"**Oregon's vision for education is that every child achieves academic success.** Proficiency-based education is vital to our efforts. *It's About Time* is an indispensable tool for Oregon and the nation to make substantial progress on this journey of profound change."

John A. Kitzhaber, M.D., Governor of the State of Oregon

# IT'S ABOUT TIME

## A FRAMEWORK FOR PROFICIENCY-BASED TEACHING & LEARNING

by **DIANE SMITH** for the
**BUSINESS EDUCATION COMPACT**

**BEC**
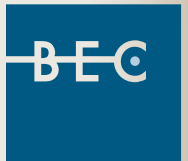
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A Framework for Proficiency-based
Teaching & Learning

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# Table of Contents

It's About Time

A Framework for
Proficiency-based
Teaching & Learning

BEC

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# Foreword

Since its founding in 1984 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, the Business Education Compact (BEC) has embraced a strategy that links educational reform, economic development and workforce requirements through productive partnerships between business and education. In 2003 it launched the Teaching and Learning Initiative with an advisory team that included leaders at all levels of the education community. After supporting a partner school piloting credit by proficiency, the BEC began its journey in spreading proficiency-based teaching and learning across Oregon schools. As of year-end 2011, more than 2,500 teachers in 119 of Oregon's 197 school districts have been trained by the BEC.

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**About the Business Education Compact**

The BEC is a non-profit organization investing in quality education since 1984. In fulfilling our mission—"Make Learning Real"—we connect students with their future and give teachers tools to create enthusiastic, lifelong learners. Programs include paid internships for high school and college students; National Engineers Month that stimulates student excitement for science and math; and the Teaching & Learning Initiative that is transforming K-12 education and improving student outcomes through proficiency-based teaching and learning.

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The framework shared in this workbook fills a need expressed to the BEC by the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). ODE asked the BEC to define proficiency so there is consistency in the practice and fidelity in the measurement of results of student learning. It is designed to inform and support teachers, students, administrators and school board members who are willing to take bold steps to transform their classrooms, schools and districts so that all students' needs are met for them to be successful.

The BEC has focused its efforts on changing the very nature of teaching through proficiency practice. In proficiency-based teaching and learning classrooms, students move on only when they can demonstrate they know and can apply the core standards. Raising the bar on learning means it also must be raised for teaching. This workbook provides the framework for implementing sustainable and effective proficiency-based teaching and learning practices.

Foundation funding for an independent evaluator provided the BEC with necessary resources for ground-breaking research and evaluation that validates the effectiveness of proficiency practice. Across Oregon—from rural schools to urban schools, from small schools to large comprehensive high schools—the results are consistent: high gains in student achievement and success!

For instance, here are examples from three Oregon schools:

- After one year of proficiency-based teaching and learning practices by math teachers, Hidden Valley High School in Three Rivers School District/Oregon (school enrollment 756) reported notable gains in the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) in math. In 2009-10, 62% of juniors met or exceeded achievement standards. In 2010-11, 81% of juniors and 63% of sophomores met or exceeded. The percentage of juniors is 11% higher than the state average and a 19% increase over 2009-10. They also reduced the percentage of freshmen with Fs by 68%, primarily in Algebra I classes.

- Early College High School, an alternative school in the Salem-Keizer School District (school enrollment 198) reported that 60% of their students met or exceeded standards measured by OAKS in math in 2009-10. One year later, 95% met or exceeded with 100% participation.

- Heppner Jr/Sr High School, Morrow County School District (school enrollment 213) reduced the number of failing grades for all students from 143 Ds and Fs at the end of the first semester in 2009-10 to 26 Fs and no Ds at the end of the first semester in 2010-11.

Proficiency has been fueled by a grassroots movement to transform teaching and learning in Oregon. Through this practice, classroom teachers are experiencing more professional satisfaction as they witness the growth in academic achievement and student ownership of their own learning. These teachers vow that they will never go back to traditional classroom teaching. As one veteran teacher so succinctly stated, "proficiency offers hope for those students who have given up trying to be successful in school."

The BEC Board and staff are humbled and inspired by the hard work and bold determination of so many teachers and administrators we are proud to call *partners in change* as they implement proficiency in their classrooms and schools. This book is for them and others yet to join us in our journey to ensure proficiency-based teaching and learning practices are implemented in every classroom, every school and every district in Oregon.

To view other proficiency resources developed by the BEC such as a proficiency portal (a document library of proficiency material for classrooms), please visit our website at www.becpdx.org.

**Tamra Busch-Johnsen**
Executive Director
Business Education Compact

# Acknowledgements

# Introduction

## It's About Time—A Framework for Proficiency-based Teaching & Learning

It's about time! It's about time that we make changes in our K-12 education system to ensure that a high school diploma will at last be a reliable predictor of post-academic success. It's about time that we give each and every student the time to learn with the help they need to be successful. It's about time that we assess students based on what they know and can do instead of how long they sit in a classroom chair. It's about time that grades accurately reflect student knowledge and skills!

America's classrooms reflect a place where time truly marches on. In fact, time dictates many of the learning decisions that drive how schools function. For example, students who were born during a certain time period start school together; classes, units and grading periods all start and stop for large groups of students based on dates on a calendar instead of when students master the material. And students move through the school system in instructional groups with time limiting the personalization of instruction and curriculum to meet students' needs.

Time **is** an important feature for some activities, such as having students complete statewide assessments within an identified testing period, or scheduling important school-related activities. Parents also expect that schools will train students to meet deadlines and work within a schedule. And a student-centered performance model frequently encourages students with common interests to work together to complete a quality task under set deadlines. These are all worthwhile tasks with time as an important ingredient. We can't afford, however, to continue the long-standing educational practice of allowing time to drive all of our educational decisions.

Proficiency-based teaching and learning allows a teacher to set aside many of the time barriers that prevent some students from having extra time to learn tough concepts and other students from moving ahead at a faster pace. Proficiency defines what it means to master a learning concept by breaking it down into manageable chunks of knowledge and skills and giving students all the support and interventions necessary for them to reach, at a minimum, a proficient level of learning.

*It's About Time* is written for teachers, students and school leaders. The framework described in this workbook defines the critical elements of proficiency-based teaching and learning through a series of teacher and student rubrics. Designed around "constructs" that are essential to quality teaching and learning, the rubrics are designed to be accessed in any order. This is particularly important since practices like identifying learning targets and assessing student knowledge occur frequently during the learning process.

Teachers can use the framework to self-evaluate where they are on the continuum of mastering proficiency skills and create goals for self-improvement. Teams of teachers can study the elements and identify where their grade level team or department needs to improve and develop a plan to get there, as well as evaluate how effectively their students are engaged in their own learning, as identified in the rubrics. Administrators can support teachers by studying the framework and looking for elements of proficiency when they visit classrooms. The rubrics help point out the critical features of proficiency-based practices and provide a structure for conversations with parents and students about changes in classroom practices that are likely to occur, as well as fostering ongoing dialogue with all stakeholders. In addition, administrators can recommend their teachers collaborate on how to improve professional skills and move through the continuum of proficiency talents that these rubrics support.

The proficiency transformation is rising up across Oregon and emanates from the classroom as opposed to the legislature, principals' offices or school boards. It brings with it the promise of improving teacher effective-

ness and dramatically increasing student learning. It also comes with labels—labels that can be confusing to parents, students and community stakeholders, not to mention practitioners and our higher education partners. This practice is known by many different terms: proficiency-based teaching and learning, standards-based education, performance-based practices, competency-based pathways and many more. Regardless of its nomenclature, we owe teachers a clear set of components that distinguish the classroom "must haves" from the "nice to haves." We invite you to join our journey!

**Diane Smith**, Director Teaching & Learning Initiative
dsmith@becpdx.org
Business Education Compact
12655 SW Center St.; Suite 430
Beaverton, OR 97005
(503) 646-0242 x28
www.becpdx.org

**We expect you to write all over this book—it's a workbook, after all.**

As you proceed through *It's About Time*, you'll come upon Construct Rubrics that set performance goals. We've designed them with check boxes for you to document your progress.



Construct 1—TARGET
Teacher Rubric

# Proficiency Pyramid



**INTERVENTIONS**
Provided for students who need additional support and/or time to reach proficiency levels

**ENRICHMENT AND ACCELERATION**
Provided for students who demonstrate proficiency and are ready to dig deeper into understanding and applying content

*Pyramid left side (Interventions):*
- Students who need major interventions to make measurable growth
- Students who need occasional or strategic interventions to reach proficiency
- Students who reach proficiency through regularly scheduled activities and need no interventions

*Pyramid right side (Enrichment and Acceleration):*
- Students who reach proficiency quickly and need enrichment or acceleration
- Students who reach proficiency with infrequent interventions and are ready for enrichment or acceleration
- Students who reach proficiency through regularly scheduled activities and seldom access enrichment or acceleration activities unless teacher builds in opportunities

| Interventions | Enrichment and Acceleration |
|---|---|
| **Core instruction with minimal interventions:**<br>Regularly-scheduled progress monitoring<br>Early interventions to minimize problems<br>Additional homework review<br>Mini-tutorial during class<br>Student-to-student review | **Minimal need for enrichment and acceleration:**<br>Reach proficiency through regularly-scheduled activities |
| **Core instruction with occasional interventions:**<br>Strategic and frequent progress monitoring<br>Teacher reviews concept with student<br>Student-to-student review<br>Student/teacher exchange<br>Teacher feedback on attempted work<br>Topic-related websites for review<br>Homework review activity<br>Supplemental instructional material | **Occasional enrichment and acceleration instruction needed:**<br>Confirm proficiency after initial teacher instruction and reduce number of required activities in the lesson<br>Extend learning through activities requiring application of standards that are teacher- and/or student-developed<br>Engage in peer projects with higher-order activities |
| **Intensive remediation with significant interventions:**<br>Continual progress monitoring<br>One-on-one tutorials<br>Frequent review of basic concepts by teachers or support staff<br>Structured and well-supported introduction of extended learning concepts<br>Additional program resources<br>Online tutorial sites | **Minimal enrichment and acceleration instruction needed:**<br>Confirm proficiency through pre-assessments<br>Extend learning through activities requiring application of standards that are teacher- and/or student-developed<br>Pose opportunities for original research in areas of student interest related to selected standard(s)<br>Provide a smooth and immediate transition to next set of learning targets when proficient or higher levels of knowledge and skills are confirmed through assessment profile<br>Engage in activities that promote higher-level thinking and application of skills |

Districts may want to consider what role standardized tests that are mandated at the state, district or school levels can play as formative or summative assessments.

# Assessment Options to Measure Student Knowledge and Skills

Assessments serve as a GPS for teachers by laying out a pathway to identifying what students already know and can do and what they still need to learn. Without this information, teachers may teach information students already know or skills they already have. Teachers can use the information gained through frequent and purposeful assessments to double back and reteach a learning concept students didn't grasp or to move more quickly to keep pace with the advanced learners. Along the way, teachers adjust the activities and tasks to address unique student needs. The frequent and "just in time" assessments are known as formative because they form the pathway to the learning target. At a point identified by either the teacher or the student, there is a summative assessment that measures student learning before moving on to the next learning target. An abbreviated list of suggested formative and summative assessments follows, with many working for either assessment purpose.

| Formative | Summative |
|---|---|
| *Formative assessments occur regularly and inform the teacher and the student about what the student knows and can do. They provide a roadmap for routine instructional decisions to help each student reach the learning target.* | *Summative assessments are capstone activities that measure what the student knows and can do at the end of a unit or period of learning. Students may complete multiple summative assessments in order to prove proficiency in the learning target. Teachers can provide a variety of ways students can share their learning.* |
| Anticipation guides | Artwork |
| Classroom performance system check-ups | Blogs |
| Concept mapping | Board games |
| Cooperative learning strategies | Bulletin boards |
| Discussion questions | Charts/diagrams/graphs |
| Entrance/exit notecards | Computerized learning: blogs, PowerPoint presentations, podcasts, video games, web pages, wiki entries |
| Graphic organizers | Costumes |
| Guided work with highlighters | Debates |
| I Do/We Do/You Do | Demonstrations |
| Individual whiteboards | Discussions |
| KQL charts | Flip charts |
| Peer evaluations with rubric | Game shows |
| Quick response writing | Journal entries |
| Quick writes | Learning centers |
| Rankings | Mock trials |
| Short quizzes with leveled questions | Models, murals |
| Think/pair/share | Original writings: books, letters, news accounts, plays, poems, songs, stories, compositions, journals, etc. |
| Thumbs up, down, sideways | Portfolio collections |
| Write what you know assignments | Radio shows |
| Verbal checks with teacher | Tests, quizzes |

# Scenarios

Teachers learn from one another, whether by collaborating on lesson development or watching each other teach the lesson. The following scenarios reflect what proficiency-based teaching and learning can look like in classrooms at the elementary, middle and high school levels. Teachers are encouraged to consider what proficiency elements their students need, how to sustain these practices after implementation, and what support system is needed at the classroom, department and building levels to maintain progress in implementing proficiency for all students.

### Scenario: Intermediate Reading—Grades 4-5 Reading Standards

Beth Smith has wanted to be an elementary teacher all of her life. She loves this age group and cherishes each minute she is with her students. When Beth was in school, elementary teachers were hired to teach a specific grade level, such as first grade or third grade, etc. Beth's school focuses on standards as the learning targets for each student. The faculty recognizes that not all students learn at the same speed and that time should not hold students back from achieving strong learning.

One of the ways that Beth's school reflects this fluid approach to teaching is the way teachers spend their day. Instead of being hired to teach a particular grade level, teachers are hired to provide instruction in a range of content-area district and state standards. Teachers are also incorporating the common core state standards in reading and math. In this way, similar to the "looping" strategy, teachers can move students along a learning continuum that does not expect them to learn at the same speed as every other student. Beth is responsible for teaching the fourth and fifth grade reading standards at her elementary school. This is not the only subject area she teaches; she also teaches the fourth and fifth grade social studies and math

standards. This means that she sees a wide range of students in a day and that students are not self-contained in her room exclusively for their instruction. While the school has a "home room" model, it is expected that even the primary students follow a "walk to learn" model where they are grouped with students who are working to reach a proficient level or higher in the same standards.

Beth's district developed a scope and sequence for reading based on the state and common core state standards. The scope and sequence breaks each of the reading standards down into learning targets and provides an instructional order that helps students be successful. The document also spells out the vocabulary that is unique to reading that teachers are expected to use during their instruction, as well as the resources that the district has provided that cover the specific targets.

The scope and sequence focuses on five major areas of reading: Phonemic Awareness, Decoding, Fluency, Comprehension and Vocabulary. Each of these areas builds on the next. The goal of the district is to make sure that students are strong independent readers by the time they master third grade reading standards. (Note: Students who are not reading at grade level by the end of third grade will typically struggle to become independent readers.) This means that, as a teacher who focuses on the fourth and fifth grade reading standards, Beth's students should come to her already knowing how to decode and read with a fluent cadence. Students who have mastered fourth grade reading standards may still need to focus on phonemic awareness, decoding and fluency standards. These will be addressed by other teachers who deliver in-depth interventions to students who are not on a solid learning trajectory.

Reading is a major instructional focus at Beth's school and, as a result, there are many interventions in place to help students reach proficiency. Teachers take a proactive approach to grouping students on this learning continuum. They study available scientific research about grouping and, in weekly placement meetings, teacher teams and content coaches review a student's learning profile and determine whether a move to a different

teacher's room is warranted. Students are comfortable moving among teachers and soon gain a sense that each teacher is a member of their "teacher family," helping to support their learning and providing a broad range of support and advancement.

When Beth is ready to design a unit, she references the scope and sequence as a place to start. She knows that reading standards build on one another and need to be addressed multiple times during the year. She also knows that there is an instructional order to the reading standards that helps students reach proficiency and that the district and school resources will help her create a broad range of learning activities. Beth's district has also developed common formative and summative reading assessments that measure each grade-level reading standard. These common assessments are stored electronically on the district's server and are available for Beth to retrieve and administer to any student she believes is ready for one. The questions on the assessments come from a bank of research-based reading questions, including those from the adopted core and intervention programs her district uses, as well as those teachers have developed and refined through use.

To know whether a student is proficient in a reading standard or not, teachers developed a set of rubrics that define a range of proficiency. Teachers refer to these rubrics many times, using them with parents at conferences to explain how their student is doing in learning to read, as well as using them to report student learning on the student's report card. As students begin to understand what is expected of them to be successful, students also use the rubrics to understand why they missed the mark and what they need to do to improve their learning next time.

Comprehension is one of the areas that Beth will focus on with her students. The district's intermediate teachers discussed what the standard required a student to know and to do, and they collectively reviewed a great deal of research on the teaching of reading. Then, after confirming that they were all on the same page about what comprehension is, how to measure it, and what it means to be proficient in comprehension, the teachers developed a series of grade-level rubrics that reflect a continuum of knowledge and skills. The district's rubrics are on a 6-point scale, with a 4 being proficient. This is the district's fourth grade comprehension rubric:

| | 1—Does Not Meet Proficiency in the Standard | 2—Does Not Meet Proficiency in the Standard | 3—Nearly Meets Proficiency in the Standard |
|---|---|---|---|
| **4th Grade Comprehension Rubric** | Even with support, unable to interpret information from grade-level text, including cause and effect, fact and opinion, sequence of events | Needs support to interpret information from grade-level text, including cause and effect, fact and opinion, sequence of events | Inconsistently interprets information from grade-level text, including cause and effect, fact and opinion, sequence of events |
| | **4—Meets Proficiency in the Standard** | **5—Exceeds Proficiency in the Standard** | **6—Masters the Standard** |
| | Accurately interprets information from grade-level text, including cause and effect, fact and opinion, sequence of events | Accurately and consistently interprets information from grade-level text, including cause and effect, fact and opinion, sequence of events | Independently applies well-developed comprehension skills to above-grade-level texts |

After collecting assessment information for her students on their comprehension ability, Beth develops a range of activities that suits each student's personalized learning plan. The learning plans reflect a thoughtful strategic and intentional focus for each student that will help them reach proficiency in this fourth grade standard. Some activities have students working in the basal program; other activities have them strengthening their comprehension skills by completing reading-related activities in their health newspaper and their social studies reader. Regardless of the content, Beth addresses the need for understanding what the text is saying, interpreting the information and developing cause/effect relations, opinions and the ability to sequence events.

During the activities, students track their progress using their learning plans. The activities include assessments that are used by other teachers to measure comprehension. In addition, a district-wide elementary reading assessment program is used that offers a range of reading passages that quickly reflect a student's comprehension ability. After reviewing all assessment scores and the comprehension rubric, Beth makes an overall evaluation on each student's comprehension ability and records this on the student's standards-based elementary report card.

When parents get this information, they are also provided a complete comprehension rubric from kindergarten standards through fifth grade standards. Teachers hope this will help parents understand that scoring a student's ability to comprehend the printed text will give them a more accurate picture of their student's true ability. In addition, parents can look at the whole continuum of comprehension across the elementary years and understand how much growth their student has made to date and should make in the future.

**Scenario: Seventh Grade Science Standards**

Ms. Garcia teaches middle school science standards to seventh graders. Her middle school is on a semester system and classes are 56 minutes long. Ms. Garcia has six sections of students. Most of them are working to be proficient in seventh grade science standards; however, some of them have advanced science ability and are working on eighth grade standards.

The smallest class has approximately 26 students and the largest section has 34 students.

Ms. Garcia's department spends a great deal of time identifying the structure of middle school science. Together the department members created a scope and sequence that outlines the order in which the standards are covered. Part of their design plan includes ensuring that much of the content of the state assessment test is covered in depth by the time the students are scheduled to complete the test.

