

Title of Session: Classroom Assessment: Survey Tools

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Room: Classroom Assessment Group

BJB2: Welcome to today's Classroom Assessment discussion, everyone!

MaryannDu: hello everyone

BJB2: we usually start all the Tapped In discussions with introductions. Do you want to do that, Maryann?

MaryannDu: yes

MaryannDu: thanks

MaryannDu: I'll start

MaryannDu: I'm Maryann Durland

BJB2: please share your location and what you teach or hope to teach.

MaryannDu: I am in Chicago, and I am an independent consultant specializing in evaluation

PattyMc: My name is Patty I teach in King George Virginia I teach students with mental retardation. I read yesterday that you are from Pa. I'm originally from Erie PA.

BJB2: I'm a communications teacher in Pennsylvania..nw of Harrisburg

BethBre: Hi everyone, I'm living and teaching in the Bethlehem area of PA

MaryannDu: the east coast tonight!

BJB2: if you haven't looked at the survey under Featured Items above this chat window, please click on that link...

EmilyMH: I am a technology integrator in Spotsylvania, VA (outside of Fredericksburg)

MaryannDu: ok

BJB2: and then go to the Actions menu in the top right of the chat window and click on Detach

LeontyneA: I'm in Houston, I'm going to teach 8th grade science

BJB2: Ready to rock and roll, Maryann?

MaryannDu: yes

MaryannDu: I posted a survey about classroom assessment.

MaryannDu: and we should be able to see some of the results as they are coming in

MaryannDu: first, I will refresh it

MaryannDu: then I can give you a link and you can see the results in tables and charts.

MaryannDu: then I can cut and past the data part on the whiteboard.

MaryannDu: I don't think it will cut and past the graphics

MaryannDu: what did you think about the survey?

BJB2 . o O (did everyone take the survey?)

PattyMc: I thought it applied to everybody's classroom

LeontyneA: yes

AmandaRo: yes

MaryannDu: yes

BethBre: yes

PattyMc: I think assessment is very important especially in a NCLB world

MaryannDu: yes

AmandaRo: I agree

BethBre: I have trouble figuring out how to use ongoing assessment in the classroom

BethBre: not just a once a year standardized test

PattyMc: I do as well that is why I was looking forward do doing this

EmilyMH: I think assessment is out of control with NCLB--teachers and students do not have enough options for assessment

MaryannDu: yes. That is a critical issue

MaryannDu: actually I think the options are there, just not promoted or reinforced

PattyMc: I don't teach sol I teach ASOL's but I still need to know what I taught them and if they got it

MaryannDu: yes

BethBre: Too often administrators (and parents) insist on "teaching to the test"

MaryannDu: yes

AmandaRo: it is not only that, I gave a test with higher order thinking and the kids bombed it....

MaryannDu: but there are also two interpretations of that

AmandaRo: they just did not want to think

BethBre: we need to make people realize that effective learning will result in improved scores

EmilyMH: I am in a school where teachers are teaching to benchmarks and teaching to the test and our school is evaluated by how students performed on the test

EmilyMH: it can be frustrating

MaryannDu: yes

EmilyMH: I thought the survey helps focus discussion on assessment

BethBre: I hear you Emily, I can relate

MaryannDu: one way to teach to the test is to narrow the focus

MaryannDu: the second way it to go from the standards, and then move towards assessments - many -

MaryannDu: and if you do that, then you are still "teaching to the test" but from a broad end

BethBre: This sounds like backwards planning or understanding by design

PattyMc: Assessments are important even if NCLB wasn't around

MaryannDu: yes

EmilyMH: true Patty

MaryannDu:

<http://www.surveyconsole.com/console/listSummaryReport.do?enableStatisticalDetails=true>

MaryannDu: this should get us to see the overall summary of the survey

MaryannDu: then I will pull out a few items to put on the whiteboard

MaryannDu: thanks

BJB2: asks for a login, Maryann

MaryannDu: ok

MaryannDu: let me just post then

MaryannDu: I am getting it, but I guess because I am logged in

BJB2 Nods

MaryannDu: If I open the white board can we all see

BJB2: to view the whiteboard click on whiteboard on the blue menu on the left of the web window

BJB2 . o O (if you have detached, you may need to attach your chat)

BJB2: there is a refresh it button at the top of the whiteboard

MaryannDu: ok

MaryannDu: I posted the data for respondents

MaryannDu: are we together yet?

LeontyneA: yes

EmilyMH: yes

AmandaRo: yes

MaryannDu: we can see that most of us are teachers! yeahhhh

MaryannDu: and a total of nine people have taken the survey

MaryannDu: now I just put on the information about how important you feel NCLB is

MaryannDu: wow, 43 % critical

MaryannDu: 43% important

MaryannDu: any particular question you would like to see the data for?

