



# Assessment Update

Report to the School Committee

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# Aspects of Assessment

- Newton Public Schools - Uses of Assessment
- District Determined Measures (DDMs)
- MCAS and PARCC



# Uses of Assessment in the Newton Public Schools



- Supporting curriculum alignment  
- vertical and horizontal
- Improving instruction
- Reporting and measuring district progress

# Curriculum Alignment – Horizontal and Vertical



- “A Newton education is a Newton education.”
- Our intent is that student experiences at each school are more alike than different.
- Horizontal Alignment: Common assessments for common subjects, grades, and courses are part of the process of aligning curriculum across the district.
- Vertical Alignment: Common assessments support vertical alignment – 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers know what 3<sup>rd</sup> grade expectations are. Math 3 teachers know what Math 2 expectations are.
- We’ve been working towards this in various ways for some time.

# Improving Instruction



- Plan instruction based on students' prior knowledge
- Plan instruction in response to evidence of learning
- Uncover student misunderstandings and misconceptions during the learning process and respond with appropriate instruction
- Provide feedback to students to improve their work
- Must be immediately available to teachers

# External Reporting and Measuring District Progress



- Reporting to parents and families
- Reporting to state and federal agencies
- NPS student outcomes compared to non-NPS peers
  - MCAS and PARCC
  - SAT
  - Advanced Placement

# Assessment *of* Learning

# Assessment *for* Learning

## Assessments of Learning

### Summative Assessments

- MCAS and PARCC
- SAT, Advanced Placement
- Many standardized tests
- Local class assessments:
  - Final exams
  - Unit tests
  - Final projects
  - And so on

## Assessments for Learning

### Formative Assessments

- Pre-assessments
- Universal screenings
- Feedback on student work (rough drafts, etc.)
- Exit slips and other forms of quick measurement

# District Determined Measures: DDMs

- Common assessments of common courses of study
- Compatible with NPS common assessment efforts
- MA DESE provides resources and supports for
  - non-traditional forms of assessment
  - assessment of traditionally non-assessed areas

- Linked to Educator Evaluation Framework through Student Impact Rating
- Trends and patterns in student learning, growth and achievement
- Every educator needs annual data from at least two state or district determined measures



# Definition of DDMs \*

- Measures of student learning, growth, and achievement related to ... frameworks, that are comparable across grade or subject level district-wide.
- These measures may include, but shall not be limited to:
  - portfolios
  - approved commercial assessments
  - district-developed pre and post unit and course assessments
  - capstone projects

\* Massachusetts Department of  
Elementary and Secondary Education

# DESE Requirements for DDMs



- DDM Piloting Plan submitted September 30, 2013
  - Early grade (K-3) literacy
  - Early grade (K-3) math
  - Middle grade (5-8) math
  - High school writing to text
  - Traditionally non-tested grades and subjects (e.g., Fine Arts, Music, Physical Education)
- Select or develop DDMs in other areas and submit piloting plan by June 1, 2014

# Submit DDMs June 1, 2014



Commissioner's Update March 18, 2014:

*"I assume that most districts will not have DDMs in place for all grades and subjects by June 1st."*

June 1 Report:

- Grades/subjects with identified DDMs
- Grades/subjects without identified DDMs and the process and timelines for completing the identification and implementation of DDMs.

# MCAS and PARCC



- Spring 2014
  - All students in grades 3 – 10 participate in MCAS
  - Some students in 15 NPS schools also participate in PARCC Field Test
- School Year 2014-2015
  - Districts participate in *either* MCAS or PARCC
  - Districts submit decision by June 30 to guarantee choice
- Students presently in eighth grade and High School continue under MCAS rules (Classes of 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)
- MCAS continues in Science and Technology/Engineering indefinitely (Grades 5, 8, and 9)