The scope and sequence identifies the standards teachers will teach and breaks them down into units throughout the year. Each unit addresses specific science standards that are unique to a particular science concept. Other standards are addressed within each unit, appearing multiple times during the year. This happens because the teachers have identified some standards that are generic to any specific content and that shape the way students need to think as scientists. Reviewing some of the science standards more than once gives the teachers many opportunities to hit some of the really critical science concepts that students will need to know in order to be successful with eighth grade science standards.

Ms. Garcia's science department spends time breaking down each science standard into learning targets. These learning targets are really chunks of knowledge and skills that teachers will teach and for which students will be held accountable. The learning targets are written in the form of *I Can* statements so they can be easily understood by the students. For example, one of the seventh grade standards for Ms. Garcia's class deals with how the components and processes within a system interact with one another. Under this standard there are five learning targets. When the students demonstrate the *I Can* statements associated with a particular target, then they are proficient in the learning target. When they are proficient in all of the learning targets, they are proficient in the standard.

Here are examples of the *I Can* statements for the learning target that reads: "Explain how landforms change over time at various rates in terms of constructive and destructive forces."

- *I can* label constructive and destructive forces.

- *I can* describe different types of land forms.

- *I can* describe constructive and destructive forces.

- *I can* describe ways constructive and destructive forces affect landforms.

- *I can* give examples and explain how landforms change over time and why.

- *I can* give examples and explain how landforms change at various rates and why.

- *I can* predict how constructive and destructive forces may affect landforms and propose solutions or benefits that may be a result.

(Note: The verbs in the *I Can* statements should represent the same level of knowledge and skills as the verb in the main standard. Verbs should be measurable and allow students to demonstrate understanding through a broad range of performance assessment formats.)

The *I Can* statements become very familiar to the students. Ms. Garcia and her department colleagues laminate them for each standard and post them in classrooms, outside the classroom door, on walls, windows and bulletin boards where they are referred to routinely as part of the instruction. In addition, students have a chart with all of the *I Can* statements listed on them. When they are proficient in a particular statement, they mark it on their chart. They keep track of which learning targets they are not yet proficient in meeting and for which ones they have already reached a proficient level or higher. Students who are already proficient in a particular learning target frequently provide instructional support and coaching. Ms. Garcia's students act as a team to help everyone reach a proficient level or higher in each standard.

Students are engaged in a variety of learning activities to help them reach proficiency. In some activities they are grouped by interest area, while at other times they are working independently or in online learning environments. Ms. Garcia's role is to lay out the learning opportunities and to be a resource for students. It is her expert knowledge of science and her strong

teaching background that shape the discussion questions and initial student interactions. Once students feel confident that they are being successful and that their input is valued, they begin to take charge of their own learning, frequently initiating activities that they want to pursue and gauging their progress against what the *I Can* statements require them to demonstrate.

Ms. Garcia's classroom reflects a standards-based learning environment. The focus is on the standards and they are broken down into manageable and measurable components that collectively represent the science curriculum. She uses proficiency-based practices to measure student learning and to hold students to a high level of knowledge and skills. Together with her students, she develops and reviews rubrics for what each learning target looks like when a student demonstrates it at a proficient level or higher. Her rubrics are always provided to the students ahead of each activity to be scored. They are available for students to put in their notebooks; in addition, they are posted on the class wiki and are on bulletin boards in the classroom. Students have a clear target of what they are expected to know and do. Ms. Garcia provides feedback to students using the rubrics and offers a variety of interventions when students need extra help, support or more time to demonstrate proficiency.

The science department has developed a series of both common and teacher-specific formative assessments. These are stored on the science department's server for all department members to review and use. In addition, all the teachers post their lessons electronically so colleagues can share ideas. When it is time for a summative assessment, Ms. Garcia turns to the science server to electronically retrieve an appropriate summative learning activity that students will complete. All formative and summative assessments provide a range of questions that reflect three distinct levels of learning. Level 1 has anywhere from five to ten questions that force students to make a choice. These frequently take the form of multiple-choice, matching or true/false questions. They typically require a basic level of the knowledge and skills in the standard. Students answer this level of questions to demonstrate a minimum level of learning.

Level 2 has four to six constructed response questions that require students to provide a short, often written response. In assessments at this level, students use analysis skills to compare and contrast scenarios provided in the

assessment and examine issues more closely. Level 3 has three to four questions that are even more complex and give students a chance to synthesize and evaluate information provided. In addition, students can extend what they've learned about scientific principles by justifying why principles are true or predicting what will happen when variables in the scientific information are altered. These are relatively short assessments that can be scored quickly but give an accurate "point in time" snapshot of what the students know and can do.

Ms. Garcia uses assessment information to determine how close the students are to reaching proficiency. Seldom are the Level 1 questions enough to get a true picture of proficiency; in most cases, students must answer the Level 1 and Level 2 questions correctly to demonstrate proficiency. In Ms. Garcia's room students can also skip Level 1 and Level 2 questions and go right for the Level 3 questions. Should they answer only these questions, but answer them correctly, reflecting a high level of knowledge and skills, they are demonstrating a level of knowledge and skills that is beyond the minimum expected to be proficient. These students exceed proficiency and are working at a high level of academic learning.

Several students in Ms. Garcia's classroom are identified as talented and gifted. Their reading abilities are strong and they have no problem understanding and internalizing highly complex scientific principles. They are held to the same *I Can* expectations as the other students; however, their assignments and/or projects will be customized to allow for their more advanced ability. Other students in the class struggle with learning issues and will be involved in some of the wide range of interventions available to help each student reach proficient levels in the standards.

Ms. Garcia and the rest of the staff at her middle school have worked to develop interventions that are appropriate for specific content areas, as well as some that can be delivered school-wide. The following interventions are available:

- Planned in-class review time when students can work with the teacher and other students to clarify confusing issues related to the standards in which they are not yet able to meet proficiency

- Online department websites to review prior lessons their own or other teachers have delivered in class for a review of the material

- Online learning tutorials that are provided by third-party software or web companies

- Study packets of three to seven practice questions or activities that specifically address the standards. If a student is not currently proficient, he or she must complete the review packet and visit with the instructor about accuracy and depth of responses before the student can retest/redo, etc.

- Quick 15-minute reviews during class that involve handing students a flash card when they enter the room. Have a group of questions on the board divided by standard or learning target. Have students use the index card to answer the two or three questions that address the standard or learning target on which they are currently working. Group the students by the same standard or learning target to share, defend and correct responses. Then, call on students to explain where they went wrong or incorrectly processed information to generate an incorrect response. Collect the cards at the end of the class period. With student names on the cards, check off which ones are turned in as practice for the upcoming retests/redos.

- Before- or after-school tutorials offered by different members of the department. Each teacher covers a certain time slot, not inconveniencing any one person more during the week than anybody else. This requires all teachers in the department to realize they all teach the same standards and that they have a sense of how much more complex the quality of the work should be as a student moves from sixth grade standards to seventh, to eighth, etc. It also requires that teachers discuss and agree on what they are looking for when holding students to proficiency, as well as developing or, at a minimum, sharing the work students can redo to demonstrate proficiency. (Teachers who are the only person in a department may want to visit with the principal or superintendent to learn which other teachers in the district are also licensed to teach the same content area and who could help support students reaching proficient levels.)

- Flexible schedules to allow students to move to their next subject about 10 minutes late, allowing them additional learning time with a teacher who can provide them support and clarify confusing concepts.

- Extended learning time options that occur twice a week when the whole school operates on a different master schedule. This offers students the opportunity to spend time with teachers who can provide additional instruction in targeted areas where students are struggling. The schedule also has built into it an acceleration and enrichment section for students to pursue advanced original research in areas that pique their interests and offer connections to possible career interests.

Ms. Garcia holds her students to high standards of learning. She expects each student to reach proficiency and has interventions in place for those who need extra time and/or support to get there. Students who can progress more quickly are not held back but proceed through the learning targets at a rigorous pace. When the end of a grading period occurs and Ms. Garcia has to file grades for each student, she is confident that her marks reflect a true picture of what students know and can do.

She has at least three to five scores for each student on each standard so the marks don't reflect a "once is good enough" teaching strategy. When student scores are not their best, or don't reflect a proficient level, students are expected to keep working. As new scores are generated, the older lower scores are erased, rather than mathematically being averaged into a collection of points that might give an inaccurate picture of what the students really know and can do at a particular time. Her students expect to work hard. While some of them initially just wanted the "points" and were only willing to do enough to "get by," her confidence in them has won them over and her strong support system has helped them achieve more than they thought possible. They understand that only their best thinking and learning count and that they must take ownership for learning middle school science standards.

**Scenario: High School Language Arts Standards**

Mrs. Johnson teaches the national common core state standards in Language Arts & Literacy standards to ninth and tenth graders in a large comprehensive high school of about 1,400 students. Her classes range in size from about 28 to 40 students, making it difficult sometimes to address all of their needs. She focuses on the non-fiction reading, literature, writing and speaking standards in her class.

The inside of Mrs. Johnson's class looks fairly traditional, with desks set up in rows and a few computers around the outside edges of the room. The walls and board give the first indication that students in this room experience something unique to a school setting. The walls are lined with poster-size sheets of paper with *I Can* lists on them. Each poster states the standard being targeted with a short, bulleted list of things students should be able to know and do after completing all of the assignments and assessments that Mrs. Johnson has planned. The *I Can* lists are easy for the students to understand and are brief in length, helping students feel a sense of confidence that they can reach the targets.

Mrs. Johnson presents the next unit by laying out the standards that students are expected to know and be able to do. She reminds them that their goal is to reach a proficient level or higher. Then, together with the students, she develops the *I Can* statements that will be the learning targets for students to reach. Finally, as she regularly does, she writes the standard and the *I Can* statements on the board for frequent reference by students and the teacher. Here is an example.

Common Core State Standard in Reading/Informational Text:

*9-10.RI.5 Analyze in detail how an author's ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter).*

*I Can:*

- Identify what causes things to happen and why they happen from within what I read

- Identify the order in which things happen and distinguish what this order contributes to the information I read

- Compare the ideas and points of view from within what I read by gathering pieces of information that are important and explaining their differences and similarities

- Analyze how individuals, groups, events and situations in what I read are connected and how they contribute to what the author is writing about

- Examine big ideas and supporting ideas from within what I read and explain how they connect and support one another

During the discussion, most students demonstrate a high degree of engagement. Mrs. Johnson asks questions of students, and students ask questions of Mrs. Johnson. Together they define vocabulary and clarify the quality and quantity of activities and assignments/assessments that students are expected to complete.

Mrs. Johnson then provides a common formative assessment developed with other teachers who also teach the same standards. The assessment is meant to give her information about what students already know and can do. While reviewing the results, she notices that one particular student was able to answer all of the questions correctly with a significant amount of detail and a well-developed level of understanding about the standards. Mrs. Johnson believes the results suggest that it won't take long for this student to not only meet proficiency, but exceed it. Mrs. Johnson knows that she will need to prepare more advanced activities that extend the concepts of the unit for this student, or allow the student to move on to the next unit and set of learning targets. The assessment results also indicate that three students are really struggling to work at even a "nearly proficient" level. They are functioning at least two or more years below the grade level standards and will need significant interventions to help them make strong academic growth during this unit.

Over the next several weeks, Mrs. Johnson engages the students in a variety of activities. Sometimes groups of students work in teams to pursue learning targets. Sometimes students work individually. As time progresses, Mrs. Johnson continually checks on how students are doing and what they know and can do. The format for these formative assessments is diverse and always provides a range of questions or tasks that allow students to demonstrate a low level of knowledge and skills. Questions or tasks ask them to apply information and skills to more advanced situations and experiences. Two things are always true about these assessments: 1) they are developed to measure a student's proficiency level for the *I Can* statements; and 2) they are aligned to the rubric language that defines proficient knowledge and skills for the selected standard.

During the learning activities, students frequently use graphic organizers that are provided or that they design to categorize, group or connect learning among and between the *I Can* learning targets. They work to demonstrate proficiency with a high degree of ownership and personal commitment. When initial results indicate students still have some learning to do, they work with Mrs. Johnson or other students in a variety of ways to try to meet proficient levels of knowledge and skills. Some of these strategies include the following:

- Working with other students in class who have mastered the standard

- Working with teacher during study-hall, prep period or advisory

- Attending a tutorial after school with a teacher designated by the school or the department to provide review sessions for a particular standard

- Reviewing with teacher during class period when teacher provides a mini-lesson in which standard is reviewed and skills practiced

- Working with their teacher before or after school

- Continuing work on the current learning targets while the rest of the students move on to a new lesson and its learning targets

- Continuing in that class until they reach proficient levels or higher rather than enroll in an elective

- Meeting in Saturday Seminars with other students who need to demonstrate proficiency in selected standards

- Requiring students who still need to demonstrate proficiency to come to school and work with teachers or trained community volunteers who can provide help with certain standards. Districts with four-day weeks for students schedule Fridays as Intervention Friday.

In order to help students "stay in touch" with their pathway to proficiency, Mrs. Johnson regularly checks on all students to confirm all of them are making progress. She spots students who are struggling and who need some specific interventions to get over a learning bump. She brings some of them together in a learning group and works with a few more individually. Mrs. Johnson provides the class with a variety of methods to keep track of how they are doing.

One such tool is a capacity matrix, otherwise known as a standards record-keeping chart. It contains a list of all standards or learning targets in which students must be proficient before moving on to the next level or course. Students keep track of their progress by dating when they reach a proficient level or higher. Mrs. Johnson also posts the names of student "coaches," without any scores, who have already demonstrated a proficient level of knowledge and skills so students can work with them for additional practice and support.

In addition, Mrs. Johnson has posted rubrics around the room and provided copies to students. They refer to these as they complete assignments and projects so they know exactly what proficient "looks like." When Mrs. Johnson provides feedback about how students can improve, she uses this language to make it clear in what areas students still need to make growth or correct their thinking or skills.

Mrs. Johnson is eager to help each student meet proficient levels in all assessed standards. She is careful, however, to help students understand some very important concepts:

- Some standards are taught but not assessed because they are bridges to learning other concepts.

- Learning targets or *I Can* lists are simply the standards broken down into student-friendly statements that are manageable and that define chunks of learning.

- Time does not define learning; students are given immediate support when they cannot demonstrate proficiency and are expected to work until they reach this level, and higher, when possible.

- Students who demonstrate proficient levels are provided opportunities to complete advanced work or move on to more difficult standards or coursework.

- Students own their learning and are active partners in shaping many of the activities and interventions that they complete to reach proficiency.

When Mrs. Johnson's principal stops by, he checks on the students' activity. Students are able to tell him which standard(s) is the focus for their learning at that time; they are able to use the vocabulary of the standard, as well as to share the rubric definitions of proficiency and to describe what they need to do in order to get there. Instead of begging for more time, more extra credit, teacher leniency or other "gifts" that don't really reflect knowledge and skills, students arrange opportunities to revise work, talk through problems or learning targets, and eventually retake assessments, whether in written, oral or visual formats.

When Mrs. Johnson communicates with parents about how their students are doing, she provides specific examples of what the students know and can do. She refers to the rubric definition of proficiency and *I Can* lists to point out the academic knowledge and skills that the students are expected to achieve. Parents are included in the learning plan and are given suggestions about what they can do at home to help their students.

She frequently posts lessons on a website so students and parents can access the rubrics, videos of lessons and support material on-line. She also

records her lessons from her interactive white board and posts the audio and video on her web page so that students can replay them over the Internet outside of school. This helps students revisit what was taught at any time and creates a 24/7 learning opportunity. Students also access the class wiki site created by Mrs. Johnson and student study teams. The wiki includes assignments, sample assessment questions, rubrics and even important concepts students should know. Mrs. Johnson's toolbox to help students is deep and effective.

She and her department colleagues meet periodically to revisit their understanding of what the standards for their courses require students to know and do. In addition, they calibrate their judgment on student work to make sure they all have comparable expectations, review the language of the rubrics, as well as discuss grading practices and parent communication. Mrs. Johnson and her department colleagues work hard to provide many learning options for students. They encourage students to generate their own project ideas to meet the learning targets and offer an easy-to-use contract form for students to complete and submit with their ideas. Mrs. Johnson expects each student to work hard to achieve proficient levels of knowledge and skills. Furthermore, she wants to stretch each student's learning to reflect optimum academic growth by eliminating any time barriers created by the calendar, clock or curriculum.

### Scenario: Construction I and Construction II—Applied Academics Standards

Mr. King teaches Construction I and Construction II at a small high school with about 650 students in grades 9 through 12. His course is recognized as a Career and Technical Education course (CTE), and he holds appropriate certification to teach such a course, with a rich background working in the field of construction as a college student. Mr. King is well aware of Oregon's Skills Set for his construction courses, as well as the industry standards that reflect when construction work is done with quality and care to meet consumer expectations. Mr. King has spent a significant amount of time connecting his industry standards to Oregon's state standards. He is aware that many of the assignments his students complete require them to use a great deal of math.

Ms. Allen teaches math at the same high school and is certified as "highly qualified" in this area. Her courses address math standards from Pre-Algebra through AP Calculus levels. Ms. Allen is aware of Mr. King's interest in offering some math credit to students who complete the two-course sequence of Construction I and Construction II. He believes this is possible because of the breadth and depth of math skills his students are expected to know and be able to use. Ms. Allen and Mr. King begin a conversation about how this can happen.

A document developed by the Oregon Department of Education guides their initial work. It is entitled *Guidelines, Scenarios, and Resources for Offering Credit in Applied Academics*. First, Mr. King and Ms. Allen review the industry-related construction standards for the course. Then they turn their review to the state's math standards. With Ms. Allen's help, Mr. King reflects on which math standards he addresses. Ms. Allen encourages him to talk about how he teaches the standards, what he uses to assess what his students know and can do, and what the assignments and tasks look like that students are required to complete. She also wants to make sure that they are both on the same page with what students need to know and do in order to be proficient in the math standards that Mr. King addresses.

As they discuss the selected math standards, Ms. Allen explains that some of the standards are not covered in enough depth to help students demonstrate a proficient level of knowledge and skills. To help Mr. King understand what proficiency in some of the math standards looks like, she shares her *I Can* lists that are used in her classroom. These lists break the standards down into manageable chunks. In other words, the lists are a series of learning targets that, when taught as a unit, address all necessary components of the standard.

Next Ms. Allen reviews the assessments, assignments and tasks that students complete that reflect the math standards Mr. King covers. What she finds is that, in most cases, there are only superficial activities that address the standards. With just a few exceptions, students are only asked to complete a series of math activities that are introductory in nature, and that frequently don't address the components of the proficient descriptions that Ms. Allen and other math teachers in her department have developed. There are some tasks related to the geometry standards, however, that are

critical to construction that students are asked to complete. These tasks have well-developed assessments, both formative and summative. Mr. King holds the students accountable to know, understand and use these standards at a higher level than most of the other math standards that his courses address. This is because, without a firm foundation in these geometry standards, doors will not hang straight, rafters will not be installed correctly and angles where walls meet floors and ceilings will not be accurately constructed.

Ms. Allen feels assured that the assessments, assignments and tasks address these geometry standards at a level that is consistent with what the math department expects. Furthermore, she is confident that, after using activities that he has planned, Mr. King will be able to provide her with a rich collection of work to review to determine if students have reached a proficient level of knowledge and skills in geometry through their Construction I and Construction II classes.

Mr. King's next step is to develop a course syllabus that clearly lays out the geometry standards that he teaches and for which students are held accountable. Together with Ms. Allen, they identify sufficient geometry standards to equal .25 credit. This will help many of Mr. King's students who, in a traditional math course, may have a hard time demonstrating a proficient level of geometry skills. In his construction sequence, however, he is hopeful that struggling students will be able to connect their "hands-on" activities with the geometry algorithms and will be able to apply their learning at a high enough level on his assessments for Ms. Allen and her department to consider their work to be proficient.

