



the ABCs of CBMs

Benchmarks made easy for Multi-tiered Student Supports & Response to Intervention
Using data to drive instructional decision-making in the classroom

PREFACE

Curriculum-based Measurement Assessments (CBMs) are a diagnostic testing procedure used by many school districts nation-wide. As a kindergarten through grade eight assessment, it should be designed by the local school, district, or Conference to measure students' perceived and actual classroom growth against the used standardized or norm-referenced test. In the era of 21st Century Literacy, *Reading First* and *Reading Next* have defined the core curriculum as having one central polarizing theme: Literacy. The components should come from various districts and universities from around the country, which help to ensure that the standards are achieved. The assessment can then be used as a benchmark of progress to help teachers drive their curriculum map for each part of the school year (beginning, middle, and end).

This format was first developed in Florida in 1970 by Stan Deno, a professor of psychology, with the idea that the procedures that were used should emulate classroom curriculum in an easy to give, informative, on the spot diagnostic tool. In 1985, Pine County Special Education Department in Minnesota, began field testing the assessments with amazing results (Ysseldyke, 2001). These assessments are now widely used around the nation in most school districts where the student population may not reflect the national norm (i.e. SES, Free/Reduced Lunch Programs, parental educational level, etc.). Some of the districts currently implementing CBMs include St. Croix River Education District, Minnesota; St. Paul Unified School District, Minnesota; Perris Elementary School District, California; Los Angeles Unified School District, California; La Paloma Academies, Arizona; Denver Public Schools, Colorado; and most of the school districts in Oregon and Iowa.

CBMs have been studied for over 30 years. In addition to providing an immediate response, the assessments also provide qualitative as well as quantitative information (Buehl, 1998). The faculty and staff of the South Atlantic Conference will be using this assessment as one source of information to monitor growth outcomes for the Conference-wide Student Growth Objectives.

CBMs AND ALTS

Teachers are always expressing dissatisfaction with the current standardized achievement battery administered each school year. This dissatisfaction may stem from not having the necessary materials, not being adequately trained on the instrument, not understanding how to use the assessment to drive instructional decision-making in the classroom, or the believe that the assessments do not adequately reflect how well students are performing as measured against the standards-based curriculum. In other words, students may have been doing well in the classroom, and yet have low achievement scores on the standardized battery given. Seeking a



simple straightforward assessment that would be a more direct indicator of how students progress, teachers are looking to CBMs to benchmark their students' progress.

Under the direction of the South Atlantic Conference of Education, teachers will be able to tackle Student Growth Objectives (SGOs) and move their students onward and upward in the Conference's goal of making every Adventist school in South Atlantic a school of excellence, embracing the Adventist Edge. The approach to CBMs required the Conference administration to look to assessments that could be used to directly monitor student progress of the model Adventist standards representing range of skills a student is required to become proficient in by the end of the school year. Basic proficiency is represented as having achieved at minimum of 80%. These tasks then become the items on the CBM battery, and the battery is then normed against the Iowa Assessment (IA).

Achievement Level Tests (ALT) are designed to partially mirror a standardized test format. CBMs and ALTs are not timed and they recognize that not all students are working with the same capabilities. With both type of assessments a placement test is administered to the student and he or she is matched to an appropriate assessment to measure their ability. The test spans grade-level years and students are able to move up and down the assessments based on their ability level. ALTs are norm-referenced assessments while CBMs are criterion-based assessments.

For the purpose of meeting the high SGO goals teachers will use the model Adventist Standards as their basis of instruction. The SACOE CBM will focus on criterion-referenced materials using our standards, and in a highbred fashion, combine ALTs from various other sources. The SACOE CBM has been borrowed and adapted from the following sources of materials to meet the model Adventist standards:

1. Developmental Reading Inventory 2.
2. Learning A to Z benchmark passages.
3. Assessment for Common Core Mathematics Standards Grade K – Center for Teacher Effectiveness, Los Angeles.
4. Assessment for Common Core Mathematics Standards Grade 1 – Center for Teacher Effectiveness, Los Angeles.
5. Assessment for Common Core Mathematics Standards Grade 2 – Center for Teacher Effectiveness, Los Angeles.
6. Assessment for Common Core Mathematics Standards Grade 3 – Center for Teacher Effectiveness, Los Angeles.
7. Assessment for Common Core Mathematics Standards Grade 4 – Center for Teacher Effectiveness, Los Angeles.
8. Assessment for Common Core Mathematics Standards Grade 5 – Center for Teacher Effectiveness, Los Angeles.
9. Assessment for Common Core Mathematics Standards Grade 6 – Center for Teacher Effectiveness, Los Angeles.
10. Assessment for Common Core Mathematics Standards Grade 7 – Center for Teacher Effectiveness, Los Angeles.



