SLO Module B: Standards and Assessments for PLCs

**Overview:**

This module consists of a protocol schools and/or PLCs can use to discuss the alignment of assessments to standards and the tools used to score the assessments.

**Rationale:**

Having a common approach to, and understanding of, standard(s) and assessment(s) alignment, as well as what is considered proficient, is a critical component to teacher efficacy and therefore increases student achievement.

**Materials:**

* A training assessment and the necessary scoring materials are provided below. However if your site would like to review an assessment and scoring materials from a teacher at your school, please feel free to do so.
  + For Elementary Schools-Use an assessment of your own or the Elementary Science Sample from SLO website
  + For Middle Schools- Use an assessment of your own or Middle School Science from SLO Website
  + For Secondary Schools- Use an assessment of your own or the High School Geometry Sample from the SLO website

***1. Before discussing assessment alignment, review the following ideas:***

* **You do not have to teach the content/grade level in order to discuss alignment to standards.** 
  + *Use the verbiage of the standard to determine what the student is supposed to demonstrate. For example, if the standard states, “analyze a graph…”, discuss what it means to “analyze” and let that drive your conversation.*
  + *Review the standard(s) below and above the grade level standard to get an idea of what the student already knows and the knowledge the student will be asked to demonstrate next.*
* **Asking questions for clarification is encouraged.** 
  + *Asking questions about the standard(s) and/or the assessment(s) pushes everyone’s thinking and helps build the collective knowledge of the group.*
* **Consider the cognitive demand of the standard and of the assessment or assessment item.**
  + *Some standards are “meaty” or ambiguous therefore questions assessing a variety of DOK levels may be necessary.*
  + *Types of assessment items may vary, depending on the depth of the standard. For example, if the standard states, “construct an argument…”, a performance task with rubric would be an assessment item that could align to that standard.*
* **Is there a balance of standards represented within the assessment?**
  + *Again, some standards are more “meaty” and require more questions to determine the full spectrum of the standard. Some standards are more explicit and may require fewer questions. If paired together, these standards may not have the same number of assessment items but are equally represented within the assessment due to their level of complexity.*
  + *The idea of quality vs quantity. Does the length of the assessment align with the depth of the standard and the needs of the student(s)?*
* **Assume best intentions…as someone giving feedback and as someone receiving feedback.** 
  + *Great instruction and assessment of our standards is happening every day in our schools!! If a teacher has overlooked something, consider this an opportunity for clarification and growth. Feedback on an assessment is intended to push each other’s thinking and help educators grow. It is not punitive or evaluative and therefore should not be presented that way nor received that way.*

***2. Handout the Sample Assessment and Scoring Materials***

***3. Review an Assessment and the Assessment Scoring:***

1. As a PLC, read the standard(s) and discuss what the standard(s) is asking the students to do.
2. As an individual, read the assessment and the associated scoring.
3. As an individual, note the standard that each assessment item is assessing as well as the depth of questioning.
4. As a PLC, discuss notes and findings.

* **What are the expectations for proficiency?**
* **How are all students able to show growth?**
* **Is the scoring of the assessment clear?**
* **Does the distribution of points for each item align with the type of questioning?**
* **If it is a common assessment, how are we ensuring all assessments are scored and graded the same way?**

*Note: The questions for assessment scoring may not be easily answered and will therefore take some time to discuss as a school/PLC. However, these questions often lead to powerful insights about our practice and end up being a valuable piece to a PLC.*

1. As a PLC, discuss feedback that will be provided to the teacher(s).