

# Using Multiple Measures & Formative Practice to Identify Learning Needs



## REENTRY GUIDANCE

### Relationships First

School leaders and educators will be faced with many, immediate priorities as students start the academic year. Among those will be understanding new safety protocols, adjusting to new schedules, routines, and norms, incorporating technology more robustly as a day-to-day tool for instruction, and establishing academic baseline using formative assessments and multiple measures of student performance.

However, it is our belief that none of the above priorities can be accomplished without first attending to the social and emotional wellbeing of students. Strong, established, positive relationships with adults and peers allow for deep connections, critical thinking, and accelerated learning to occur. In this way, our students' emotional and physical safety is paramount.

Administering a test should not be a day one, week one, or even week two activity; New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) believes that local school leaders can best determine when to deploy the formative assessment tools that will assist with identifying their students' needs. When appropriate, this guidance document will assist schools in better understanding how to identify learning needs and the resources available for formative practices.

– Dr. Gwen Perea Warniment,  
*Deputy Cabinet Secretary  
Teaching, Learning & Assessment*

### Identifying and Diagnosing Learning Needs

Many assessment products have been described as diagnostic and made to serve multiple purposes. However, NMPED understands that effective assessment practices require specific design and uses. As such, in order to support teachers in identifying and addressing student needs, New Mexico has engaged in a comprehensive, balanced assessment system. A balanced system of assessment provides students multiple opportunities to demonstrate learning and understanding. Comprising formative, interim, and summative assessments, each with a distinct purpose and use, this system of assessments informs teachers on student competency and learning gaps, provides feedback to students and families, and illuminates the need for broader support and policy action at the district and state levels.

As schools begin to prepare for student reentry in the fall, NMPED is dedicated to supporting teaching and learning through formative and interim assessments, available to all NM public schools, at no cost to the school or district. These tools, which are aligned to state adopted content standards, are also aligned with the state's summative assessments, allowing for consistent, streamlined information on student progress. **Additionally, these tools are available in multiple delivery formats (paper and online) and with flexible administration (number of items, time) to be adaptable to all reentry options: remote, hybrid, or in-person.** Together, the implementation and use of high-quality formative and interim assessments and practices illuminate student learning gaps and highlight targeted areas of focus for the upcoming school year.

Critical to the support and success of all NM students is a commitment to maintaining high standards and academic goals. Identifying and addressing student learning needs is a practiced skill for teachers, thus NMPED’s primary aim is to leverage, support, and enhance those skills by providing tools and services that teachers may use to build capacity and address the needs of students in the fall.

Importantly, there is no single prescribed method, test, or tool that single handily works to “establish a baseline” for student learning. Rather, schools and educators must employ a toolkit of resources and supports to elicit student thinking, identify areas of need and misconceptions, and measure progress in relation to learning goals, all to target specific actions that accelerate learning. This is the work of taking back assessment as part of the teaching profession.

These actions require multiple measures of student understanding, including formative and interim assessment data, as well as leveraging longitudinal data, screeners, and critical, informal learning checks. Developing, selecting, and using the information from high-quality assessments works best when teachers can work together in groups such as professional learning communities (PLC).

Formative assessment practices are inseparable from instruction and provide in-the-moment feedback to students and to gain insight into student thinking so teachers can adjust instruction to best meet students’ learning needs. These tools elicit student understanding and help identify misconceptions. NMPED provides assessment tools, aligned to NM content standards, which may be used formatively, to all schools. These resources are tied to key learning targets to provide specific information to educators on knowledge and skills that are still emergent or developing.

### Formative Assessment Guidance by Reentry Category

REMOTE	HYBRID	FULL REENTRY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A variety of delivery options including printable PDFs that may be distributed to students with limited internet connectivity</li> <li>• Professional learning available to educators to support use of formative assessments in digital or remote learning environments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formative assessment tools are available for remote access schools</li> <li>• Resources support specific learning targets, may also be individually selected or grouped by teachers to support specific uses</li> </ul>	



As you monitor your students' progress, it is important to respond with both the data and acceleration in mind. Here are some responses that may be employed based on formative practices and interim performance.