BethBre: how about the question about the types of assessment questions

EmilyMH: it's all we talk about in our leadership meetings

EmilyMH: you get a little tired of spreadsheets after a while

PattyMc: what would you use something like this for

AileenC: I have yet to see any data at my school - it's like a well kept secret

EmilyMH: scary

MaryannDu: that is not good

MaryannDu: but I also find that many people don't know what they have or what to do with it. Data is just numbers it is the meaning that is critical

BethBre: Right on Maryann!!

EmilyMH: right...well the big push in Stafford and Spotsy is for data driven decision making

MaryannDu: when we are finished I will put up the survey and you can see the charts and such. right now you are just getting a sample

EmilyMH: but hard to do if you don't k now how to do it

MaryannDu: yes. and what does that mean?

AileenC: hard to make decisions w/out data

MaryannDu: yes

MaryannDu: what is data?

MaryannDu: how do you link "data" to a decision

AmandaRo: like you said, data is nothing unless there is meaning behind it

MaryannDu: any ideas?

MaryannDu: yes

PattyMc: by pass or fail?

AileenC: how about numbers concerning how diff populations did on sols?

MaryannDu: that is a number

MaryannDu: what does it tell you/

BethBre: any information about students, information about learning styles, etc

MaryannDu: yes

EmilyMH: it tells you about an area of performance or understanding

PattyMc: If the students could regurgitate the information

AmandaRo: I guess link data to what objectives kids missed?

AileenC: depends on what it is measuring

MaryannDu: yes

MaryannDu: and often it means more questions

MaryannDu: each kind of data is good for specific kinds of questions

AileenC: more questions sounds like a good place to start changing what we do

MaryannDu: one of the problems with state assessments is that they should never be used for student decision making

MaryannDu: on the student level

PattyMc: like multiple choice is good for measuring NOT knowing the right answer

LeontyneA: some data can help you figure out which questions kids just don't know or where there are misconceptions

MaryannDu: and for understanding the reasons!

MaryannDu: I just put up a pdf tonight on test items but mostly on mc

BJB2 . o O (is the test culturally biased, for example)

BethBre: assessment can also be pro-active, discovering knowledge kids already have about a concept

MaryannDu: state data provides a direction for where to look for problems

MaryannDu: yes

MaryannDu: and once you get that state level data, or school level or even grade level, you have directions to go

PattyMc: Now-a-days assessments have to be mc to get students ready for state assessments

MaryannDu: but not for any one set of kids

MaryannDu: or child

EmilyMH: individual data can help you plan for placement or remediation opportunities

MaryannDu: yes

MaryannDu: if the data is very good, grounded in goals and objectives and actually measures what is aligned

EmilyMH: right...and sometimes it is

EmilyMH: but even the teachers get caught up in overall benchmark scores rather than looking at the concentrations by strand

MaryannDu: if you give a child a higher order item, but have taught at a lower level, then you have mismatched the objective and the assessment through the activity

MaryannDu: yes

LeontyneA: true

AmandaRo: yes

MaryannDu: one way to move beyond that is to say, what does this child or group of child need to get that benchmark

MaryannDu: a benchmark is a point

MaryannDu: and that way you begin to do a task analysis, and see what might be missing

MaryannDu: like multiplying two digit numbers under 55

EmilyMH: right...a more specific breakdown than the SOL

MaryannDu: why were they wrong on the state test.

EmilyMH: (for VA)

MaryannDu: many failed those items

MaryannDu: so it might be that it is taught out of order

MaryannDu: with regards to the test

MaryannDu: or too far away from the test

MaryannDu: and just a review would do the trick

MaryannDu: or as you look at students work

MaryannDu: you see that it is the multiplication tables that are the issue, not the process

MaryannDu: I believe that as teachers we have to be diagnostic

EmilyMH: yes

MaryannDu: really ask and think about what is going on in a child's head

MaryannDu: what are you thinking when you do that?

LeontyneA: definitely

MaryannDu: what don't you understand?

MaryannDu: etc

MaryannDu: what else??

EmilyMH: It's just amazing how schools have changed and how the role of teacher has changed

MaryannDu: what other thoughts

MaryannDu: yes

AmandaRo: I feel that most of my kids do not like to think

EmilyMH: somehow teachers are expected to diagnose students through data analysis but there is no additional time built in to do that

MaryannDu: yes, I totally agree with that

AmandaRo: we have district test every six weeks and they bomb it every time

MaryannDu: schools need a person who helps teachers figure it out

AileenC: I feel I am immersed in a teach to the test culture, not a learning, discovering environment.

