



ACT Assessment Network Meeting

On Tuesday, December 5th the ACT schools convened at KVEC to continue their work on a problem of practice and individual theories of action. The Community Engagement and Assessment leads in attendance from each school met for the first time to learn about an initial vision of proposed work and to help chart a course that would allow them to learn from each other for the purpose of creating resources and professional learning experiences for their schools.

Why You?

I am reaching out to you as a follow-up to last week's meeting because you are identified as your school's building assessment lead. Each school was asked to identify two assessment leads that would help coordinate transformational change in assessment. I am excited to help facilitate the work of the ACT Assessment Network and look forward to working with you. I sincerely hope that our efforts together can make a positive difference for our teachers and students. The work of assessment can be challenging due to the negative perceptions associated with accountability. The mention of assessment can create feelings of tension, stress and anxiety. So, why focus on assessment? Is assessment fundamental to teaching?

Why Assessment?

Since the beginning of our existence, one could argue that we have always had the need to impart knowledge, understanding and perhaps on good days even wisdom to the next generation. With this need came teaching. Teaching first requires that we have something to teach and then to teach it. How we teach can take many forms, but ultimately we want our students to learn what we taught. If they did not, we want to help them, so ultimately they walk away with the knowledge/understanding we wanted them to learn. If we care about knowing what was learned and how best to take next steps in the learning, we have to assess in some form. Assessment can happen in many ways, but ultimately teaching is reduced to the equivalent of pressing play on a video, unless we assess. With these simple notions of teaching, the skilled use of assessment becomes fundamental to teaching.

Time is a Challenge

Many of us have been exposed to the work of Rick Stiggins around assessment for learning, but teacher turnover in the years since has been tremendous. In the meanwhile, assessment for learning has advanced with numerous examples and tools for teacher use. Ultimately, teachers and you as an assessment coach are most limited by time. Because of this, our efforts to support you and for you to support your school must value time. Initial thoughts thus far have moved us towards a virtual learning network centered on assessment that allows flexibility in how we interact with each other, share resources, create products, and access learning opportunities.

Our First Task

The Holler already offers many opportunities to interact and ways in which to share resources, but in an effort to simplify our work, we will be collaborating with The Holler creators to build a new specialized component within the site for our virtual learning network. With a need to network, learn, create, and

teach we must turn our attention to the design of the site. A design that is easy to use and contains features you need to support your work in the school is essential.

For our first task as a developing group, we are asking for your guidance on what you need the virtual learning network site to do as it relates to our work with assessment. Our goal is to create the new site and launch it for our use in January after returning from Christmas break. If we as a group are to learn from each other in an effort to build capacity within our own schools for the skilled use of assessment for learning, what must the virtual learning network site provide? What is your wish list for how best to support your work around assessment and accountability? *Please respond by replying to the Assessment School Lead Survey accessed at the below link by next Tuesday, December 19th.*

[Assessment School Lead Survey](#)

Thank You!

Thank you so much for your commitment to constant improvement by your willingness to accept the challenge of this work. The work of a committed educator often goes unnoticed by many, but the reward that feeds us is in knowing we are making a difference in the life of a child. Assessment practices can affect our student's lives and is why our work is crucial. We look forward to your guidance and pray you and your family have a Merry Christmas and blessed New Year.