When the math team reviews a collection of a student's work that has been completed during Mr. King's Construction courses, and decides it reflects a proficient level or higher in the selected geometry standards, the registrar will transcript the course as .25/Construction credit and .25/Geometry credit. Ms. Allen, with input from her department when needed, will review the work of any student who wishes to take Mr. King's Construction I and Construction II courses for partial Geometry credit. In the end, she will evaluate the student's level of knowledge, understanding and skills, as well as be the teacher of record for transcripting purposes.

# Strategic and Systemic Implementation of Proficiency

In Oregon, it is teachers who are advancing the implementation of proficiency in K-12 classrooms. Some say it is an initiative that is teacher generated and administrator supported. In order to ensure that teaching to a level of personalized mastery is a sustainable practice in a district, a number of important elements need to be addressed. This framework is intended to define the essential elements that teachers and students exhibit in a classroom that successfully uses proficiency-based teaching and learning.

One cannot ignore the confusion that exists as a result of the many terms currently used to define this set of practices. Among the terms currently found in policy and research to describe proficiency-based teaching and learning are the following: competency-based, performance-based, standards-based, personalized learning, proficiency-based and more. While it is a worthwhile task to crosswalk similarities among all of these terms, they all have one goal in common: improved student achievement.

As proficiency spreads to more and more schools, misinformation about what it is gets perpetuated and a wide range of terms are used to describe the same practice. Paramount to successful implementation is the need to decide on a single term to define the practice, or at the least to define what it looks like.

We are learning that teachers believe that the use of these strategies significantly improves their teaching as well. During many interviews, teachers have shared that proficiency practices are something that they wish they had learned earlier in their teaching careers. Many affirmed they will never return to the more traditional ways of teaching that had them working independently in their silos, being regimented content-delivery specialists who measured student learning against a calendar or clock.

Today's teachers understand that their classrooms are already tied to standards. Classrooms have reflected this focus since states began defining their curriculum and linking content to state assessment tests. Robert Marzano makes a significant distinction between "standards-referenced" and "standards-based." It is important to understand the difference so we don't become idle instructors who let the standards-referenced environment just exist, expecting that acknowledging that standards are in place is enough to "make something happen."

Students advance through a "standards-referenced system" based on their grade level (Marzano), moving from one grade to the next in batches dictated by their date of birth (Robinson). Time is flexible in a "standards-based system" and students advance based on identified criteria that reflect a proficient level of knowledge and skills in identified areas. Available interventions and guidelines that spell out performance levels are integral in helping teachers make decisions that lead to students making optimum academic gains. A standards-based classroom environment significantly increases a student's opportunity to master material and sustain knowledge over a longer period of time.

Proficiency-based teaching and learning occurs naturally in a standards-based classroom. The standards are clearly the learning targets and teachers are purposeful about holding students accountable for them. In a proficiency-based classroom, however, standards are broken down into achievable chunks of learning that, collectively, reflect the selected standards. Clear criteria are in place that students understand, and often help write. They spell out the proficient level of knowledge and skills they are expected to reach. Interventions and support services ranging from mini-tutorials to full-scale double-dosing of content instruction are in place for students who need additional time to reach proficiency. Students can also advance to a deeper level of learning or to the next standard without regard for the date on the calendar that indicates whether or not it is the end of the term. In addition, teachers measure and report student academic performance separately from personal management skills, frequently called career-readiness skills. As a result, students and parents know a student's

true academic ability and, while we appreciate hard-working students who have been labeled "teacher pleasers," these attractive behaviors do not cloud the true picture of a student's academic ability.

Teachers report that implementing proficiency practices is most successful when they work with a team from their department, grade level, and school or across the district. Working as a single teacher delivering the entire scope of, let's say, math content in a small rural school creates inherent problems with sustainability. While initial efforts to implement proficiency might be successful, sustainability requires a team and systemic effort. Teachers and principals must collaborate to develop policy and practices that are in the best interest of students and support all students working to achieve high standards.

When a parent whose "A" student suddenly comes home with a "C" on a report card, there needs to be a clear and consistent message from the school that addresses what the grade stands for and how it was earned. When a district rolls out proficiency district-wide, teachers appreciate that the critical work of designing instruction with clear targets and well-structured assessments, as well as measuring and reporting student achievement is a shared mission. Together, teacher teams and administrators align their proficiency work and are in agreement in all critical areas that improve student academic performance.

So where does a district begin to tackle the strategic and systemic issues that support successful implementation of proficiency practices? Let's take a look at few of those issues and how they relate to the day-to-day operations of a district.

### Creating a Mindset for Change

Districts that want to undertake a K-12 reform effort to implement proficiency-based practices must first ask whether members of each key stakeholder group are on board and ready to undertake a multi-year communication plan. This is important to help others understand and buy into a shift in thinking about how best to serve students. Districts can undertake a strong campaign to make something happen, but without the support of stakeholder groups, nothing happens that is sustainable.

The BEC is proposing that schools make a permanent change in how we design and deliver instruction, as well as how we grade, assess, evaluate and report student achievement. This involves shaking up the fundamental core of education and moving forward in areas where we are now able to make significant changes to improve student achievement. A district's ability to make such a shift depends on establishing a strong culture of routinely looking at all available data. This includes studying student performance on formative and summative assessments in order to make effective changes in planning and instruction practices.

There are four critical questions that districts must be able to answer:

- What do our students know?

- How do we know that they know it?

- What do we do if they don't know it?

- What do we do if they already know it?

Implementing proficiency-based teaching and learning provides teachers, students and parents the answers to these most fundamental questions. Creating a mindset for change allows this implementation to occur.

### School Board

The school board sets district policy. They need to lead major changes in instruction and assessment and mitigate any conflicts that would prevent the district from moving forward with proficiency-based practices. This is critical because moving from a time-based system to a proficiency-based system can send ripples throughout an entire educational community. Making such a change may result in needing to revise current policy or to create new policies. Together with district specialists, board members can ask the tough questions that help lay a solid foundation with the community at large. Two major areas appear to need careful consideration by school boards, with research-based input from district leadership and community. These include the school calendar and grading practices.

In a proficiency-based environment, the calendar does not dictate measuring what students know and can do. While arbitrary dates are set for teachers to mark report cards and provide parents information about student learning, the window of time is flexible and allows for more time if needed, while also offering advancement to students who demonstrate proficient or higher levels of achievement earlier than expected. When time is flexible and learning progresses as a fluid continuum of instruction, intervention and advancement, parents understand that their student is given all of the support needed to reach optimum levels of achievement.

When teachers are clear about learning targets and levels of achievement, they collect information about student performance differently. No longer do they typically add up student points and find the average to determine a student's grade. Abandoning this practice comes at the expense of throwing out conventional grading practices and opting for new, clearer, improved agreements that are transparent to both students and parents. Frequently the old report card doesn't fit the new grading paradigm. In fact, it feels like trying to fit a square peg into a round hole. Teachers report that such a struggle usually occurs because district-adopted electronic grading systems do not support these improved grading practices.

As a result, board members may face inconsistencies with current grading policies and what is actually happening in classrooms where teachers are using proficiency. When this occurs, it is important to investigate what other states and districts are doing, what their policies say, and how they are implementing proficiency. Oregon's HB2220 is an example of how policy could significantly change practice. This legislation requires that teachers report progress students are making in being proficient at grade-level standards. Furthermore, it positions districts to move forward in developing a reporting system that informs parents about the progress students are making in reaching proficient levels of knowledge and skills.

### Resources: Personnel, Finances, Time, Buildings, Data

How districts use their resources says a lot about the quality of their decision-making. Particularly in lean economic times, creativity in resource allocation is a must. So, what implications are there for how districts use personnel, finances, time, buildings and data when they set out to implement proficiency-based practices?

### Personnel

The district's strongest resource is their personnel, the people who actually spend time working with students. Once the decision is made to move to a proficiency-based education system, many changes affecting personnel can occur. Job descriptions can change to reflect a teaching assignment that addresses a range of academic standards as opposed to a discrete grade level. In other words, districts may decide to post an intermediate position responsible for a range of reading, math and science standards, as well as another one with responsibility for the same range of standards in social science, wellness and the arts. These two positions would be in place of both a fourth and fifth grade teaching position. District recruiting and interviewing practices should also reflect a proficiency-based teaching and learning model.

Classified staff such as teacher aides, as well as certified staff, need frequent collaboration time and professional development. Activities should meet staff where they are and address areas that need to be improved or strengthened. Training should be supported through on-the-job collaboration and frequent updating. District, building and classroom leaders must engage in collaborative discourse about whether they are ready to embrace new changes and evaluate current practices. They must set aside finger pointing and understand that emerging student data support proficiency-based practices as a method to improve learning for all students. If the teachers and classroom assistants believe all students can learn, then all will learn; if they believe all will achieve high academic standards, then all will make solid individual growth.

### Finances

District resources must be reallocated to support the implementation of proficiency-based teaching and learning. Funds for ongoing collaboration and document development are critical. Teachers must have adequate and regularly scheduled time to talk about important issues that require them to be

on the same page about what their standards mean, to agree on common definitions of what it means to be proficient, and to establish fair and consistent grading practices.

In addition, they need time and training to understand proficiency-based teaching and learning practices and how to routinely use data to make instruction and evaluation decisions. Together with colleagues, they should establish fair and consistent grading practices and design and use effective assessment practices. Seldom do these critical issues get resolved in brief and infrequent after-school meetings when teachers have just finished the daily hard work of serving their students' needs.

Many districts create proficiency coaching positions. These positions are filled with master teachers, frequently splitting their time between classroom instruction and professional development responsibilities. If districts select the right person for such a position, even the most resistant teacher will work with a coach to make inroads in embracing proficiency practices. A coach is seen as a colleague, a resource, someone who is not going to run to the administration every time a discouraging word is said or when lack of improvement results. Teacher coaches can design and identify essential learnings and, together with classroom teachers, develop common assessments, descriptions of proficiency and student-friendly rubrics. Slowly, through providing resources, modeling lessons, co-teaching and generating ideas, a team attitude builds and teachers are willing to take the risk.

Over the years, districts have created a variety of other positions to help provide services to students. They include TAG coordinators, Special Education facilitators, reading coaches and others. Nothing is more critical than the basic responsibility of teaching our students to be the most well-informed and talented they can be. It's time to put our resources to good use and focus on this fundamental need: coaching our teachers to use effective instructional design and delivery strategies every day with every student.

**Time**

Time has long been the culprit that holds learning back. There are policies at both the state and district levels that base funding on seat time. In addition, policies, and more frequently, past practices dictate how long the school year should be, how many minutes of instruction students should receive, how many days there should be in a grading period, how many minutes there should be in a class period, etc. These are frequently set without regard for what is best for students. Instead, they are set and regulated by state policies and implemented with varying levels of fidelity by well-intended districts. So how can a district restructure time?

Consider the following possibilities:

- Investigate waivers from the Carnegie Unit that allow for flexible time and the use of proficiency-based practices to earn credits.

- Implement a credit-by-proficiency policy that allows students to earn credit both inside or outside the classroom when they demonstrate proficiency in defined standards. This frees up how students' lives are regulated by the master schedule and offers flexibility in the use of building personnel.

- Provide students a temporary "double dose" of instruction in a content area in which they have not met proficient levels of knowledge and skills. This may happen by delaying when a student starts a new class, opting instead for an intervention course until the student meets proficient levels.

- Create a climate among personnel that expects all students to show high academic achievement. Promote this among athletic, activity and instructional coaches and advisors. Engage them in a professional discussion about how to create flexible after-school time to help make this happen. Engage them in developing an after-school schedule that allows students who engage in athletics and activities to show up for after-school practices and meetings late or to start practices and meetings late at least twice a week. Make sure that these late starts are not on game days or days set aside for other competitions. Coaches and advisors have a special and highly valuable relationship with their student athletes and leaders. Together, these groups can promote high academic achievement among all students in the school.

- Train teachers on how to provide mini-tutorials on some of the learning targets that students are struggling to understand. Post these online for easy student access. Create a cadre of proficiency-based teacher leaders who can model this for others in the building/department.

- Research and explore a walk-to-learn model at the elementary level that allows for instruction in grade-level learning targets without regard for calendar dates, time of day and grade in which the student is registered.

- Consider hiring elementary teachers like we do in middle school and high school. Hire them to teach the leveled standards in identified areas. For example, instead of hiring a second grade teacher who is assigned to serve a wide range of abilities in a heterogeneous classroom, consider hiring a primary teacher who is responsible for delivering instruction in the first and second grade standards in reading, math and science. Her colleague next door might be assigned to teach the first and second grade standards in social studies, wellness, art and music. When this type of teaching assignment becomes part of a building's overall master schedule, it creates a very flexible use of time and generates significant professional dialogue about student grouping and placement.

**Buildings**

For the most part, school buildings are still used in the compartmentalized way they were originally designed. Teachers have assigned rooms in which learning happens. Students are assigned to rooms to take part in those activities. In a standards-based environment when a teacher is using proficiency practices, the bell might ring and students are still learning, instruction is still going on. What happens? The clock says learning is done and it's time to go to the next learning site. This may be an efficient method of delivering instruction; however, how can students' learning needs be better served by a different use of building space? A time-based plan for instruction helps the day run smoothly and allows for the anticipated interruptions that are always part of all classrooms. What would happen if all buildings were used differently to support a fluid, non-time based learning system?

Imagine an elementary building where students travel to gain instruction in standards based on their developmental level. For example, Jane reaches a proficient level of reading as measured by the second grade standards and is now ready for instruction in the third grade standards. Without even knowing that the instruction is a little more challenging or the material is more difficult, Jane's learning continues on a pace that is meeting her appropriate rate and level. She may move to another classroom for instruction in the third grade standards; she may stay in the same room she has been attending for instruction in a blended setting. In other words, room assignments are made based on what instruction occurs there, not based on how many years students in that classroom have enrolled in school.

In lean times when, sadly, empty rooms exist, consider making one room an intervention setting where students can gain tutorial help in the learning targets in which they need reinforcement or continued practice. Consider creating a place where students can pursue group projects, team building activities, enrichment and/or research.

Secondary buildings can be transformed from compartmentalized hallways of silos into classrooms of learning labs where students gain primary instruction in the learning targets for a particular content area and then have access to open labs where assistants help them gain additional instruction, or pursue research. This can be done in a computer lab or on laptops issued to students by accessing department-created wikis that hold review lessons.

These electronic lessons are created by teachers on interactive white boards and capture white board notations and problems as well as the teacher's voice. In fact some schools are creating an open learning space, similar to a media center/library where staff is accessible before and after school to provide intervention assistance to students who still need to reach proficiency in some learning targets. For example, Monday and Wednesday tutorial help might be provided by math and science teachers; Tuesday

and Thursday tutorials might be with English and social studies teachers. Departments are responsible for rotating coverage in the tutorial lab and all teachers who show up on a scheduled day can access information off of the department server to learn where students may need help.

Consider whether all staff members need to start school at the same time. Could you create learning labs that are open earlier in the morning or later in the afternoon or evening if you staggered staff hours? This type of flexibility is hard to create when we are "doing the work of school." It is similar to that adage about repairing the plane while flying it. Student-centered use of space can only be created through a free-flowing conversation with staff about how to think outside the box, how to do their job differently, how to serve the students' current needs in an environment more in line with what they need instead of having their needs fit the services we have too long provided.

## Use of Data

Whether districts are struggling to find enough revenue to sustain existing programs, or whether they have no budget woes, it is important to base decisions that affect the learning environment of students on all available data. There is a public call for equity and a focus on the achievement gap that clearly requires that all data be considered when making changes in how students are served.

Teachers are collecting classroom data, as well as student performance data on state assessments, to design personalized learning. They collaborate as part of building or department teams to learn whether each student has access to every resource needed to be successful. When teachers are using proficiency-based practices, new data points surface and need to be collected, studied and used to improve the learning environment.

As part of collaborative teams, teachers learn which students are proficient in identified standards, which students need additional interventions to reach proficient levels of knowledge and skills, and which students are ready for advanced or accelerated coursework. Through a close review of programs and services, teachers may discover that not all services are available to every student. This discovery creates a need to redesign or adjust the instructional delivery model.

Like teachers, districts use data to make changes that lead to increased student achievement. Studying what the data says is especially critical when districts take on implementing proficiency district-wide. Recognizing that the gap is widening between low and high-achieving students is frequently at the center of implementing proficiency-based practices. A close review of why this is happening requires dedicated time for district and building leaders, as well as teachers and support staff, to come together to discuss what the data says, reflect on what needs to be done to address problem areas identified by the data review and make decisions that lead to improved learning environments for each student. After a short period of time and involvement in reviewing data regularly, teachers become continuous learners and districts make solid progress in helping each student reach proficient levels or higher.

## Holding Students Accountable

One of the most important cultural shifts that occurs when districts implement proficiency-based teaching and learning is the crucial practice of holding students accountable. This far-reaching practice affects everyone, from the school board and district office to the classroom, students and parents. Moving to a system where students are held accountable to reach a proficient level of knowledge and skills should be phased in gradually with solid communication and problem-solving among all stakeholders.

In such a system, students will no longer pass simply because they have accumulated enough points to kick their grade up from an F to a D, or move their B grade up to an A. From one teacher to another, one content area to another, everyone expects students to reach for high levels of learning, to work hard, to do their best, to take advantage of all opportunities to learn and to understand that school is not a place where one can get by on just good behavior or a strong athletic profile. When a district expects students to demonstrate high levels of knowledge and skills in adopted standards, and creates an educational environment that supports this culture, a powerful thing happens: people think it can actually happen! Students

want to succeed; parents want to know that the grade students earn is not clouded with non-academic factors. And community members feel part of a hard-working team that expects all students to learn.

When teachers include student behavior factors in the evaluation of student learning, parents receive an artificially skewed report of what the student knows and can do. There are eight identified personal management traits that teachers frequently consider, and occasionally assign points to, when determining a student's grade in a class. They include the following: attendance, attitude, behavior, do-overs, efforts, extra credit, late work and homework. While these components of school success are important, they can be measured and reported separately on the report card and transcript.

Instead of diluting the true picture of what students know and can do, teachers must help each student reach proficient levels of knowledge and skills and measure their progress through the use of well-developed formative and summative assessments. These assessments should align to the standards being measured, and be constructed in a way that allows the teacher to measure a continuum of learning. In this way, teachers know which students are not yet proficient and which students are ready for enrichment, advanced work, or even ready to move to the next set of standards, possibly in a different course. Solid, well-constructed formative and summative assessments provide a clear picture of student learning and reduce the dependence on the calendar as the unit by which we determine if a student is "on track."

### Hope for the Future

So, what factors do districts that take on this level of system-wide academic accountability face? First, districts need to celebrate their successes. While some schools have moved to proficiency-based practices because their academic data reflected poor achievement results, all districts have many things they can point to that they do well. Students have been learning and graduating from their schools for many years. Why would successful districts take on a change to proficiency-based practices?

To improve how they serve all students! To provide all students with a successful pathway toward college and career success! And to develop a solid partnership with students that is based on a success plan for all, with clear learning targets, strong assessments, accurate evaluations of student academic achievement, and flexible pacing that provides a continuum of learning when students are ready to move on, without the barrier of time. Proficiency-based teaching and learning practices lay out clear pathways and definitions about what students need to learn and how well they need to learn it. These practices set aside time as the parameter for measuring learning and, instead, offer students supported opportunities to excel. Holding students accountable to demonstrate proficiency in content standards and process skills creates a transparent academic bar that students can reach, and even exceed, with hard work and access to support systems districts create and offer.

Districts must also develop and nurture strong partnerships with the parent and business communities. Embracing a solid proficiency-based teaching and learning environment requires effective dialogue with those who don't understand the shift to standards and what it means to hold students accountable for reaching proficient levels of knowledge and skills. Parents understand what they know and, while even the strongest advocate and high school alum can sing a district's praises, confusion still exists over changes that they don't understand.