MaryannDu: wow

EmilyMH: we have an instructional coordinator who helps with that (the figuring it out) as does our math specialist

AmandaRo: but when we go over the answers as a class, they know every answer

EmilyMH: I agree with Aileen

MaryannDu: I do think that kids like to think, we are just not letting them

LeontyneA: I agree with you Aileen

AmandaRo: so I ask them...what were you thinking when you took the test

EmilyMH: I also agree with MaryAnn

MaryannDu: what do they say?

AmandaRo: "I don't know"

MaryannDu: why do they think they bomb the test?

LeontyneA: their brains shut down

MaryannDu: Kids' thinking is so much more complex than we realize, they do more than we give them credit. wow

MaryannDu: that is so insightful

PattyMc: because they don't generalize from one place to another

AmandaRo: to me if the answer is "blue" they know it's "blue", but for some reason they put "black"

MaryannDu: I would do something different

LeontyneA: they say "oh no, I don't get what they're asking me" then they bubble in D and go on

EmilyMH: maybe test taking strategies is the way to go...

EmilyMH: allowing for creativity in responding

MaryannDu: yes, reading and knowing how to take a test is critical

EmilyMH: starting at the end instead of the beginning

EmilyMH: skipping questions or having questions divided up onto cards or strips that they sort

MaryannDu: also, letting kids be creative. and also letting them know and see that there are many ways to answer a questions.

AileenC: perhaps they need to also build confidence - small quizzes, think alouds to practice getting through test questions'

EmilyMH: it sounds silly but they might like choice

AmandaRo: these are district created mc tests

AmandaRo: we have done things like this

EmilyMH: blech

MaryannDu: yes, and also like to know what is going on.

LeontyneA: You know, I saw some great test taking skills during TAKS prep, but they don't use them during other tests. It's like they think that the skills are special TAKS skills

MaryannDu: I would take one item. like above. and I would sit with a class and say. how many ways can you show me that you know how to do this.

AileenC: what is TAKS?

AmandaRo: they do fine on class test which are more higher order thinking than the mc district tests, but when it comes to these test, they just don't get it

LeontyneA: our state test

EmilyMH: I modeled math test strategies with an interactive white board and the kids took the test together (using an online practice TAKS test thank you very much) and worked through their problems

MaryannDu: the tests may also be written very poorly

BethBre: What a great idea Maryann; demonstrate that there is more than one way to arrive at an answer

AileenC: thanks -

MaryannDu: and help kids see that the test is only measuring one thing

PattyMc: in our state students with disabilities can express their answers to a state assessment in other ways

MaryannDu: that is important but low level, and that they have to think about when an item is bad and doesn't; make sense

MaryannDu: right

MaryannDu: from the means on the item matrix

EmilyMH: are you saying 'they' as in students?

MaryannDu: 1 being unlikely and 3 likely

MaryannDu: yes

MaryannDu: we tend to assume that all items are good, but....

MaryannDu: maybe when it doesn't make sense, it is because it doesn't make sense...

EmilyMH: where would you suggest looking for criteria for good test items?

AmandaRo: <raises hand>

MaryannDu: I also think we make assumptions about kids today.

MaryannDu: yes

MaryannDu: they think differently. they can multi task

MaryannDu: they are totally into communication

MaryannDu: but,

AmandaRo: for 6 graders do you feel it is appropriate to use modified true/false rather than the standard true/false?

MaryannDu: they don't know how to evaluate

MaryannDu: modified in how?

AmandaRo: if it is false, you need to change the statement to make it true

MaryannDu: that is very difficult.

MaryannDu: and is asking another level of information

PattyMc: I think that would increase deep understanding

MaryannDu: I think it is appropriate

MaryannDu: yes

EmilyMH: good practice for reading a car or housing contract

MaryannDu: sometimes you know one is wrong, but not why the other is right

MaryannDu: so it gets at a higher level of knowledge

MaryannDu: but depends on the level of the question

MaryannDu: if it is factual only. like a date, is that important

AmandaRo: we have made it a little easier by underlining the word they need to change

MaryannDu: I think that is too easy.

BethBre: I like the idea of modified true/false

EmilyMH: how about the kids identifying the word to change

MaryannDu: they should, with a well written question, be able to rewrite to be right

LeontyneA: so do I

AileenC: I think I do as well

BethBre: students have the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of a concept

MaryannDu: without too many clues

MaryannDu: yes

AmandaRo: you would think....

