

Glossary of Terms

Common Core – Standards that are being developed that will be common across all states for English and Math. This is a big change from the current state-by-state system we have now. Instead of taking the CST test in May, students will take the new test, called the Smarter Balanced Assessment. The first year of the new test will be 2014. We have heard that the new test covers fewer standards but covers them in more depth. There is less memorization of straight fact and more critical thinking skills involved. For example, fewer straight math problems, more word problems.

Smarter Balanced Assessments - Next-generation assessments that are aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts/literacy and mathematics for grades 3-8 and 11. The Smarter Balanced Assessment System will give parents and students more accurate and actionable information about what students are learning. Because these assessments are computer adaptive, they will also provide better information about the needs and successes of individual students.

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) - New K–12 science standards have been developed that are rich in content and practice, arranged in a coherent manner across disciplines and grades to provide all students an internationally benchmarked science education.

Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) - The LCFF is the state's new funding formula for education that provides decision-making power to local education agencies, empowering districts to act based on the needs they see for their students.

Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) - The LCAP is a requirement of the changes to state funding made by the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). The LCAP is LCFF's vehicle for transparency and engagement. It is the way that school districts are expected to share performance data, needs, actions, and anticipated outcomes that guide the use of available LCFF funding.

PLC – Professional Learning Community - An ongoing process in which teachers work collaboratively on a regular basis to evaluate and revise their teaching materials and methods (based on student data) to make sure more students learn more.

Collaboration – Working together in a structured environment. On teacher collaboration days, the teachers are looking at data (like student tests, homework, etc), and sharing their teaching practices to improve individual student and classroom results.

Articulation – Collaboration between teachers of grades above and below them to ensure that students are prepared for the next grade level. For example, the 3rd grade teachers throughout the district work with the 2nd and 4th grade teams.

Alignment – Collaboration across grade level and/or subject throughout the district to ensure that all students, no matter which school they attend or which teacher they have, will learn the same material.

Data-Driven – all decisions are made based on concrete information gained from looking at student's test scores, homework, essays, etc.

Standards – The things the state says the students must learn in every subject.

Power Standards/Essential Standards – The standards that the teacher teams have decided are the most critical for the students to learn before moving on to the next grade.

Learning Goal/Learning Target – A statement given to the kids at the beginning of each day’s lesson that tells exactly what is to be learned that day in that subject. For example, “Today we are learning how to convert fractions to decimals.” Ideally students should write this learning goal in their notebooks and be able to answer the question, “What did you learn today.”

Assessments - Test, quizzes, etc. Ways of measuring whether or not students have learned the material.

Summative Assessment – The end of unit test (or final exam). Checks to see if the students learned the material and have met the standards.

Common Assessments – The idea that all teachers of a grade or subject use the same test and grading criteria for measuring whether or not the students have learned the material.

Common-Formative Assessment (CFA) - A mid-unit assessment (test, quiz, quick-check) that measures whether or not students are understanding the material as it is being taught. This is to inform instruction. If students are not making sufficient progress with the material, teachers know that they need to offer additional support within the unit so that students will learn the material by the end of the unit.

Pre-assessment – a test given before a new unit that checks the level of understanding students have of the material that is to come. The student’s results help the teacher to differentiate instruction for that unit – it helps identify which students might need extra help preparing for the unit and which students already know the information and will need enrichment activities as the unit is taught.

Quick Check for Understanding – quick informal assessments during the school day that let the teacher know whether or not the majority of students are “getting” the material so that he/she knows if it’s ok to move on to the next concept or if more review is needed. For example, this could be in the form of “show of hands” daily questions, post-it note quizzes taken as students are leaving the classroom, etc. These are not graded tests, but tools teachers use to ensure students are learning.

Differentiation – The idea that different students learn at different rates, and that the classroom teacher can support students at different levels within the same class. Some students may be working on basic skills at the same time that others are working above grade level on enrichment projects.

Intervention – Additional time and support for a student who needs extra help during the school day. The majority of this additional time and support takes place in class with the classroom teacher.

Additional Time and Support – Help for struggling students.

POI – Pyramid of Intervention – A systematic school-wide plan of intervention. This includes intervention that is built into the school day and additional resources offered after school hours.

RTI – Response to Intervention – Intensive programs for students who need more assistance than the classroom teacher can provide. These are pull-out programs that focus on specific skills to allow students to catch up with their peers.

Enrichment – “Extra” or more in-depth work for students who have already mastered the standards that the class is currently working on.

Cycle of Inquiry - The process of collecting and analyzing data to use it to guide and inform instructional practice and improve student-learning outcomes.

Depth of Knowledge - The complexity or depth of understanding required to answer or explain an assessment-related item. There are four levels of DOK. Level 1 includes basic recall of facts, concepts, information, or procedures. Level 2 includes skills and concepts such as the use of information (graphs) or requires two or more steps with decision points along the way. Level 3 includes strategic thinking that requires reasoning and is abstract and complex. Level 4 includes extended thinking such as an investigation or application to real work.