Administrator and teacher teams can develop information sessions to be shared frequently in a variety of venues. Parents and students need to see compelling data from other districts, to hear administrators, teachers, and particularly students and parents from other districts tell their stories and share their successes. While many educational initiatives have come and gone, some with even short-term positive results, how we deliver school has been stagnating for decades. Systemic and sustaining change only comes about through genuine partnerships that embrace all concerns, look at all data and research, and clearly has students' best interests at the heart of every decision.

# Questions and Answers for Implementing Proficiency-based Teaching and Learning

**Q:** **Is proficiency-based teaching and learning based on research?**

**A:** Yes, many have said that proficiency-based teaching and learning is simply using what research has already identified as best practice. Teachers who visit the classrooms of those using proficiency-based practices have reported that what they see when they watch these teachers interacting with students is simply a collection of transparent, clearly-focused lessons that are supported by sound grading practices. They report that students have a high level of engagement, that they track their own learning progress and that they are very well-versed in what learning targets they have mastered and those that still need work. Teachers report that the learning environment does not feel like a checklist with students just working down a list of things to get done. Rather, learning feels connected, solid and well-established for long-term retrieval and application.

**Q:** **How many states have similar practices in place?**

**A:** All 50 states have elements of proficiency-based practices in place. Some of them call their initiatives by other names; however, reviewing the major components of classroom applications, there are many essential elements that are common across all 50 states. This includes private programs, online learning providers and charter schools.

**Q:** **What are the most common factors found across all of the different models of implementation?**

**A:** The most common factors include the following:

- Learning is constant and is dictated by student needs instead of the clock, calendar or curriculum; time is a variable factor that can be manipulated to help students reach proficiency;

- A focus on district, state and common core state standards as the learning targets students will be held accountable to demonstrate;

- Defined levels of proficiency laid out on a learning continuum that are used to identify baseline ability and that reflect a range of continuous learning in sequential order;

- Integration of technology as a powerful learning and assessment tool, including online collaboration of teacher-to-student and student-to-student contact, as well as student-created demonstrations of learning;

- Clear grading practices that distinguish between academic achievement and personal management skills;

- Teachers as facilitators of learning and students engaging in shaping learning experiences and taking ownership of what they know and are expected to learn.

**Q:** **Is proficiency-based teaching and learning exclusively for secondary students who are earning credit?**

**A:** No, proficiency is well-suited for classrooms from K-20! In fact, primary classrooms naturally use this model to help students move through a learning continuum when they have mastered certain skills and are ready for the next skills in a sequence. Students instinctively adjust easily to moving through a continuum of standards as they reach proficient levels or higher. No one wants to be held back when they are ready to move on, just as no student wants to move on without having learned what is needed to be successful in the next unit.

**Q:** Does the business community support proficiency-based teaching and learning?

**A:** Based on initial discussions with the business members of the BEC Board of Directors, the business community enthusiastically endorses this performance-based approach for education. It mirrors how their employees are evaluated in the workplace, and they are eager to support a diploma that accurately reflects what students know and can do, with strong career-readiness skills.

**Q:** How does proficiency support equity in the educational environment?

**A:** Proficiency ensures equity on many levels for all elementary, middle and high school students. It ensures an appropriately challenging curriculum with opportunities for advancement when ready, and remediation with support when needed. It offers full access to learning with no artificial barriers built in by the clock, calendar or school structure. It eliminates the traditional practice of achieving mastery for only the advanced students who learn concepts quickly before the clock indicates to the teacher that it may be time to move on to the next unit. Providing equitable access to mastery should be the goal of every educational program. Proficiency-based teaching and learning delivers a full array of services to every student sub-population every day.

**Q:** Does proficiency-based teaching and learning depend on which instructional material teachers use?

**A:** No. State and national common core state standards are the instructional foci in classrooms. All instructional material, whether in print, media or online form, is used to support students in reaching proficiency. Instructional material is not the primary source of instruction. As teachers break down the standards into manageable learning targets, they should do a crosswalk with all available instructional material and determine which components will best benefit students.

**Q:** How can secondary students earn credit by proficiency?

**A:** Students can earn credit by proficiency when they demonstrate what they know and can do in any of three different ways:

- In-class model: Students work to show proficient levels of knowledge and skills or higher in the classroom. When they demonstrate this, the grade is earned and the credit is transcripted. Neither the clock nor the calendar dictates how much time this may take. However, districts find that they must structure a strong support system for students to reach proficiency to avoid having students take so much time on one learning target that they fail to complete a course. In addition, students must understand that learning and hard work don't stop when they reach proficiency. They need to reach for levels of advanced understanding and application.

- Out-of-class model: Students work to show proficient levels of knowledge and skills or higher outside of class. They frequently work with a teacher facilitator who helps define the standards that must be met. Students meet regularly with the teacher facilitator to check in and confirm that they understand the learning targets correctly and that their work is moving them closer to proficiency. Time does not dictate how long this may take; however, just as with the in-class model, districts may set some parameters for students to complete their task within reasonable and supported limits.

- Prior learning model: Some students arrive at school doors with a significant amount of prior knowledge and skills. When assessed, their talents may clearly reflect mastery of the required standards that teachers expect them to learn. Teachers may create proficiency-based classes when students who exhibit prior learning are identified and are ready to demonstrate knowledge and skills at a proficient level. Because the newly designed course will be proficiency-based, and students already have the content knowledge and skills necessary to demonstrate the standards for the course at a proficient level, there is no minimum number of students who must "formally" enroll in the class. This option can be offered for only one student.

**Q:** How soon should teachers offer interventions for students who are struggling to reach proficient levels of performance?

**A:** Interventions can be offered immediately after the student and teacher recognize that the student is struggling to understand a learning target. This may take the form of a mini-tutorial administered right after assessment results indicate a problem. Interventions can also continue for a longer period of time until the next scheduled assessment when the teacher checks for understanding again. Some interventions may last several days; others may last several weeks or the length of a regular course. Do not wait until the end of a regularly scheduled grading period to provide additional resources and interventions. This creates an unnecessary learning burden on the student. Immediate "course corrections" that help the student reach proficiency are the most effective way to help students see connections between learning targets and reaching proficient levels of knowledge and skills.

**Q:** How many standards can be covered effectively in one scheduled grading period?

**A:** Teachers who have been using proficiency for several years report that students can reach proficiency in approximately 12-15 standards per year-long course. This would break down into approximately 6-8 each semester or 4-5 each trimester and 1-2 per unit. Each standard, however, can be broken down into smaller learning targets for which students are held responsible. Some process standards may be instructional foci all year.

**Q:** What do 'sufficient' and 'proficient' mean in proficiency-based teaching and learning?

**A:** **Sufficient** refers to the amount and types of artifacts that are considered when a decision is made about whether a student is proficient in a standard. Another way of thinking about this is to ask if you have enough of the right information to make a quality decision about what a student knows and can do. Obviously, there are many combinations of assignments, summative assessments, performance tasks, interviews, projects, etc.

that can be put together to reflect the standard being measured. Remember, how well the student has performed on these artifacts is NOT part of the equation. And there is no prescribed number of items in the student collection. The artifacts that provide a sufficient collection will differ from teacher to teacher, depending on how the standard is taught and what activities are included in the unit. Teachers who use proficiency in their classrooms report that they want to make sure a student can hit the proficient level or higher at least three times in order to confirm proficiency. They believe that a sufficient collection of this depth and breadth reflects solid learning and is a true and stable representation of student ability. The key question for sufficiency is: What artifacts or experiences can be combined to reflect the standard you are measuring?

**Proficient** refers to a defined level of knowledge and skills that is required to demonstrate the learning reflected in the standard. Another way of thinking about this is to consider proficiency as sufficient evidence of student demonstrated knowledge and skills that meet or exceed defined levels of performance. It is not a checklist of one-to-one assignments for each learning target; rather, it is a level of ability represented by a collection of student work that matches the expected level of ability inferred from the standard being measured. The key question for proficiency is: What level of quality should the selected artifacts or experiences reflect?

**Q:** How do students keep track of their learning?

**A:** Students can keep track of when they reach proficient levels of learning by using a simple chart with their name and a check/date box for each standard they must reach. In addition, a large chart listing the standards for the class can be laminated and posted in the classroom for teachers and students to refer to regularly.

**Q:** How do teachers share descriptions of proficiency with students?

**A:** Teachers design rubrics that provide clear student-friendly descriptions of proficiency on a learning continuum. Students can also help describe proficiency as a class activity. The more involvement students have in creating the descriptions of proficiency, the more buy-in that occurs.

Teachers should make sure that the descriptions of proficiency that students help develop match the agreements teachers have made about what it means to reach a proficient level of knowledge and skills for each identified standard. Agreement among teachers about what the standards mean and how to identify when a student is proficient is critical to successful implementation of proficiency-based practices.

**Q:** **How many levels should the rubrics have?**

**A:** While this is an important question to ask as it pertains to the development of the rubrics, the more important question is "How many levels of ability should be measured to help students reach proficiency in the identified standard?" On a safety skills test, a question might measure whether a student wears safety glasses when using a power tool. There may be only two levels of skills: Yes, the student wears safety glasses or No, the student does not wear safety glasses. On the other hand, if the standard being measured is "Add two fractions with like denominators," the teacher team may decide to write the rubric with three levels of ability: Emerging, Proficient, and Masters... or similar language. The short answer is that the rubrics should have enough levels to measure learning progress and keep students motivated, without having so many levels that it is hard to discern variations from one level of learning to another.

Teachers discover strong points of view among their colleagues when they tackle controversial questions about whether there is a level of knowledge and skills above proficient. In other words, can a student exceed a proficient level? Yes, this is quite possible. It all depends on the standard and on how the teachers create the rubrics.

**Q:** **What terms should be used when labeling levels of proficiency in a rubric?**

**A:** There are many possible terms that can be used when developing levels of a rubric. It is important, however, to make sure that the standard is the target that guides all decisions and word choices, and that the language, including how the levels are labeled, is easily understood by students. The following are only examples of many suggestions for terms that can be used:

| 2 levels: | Proficient, Beginning |
|---|---|
| 3 levels: | Masters, Proficient, Beginning |
| 4 levels: | Masters, Proficient, Emerging, Beginning |
| 5 levels: | Masters, Exceeds, Proficient, Emerging, Beginning |
| 6 levels: | Masters, Exceeds, Proficient, Emerging, Beginning, Not proficient |

**Q:** **What are some other terms for the smaller learning chunks that are the result of breaking down a standard?**

**A:** Teachers have referred to these as essential questions, learning targets or *I Can* statements. Regardless of which term is used, these terms define the collected knowledge and skills to which teachers hold students accountable in order to make a decision about proficiency.

**Q:** **How should teachers measure what students already know and can do?**

**A:** Measurement specialists and teachers who have been using proficiency for some time believe that common assessments are an effective method to find out what students already know about a particular standard. Common assessments can take many forms and do not need to be the more traditional paper/pencil tests.

**Q:** **What elements are commonly found in a proficiency-based classroom?**

**A:** The following elements are commonly found in a proficiency-based classroom and reflect the essential elements that define proficiency-based practices:

- Time is not a barrier that defines partitions of learning; rather, it is flexible and stretches or condenses to accommodate student needs

- Teacher as facilitator and students taking ownership of their learning in a visible and involved manner

- Personalized learning plans for each student

- Opportunities for students to work in groups on teacher- or student-designed projects

- Standards and learning targets visible in the room and included in the dialogue between the teacher and the students; standards or learning targets included in the written documents that the teacher shares with students, as well as including them on the personal learning plan, capacity matrix or other record-keeping form students use to track their academic efforts

- Aligned, effective and frequent assessments that reflect levels of questions keyed to the learning targets

- Well-developed, student-friendly rubrics that define levels of proficiency consistent with selected standards

- Interventions that provide a range of opportunities and fit a variety of time frames

- Opportunities for advancement, original research and enrichment

- Implementation of hybrid learning that combines both online and face-to-face instruction, assessment and collaboration

- Academic achievement and personal management skills measured and reported separately

- Defined levels of proficiency developed by teacher teams that address the standards and are consistent with district reporting policies

- Expectation that students must grasp knowledge and skills at a predetermined progression in order to advance

**Q:**   Will all scores students earn on assignments "count"?

**A:**   Some assignments do not need to be scored and entered into the grade book. They are intended to help students practice a new skill or be comfortable with new information. In proficiency-based classrooms, when teachers gather scores that measure learning and that they want to include in the student's learning profile, they enter them in a grade book. When a more recent score reflects improvement in student learning on the same learning targets, teachers replace lower scores with new ones that are higher and that represent improved student knowledge and skills.

**Q:**   What is the role of homework in a proficiency-based classroom?

**A:**   Teachers who implement proficiency-based teaching and learning frequently reconsider their homework policies and procedures. Some of the issues that they rethink include the following:

- What role does homework serve?

- How can teachers make sure that students take homework seriously and complete it with quality?

- Does homework always need to be reviewed and/or corrected?

- Can homework be constructed to allow a group of students to work on it?

- How can teachers let students know what standards the homework addresses?

- Should homework provide practice for skills just learned or for skills to be learned in the future?

- Can students design their own homework? If so, what training do they need to do this?

- Can turning in homework earn points for personal management skills, such as responsibility, and not earn academic credit?

- Must homework be worth academic points at all?

- How soon should homework be returned to the students so they know how they did?

**Q:   How many times do teachers need to "see" learning at a proficient level in order to affirm the student "gets it"?**

**A:**   Teachers using proficiency-based practices report that a minimum of three to five times is necessary to know the student has solid and sustained learning. In most cases, these scores are earned on well-developed assessments that are aligned to the standards, with leveled questions that provide students a chance to show depth of learning.

**Q:   Do students who are proficient earn an A?**

**A:**   This depends on whether it is possible to demonstrate the identified standard(s) at advanced taxonomy levels. Reaching proficiency does not always mean the student should move on to the next standard in the learning continuum. Teachers across grades, department, schools and districts need to discuss what students need to know and do to earn an A. In some cases this means teachers need to tear apart the standards for their classrooms, asking some tough questions about what the standards really require students to know and do. Furthermore, they need to ask themselves if they are teaching to this level and holding students accountable to reach this level.

Teachers report they teach some standards for which there is no level of performance higher than proficient. An example might be a standard in which a student needs to know how to use a piece of equipment safely. This can be easily checked off and recorded in the grade book as "Yes" or "No." Would each student earn an A because he can safely use a piece of equipment? Is it possible that there is a way the piece of equipment can be used in an advanced way? Could the student teach someone else to use it? Could the student use the equipment to make something that is more involved or complicated? To understand this better, take a look at the rubric for the common task of riding a bike:

Bicycle Riding Standard: Student will ride a bicycle safely from one point to another.

- Does Not Meet = Student cannot ride the bicycle.

- Nearly Meets = Student rides the bicycle with some support and assistance.

- Meets = Student rides the bicycle safely from one point to another.

- Exceeds = Student rides the bicycle safely from one point to another and reflects the confidence to try more difficult routes, increase speed or make bicycling a fairly common occurrence.

- Masters = Student not only rides bicycle safely from one point to another, but also takes on a level of biking that may be competitive, or that reflects rigorous biking habits over rough terrain or long course events. Student becomes intensely interested in the physiology of biking, including the effects on the body, stamina issues and advanced training techniques.

District staff should consider whether they are going to cross-reference a traditional grading system that includes a GPA to a proficiency-based system.

**Q:   Can student academic performance and personal management skills be measured separately but combined to reflect an overall grade?**

**A:**   Yes, however, there are districts that are moving away from this practice, expecting that academic knowledge and skills will eventually be reported separately. Significant research is now available on designing a grading system that accurately separates academic achievement from personal management skills. All stakeholders are encouraged to study emerging research and discuss what grading changes are necessary, achievable and sustainable.

**Q:   If academic performance and personal management skills are combined, what percentage should each area reflect?**

**A:**   There is no correct answer to this question; however, common sense should offer a place to start. Consider what it says about a class if the academic grade equals 50% of the total grade and the personal management skills equal the other 50%. Clearly this paints a picture of a class-

room where it is just as important to behave and turn in your homework as it is to learn anything. Is this what we want?

Most teachers report they usually start their first year in a proficiency-based classroom having academics equal 70% of their grade and personal management skills equal 30% of their grade. These same teachers typically move to higher academic percentages their second year of proficiency-based practices. AP and IB teachers report that they frequently set the academic grade at 90% and the personal management grade at 10%, moving later to 100% academics in the second year. The decision about the academic vs. personal management split needs to reflect the social and developmental behaviors of the student age group. In addition, the final decision needs to be clearly communicated to students and parents.

## Q: Do all teachers need to have the same percentage for academic performance and personal management skills?

**A:** Students function better if they don't have to guess or keep the percentage split straight from one class to another. Departments, schools and even districts that can come together and make this decision provide a consistent grading and reporting policy for all students.

## Q: Can student academic performance and personal management skills be measured and reported separately?

**A:** Yes. A few teachers are trying this. There are some hurdles that should be considered. First, if student grades are automatically transferred from the teacher's grade book to the student's report card, then it is likely there is only one electronic field for a grade per class. When the teacher wants to report an academic grade and a personal management grade, one of those grades doesn't have a "home" on the report card. As a result, some districts have found that they end up creating a double master schedule that creates two marking areas that a teacher has to fill in for each class: one for academics and one for personal management.

Another important decision when these areas are reported separately is whether personal management skills will be calculated into the student's GPA. Equally important, in a half-credit course (.5), is the question of how much weight each area is worth. Will the academic grade equal .4 and the personal management skills equal .1? Will they be weighted .3/.2? There are many variations and some reflect a stronger focus on academics than others. Think about what is best for your students. Gain the support of teachers and parents. Encourage students to be involved in the discussion. A possible coding system helps parents understand how to read the report card:

| American History (Academic) | B | .4 |
| American History (Personal Management) | D | .1 |

This report card reflects both the academic mark and the personal management skills mark being included in the GPA calculation. Higher education representatives report that this student learning profile represents a student who grasps the American History standards at an above average ability but has some issues with attendance, attitude, behavior, homework, etc.