MaryannDu: and put things in their own words

MaryannDu: I think that the more we model orally, and do things orally in classes and the more kids work together, that it helps

BethBre: it requires the teacher to be flexible in grading for there are a number of correct responses to this type of question

MaryannDu: for me it is talk, talk, talk, think, and then write

MaryannDu: yes,

AmandaRo: of course Beth

MaryannDu: but I also believe that we grade too much and we should use the classroom and grading as an opportunity to learn

EmilyMH: these kids are very visual though...think on their level with iPods and cell phones and computer games

MaryannDu: so I would exchange papers, and grade and talk about each item

MaryannDu: yes

EmilyMH: try to play that into assessment

MaryannDu: I would do online surveys!!!

MaryannDu: tests

AmandaRo: what about student confidentiality

AmandaRo: we had a parent a little upset about it

MaryannDu: that is something to really train

MaryannDu: yes, I can imagine

EmilyMH: you could also do a mock test that nobody in the class took...you took it

EmilyMH: but they don't know that

EmilyMH: and they evaluate it

AmandaRo: I like that idea Emily

AileenC: Great idea!

EmilyMH: with the same discussion (if that's the route you go)

LeontyneA: so do I

EmilyMH: I usually put myself or an administrator out there as the 'fool'

MaryannDu: but, if we are clear about why and how and the learning objectives and what kids are expected to do, and what comes out of it, then there should be no problems

AmandaRo: lol

EmilyMH: they were never afraid to critique me

MaryannDu: lol

MaryannDu: I also tell parents to come into the classroom.

MaryannDu: if the state objective is to do xxx, then this is one way to do xxx, and focus on diagnostics, help kids become role models for each other

MaryannDu: when I first started teaching, we moved kids from classroom to classroom for grouping as needed, with no formal needs

MaryannDu: we asked the kids if they were ready and they told us

MaryannDu: I want to do that

PattyMc: we do that at our school but with formal testing to get the kids into the proper groups

MaryannDu: this was on a daily basis!

AmandaRo: how cool

MaryannDu: today in this room we are doing a review of division and in Mrs. xx room a review of the times tables. Sam you stay here for sure, Mike you go there.

MaryannDu: etc.

MaryannDu: yes it was

LeontyneA: hmmm...interesting.

AileenC: choices and some sense of control are good

MaryannDu: I see part of the problem we have today, is that often teachers are directed by principals to do things

EmilyMH: and principals are instructed by supervisors who follow the state...

MaryannDu: yes

MaryannDu: but ultimately I do believe that we can do both.

EmilyMH: it's like a big game of telephone, trying to interpret what we think we're being told to do or make happen

MaryannDu: we can get kids ready for a test, and we can teach

AileenC: I also see too many teachers who are resistant to teaching any differently than they were taught

EmilyMH: and we can do both

MaryannDu: yes

EmilyMH: teachers are amazing people

MaryannDu: resistance is big

EmilyMH: but stubborn

MaryannDu: yes

AileenC: and territorial

MaryannDu: I think that great teachers are wonderful

BethBre: A big yes to that Aileen!

MaryannDu: but really a school should be a community of learners

MaryannDu: everyone learning

EmilyMH: you would think

MaryannDu: lol

MaryannDu: lol

MaryannDu: very funny for me as I am working on a project about that

MaryannDu: heheheheh

MaryannDu: ok not that funny

AileenC: great teachers are wonderful - we just need to cultivate more of them

MaryannDu: yes

BethBre: Have you read Mike Schmoker's Book Results Now about professional communities of learners

EmilyMH: and it is all just so tied together

MaryannDu: not his but several others,

AmandaRo: I think a lot of it has to do with kids not wanting to do the "hard" work

EmilyMH: I was just going to mention communities of practice

MaryannDu: I think that they need guidance, but that once you realize what learning is, you love it

AileenC: I have read a book on professional learning communities

MaryannDu: I love them

EmilyMH: which book?

EmilyMH: I am interested in reading about the topic

MaryannDu: well, I think we are almost done here.

BethBre: This has been a great session, thanks everyone, I need to sign off to join the Best Practices in Writing session now. Thanks again.

AileenC: but if teachers, etc don't buy in, it's hard going for the rest.

MaryannDu: bye

MaryannDu: anything special for next time?

PattyMc: I gotta go too

PattyMc: bye

AileenC: by and thanks

MaryannDu: I'll put the results of the survey up

BJB2: the next Classroom Assessment is December 14

MaryannDu: feel free to share the survey with anyone who wants to take it

LeontyneA: ok, thanks

MaryannDu: we just have to keep trying

AileenC: thanks - it was interesting and good food for thought

MaryannDu: thanks

BJB2: and join this group if you want Maryann to remind you of the next discussion

LeontyneA: bye all

AmandaRo: thank you for some great ideas

BJB2: thanks, Maryann