11. Assessment for Common Core Mathematics Standards Grade 8 – Center for Teacher Effectiveness, Los Angeles.
12. San Diego Writing Assessment.
13. Writing Scoring Rubrics from 6+ 1 Traits of Writing

ADMINISTRATION

Each grade level will have their reading assessment administered one-on-one, while the writing and math assessments may be administered in whole groups for grades 1 to 8. Each classroom teacher will have access to the electronic spreadsheet known as the Status of the Class document on the SACOE website under, Employee Portal: Curriculum Resources. The document will be turned into the school principal and SACOE three times each year. Student progress should also be maintained by the classroom teacher as input for progress report grades on the web-based SIS current used in South Atlantic. Teachers should also extrapolate data from the Status of the Class worksheet. This data can easily be turned into a graph for the class or each student. This may be used during Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences.

Norming. The reading assessments are scored based on the common scoring practices of the Developmental Reading Assessment 2 (DRA2), as standard rubric scale for mathematics, and the 6+ 1 Writing Traits rubric for writing. The scores are then reported to the school administration or the Conference using the Status of the Class forms.

After faculty receive in-service on the scoring and administration of the CBM, the battery will be administered to the entire school population three times a year: E – Entry (no later than the third week of school; T₂ – middle of the year in January; T₃ – end of the year in May (scores for this assessment should be included in the student's grades on the SIS.

Math Rubric Scale

- 6 – Exemplary = 101% +
- 5 – Mastered = 90-100%
- 4 – Proficient = 80 - 89%
- 3 – Developing = 60-79%
- 2 – Beginning = 40-59%
- 1 – Not Yet = 1-39%

Scores entered into the Student Information System (SIS, i.e RenWeb) should be based out of 5, since Mastery is the goal.

WHY DO WE ASSESS?

Assessment has been around since the dawn of time. It was used by God in the Garden of Eden and later by famous educators such as Aristotle. Assessment was employed by King Philip of



Greece to teach young Prince Alexander the lessons of logical thinking and reasoning skills which would one day help him dominate the world and become known as Alexander the Great.

Assessment can come in many forms: oral, written, project-based, tests of strength and endurance, courage, perseverance, or even self-control. No matter the form, assessment has but one goal – determine whether or not the pupil has mastered the lessons, standards or expectations taught.

WHAT SHOULD ASSESSMENTS TELL US?

Standardized Norm-referenced Tests. Standardized tests such as IA, CSAP, FCAT, WYPAS, or whichever test your state has chosen to adopt to measure universal student progress are all designed to measure the growth of students as they compare themselves from the year prior, and to other students at their grade level in their classroom, at their school, in their district, in their state, in their geographic region, or in their nation. These tests often have various factors which help equalize the normed score such as socio-economic status, paternal education level, free and reduced lunch status, gender, and special education limitations.

Criterion-based and Criterion-based Normed Reference Tests. Criterion-based tests, such as DRA2, CBMs, and even WRAP are designed with a proficiency goal of typically 80% mastery. These tests measure growth at various points during the school year (often repeating the same materials), and are developed with the core curriculum being implemented in the classroom in mind.

HOW DO THEY STACK UP?

ALT. ALTs have been designed as indicators of student achievement on standardized tests. Their correlation has been labeled “Extremely High,” by states such as Oregon, California, and Colorado.

CBM. CBMs are assessments that have been adapted from various other tests from around the country. A CBM is criterion-based in that it has been normed referenced against grade-level standards and curriculum being used in the classroom. The writing and mathematics portion of the SACOE CBM have been correlated against the SAT₉, and was found to have a correlation of 0.8, which in itself is “High.”

MODEL ADVENTIST STANDARDS

The model Adventist standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them achieve and succeed through rigor and relevance. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success providing



them the ability to obtain college and career readiness. With Adventist students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy, and our students will be rightly trained for service in this life and the life to come.

Building on the excellent foundation of standards, the Adventist model standards are the first step in providing our young people with a high-quality education. It should be clear to every student, parent, and teacher what the standards of success are in every SAC school.

The SACOE strategic planning is simple and actionable with your help. The following four objectives will help our system meet its goals:

GREAT schools at all SAC locations.

SAC is increasing the quality of our schools to ensure every student in each community throughout the Conference has access to a GREAT school.

Foundations of success in every school

SAC is focused on the Adventist blueprint philosophy of *Imagio Dei*. SAC will focus on restoring the image of our students into their Creator's by developing students who are creative, critical thinkers.

Preparing for Service in this life and the life to come

SAC is inspiring, challenging, and empowering our students to forge their futures with Christ as their guide and mentor. We are preparing our students for life on Earth after PK-12, including college and careers. More importantly we are preparing them for the life of service in the world to come.

Supporting the whole child

SAC will lead the Southern Union Conference in supporting the whole child ensuring students are healthy; engaged; and safe emotionally, spiritually, physically, and mentally.