## Q: What are the benefits of using proficiency-based teaching and learning?

**A:** As a result of training since 2005, feedback from more than 2,500 teachers, as well as partnerships with districts and reviews of student achievement data, the BEC has identified the following benefits of proficiency-based teaching and learning:

- Delivering an equitable education program that improves academic achievement for all student sub-populations

- Removing equity issues that prevent students from accessing a rich and complete curriculum with a full set of learning interventions or advanced learning opportunities

- Learning on a continuum with strong interventions that provide students time to learn without artificial clock, calendar or curriculum barriers

- Improvement in state achievement test scores

- Reductions in numbers of students identified with learning disabilities

- Increased numbers of students in middle school accessing pre-Algebra and Algebra 1

- Easier access to high school courses and advanced classes for students who have established a high level of academic knowledge and skills

- Changes in the classroom roles of teachers and students

- Reduced classroom management issues

- More effective use of instructional and learning time

- Increased ownership of students in their own learning with the expectation that they must do more than just work hard to get through school
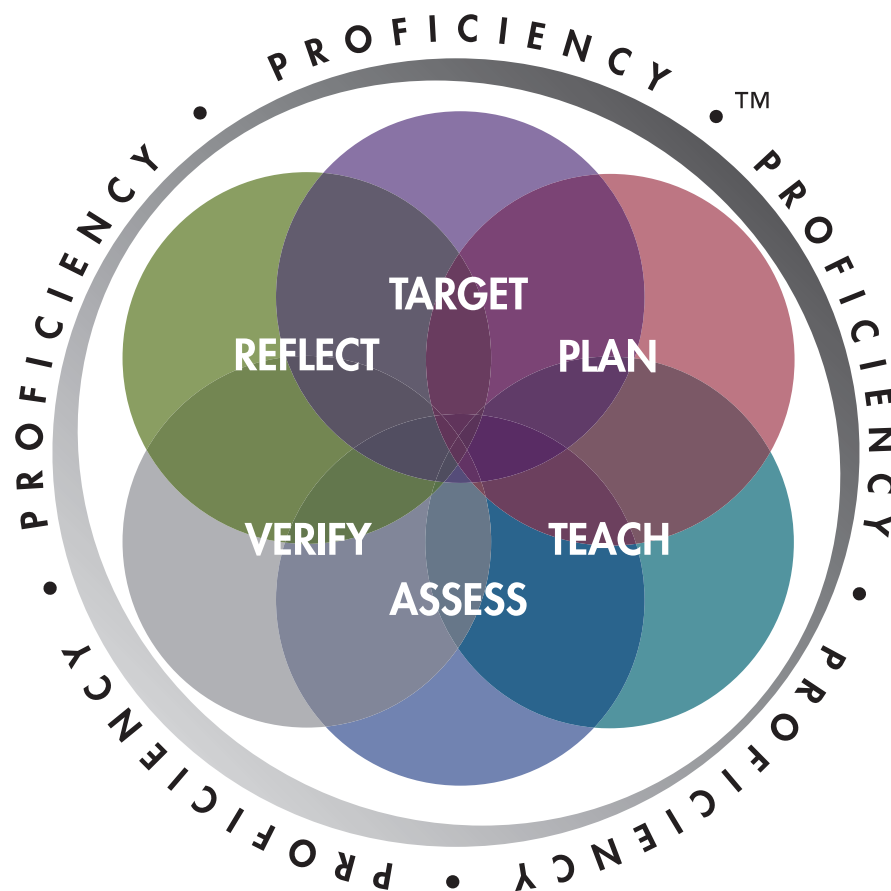
# Proficiency-based Teaching and Learning Process™

**Personalizing Education**
**Serving Students' Learning Needs**

Achieving a proficient level of knowledge and skills in anything demands considerable commitment and effort. Whether in the classroom, on a sports court or fulfilling a personal objective, we must identify the target, design a course of action and move forward with a personalized plan. Periodically along the way, we need to stop, check in on how we're doing and recalibrate our course. Then, with the target clearly ahead, we continue to gain momentum, improving with every step and using all available resources to reach our goal. Once there, it's time to do a self-check on what we learned, identify our next steps and reflect on our journey. This model of reaching proficiency occurs many times a day in a classroom. The teacher personalizes the cycle for each student, basing decisions on frequent formative assessments, student interests and needed interventions. Both teachers and students are involved in the teaching and learning process. Each shares a role in carrying out the learning plan.

This diagram reflects the six major components of achieving proficiency: target, plan, teach, assess, verify and reflect. While there appears to be a cyclical nature to moving through them, teachers and students move back and forth between the components based on what the student's plan indicates is needed to reach proficient levels or higher. For example, when a student appears to be struggling, the teacher reassesses, offers interventions and support and helps the student try again. Likewise, when a student has already mastered the target, the teacher confirms this through multiple measures and offers the student opportunities to do in-depth learning or to move on to the next learning target. The calendar, the clock and the curriculum do not drive the learning. Instead, time is removed as a learning barrier and the focus is on helping each student reach proficient levels of knowledge and skills.

The construct sections in this workbook offer an overview of each of the six proficiency components, as well as rubrics that reflect a continuum of proficiency for both teachers and students. What are your strength areas? Where do you need to make improvement? How can you personalize your teaching to help each student reach proficient levels of knowledge and skills? Get ready to use this workbook to find your strengths, identify your goals and chart a path to proficiency!

# Quick Reference Chart to Proficiency-based Teaching and Learning

**How to use this chart:** The descriptions below reflect proficient levels of teacher and student behaviors in classrooms using proficiency-based teaching and learning. They are part of the Teaching and Learning Constructs on the following pages.

- Review these critical elements

- Identify an area where improvement is needed

- Turn to the corresponding page number and find the element in the proficient column of the rubric

- Study the continuum of skills in the rubric

- Develop a plan to secure resources and work with colleagues to reach a proficient level of skills in this area

| Teacher | Student |
|---|---|
| **Construct 1—TARGET** (page 35) | |
| Teacher identifies, posts and reviews the standard to be taught and uses the standard as the global instructional target. Teacher makes sure that standards and learning targets are in student-friendly language. | Student recognizes that being held to a defined level of knowledge and skills is important to achieving proficiency in the course-identified standard(s). |
| Teacher uses developed curriculum framework or pacing guide that breaks down the selected standard into manageable instructional targets; if no pacing guide or curriculum framework is available, teacher is able to break down the selected standard into manageable instructional targets that students can understand. | Student reaches a proficient level of knowledge, understanding and skills. If student has already achieved proficiency, student works hard to move to the next level by taking advantage of advanced opportunities. |
| Teacher selects and/or designs pre-assessments that are aligned with the identified standards and that will provide for a range of abilities and produce accurate data. | Student defines learning targets as a collection of knowledge, understandings and skills that can be broken down and built upon one another. |
| Teacher understands that learning happens most effectively when there are sequences to the standards that create a scaffolding of information and skills. Teacher plans to provide connections between the selected standard and other interests and/or possible next steps that students might want to pursue. This includes providing a variety of activities, community guests and/or discussions on how the knowledge and/or skills can improve options student might have in the world of higher education and/or business and industry. | Student understands how obtaining knowledge and skills can be useful in multiple settings related to academic and career interests. |

| Teacher | Student |
|---|---|
| **Construct 2—PLAN**  (page 40) | |

**Construct 2—PLAN**  (page 40)

**Teacher:**

Teacher and student select and/or design assessments that are aligned to targeted standard. Teacher organizes selected assessments so performance on individual learning targets clearly reflects levels of proficiency and can provide meaningful information to both the teacher and the student. Teacher is prepared to use the information to help create multiple and meaningful learning activities that ensure individual student academic success.

Teacher collects and connects all assessment information to create a profile of the student learner in order to develop meaningful learning activities.

Teacher engages students in a series of activities that provide information about how the student learns best and what "next steps" are of interest. Student's educational pathway is carefully crafted and personalized to reflect instructional methods that ensure optimum student growth.

Teacher uses formative assessment information to create a personalized learning plan that is supported by flexibility, interventions, acceleration and enrichment.

Teacher is aware of research-based instructional methods and uses these methods in the planning, design and delivery of instruction.

Teacher routinely collaborates with colleagues on elements of planning and assessment. Teacher uses state, district, national common core state standards, business/industry and college-readiness standards, along with related learning targets, as instructional goals. Teacher and colleagues agree on what the standards require students to know and do, as well as what standards are their instructional foci.

Teacher effectively designs lessons based on what the standard requires student to know and do. Standards and assessments are tightly aligned and instruction and activities support expected outcomes. Teacher creates a clear pathway to help student know what is expected and how to get there.

Teacher plans for frequent and purposeful formative and summative assessments to help guide and frame instructional choices in lessons.

Teacher has a well-developed set of classroom interventions to help each student reach proficiency in the selected standards. Teacher also plans how to move students to the next learning level when they have demonstrated they are proficient in selected standards.

Teacher makes efforts to incorporate emerging research in planning and instructional methodology. Teacher pays particular attention to strategies that help each student, regardless of academic ability, develop a personalized and reachable learning plan.

**Student:**

Student participates fully in all activities to further a personalized learning plan.

Student expects to participate in a variety of assessments aligned to identified standards and learning targets to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills.

Student is aware of all factors that lead to successfully learning new information and skills; student uses this information to reach proficient levels and academic success.

Student expects to reach proficient levels of knowledge, understanding, and skills; student develops a plan to reach all learning targets.

Student uses a capacity matrix to monitor progress and to make plans to complete learning activities.

Student actively participates in developing a personalized learning plan to achieve proficiency in personalized learning goals.

| Teacher | Student |
|---|---|
| **Construct 3—TEACH**  (page 48) | |
| Teacher uses the terminology and vocabulary of the standards to help students become familiar with them. Teacher expects, at a minimum, that each student will reach a proficient level and communicates this expectation through teaching and individual student conversations. <br><br>Teacher provides opportunities for students to use graphic organizers and visuals to bring meaning to the standards being targeted. <br><br>Teacher minimizes "teacher talk," and instead, develops learning opportunities that allow each student to create personalized learning through student choice and cross-student engagement. <br><br>Teacher provides many "loop-back" learning opportunities so that each student can reach proficiency in each standard. <br><br>Teacher paces instruction, adjusting to meet the needs of those not yet meeting the standards and those exceeding the standards. | Student connects to the standard by using related vocabulary and language as a way of internalizing what is expected to demonstrate proficiency. Student is a partner in the learning process and accepts a personal challenge to work hard to meet or exceed proficiency. <br><br>Student uses graphic organizers and student-created visuals to personalize and internalize the learning targets. <br><br>Student is committed to meeting or exceeding proficiency. Student monitors progress in reaching proficient levels in the standards. Student seeks out intervention/relearning opportunities and reflects a personal commitment to engagement in the learning process. <br><br>Student participates in interventions or relearning opportunities. Student regularly communicates with the teacher about the progress to meet or exceed proficiency. <br><br>Student understands some concepts take more time to learn than others. Student is willing to work hard to meet or exceed proficiency with steady and committed progress. |
| **Construct 4—ASSESS**  (page 53) | |
| Teacher recognizes the difference between assessments *for* learning and assessments *of* learning. Teacher intentionally uses this distinction in developing formative and summative assessments. <br><br>Teacher designs a variety of formative and summative assessments with tight alignment to selected standards and grade levels of learning. Teacher includes appropriate connections to industry and certification standards when appropriate. Formative and summative assessments clearly measure selected targets and are aligned to the correct cognitive level of the standard. Assessments reflect differentiation to support learning styles and levels of proficiency. <br><br>Teacher participates with a team of teachers to create common rubrics that spell out proficient levels of knowledge and skills. The rubrics provide students a clear description of what they need to know and do to demonstrate proficiency in selected standards. Teacher uses rubrics to provide students feedback about their level of performance and to help them know what they need to do to meet or exceed proficiency. <br><br>Teacher uses frequent and effective formal and informal measures to find out what students know and can do. Assessments reflect a variety of performance models administered in a variety of ways that give students the best opportunity to demonstrate proficiency. Academic ability is measured separately from personal management qualities. Assessment environment reflects a high degree of student buy-in and an eagerness to find out about performance. <br><br>Teacher establishes a collaborative evaluation culture with students as active stake-holders in evaluating learning. Teacher uses the language of the standards and the rubrics when discussing areas of strength and areas of improvement with students. Teacher encourages students to monitor learning progress and offers support to reach proficiency. | Student understands that both formal and informal assessments, completed in a variety of settings and formats, can provide an accurate profile of knowledge and skills. Student uses the assessment results to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. <br><br>Student participates in the development of assessments and evaluation of assessment results. Student advocates for personal improvement to meet proficiency as a result of understanding and having a voice in the development of assessments. <br><br>Student reviews and evaluates assessment results and uses those results to design the next steps in a personal learning plan. Student sets goal to work for high academic performance and personal management qualities. |

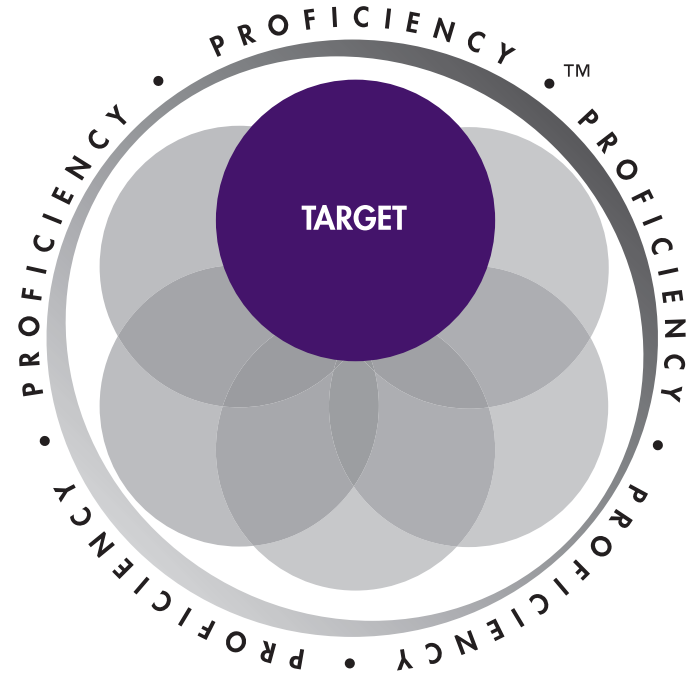| Teacher | Student |
|---|---|
| **Construct 5—VERIFY**  (page 60) | |
| Teacher reviews student performance during learning activities and looks for improvement patterns and inconsistencies, knowing that consistent improvement leads to proficiency. Teacher expects each student to demonstrate proficiency a minimum of three times. Teacher establishes a student performance profile by helping students earn at least three or four scores that reflect proficient levels of learning or higher in each standard.<br><br>Teacher and colleagues work together to break the standard down into manageable learning targets; all work together to agree on what students need to demonstrate to meet or exceed proficient levels of knowledge, understanding and skills.<br><br>Teacher shares samples of student performance with colleagues to confirm that judgment about performance is based on consistent interpretation of standards.<br><br>Teacher reviews opportunities for students to engage in the lesson to ensure that student learning needs, including identified rate and level of learning, are being met. | Student keeps track of personal performance profile and works to reach proficient levels and higher.<br><br>Student checks in frequently with teacher and other students to confirm what the standard requires students to know, understand and do. Student reviews work to confirm that it reflects a proficient level of learning.<br><br>Student knows learning strengths and how to improve. Student uses this information to work toward proficient levels and higher. |
| **Construct 6—REFLECT**  (page 64) | |
| Teacher considers whether any changes in planning and teaching can help more students reach proficient levels or higher. Teacher gathers feedback from students and expects to make changes to help them reach proficient levels or higher when the lesson is taught again.<br><br>Teacher routinely reviews how effectively student academic achievement is measured and reported separately from non-academic factors.<br><br>Teacher reviews the resources and strategies used during planning and teaching as part of an ongoing practice of self-reflection, expecting this will lead to improved instruction and increased student learning. | Student seeks out information on how to be a more focused and engaged learner. Student expects to make any changes necessary to reach proficient levels of knowledge and skills.<br><br>Student demonstrates positive patterns in all non-academic areas and expects that this helps contribute to successfully reaching proficient levels or higher. Student can identify the attributes that contribute to success. |

# Construct 1—TARGET

## Teacher and Student Rubrics

In a standards-based classroom, teachers TARGET the standards as their primary instructional foci. This involves identifying which specific standards will be taught and assessed and confirming this decision with department/team members, district curriculum maps and state curriculum documents. Teachers must pre-assess how well the students already know the standards and compare this information against an established definition of proficiency. In addition, they can look over their scope and sequence and connect the identified targets with other instructional units, providing a realistic contextual example students can use to apply learned information.

Together with their colleagues, they discuss how the standard should be taught and consider activities and assessments that will effectively and accurately measure student performance. Teachers investigate whether there are already existing criteria to determine when a student reaches proficiency. If there isn't, then, they talk with colleagues about what they need to "see" in order to make a judgment about student knowledge and skills. This decision is made by setting the knowledge and skills required to meet the standard into a relevant context within the lessons they use.

Students TARGET the standards by understanding that they must reach expected levels of proficiency in the identified area(s). They work with conviction and purpose to reach high levels of knowledge and skills, and expect that by successfully demonstrating the learning targets, they will reach a proficient level or higher. Students connect their new learning to projected interests in college and career pathways, anticipating that the skills will be important for them to apply in their "next steps."

# Construct 1—TARGET
## Teacher Rubric

| | **What does a student need to know, understand and be able to do?** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TEACHER RUBRIC** | **LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE** | | | |
| | **Beginning** *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Identifies state, national, technical and/or industry standards students need to know, understand and do** | ☐ Teacher does not identify appropriate standards for targeted instruction; instead, teacher plans on covering the next unit, chapter or packet in a cursory manner. | ☐ Teacher knows the unit to teach and tries to find a standard to match the selected unit. | ☐ Teacher identifies, posts and reviews the standard to be taught and uses the standard as the global instructional target. Teacher makes sure that standards and learning targets are in student-friendly language. | ☐ Teacher has a well-developed knowledge of all state, national, business/industry and college-ready standards and is able to recognize and connect interdisciplinary standards at one time. |
| **Studies the standard(s) and breaks it down into learning targets or essential questions, etc.** | ☐ Teacher is not able to break the standard into incremental learning targets. | ☐ Teacher understands that a standard incorporates incremental learning in discrete but connected components; however, teacher is not able to identify these essential benchmarks as instructional targets. | ☐ Teacher uses developed curriculum framework or pacing guide that breaks down the selected standard into manageable instructional targets; if no pacing guide or curriculum framework is available, teacher is able to break down the selected standard into manageable instructional targets that students can understand. | ☐ Teacher uses available resources and/or is able to break down the selected standard into instructional targets and is able to identify targets that are developmentally appropriate for students who are working above and/or below grade-level standards. |
| **Determines how to measure what the students already know and can do based on the targeted standards** | ☐ Teacher does not pre-assess what students already know and can do; rather, the teacher teaches the expected "next unit" because it is a common routine in the classroom and/or department. | ☐ Teacher selects pre-assessments that are not aligned with the standard, resulting in inaccurate assessment information and an inability to tailor instruction to students' needs. | ☐ Teacher selects and/or designs pre-assessments that are aligned with the identified standards and that will provide for a range of abilities and produce accurate data. | ☐ Teacher engages the students in developing a range of pre-assessment activities aligned with the identified standards that reflect student knowledge, understanding and skills. |

# Construct 1—TARGET (Cont'd)
## Teacher Rubric

| | What does a student need to know, understand and be able to do? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TEACHER RUBRIC** | **LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE** | | | |
| | **Beginning** *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Investigates how selected standard(s) is part of a logical sequence of interdisciplinary instruction, as well as how it relates to business/industry skills and/or college readiness** | ☐ Teacher is unaware or not interested in making connections between selected standards and a range of possible next-step options for the student. | ☐ Teacher plans to make a brief reference to the selected standard and how this knowledge and/or skills might be useful to the student in future endeavors. | ☐ Teacher understands that learning happens most effectively when there are sequences to the standards that create a scaffolding of information and skills. Teacher plans to provide connections between the selected standard and other interests and/or possible next steps that students might want to pursue. This includes providing a variety of activities, community guests and/or discussions on how the knowledge and/or skills can improve options student might have in the world of higher education and/or business and industry. | ☐ Teacher provides students with the opportunity to learn how the selected standard might connect with college and/or career readiness. |