- **Fewer than 25% of students perform below mastery on an assessment:** respond with targeted intervention for those specific students. Do not adjust whole-group instruction to meet this need.
- **Between 25–75% of students perform below mastery on an assessment:** analyze the standard and high-quality instructional material being used to determine:
  - ▶ If the material spirals into future units of instruction, then adjust your scope and sequence/pacing guide to offer embedded formative assessments to regularly monitor progress. Since the material spirals, you do not need to adjust the scope and sequence/ pacing guide to add instructional days. This is true for both priority and non-priority standards.
  - ▶ If the material does not spiral and it is a priority standard, then slight adjustments should be made to the instructional days in your scope and sequence/pacing guide. These adjustments should be as minimal as possible (one to three days) so as not to remove needed days for other standards. Adjustments should also be made to incorporate small opportunities for spiraling of content in practice found daily lessons or homework.
  - ▶ If the material does not spiral and it is not a priority standard, then no adjustments should be made to the instructional days in your scope and sequence/pacing guide. Adjustments should be made to incorporate small opportunities for spiraling of content in practice found daily lessons or homework.
  - ▶ **NOTE:** Strategies must be adjusted depending on where along the 25–75% continuum the class exists.

- **More than 75% of students perform below mastery on an assessment:** respond with targeted whole-group instruction to meet these needs. Analyze the standard and high-quality instructional material being used to determine:
  - ▶ If the material spirals into future units of instruction, then adjust your scope and sequence/pacing guide to offer embedded formative assessments to regularly monitor progress. Since the material spirals, you don't need to adjust the scope and sequence/pacing guide to add instructional days. This is true for both priority and non-priority standards.
  - ▶ If the material does not spiral and it is a priority standard, then slight adjustments should be made to the instructional days in your scope and sequence/pacing guide. These adjustments should be as minimal as possible (two to three days) so as not to remove needed days for other standards. Adjustments should also be made to incorporate small opportunities for spiraling of content in practice found daily lessons or homework.
  - ▶ If the material does not spiral and it is not a priority standard, then a small (one day) adjustment could be made to the instructional days in your scope and sequence/pacing guide. This should only be done if all students share a common misconception that could be address easily in one lesson. If this is not the case, adjustments should be made to incorporate small opportunities for spiraling of content in practice found daily lessons or homework.



**Formative Tools Available to All New Mexico Schools at No Cost**

	SUBJECT AREA	RESOURCE/PURPOSE	PARTNER PROVIDER
K-Grade 2	English (ELA) & Spanish Language Arts (SLA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Computer adaptive ongoing progress monitoring tool</li> <li>Identify needed intervention areas and determine within year summary growth</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Istation's Indicators of Progress (ISIP)</a>
K-Grade 2	Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Computer adaptive ongoing progress monitoring tool</li> <li>Identify needed intervention areas and determine within year summary growth</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Istation's Indicators of Progress (ISIP)</a>
Grades 3-8	Math, ELA, & STEM (Science)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive 6-10 question formative item sets<sup>1</sup> available in PDF and online</li> <li>Intended to be used as part of a lesson or instructional unit</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Cognia</a>
Grades 3-8	Math <sup>2</sup> & ELA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BOY, MOY, and EOY interim assessments to determine progress toward grade-level proficiency</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Cognia</a>
High School	Math & ELA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Khan Academy for specific skill building and practice test (formerly operational exams), which can be used as BOY, MOY, and EOY interims</li> </ul>	<a href="#">College Board</a>
Grades 3-High School	Math, ELA, & Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instructionally embedded formative assessments<sup>1</sup> to be used to during the academic year to determine student progress toward IEP defined academic goals</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM)</a>

<sup>1</sup>Can be translated into other languages locally

<sup>2</sup>Spanish math in development

**Here are some additional resources to support formative practices in the classroom.**

- [Formative Assessment Resources for Parents](#), Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
- [Formative Assessment Practices for Distance Learning](#), Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
- [Six Resources to Support Remote Instruction](#), Wisconsin Digital Learning Collaborative
- [Classroom Assessment Learning Modules](#), Center for Assessment