing and training on data-driven decision-making. While analyzing and addressing strengths and deficiencies in student performance IS valuable, entirely too much classroom time is being devoted to assessment and not enough to actual learning and growing (on the part of both the teachers and the students). All student achievement cannot be measured on a test (standardized or other), and many of our students are falling through the cracks in the midst of this current obsession with data and numbers. In addition to being a classroom teacher, I am also the parent of a special needs high school student who was to be taken out of his Algebra I class (for which the EOC was 20% of his course grade) for TWO DAYS IN A ROW to take the ACT and Work Keys assessments last spring. As a special needs child, these assessments are just not applicable to him. But those two days of instruction in Algebra WERE both applicable and important. Unfortunately, his is not an isolated incident--many other students miss valuable instruction time when they have to take an assessment or when their teacher must proctor one. (We just had dozens of students displaced to sit in the cafeteria for 2-4 hours this week if they were in a "mixed" class that included sophomores who were taking the PSAT and teachers who were forced to proctor it. That is a true shame.)

I need time in my classroom and with the students/parents to discuss result. These assessments do not reflect students performance nor does it predict his/her performance. My relationship has more influence. Past/present math teachers of the student and grades are better predictors of a students performance. District provided assessments have been a distraction and waste of valuable classroom time. The students do not value them and they do not assess how much they learn and cover as we go well beyond the state standards.

I have taught for sixteen years. In that time, I have seen a terrible trend in education; the trend of categorizing human beings based on a score(s) that is based on one test, given on one day in that person's life. We have lost sight of the fact that we are teaching children who will one day become the working force, governing force, and cultural force of our country. Our teachers are being trained to become robots, with no personal identity other than the "data" their students provide. We have reduced the idea of personal growth and progress to a "catch phrase." I believe that assessment and benchmarking is important, but the amount of assessments being administered in our schools today, as well as the scope of importance being placed on the results is beyond counterproductive. We lose more and more class time every year to "assess" the situation. Students are burned out, stressed out, and forever marked by what they do or did not do on an SAT, ACT, AP, EOC, PSAT, or Workkeys test. Teachers are leaving the profession in droves; they are disheartened, disallusioned, and tired of "teaching to a test." Please stop this continuing act of industrializing education. A school district's merit should not be based on the average of its score reports on assessment alone. Thank you for providing me the opportunity to share my thoughts with you on this subject.

SLOs:

The administered tests don't apply to my content area and were not useful for my SLO.

SLO's are irrelevant and take time away that teachers need to work with students

The SLO should be done away with as it necessarily takes up a teachers time and contributes very little to inform the teaching process. It hinders instruction and adds little value to teaching.

As a teacher it is frustrating. I love teaching. But over the 15 years I have taught...it seems that more paperwork and other things such as the new Past requirements and the SLO are taking up more of our time that we can use to plan for our students and do what we are hired to do...which is teach. This is why we loose so many people out of the teaching career.

I also need help finding data & more data for 10th and 11th grade students for SLOs.

The previous two comments (editor’s note: these were not recorded in the survey) are stated in the hopes that I can convey and understanding that more autonomy and flexibility to address skill sets for learning that our students employ can better empower teachers, me, to reach more of my students. Instigating "SLO" in its honest, simplest ideal is a step in the right direction to allow teachers to truly assess each student's academic growth, not rapidly push them along an assembly line of courses with the same end-goal for all: to go to college. Not all are academically or emotionally prepared, or at this time of their life, desiring, to attend college.

Positive

Great school, great leadership, great teachers, great students.

We give state required EOCs . We use MAP testing for specific students only, not for whole classes, due to the $ impact on the district. MAP testing can be very useful if used correctly.

I need more planning time. Effective implementation is not possible when planning periods are interrupted or diminished.

Our district and school are extremely data-driven.

I currently work with credit recovery students using the computer based program called Gradpoint. This program is used to help our at-risk students get back on track for graduation. Last year we had 40 seniors graduate by completing this program. The program has been extremely successful at my school and has decreased the school's dropout rate in the 2 years it has been in place.

My school does a great job looking at assessments and communicating information needed to the faculty

-St James High School does a great job using assessments to guide way ahead.

The level of familiarity and comfort with data analysis for teachers at our school and in our District has incredibly improved in the last seven years. I would like to see this upward trend continue.

We do not give assessments at our school to all students. I could not answer these questions very well. Only a small group of students ever take assessments

Thank you. thanks for your support "When you greet a stranger, look at their shoes." -M. Stipe

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