# Construct 1—TARGET (Cont'd)
## Student Rubric

| STUDENT RUBRIC | What do I need to know, understand and be able to do? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE** | | | |
| | **Beginning** *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Demonstrates work habits that lead to proficient or higher levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in selected standards** | ☐ Student does not recognize or accept that there is an expected body of knowledge and skills that must be learned at a designated level of proficiency. | ☐ Student begins to recognize that a defined level of knowledge and skills is expected. | ☐ Student recognizes that being held to a defined level of knowledge and skills is important to achieving proficiency in the course-identified standard(s). | ☐ Student expects to participate in learning activities that lead to demonstrating knowledge, understanding and skills at levels that surpass proficiency. Student understands a high level of engagement in the learning activities leads to this outcome. |
| **Works with conviction and purpose to achieve proficient or higher level of knowledge, understanding and skills** | ☐ Student is not motivated to make optimum academic growth and does not complete classroom activities or assignments that are expected to help reach proficient levels or higher. | ☐ Student needs encouragement and reminders from the instructor to engage in learning activities set up to help achieve a proficient or higher level of knowledge, understanding and skills. | ☐ Student reaches a proficient level of knowledge, understanding and skills. If student has already achieved proficiency, student works hard to move to the next level by taking advantage of advanced opportunities. | ☐ Student reflects a highly motivated level of engagement in all learning activities and works to achieve as high a level of learning as possible. |
| **Makes a plan to break learning into smaller components and sequential steps that are manageable and lead to a proficient level of knowledge and skills or higher levels** | ☐ Student does not recognize that a learning target can be broken down into smaller, more manageable components that build upon one another. | ☐ Student begins to make connections between smaller learning "chunks" and can do a fairly good job of connecting how one component influences and/or depends upon the other. | ☐ Student defines learning targets as a collection of knowledge, understandings and skills that can be broken down and built upon one another. | ☐ Student sees the connection between learning targets and the sequence in which they are organized. Student can extend the learning of smaller "chunks" into an overarching bigger concept or task. |

# Construct 1—TARGET (Cont'd)
## Student Rubric

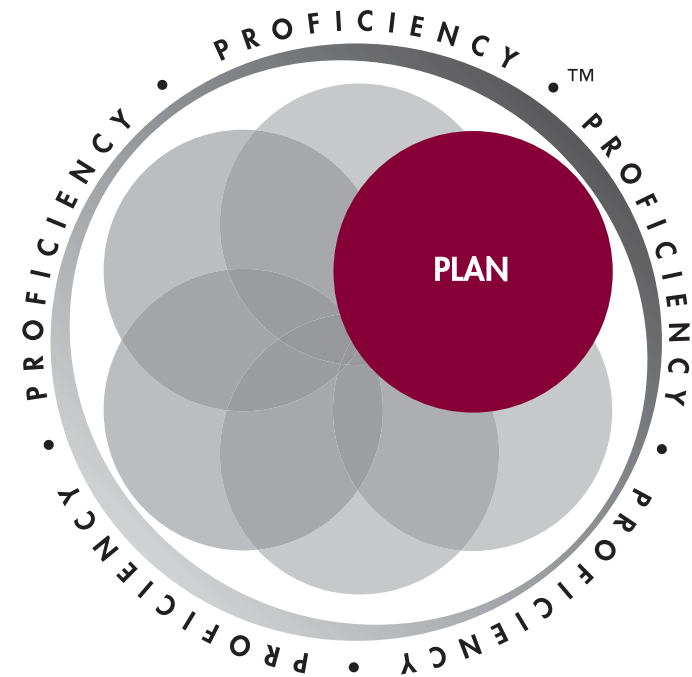| | What do I need to know, understand and be able to do? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **STUDENT RUBRIC** | **LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE** | | | |
| | **Beginning** *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Participates in developing a personalized learning plan, including activities and experiences that connect learning to business/industry, college readiness or work-related opportunities** | ☐ Student perceives learning as a discrete, isolated activity. | ☐ Student begins to make connections between what is being learned and how it might be useful in multiple ways and settings. | ☐ Student understands how obtaining knowledge and skills can be useful in multiple settings related to academic and career interests. | ☐ Student thinks about how all learning is connected to related concepts, including how new knowledge, understanding and skills are personally useful in multiple settings. |

# Construct 2—PLAN

## Teacher and Student Rubrics

In a standards-based classroom, teachers PLAN their teaching and assessing with the standards as their primary instructional foci. Teachers start with the end in mind by creating effective assessment plans that measure the proficiency level of students. They focus on methods that will provide quality information about what students already know and can do. Their assessment plan includes both formative and summative assessments, providing a wide range of opportunities for students to "show what they know" through both teacher- and student-selected assessment formats.

Either individually or as part of a team, they consider how the standards can best be taught. They break down the standard into manageable "chunks" of learning referred to as learning targets or *I Can* statements. Anticipating that some students will need less time and some will need more time than others to reach proficiency, teachers plan for appropriate interventions that address selected standards. Their planning includes researching proven and effective methods of teaching standards that hold students accountable through a high level of student engagement, accurate measuring and reporting of student performance.

Teacher planning includes using the learning targets or *I Can* statements as the basis for rubrics that spell out what proficient performance looks like. They develop a plan for monitoring or tracking student progress and establishing clear and consistent grading parameters that reflect the definitions of proficiency on a continuum of learning. This continuum is used to help students understand where they are as a baseline learning level and how they can move forward to reach proficient levels of knowledge and skills.

In addition, teachers collect and/or create a broad range of anchor examples that can be used to help students understand what proficient performance looks like. The range of activities that they offer addresses the selected standards and creates opportunities for going deeper and applying learning within a real world setting. Opportunities for students to work with peers are built into the planning and clearly support students taking charge of their learning and moving the teacher to a facilitator role.

Students PLAN on being engaged in learning; they understand that it is no longer enough to just do a minimum amount of work and turn in products that don't reflect quality and hard work. Students expect to participate in a variety of assessments and understand that results will be used to determine baseline ability and to show improvement in working toward proficiency. Students are aware of how they learn best and are prepared to advocate for opportunities to engage in activities that "play to their strengths." They understand that the plan for a particular unit or theme may not give them all of the flexibility and choice they desire; but they want to succeed and understand that they must reach a proficient level of knowledge and skills to be successful. Students plan on keeping track of their achievement using a capacity matrix or other standards record-keeping chart to monitor progress in reaching proficiency in all identified learning targets.

# Construct 2—PLAN
## Teacher Rubric

## How will I plan effectively to ensure each student is academically successful?

| TEACHER RUBRIC | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Beginning**<br>*Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging**<br>*Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient**<br>*Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters**<br>*Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Creates an effective pre- and post-assessment plan that is aligned to the selected standard and all related learning targets for the purpose of identifying what students already know, understand and can do** | ☐ Teacher does not develop a pre- and post-assessment plan but, instead, teaches the selected material because it is part of classroom routine. Teacher is not aware or does not acknowledge that there are standards that need to be the basis for assessment | ☐ Teacher might use publisher-created assessments without confirming they address the selected standards or lesson taught. Teacher is marginally aware that aligned assessment data can provide critical information about student growth and should be used to guide instruction. | ☐ Teacher and student select and/or design assessments that are aligned to targeted standard. Teacher organizes selected assessments so performance on individual learning targets clearly reflects levels of proficiency and can provide meaningful information to both the teacher and the student. Teacher is prepared to use the information to help create multiple and meaningful learning activities that ensure individual student academic success. | ☐ Teacher engages students in the development of personally designed assessments that are aligned to selected standards. Teacher is prepared to help students develop a baseline personalized learning profile that will, when updated, reflect new learning and academic improvement. Teacher's goal is to create a strong assessment environment that provides useful feedback to the students. |
| **Connects selected assessments to other existing diagnostic instruments that can provide a broad picture of student knowledge and skills** | ☐ Teacher may give a random assessment but neither uses the results to guide instruction nor connects it to other known metrics about student knowledge and skills. | ☐ Teacher makes a cursory attempt to connect assessments results and to use information learned to help create learning activities. | ☐ Teacher collects and connects all assessment information to create a profile of the student learner in order to develop meaningful learning activities. | ☐ Teacher gathers multiple assessment metrics to learn as much as possible about the student learner and to help the student own the assessment data as an indication of student mastery of the standards and overall academic growth. |

# Construct 2—PLAN (Cont'd)
## Teacher Rubric

## How will I plan effectively to ensure each student is academically successful?

| TEACHER RUBRIC | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Beginning**<br>*Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging**<br>*Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient**<br>*Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters**<br>*Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Develops methods for determining student learning styles and "next step" interests** | ☐ Teacher does not consider student learning styles or "next step" interests in the planning of instructional activities. | ☐ Teacher creates a cursory profile of student needs, learning styles and "next step" interests based on information that is rudimentary and potentially without a solid basis. | ☐ Teacher engages students in a series of activities that provide information about how the student learns best and what "next steps" are of interest. Student's educational pathway is carefully crafted and personalized to reflect instructional methods that ensure optimum student growth. | ☐ Teacher and student are partners in the planning of a personalized educational pathway that includes activities and environments that help each student reach an advanced level of knowledge and skills. |
| **Uses information about student ability levels in constructing activities and learning option choices** | ☐ Teacher does not use information about student ability levels to design instruction. The student is not offered choices that relate to the learning; instead, the teacher teaches the whole class as a group and depends on specialists to focus on individual learning needs. | ☐ Teacher recognizes student's ability, yet, tends to plan for instruction using a "batch" approach, grouping all students together for the ease of large-group instruction. | ☐ Teacher uses formative assessment information to create a personalized learning plan that is supported by flexibility, interventions, acceleration and enrichment. | ☐ Teacher and student are partners in using formative assessment information to personalize learning activities and engage student in an active decision-making role about demonstrating proficiency in the standards. |

# Construct 2—PLAN (Cont'd)
## Teacher Rubric

## How will I plan effectively to ensure each student is academically successful?

| TEACHER RUBRIC | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Beginning** *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Uses research-based nstructional methods in developing lesson plans that address each student's rate and level of learning** | Teacher does not use research-based instructional methods in lesson design. Teacher design decisions may be unintentional or purposeful but are routinely not based on sound educational principles. | Teacher is aware that research-based methods will make teaching more successful. Teacher redefines the teacher and student roles in carrying out the lesson plans; however, the teacher makes minimal effort to reflect these methods in planning, design and delivery of instruction. | Teacher is aware of research-based instructional methods and uses these methods in the planning, design and delivery of instruction. | Teacher is aware of research-based instructional methods and, together with the student, creates a classroom where the student learning is personalized through design and choice. |
| **Plans collaboratively with colleagues to confirm a clear understanding of what state and district standards, national common core state standards, as well as business/industry and college-readiness knowledge and skills, require students to know and do** | Teacher planning is done in isolation and without input or collaboration from colleagues. | Teacher may participate in school/department collaboration activities in which academic, national common core state standards, business/industry and college-readiness standards related to coursework are part of the discussion. | Teacher routinely collaborates with colleagues on elements of planning and assessment. Teacher uses state, district, national common core state standards, business/industry and college-readiness standards and related learning targets as instructional goals. Teacher and colleagues agree on what the standards require students to know and do, as well as what standards are their instructional foci. | Teacher and colleagues agree on what state, district, national common core state standards, business/industry, and college-readiness standards require students to know and do. Teacher maps these standards to course work, and, together with colleagues, creates creative and engaging educational activities that help students achieve academic success. |

# Construct 2—PLAN (Cont'd)
## Teacher Rubric

## How will I plan effectively to ensure each student is academically successful?

| TEACHER RUBRIC | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Beginning** *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Reflects lesson planning by starting with the end in mind, as well as developing alignment between the standard, the lesson and the assessments** | ☐ Teacher does not reflect an organized structure to the lessons. Activities are disjointed, ineffective or misaligned to the standard. Planning does not reflect a clear target, road map to reach the target or enrichment and intervention activities that could help each student be successful. | ☐ Teacher may plan learning activities but does not have a clear focus of where the student should be at the end of the lesson. Teacher attempts to plan meaningful activities for the student but, frequently, these seem disjointed, ineffective or misaligned. | ☐ Teacher effectively designs lessons based on what the standard requires student to know and do. Standards and assessments are tightly aligned and instruction and activities support expected outcomes. Teacher creates a clear pathway to help student know what is expected and how to get there. | ☐ Teacher plans the lesson with the end in mind, focusing on clear alignment between the standard, the lesson and the assessments. Teacher effectively engages student in the lesson to give the student a voice in their learning and to create a personalized learning pathway to exceed proficiency in all identified standards. |
| **Plans for frequent and meaningful formative and summative assessments to guide and frame instructional choices** | ☐ Teacher does not plan on using formative and summative assessments that measure student learning relative to the instructional targets. | ☐ Teacher plans for occasional formative and summative assessments, possibly because there are school and/or department agreements about administering them. There are only cursory efforts made to use this information to guide instructional design. | ☐ Teacher plans for frequent and purposeful formative and summative assessments to help guide and frame instructional choices in lessons. | ☐ Teacher creates ongoing formative and summative assessments that are tied to the instructional learning targets and that will provide each student with meaningful learning information to guide instructional choices. |

# Construct 2—PLAN (Cont'd)
## Teacher Rubric

| How will I plan effectively to ensure each student is academically successful? | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TEACHER RUBRIC** | **LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE** | | | |
| | **Beginning** *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Builds multiple opportunities and intervention methods into planning so students can learn the standard at a proficient level or higher** | ☐ Teacher plans on "teaching to the masses," without built-in opportunities for students who need multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency or those who are ready to move on without additional support. | ☐ Teacher has a rudimentary set of interventions to help struggling students demonstrate proficiency in selected standards; however, students who are working at an advanced level are not provided opportunities to move to the next learning level when they are ready. | ☐ Teacher has a well-developed set of classroom interventions to help each student reach proficiency in the selected standards. Teacher also plans how to move students to the next learning level when they have demonstrated they are proficient in selected standards. | ☐ Teacher is part of a department and school team with a well-developed set of interventions to help each student demonstrate proficiency in selected standards and move on to the next learning level without restrictions. |
| **Seeks ongoing meaningful and effective professional growth that improves the teaching craft and keeps classroom strategies current and engaging for each student** | ☐ Teacher does not stay current with research-based practices and professional growth. | ☐ Teacher is aware of the important role that research-based practices can have on a classroom but is unaware or ineffective in trying to implement these in the classroom. | ☐ Teacher makes efforts to incorporate emerging research in planning and instructional methodology. Teacher pays particular attention to strategies that help each student, regardless of academic ability, develop a personalized and reachable learning plan. | ☐ Teacher is eager to know about emerging research practices and personally pursues improving teaching through professional dialogue with colleagues and readings. Teacher is committed to help each student reach a proficient level in all identified standards and to participate in a fluid and flexible learning environment that is supported by research and effective practice. |

# Construct 2—PLAN (Cont'd)
## Student Rubric

| | How can I be engaged in my own learning? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **STUDENT RUBRIC** | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE | | | |
| | **Beginning** *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Plans for and personally engages in learning** | ☐ Student is not yet able to plan for or personally engage in learning. | ☐ Student understands the importance of participating in all learning activities but only partially engages in planning for learning. | ☐ Student participates fully in all activities to further a personalized learning plan. | ☐ Student plans, with the teacher, to design group and personalized learning activities as well as pre-/post-assessments. |
| **Acknowledges that pre-/post assessment results reflect a personal profile of knowledge, understanding and skills** | ☐ Student is not yet fully engaged in reflecting quality effort and ability in assessment efforts. | ☐ Student recognizes that there is a variety of assessments that demonstrate a personal profile of knowledge, understanding and skills; however, student does not feel confident in skills necessary to excel on them. | ☐ Student expects to participate in a variety of assessments aligned to identified standards and learning targets to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills. | ☐ Student expects to participate in a variety of assessments aligned to identified standards and learning targets; student is involved in creating assessments that measure proficiency and reflect a range of knowledge, understanding and skills. |
| **Knows and advocates for how best to learn new information and skills; expects that these methods of learning lead to academic success** | ☐ Student is not yet aware of how best to learn new information and skills; student struggles to find pathway to academic success. | ☐ Student is not interested in or does not know how best to learn new information and skills; student plans for academic success but is only occasionally successful. | ☐ Student is aware of all factors that lead to successfully learning new information and skills; student uses this information to reach proficient levels and academic success. | ☐ Student is aware of the elements that lead to being a successful learner; student plans on using this information to demonstrate proficiency and pursue "next step" academic options. |

# Construct 2—PLAN (Cont'd)
## Student Rubric

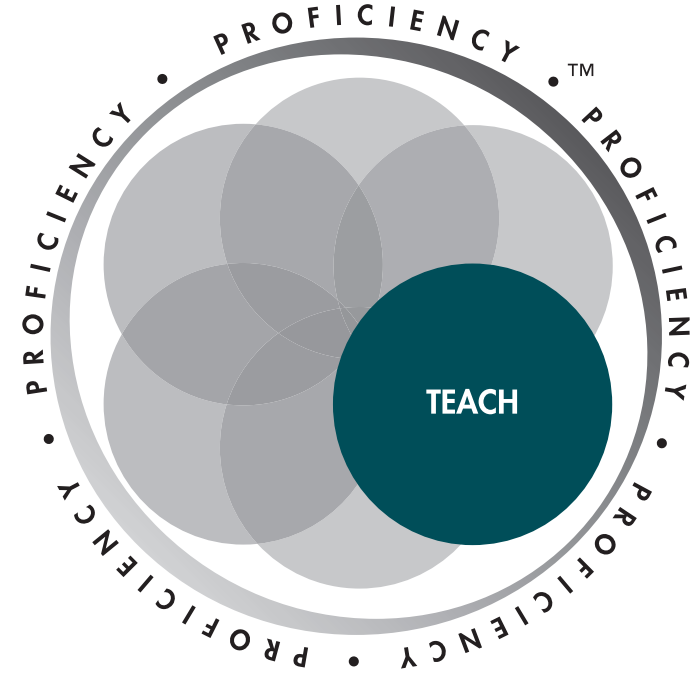| | How can I be engaged in my own learning? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **STUDENT RUBRIC** | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE | | | |
| | **Beginning** *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Acknowledges that there is an expected learning target and is prepared to work to achieve a proficient level of knowledge, understanding and skills, or higher** | ☐ Student does not recognize that being proficient means reaching a proficient level of knowledge, understanding and skills in identified learning targets. | ☐ Student wants to reach proficient levels of knowledge, understanding and skills; student recognizes learning targets are a pathway to demonstrate proficiency. | ☐ Student expects to reach proficient levels of knowledge, understanding and skills; student develops a plan to reach all learning targets. | ☐ Student views learning targets as a pathway to reach proficient levels of knowledge, understanding and skills; student develops a personal plan to exceed proficiency. |
| **Uses a capacity matrix, or other standards record-keeping chart, to monitor progress on reaching proficiency levels or higher in all identified learning targets** | ☐ Student is not yet able to use a capacity matrix to monitor progress toward demonstrating proficiency. | ☐ Student occasionally uses a capacity matrix to monitor progress and make plans to complete learning activities. | ☐ Student uses a capacity matrix to monitor progress and make plans to complete learning activities. | ☐ Student uses a capacity matrix to monitor progress, make plans to complete learning activities and accelerate learning at an individual, self-guided pace. |
| **Recognizes and commits to personalized learning goals and all incremental steps to achieve these goals** | ☐ Student has a personalized learning plan; however, the student is not yet able to recognize and commit to all personalized learning goals. | ☐ Student has a personalized learning plan; however, the student needs coaching from the teacher to achieve proficiency in personalized learning goals. | ☐ Student actively participates in developing a personalized learning plan to achieve proficiency in personalized learning goals. | ☐ Student actively participates in developing and committing to a personalized learning plan to achieve proficiency in identified learning targets and to pursue related academic and/or career interests. |

# Construct 3—TEACH and LEARN

## Teach (Teacher) and Learn (Student) Rubrics

Teachers use the language of the standards when they TEACH students. They focus on the learning targets or *I Can* statements and establish a learning environment in which students work hard, use all of their talents to show what they know and commit to the expectation that achieving proficiency is a learning goal. When appropriate, teachers use graphic organizers to help students understand the connections between the learning concepts and to remember critical relationships. Teachers work hard to facilitate learning in the classroom so that students are empowered to own their learning and engage in dialogue and activities with other students that demonstrate what they know and can do.

Teachers recognize that time is a variable and that the clock and the calendar do not dictate the only span of time available for learning to occur. In addition, teachers and students view school as only one possible learning site and actively explore where learning can occur in a meaningful and natural way. Teachers provide appropriate levels of interventions to students who need a double-dose of instruction or extended practice to reach proficient levels.

In addition, they create a range of accelerated learning activities that are appropriate for students whose formative assessment results indicate they are already at a proficient level of knowledge and skills. Teachers help students move from proficient to an expert level of knowledge and skills by engaging in enrichment and accelerated activities that advance them to the next learning targets to be covered, or by involving them in deeper research.

Students LEARN at a pace that is challenging and appropriate for them. They develop and display a high level of ownership regarding their personal learning plan and keep track of their growth. Students engage in dialogue with one another and look for partners both in and out of the classroom who can support and enrich their learning experience. These resources may include experts in a particular career field, other students in the school district, or members of a world-wide community who, through electronic dialogue, can help them understand concepts that are troubling or answer questions to help them reach proficient levels. Together with their teachers, students self-monitor their learning and expect that an ongoing assessment system will help them reach proficiency. They expect to work hard and to take advantage of intervention and enrichment opportunities when offered.

# Construct 3—TEACH
## Teacher Rubric

| | **LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **How can I help all students reach proficient levels of learning or higher?** | | | | |
| **TEACHER RUBRIC** | **Beginning**<br>*Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging**<br>*Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient**<br>*Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters**<br>*Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Uses the language of the standards with students, creating an expectation that all will reach a proficient level of knowledge and skills** | ☐ Teacher does not use terminology of the standards and does not hold students accountable to know them. Teacher does not expect each student to reach proficiency and, as a result, does not have a plan developed to help each student reach this goal. | ☐ Teacher references the terminology and vocabulary in the standards but does not do this with enough frequency that students can internalize them and can connect the vocabulary with what they are asked to do. Teacher expects some students will be proficient but is willing to accept that some students will not "get there." | ☐ Teacher uses the terminology and vocabulary of the standards to help students become familiar with them. Teacher expects, at a minimum, that each student will reach a proficient level and communicates this expectation through teaching and individual student conversations. | ☐ Teacher uses the language of the standards regularly to help students learn the terminology and vocabulary of the standards. Teacher expects each student to reach a proficient level or higher and provides options in assignments that help stretch a student's learning. |
| **Engages students in the use of graphic organizers and teacher- or student-created visuals to personalize and internalize the standards to a level of proficiency or higher** | ☐ Teacher neither uses graphic organizers nor engages students in creating visuals. | ☐ Teacher makes attempts to use organizers occasionally, or references their use in oral instructions, but does not encourage students to use them or provide opportunities for students to create visuals. | ☐ Teacher provides opportunities for students to use graphic organizers and visuals to bring meaning to the standards being targeted. | ☐ Teacher supports the construction of self-created graphic organizers and visuals to help students synthesize and further their understanding of the standards being targeted. |

# Construct 3—TEACH (Cont'd)
## Teacher Rubric

| How can I help all students reach proficient levels of learning or higher? | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TEACHER RUBRIC** | **LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE** | | | |
| | **Beginning**<br>*Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging**<br>*Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient**<br>*Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters**<br>*Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Avoids extensive teacher-directed learning, opting, instead, to have students take on an intentionally high level of ownership in their learning** | ☐ Teacher uses group instruction and all-class activities and assignments as the primary method for learning. | ☐ Teacher uses whole group instruction when pre-assessments indicate it is necessary; teacher occasionally allows choice and student-created learning opportunities. | ☐ Teacher minimizes "teacher talk," and, instead, develops learning opportunities that allow each student to create personalized learning through student choice and cross-student engagement. | ☐ Teacher expects each student to generate personalized learning opportunities by taking on the role of explorer and seeker of knowledge. Teacher provides guided facilitation when necessary. |
| **Provides individual and small group "reteach" opportunities to help students reach proficient levels of performance** | ☐ Teacher does not reteach concepts. | ☐ Teacher is willing to reteach important concepts when many students need additional help or when individual students ask for it. | ☐ Teacher provides many "loop-back" learning opportunities so that each student can reach proficiency in each standard. | ☐ Teacher encourages students to step up and help one another and creates opportunities for students to support one another's learning. |
| **Uses student learning needs to drive how time is connected to seat time, calendar requirements, and curriculum planning; time does not drive learning** | ☐ Teacher provides instruction based on all students learning at the same pace and moves ahead without checking to make sure each student is proficient. | ☐ Teacher expects all students to learn material at the same pace but is willing to re-teach when individual students ask for it. | ☐ Teacher paces instruction, adjusting to meet the needs of those not yet meeting the standards and those exceeding the standards. | ☐ Teacher and student develop a personalized learning plan that is not driven by time and that reflects an individual pathway to reaching and exceeding proficiency in all standards. |

# Construct 3—LEARN (Cont'd)
## Student Rubric

| STUDENT RUBRIC | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Beginning** *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Takes ownership of the language of the standards by using it to communicate with fellow students and teacher** | ☐ Student does not yet reflect an understanding of what the standard requires student to know and do; nor does student "get" the vocabulary and language of the standard. Student is not willing to work to meet or exceed proficiency and believes that "just getting it done" should be enough. | ☐ Student follows directions from the teacher to use the vocabulary and language of the standard; however, student does not reflect a high degree of empowerment or ownership during the learning process. | ☐ Student connects to the standard by using related vocabulary and language as a way of internalizing what is expected to demonstrate proficiency. Student is a partner in the learning process and accepts a personal challenge to work hard to meet or exceed proficiency. | ☐ Student engages with the standard by using related vocabulary and language. Student actively pursues opportunities to meet proficiency and develops internal motivation to exceed proficiency. |
| **Uses graphic organizers and student-created visuals to personalize the learning targets** | ☐ Student does not yet use graphic organizers. Student also does not yet understand how using and creating visuals will help with understanding and internalizing the learning targets. | ☐ Student makes an effort to use graphic organizers but the information is occasionally miscategorized or mislabeled. Student struggles to create visuals in an effort to personalize and internalize the learning targets. | ☐ Student uses graphic organizers and student-created visuals to personalize and internalize the learning targets. | ☐ Student confidently and frequently creates advanced and/or complex graphic organizers and visuals to personalize and internalize the learning targets. |

How can I reach a proficient level of learning or higher?

# Construct 3—LEARN (Cont'd)
## Student Rubric

| STUDENT RUBRIC | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **How can I reach a proficient level of learning or higher?** | | | | |
| | **Beginning** *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Demonstrates a high level of ownership in learning, as reflected in a personal commitment to meet or exceed proficiency** | ☐ Student is not yet able to pursue intervention/relearning opportunities without strong input from the teacher. | ☐ Student reluctantly follows teacher requests to participate in intervention/relearning opportunities. | ☐ Student is committed to meeting or exceeding proficiency. Student monitors progress in reaching proficient levels in the standards. Student seeks out intervention/relearning opportunities and reflects a personal commitment to engagement in the learning process. | ☐ Student wants to exceed proficiency and creates opportunities to do this with teacher support and guidance. Student communicates frequently about intent to reach a high level of knowledge and skills. Student monitors progress in reaching proficient levels in the standards. |
| **Participates in opportunities to revisit what the standard requires a student to know/do in an effort to meet or exceed proficiency** | ☐ Student does not yet engage in opportunities to revisit what the standard requires to meet or exceed proficiency | ☐ Student reluctantly participates in interventions or relearning opportunities to meet or exceed proficiency. | ☐ Student participates in interventions or relearning opportunities. Student regularly communicates with the teacher about the progress to meet or exceed proficiency. | ☐ Student needs infrequent interventions or relearning opportunities to meet or exceed proficiency. Student is eager to participate in all learning experiences and reflects a personal commitment to work to the highest level the student can achieve. |
| **Learns in a continuous learning model that allows for acceleration and remediation, as needed, without regard to arbitrary reporting periods** | ☐ Student has been learning in a traditional "batch" system that does not support sticking with a learning goal until reaching proficiency. Student wants an activity completed quickly to move on to the next activity without reaching proficiency. | ☐ Student is willing to work to meet proficiency in whatever learning model the teacher creates and supports. | ☐ Student understands some concepts take more time to learn than others. Student is willing to work hard to meet or exceed proficiency with steady and committed progress. | ☐ Student is highly motivated to exceed proficiency and looks for opportunities to pursue acceleration or enrichment. Student approaches learning with a strong commitment to excellence and a personal challenge to meet learning goals. |

# Construct 4—ASSESS

## Teacher and Student Rubrics

Teachers ASSESS student learning to determine if students are proficient in the selected standards. Standards may include the national common core state standards, state-identified standards, district-adopted standards or specific industry or certification-related skills sets. In addition, states and districts may identify work ethic or personal student management standards. After defining what it means to be proficient in each of these standards, teachers can use assessment strategies to measure how effectively students take charge of their learning, manage their time and follow directions.

Assessment strategies focus on all identified standards and break them down into manageable learning chunks known as learning targets or *I Can* statements. Teachers use a range of assessment styles and are comfortable with using frequent formative assessments as a method of gaining feedback on what learning pathway is best for each student to reach proficiency. Together with their colleagues, they develop rubrics that reflect descriptions of proficiency along a continuum from *just beginning* to develop knowledge and skills in an area to *mastering knowledge and skills* in that same area. These rubrics are frequently developed with students and are always shared with students prior to any activity or assessment so everyone knows what a proficient level of knowledge and skills looks like and what targets they need to reach.

Teachers share assessment information with students for quick and meaningful updates on how their learning is progressing. They give students a voice in not only self-evaluating their learning progress but also in developing appropriate assessments that accurately and effectively measure identified learning targets. Students then study how assessment results impact their overall personal learning plans. Teachers provide students with assessment information to help them understand in which areas they have made learning growth and in which areas work is still needed. Together with the students, teachers use the assessment information to identify interventions, as well as supplemental programs and material that will help reinforce learning concepts so students make optimum academic growth.
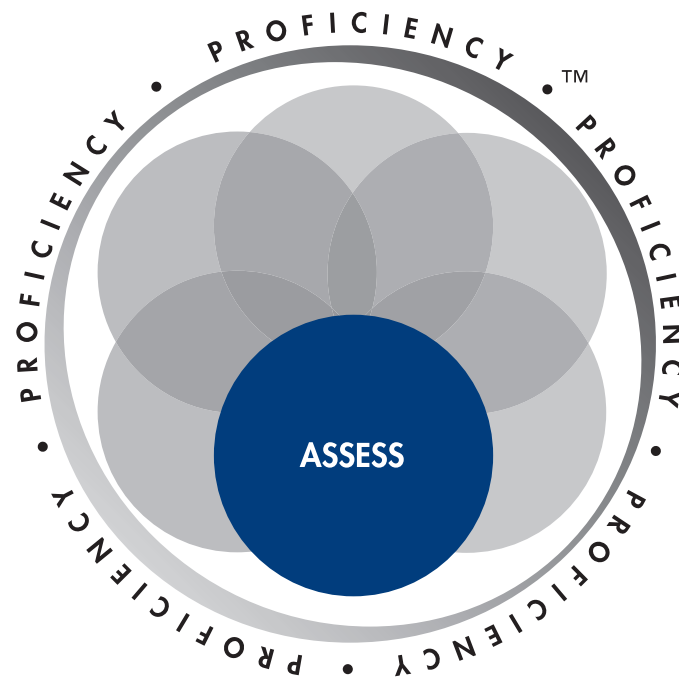
Sufficiency and alignment are critical components in a quality assessment system. Teachers need sufficient information to make a good decision about student proficiency. The decision needs to be based on not only enough information, but the right information to allow a credible judgment about student performance. Teachers should not ask if they have too many or too few tasks or exercises. According to Rick Stiggins, it is important to get "just enough to get a stable estimate of learning, and [that] the tasks cover the learning target(s)… well" (Stiggins, et al., 2006). In addition to having a sufficient amount of evidence to consider in making a judgment about proficiency, it is important that assessments are well-aligned to the standard(s) being measured. Misalignment leads to inaccurate results, which leads to inaccurate evaluations of student performance.

Teachers replace lower scores with higher ones as students learn more. They establish a clear description of what it means to be proficient in a standard. And they compare student work to that description, expecting

that, for some students, additional interventions are necessary to reach proficiency, while other students may be ready to move to the next learning target or dig deeper into related research and application of the standard. Teachers look for multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate proficiency in the standards.

In addition, they include only a student's "best effort" scores in the grade book. This is an important practice to consider adopting when viewing it from the perspective of any learning curve. According to "the power law of learning," the greatest amount of learning occurs during the first few sessions the student studies new material or practices a new skill. As students become more comfortable and familiar with the topic, the learning between sessions diminishes (Newell & Rosenbloom, 1981). Robert Marzano advocates for using the power law to give more weight to the most recent scores a student has earned, believing that they provide a "line of best fit" that reflects more accurately what a student knows and can do (Marzano, 2006). Teachers who enter only the best and most recent scores understand that using the more traditional and convenient method of averaging all the earned scores provides a false message of student knowledge and skills.

Teachers using proficiency-based practices do not factor personal management skills into the academic evaluation of student learning. Personal management skills are assessed separately using a variety of department, building and/or district criteria. As a result, student assessment data is a true reflection of academic performance and does not misrepresent what students know and can do by including non-academic factors like attitude, attendance, behavior or effort.

Students ASSESS their own learning. Whether teachers ask them to be involved in assessing their learning or not, each time a test is returned to them with a low mark on it, they judge themselves to have failed. As a result, they often give up trying. Conversely, when they get an assessment back with a high mark on it, they become more confident and hopeful that this is a trend that reflects a future of true academic success. Students should be involved in the development of the assessments, as well as a discussion about whether the assessments accurately measure the learning targets they have been working toward.

When students are actively involved at this level, they believe they can learn and they work hard to meet goals that they understand and believe are worth the effort. Without this personal commitment to achieve at a high level, students give up and expect (or, at least, accept) failure, low marks and poor grades. Developing a positive assessment role for students requires a solid foundation of support systems, from interventions to acceleration, from independent, student-designed assessments to well-designed group assessments. Once the learning climate includes effective student-centered assessments, students will be ready to participate in and accept peer assessment feedback. Then they will recognize that a broad variety of assessments gives them a clear picture of their learning and what they need to do to reach proficiency in the identified standards.

# Construct 4—ASSESS
## Teacher Rubric

| | How can I find out what a student knows, understands and can do? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TEACHER RUBRIC** | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE | | | |
| | **Beginning** *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Distinguishes between the multiple purposes and styles of assessments, particularly the difference between formative and summative assessments** | ☐ Teacher lacks a foundation in the difference between assessment *for* learning (formative assessment) and assessment *of* learning (summative assessment). | ☐ Teacher has a basic understanding of assessments *for* learning and assessments *of* learning; however, teacher does not use this distinction to ensure development of quality assessments. | ☐ Teacher recognizes the difference between assessments *for* learning and assessments *of* learning. Teacher intentionally uses this distinction in developing formative and summative assessments. | ☐ Teacher uses a highly developed understanding of formative and summative assessments to provide leadership at the department, school or district level, as appropriate. |
| **Designs a variety of valid assessments that are tightly aligned to standards and curricula, as well as industry and certification benchmarks to measure proficient student performance** | ☐ Teacher does not design or use effective formative and summative assessments. In addition, standards are not at the center of what the assessments measure; nor do the assessments reflect what the teacher uses as the instructional foci. | ☐ Teacher is aware that formative and summative assessments should measure selected standards; however, teacher is not able to articulate what the standards require a student to know and do. As a result, assessments do not clearly measure standards, including any industry and certification standards that might be included. Assessments are also not consistent with the instructional foci. | ☐ Teacher designs a variety of formative and summative assessments with tight alignment to selected standards and grade levels of learning. Teacher includes appropriate connections to industry and certification standards when appropriate. Formative and summative assessments clearly measure selected targets and are aligned to the correct cognitive level of the standard. Assessments reflect differentiation to support learning styles and levels of proficiency. | ☐ Teacher looks for and designs assessment opportunities, frequently with the input and help of students, that reflect projects, application of in-depth thinking and advanced-level skills. Formative and summative assessments clearly measure selected learning targets and offer students opportunities to provide extended thinking and connections to industry activities or advanced levels of curricula. |

# Construct 4—ASSESS (Cont'd)
## Teacher Rubric

## How can I find out what a student knows, understands and can do?

| TEACHER RUBRIC | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Beginning**<br>*Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging**<br>*Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient**<br>*Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters**<br>*Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Creates and uses common rubrics to regularly and reliably measure student performance and provide student feedback on what "proficient" looks like** | ☐ Teacher does not create or use rubrics to measure student learning. Teacher does not work with colleagues to develop a common understanding of what proficiency looks like through the use of rubrics. Feedback to the students is not based on a description of proficient knowledge and skills in the standards. | ☐ Teacher has a basic understanding of rubrics but does not feel comfortable creating or using them to evaluate student learning. Teacher does not see the benefit of having common rubrics that can be used across a grade level or content area. Feedback to students about reaching proficiency is confusing and not well-aligned to the standard. | ☐ Teacher participates with a team of teachers to create common rubrics that spell out proficient levels of knowledge and skills. The rubrics provide students a clear description of what they need to know and do to demonstrate proficiency in selected standards. Teacher uses rubrics to provide students feedback about their level of performance and to help them know what they need to do to meet or exceed proficiency. | ☐ Teacher models the use of well-developed rubrics and supports students developing rubrics that target standards in an effort to help them internalize and understand how to meet or exceed a proficient level of knowledge and skills. |
| **Creates a rich assessment environment that provides ongoing formal and informal opportunities to measure student learning; measures academic ability from personal management qualities**<br><br>**NOTE: Non-academic factors could include attendance, attitude, behavior, do-overs, effort, extra credit and homework.** | ☐ Teacher does not use any purposeful informal assessment measures and uses high-stakes end-of-unit testing as a summative measure, frequently weighing the impact of the tests significantly more than daily work or other assignments. Teacher includes non-academic factors when measuring and reporting student progress. | ☐ Teacher makes an effort to use both formal and informal measures to find out what students know and can do. Frequently the assessments are not aligned with the standards being covered or do not result in an accurate profile of student learning. Teacher wants to separate academic performance from personal management qualities, but is unsure how to do this. | ☐ Teacher uses frequent and effective formal and informal measures to find out what students know and can do. Assessments reflect a variety of performance models administered in a variety of ways that give students the best opportunity to demonstrate proficiency. Academic ability is measured separately from personal management qualities. Assessment environment reflects a high degree of student buy-in and an eagerness to find out about performance. | ☐ Teacher and students are partners in shaping the assessment culture of the classroom and look for opportunities to measure what students know and can do. Both the formal and informal opportunities are effective, aligned to standards and have a high degree of student buy-in. Teacher develops and communicates high expectations in academic and personal management qualities and measures and reports them separately. |

# Construct 4—ASSESS (Cont'd)
## Teacher Rubric

| | **How can I find out what a student knows, understands and can do?** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TEACHER RUBRIC** | **LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE** | | | |
| | **Beginning** *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Includes students in an evaluation of their learning through ongoing knowledge and guidance about assessment results** | ☐ Teacher creates and operates in a traditional assessment environment with the expectation that student learning is measured through the accumulation of points or assigning of a letter grade without knowledge of what knowledge and skills these grades represent.  Teacher does not engage students in self-evaluation, nor a discussion about what needs to be done to meet or exceed proficiency in the standards. | ☐ Teacher includes students in an occasional self-evaluation of learning. Teachers provide intermittent feedback that is sketchy and general, without reference to a pathway on how to meet or exceed proficiency. Students can inquire about progress to meet or exceed proficiency. | ☐ Teacher establishes a collaborative evaluation culture with students as active stake-holders in evaluating learning. Teacher uses the language of the standards and the rubrics when discussing areas of strength and areas of improvement with students. Teacher encourages students to monitor learning progress and offers support to reach proficiency. | ☐ Teacher fosters a strong sense of student ownership for learning and academic achievement. Teacher expects student to independently and continually self-evaluate learning and be prepared to advocate for what is needed to meet or exceed proficiency. |

# Construct 4—ASSESS (Cont'd)
## Student Rubric

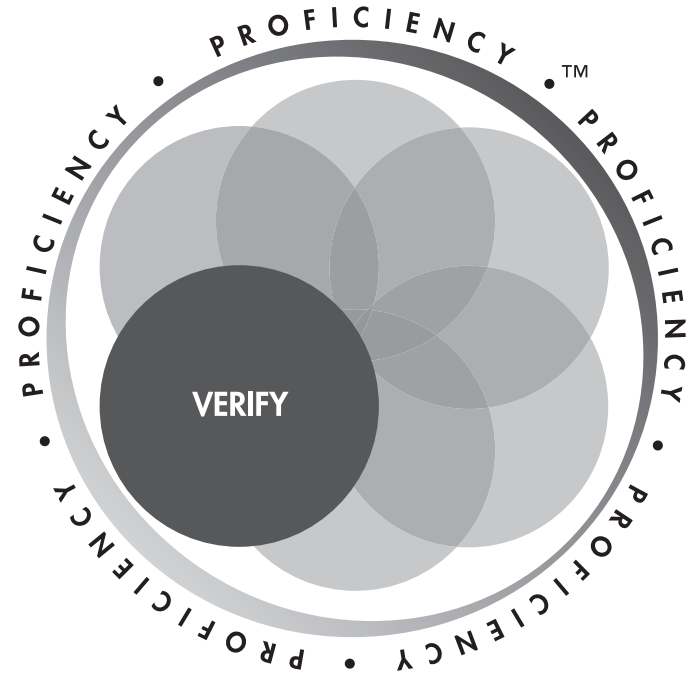| STUDENT RUBRIC | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Beginning** *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Recognizes that a broad variety of formal and informal assessments that target the standards can provide a clear picture of knowledge and skills** | ☐ Student is not aware that assessments can provide a picture of knowledge and skills. Student pursues points and grades as evidence of learning. Student believes that a traditional accumulation of points or assignment of letter grades without a description of student performance is an appropriate reflection of what the student knows and can do. | ☐ Student completes a variety of formal and informal assessments but is unsure how to use the results to chart a pathway to academic improvement. Student questions whether the results reflect true knowledge and skills. | ☐ Student understands that both formal and informal assessments, completed in a variety of settings and formats, can provide an accurate profile of knowledge and skills. Student uses the assessment results to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. | ☐ Student is eager to complete both formal and informal assessments and looks for as many opportunities as possible to gather information about personal knowledge and skills. Student asks about assessment results and engages in a dialogue with other students and the teacher about what these mean. Student uses assessment results to target areas for additional study and review in order to reach proficiency. |
| **Participates in the development of assessments and evaluation of assessment results** | ☐ Student does not yet participate in developing assessment options and is not interested in reviewing assessment results in an effort to improve learning. | ☐ Student does not want to offer suggestions for assessment options and reluctantly reviews assessment results to evaluate learning. | ☐ Student participates in the development of assessments and evaluation of assessment results. Student advocates for personal improvement to meet proficiency as a result of understanding and having a voice in the development of assessments. | ☐ Student provides design suggestions for assessments and eagerly looks for feedback about acquired knowledge and skills. Student advocates for strong personal improvement to exceed proficiency through both teacher and student-created assessments. |

# Construct 4—ASSESS (Cont'd)
## Student Rubric

| STUDENT RUBRIC | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Beginning**<br>*Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging**<br>*Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient**<br>*Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters**<br>*Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Uses assessment results to plan learning opportunities that help student meet or exceed proficiency; understands that personal management qualities will not be included in measuring and reporting academic performance** | ☐ Student does not yet appear interested in assessment results. Student completes a "next step" plan to meet proficiency but reflects little "buy-in" or eagerness to own assessment results. Student does not yet understand the impact of measuring and reporting academic performance separately from personal management qualities. | ☐ Student keeps track of assessment results according to classroom expectations. Student participates in a guided conversation about a personalized learning plan and understands that there are "next step" options available to reach proficient levels or higher. Student understands impact of measuring and reporting academic performance separately from personal management qualities. | ☐ Student reviews and evaluates assessment results and uses those results to design the next steps in a personal learning plan. Student sets goal to work for high academic performance and personal management qualities. | ☐ Student consistently monitors assessment results and knows how to use these results in a personalized learning plan to push towards higher levels of proficiency. Student demonstrates strong commitment to reach high academic levels and well-developed personal management qualities. |

# Construct 5—VERIFY

## Teacher and Student Rubrics

Teachers VERIFY their instructional practices and student performance results. They do this by carefully confirming that the standards, assessment practices, instructional activities and interventions are all aligned and consistent with what the standard requires. Teachers frequently share samples of student work with colleagues and ask them to score/grade the work. This lets teachers know they are on the same page as the rest of their department/team and develops inter-rater reliability. Teachers review instructional activities and student performance results to determine whether there are better activities that could be used the next time to help students reach proficient levels of knowledge and skills. They also confirm that all appropriate methods of differentiation are used and that the broad range of students' learning levels is met.

Students VERIFY their performance by reviewing their personal learning plans. They look at areas where they need to make improvement and where they want to explore some enrichment or accelerated learning. Students review what proficient levels of knowledge and skills look like and confirm that their work meets this expectation. Students understand why they earned the scores they did and continue to make improvement by working with the teacher on opportunities for revisions and reassessments.

# Construct 5—VERIFY
## Teacher Rubric

| How can I verify what my students learned? | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TEACHER RUBRIC** | **LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE** | | | |
| | **Beginning** *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Reviews a student's performance profile to look for consistent improvement or concerns** | ☐ Teacher reviews student performance data only when calculating the student's grade report. | ☐ Teacher occasionally looks over student's performance marks and cautions the student to work for improvement, frequently suggesting ways this might happen. Teacher is not consistently purposeful in shaping activities that give students multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency. | ☐ Teacher reviews student performance during learning activities and looks for improvement patterns and inconsistencies, knowing that consistent improvement leads to proficiency. Teacher expects each student to demonstrate proficiency a minimum of three times. Teacher establishes a student performance profile by helping students earn at least three or four scores that reflect proficient levels of learning or higher in each standard. | ☐ Teacher routinely reviews student performance, looking for patterns and areas of concern. Teacher replaces any original scores with improved marks when the student completes scheduled interventions and retries the assessments and other projects. Teacher looks for instructional activities that give each student multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency in an effort to establish patterns of improvement and optimum student growth. |
| **Confirms with colleagues what the standard requires students to know, understand and do** | ☐ Teacher does not confirm with colleagues what the standard requires students to know, understand and do. | ☐ Teacher participates in scheduled meetings and talks about what the standard requires students to know, understand and do is the focus of the conversation; however, teacher may not implement agreements team members develop. | ☐ Teacher and colleagues work together to break the standard down into manageable learning targets; all work together to agree on what students need to demonstrate to meet or exceed proficient levels of knowledge, understanding and skills. | ☐ Teacher works regularly as part of a department or school team to develop alignment documents that help both students and teachers understand what the standards require the teacher to teach and the students to know, understand and do. |

# Construct 5—VERIFY (Cont'd)
## Teacher Rubric

## How can I verify what my students learned?

| TEACHER RUBRIC | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Beginning**<br>*Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging**<br>*Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient**<br>*Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters**<br>*Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Shares samples of student work to affirm assessment judgments and alignment between assessment and standard being assessed; forms agreements with colleagues on levels of proficiency in exemplars** | ☐ Teacher does not confirm assessment judgments and alignment of assessments and standards with colleagues. | ☐ Teacher occasionally shares a sample of student work with colleagues as part of department collaboration; however, discussing assessment and alignment issues is not routine behavior. | ☐ Teacher shares samples of student performance with colleagues to confirm that judgment about performance is based on consistent interpretation of standards. | ☐ Teacher provides students and colleagues opportunities to review student performance through a blind review; this is intended to affirm a solid alignment between the standard, the lesson and the assessments, as well as to target any inconsistencies in scoring student work. |
| **Reviews activities included in the lesson to determine if there is adequate and appropriate differentiation to meet all students' needs** | ☐ Teacher does not reflect on reasons students may earn low scores, nor does teacher step back from the lesson and ask questions about whether students' learning needs are met. | ☐ Teacher is concerned when a significant number of students earn low scores but fails to connect their poor performance to an inadequate focus on learning needs during lesson planning and instruction. | ☐ Teacher reviews opportunities for students to engage in the lesson to ensure that student learning needs, including identified rate and level of learning, are being met. | ☐ Teacher collaborates with students in a review of all learning activities to ensure that each student's rate and level of learning are being met. Teacher confirms that developed definitions of proficiency reflect student learning needs and opportunities for optimum academic growth. |

# Construct 5—VERIFY (Cont'd)
## Student Rubric

| STUDENT RUBRIC | **How do I know I learned anything?** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE** | | | |
| | **Beginning**<br>*Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging**<br>*Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient**<br>*Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters**<br>*Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Reviews personal performance profile to look for consistent improvement or concerns** | ☐ Student does not keep track of personal performance and rarely uses the description of proficient as a target for the quality of work. | ☐ Student demonstrates concern about personal performance and asks questions about how to improve. Student expects that revisions and interventions will lead to improvement. | ☐ Student keeps track of personal performance profile and works to reach proficient levels and higher. | ☐ Student internalizes the definition of what it means to work at a proficient or higher level of knowledge and skills and keeps this in mind when completing activities and designing products. |
| **Reviews what a proficient level of knowledge and skills looks like to confirm student-developed work reflects proficiency or higher** | ☐ Student equates learning with earning points and does not connect required activities with learning new knowledge and skills. | ☐ Student knows the standard requires learning certain knowledge and skills; however, student continues to complete assignments to earn points. | ☐ Student checks in frequently with teacher and other students to confirm what the standard requires students to know, understand and do. Student reviews work to confirm that it reflects a proficient level of learning. | ☐ Student understands what is expected to reach proficient or higher levels of knowledge and skills; student reviews work to confirm it demonstrates advanced levels of proficiency. |
| **Looks for opportunities to shape own learning experience in ways that raise the academic bar and focus on strengths and areas for improvement** | ☐ Student not engaged in own learning and expects the teacher to create all learning experiences which, occasionally, the student may choose not to complete. | ☐ Student recognizes that steps are available to follow to achieve proficiency; however, student is not always willing to work that hard or to complete all steps leading to optimum academic growth. | ☐ Student knows learning strengths and how to improve. Student uses this information to work toward proficient levels and higher. | ☐ Student reflects a highly engaged level of ownership in learning and performance. Student asks questions and identifies ways to improve. Student has personal expectations of high academic success and plans a pathway to achieve this. |

# Construct 6—REFLECT

## Teacher and Student Rubrics

Teachers REFLECT on the success of their teaching. They affirm whether the initial planning, teaching and assessing are all aligned with the selected standards and whether they could have done a better job to prepare students and engage them in their own learning. Teachers take the time to confirm that non-academic factors are measured and reported separately from academic knowledge and skills. They review descriptions of proficient performance with their colleagues and reaffirm that the selected standards and descriptions of proficiency are consistent across the department/team and are holding students to the right level of knowledge and skills.

Teachers reflect on the resources used in the learning activities and determine whether there are some improved or newer resources that would hold the students' attention better or do a superior job of teaching the selected standards. They take the time to review all student performance data to evaluate the success of the lesson and to determine whether students were given all the right tools and experiences necessary to reach proficient levels of knowledge and skills or higher.

Students REFLECT on the success of their learning. They consider whether they could have worked harder or smarter to reach proficient levels of learning. Students evaluate what factors supported their success and what kept them from being successful; they plan on how these will not interfere with future learning opportunities. They reflect on how they can use what they have learned to set education and career goals and explore whether they want to consider additional coursework in this area. Students commit to a purposeful education pathway that reflects a strong work ethic with increased academic and skills achievement.
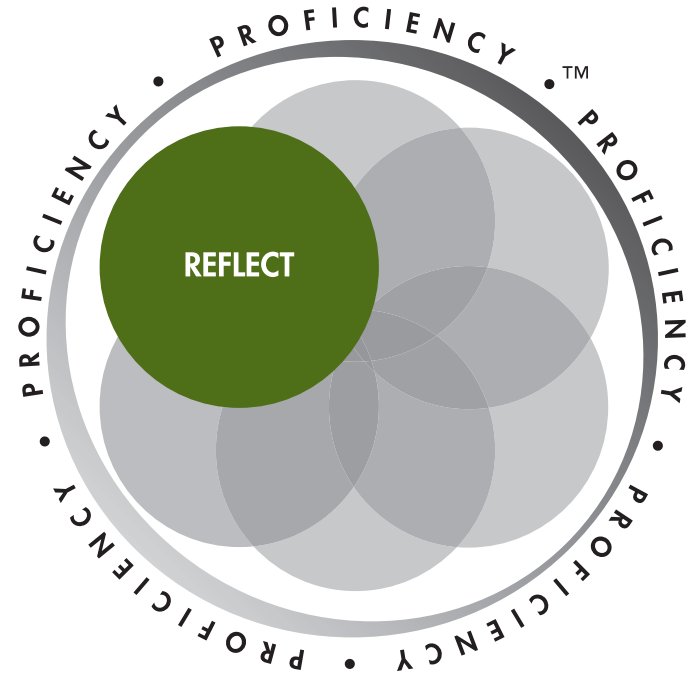
# Construct 6—REFLECT
## Teacher Rubric

| | How well did I plan, teach and assess this standard(s)? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TEACHER RUBRIC** | **LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE** | | | |
| | **Beginning**<br>*Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging**<br>*Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient**<br>*Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters**<br>*Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Reflects on whether the planning, teaching and assessment strategies effectively aligned with identified standard(s) and met students' learning needs** | ☐ Teacher believes that daily planning and teaching usually don't need any changes and that, if students don't learn anything, then the responsibility lies with the students to improve their work ethic. | ☐ Teacher occasionally looks back on how successful a lesson is and tries to remember some changes that would improve it next time it is taught. | ☐ Teacher considers whether any changes in planning and teaching can help more students reach proficient levels or higher. Teacher gathers feedback from students and expects to make changes to help them reach proficient levels or higher when the lesson is taught again. | ☐ Teacher engages in ongoing reflection about planning and learning activities, frequently making changes from one period to the next or one student to the next. Changes are intended to better align standards with instruction and assessments, in expectation of all students reaching proficient levels of learning or higher. |
| **Confirms through a review of all assessment practices that non-academic factors do not influence the decision about reporting student learning**<br><br>*NOTE: Non-academic factors could include attendance, attitude, behavior, do-overs, effort, extra credit and homework.* | ☐ Teacher routinely includes non-academic factors in evaluating and reporting student achievement. | ☐ Teacher is aware that non-academic factors contribute to a student's overall academic performance. Teacher tries to avoid having these factors influence judgment about student learning; however, personal bias and past practices contribute to the blending of academic and non-academic information when evaluating and reporting student achievement. | ☐ Teacher routinely reviews how effectively student academic achievement is measured and reported separately from non-academic factors. | ☐ Teacher and students share many conversations about what the standard requires them to know, understand and do. Teacher and students expect that non-academic factors can lead to missed opportunities to learn; however, they understand that this information will be captured and reported separately from a student's academic performance. |

# Construct 6—REFLECT (Cont'd)
## Teacher Rubric

| | How well did I plan, teach and assess this standard(s)? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TEACHER RUBRIC** | **LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE** | | | |
| | **Beginning** *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Considers the effectiveness of resources and strategies used to help students reach proficient levels and higher in targeted standard(s)** | ☐ Teacher seldom reflects on effectiveness of resources and strategies to help students reach proficient levels or higher. | ☐ Teacher recognizes that changes in resources and strategies might help improve student learning; teacher occasionally participates in this process with colleagues and makes positive changes. | ☐ Teacher reviews the resources and strategies used during planning and teaching as part of an ongoing practice of self-reflection, expecting this will lead to improved instruction and increased student learning. | ☐ Teacher reviews the resources and strategies used during the planning and teaching. Teacher considers how to include students in identifying resources to improve learning and creates opportunities for this in future lessons. |

# Construct 6—REFLECT (Cont'd)
## Student Rubric

| | **How well did I learn this standard(s)?** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE** | | | |
| **STUDENT RUBRIC** | **Beginning**<br>*Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills* | **Emerging**<br>*Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient* | **Proficient**<br>*Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill* | **Masters**<br>*Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation* |
| **Reflects on what strategies and resources will help student to reach proficient levels of knowledge and skills** | ☐ Student usually completes work because it is assigned or does not complete it at all. Student is not concerned about reaching a level of proficiency but expects to earn a grade through an accumulation of points and positive behavior. | ☐ Student occasionally reflects on ways to reach a proficient level of knowledge and skills more frequently or more easily. While there are some changes that come to mind, student rarely follows through in pursuing them. | ☐ Student seeks out information on how to be a more focused and engaged learner. Student expects to make any changes necessary to reach proficient levels of knowledge and skills. | ☐ Student does not want to settle for just reaching a proficient level. Student thinks about what to do to stretch academic knowledge and skills and views the teacher as a partner in helping to reach advanced levels. |
| **Evaluates how to work and whether there are non-academic factors that interfere with reaching proficient levels or higher**<br><br>*NOTE: Non-academic factors could include attendance, attitude, behavior, do-overs, effort, extra credit and homework.* | ☐ Student does not focus on academic progress and, although there are problems in non-academic areas, student appears not to realize how these interfere with successful learning. | ☐ Student is aware of how non-academic factors contribute to academic achievement. Student occasionally has problems in some of these areas and does not appear too concerned about making changes to address this. | ☐ Student demonstrates positive patterns in all non-academic areas and expects that this helps contribute to successfully reaching proficient levels or higher. Student can identify the attributes that contribute to success. | ☐ Student demonstrates positive patterns in all non-academic areas and routinely engages in a personal review of work ethic and engagement in learning to ensure reaching proficient level of learning and higher. |

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# About the Author



Diane Smith is a life-long teacher, beginning her career as a playground monitor in fourth grade. Her 34-year public school experience spans instruction at the elementary, middle, high school and college levels. An expert in the fields of curriculum and instruction, she shared her talents as a teacher, alternative school principal and Director of Curriculum for the Greater Albany Public School District in Albany, Oregon. Diane used proficiency-based teaching and learning as a teacher, while also working as a proficiency training coach for Oregon's Proficiency-based Admissions Standards System (PASS).

She is the author of several reflective and research documents on proficiency. She has provided professional development in proficiency-based teaching and learning for the Business Education Compact since 2007 and has held the position of Director of Teaching & Learning Initiative for the organization since her public school retirement in 2010.

# IT'S ABOUT TIME

*It's About Time—A Framework for Proficiency-based Teaching and Learning* is a comprehensive resource for all educators wanting to implement proficiency-based teaching and learning from the board room to the classroom. This user-friendly workbook offers a "how to" for teachers, principals and district leadership. Educators can use the rubrics and scenarios to evaluate readiness to implement proficiency practices successfully at the teacher and student levels. Administrators will find a wealth of ideas on how to ensure that proficiency-based teaching and learning practices are supported with strategic policies and sustainable resources.

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Assessment Consultant

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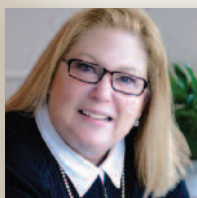
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### About the Business Education Compact

The BEC is a non-profit organization investing in quality education since 1984. In fulfilling our mission—"Make Learning Real"—we connect students with their future and give teachers tools to create enthusiastic, lifelong learners. Programs include paid internships for high school and college students; National Engineers Month that stimulates student excitement for science and math; and the Teaching & Learning Initiative that is transforming K-12 education and improving student outcomes through proficiency-based teaching and learning.

ISBN 985338503-1

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