

Table E.1: Tenets of Assessment Literacy

Chapter	Tenets
<b>Introduction: Revisiting Assessment Practices</b>	<b>Tenet 1.1:</b> Systems used to classify students in K–12 education should be used only after a thorough examination of the potential negative effects on each individual student.
<b>Chapter 1: The Influence of Large-Scale Assessments</b>	<p><b>Tenet 1.1:</b> Large-scale assessments were introduced to American K–12 education in the late 19th century and have grown to encompass several types and purposes. Nevertheless, measurement experts increasingly emphasize the limitations of large-scale assessments, especially when measuring general cognitive skills.</p> <p><b>Tenet 1.2:</b> Interim assessments are designed to complement year-end assessments. They can serve a number of functions, including guiding instruction, evaluating students, and predicting how well students will perform on year-end assessments. However, they only provide a limited amount of data and cannot be used for all purposes.</p>
<b>Chapter 2: Technical Characteristics of Large-Scale Assessments</b>	<p><b>Tenet 2.1:</b> Large-scale assessments should represent only one piece of information when making decisions about students, and they should never be the primary piece of information.</p> <p><b>Tenet 2.2:</b> Large-scale assessments measure only a sample of the important content in a given subject area.</p> <p><b>Tenet 2.3:</b> Large-scale assessments are not necessarily aligned with state or local standards.</p> <p><b>Tenet 2.4:</b> Large-scale assessments are not necessarily comparable to one another.</p> <p><b>Tenet 2.5:</b> Students should receive information and experiences that make them familiar with the nature and formats of the large-scale assessments they will take.</p> <p><b>Tenet 2.6:</b> Large-scale assessment scores for students who are not fully engaged in taking the test are typically underestimates of the students' actual knowledge and skill.</p> <p><b>Tenet 2.7:</b> A single score on a test should always be interpreted from the perspective that it might contain significant error.</p> <p><b>Tenet 2.8:</b> Cut scores should be considered cautiously when making decisions about individual students.</p> <p><b>Tenet 2.9:</b> Subscores in isolation should not be used to make decisions about student placement for instruction.</p> <p><b>Tenet 2.10:</b> Educators should provide enough accommodations to ensure that each student's performance on an assessment is the most accurate estimate possible of the student's true status.</p>
<b>Chapter 3: Rethinking Classroom Assessments</b>	<p><b>Tenet 3.1:</b> A single score on an assessment should represent a single construct or dimension.</p> <p><b>Tenet 3.2:</b> Using points and percentages to score assessments without explicit reference to a continuum of knowledge and skill can be highly misleading in terms of the status of individual students.</p> <p><b>Tenet 3.3:</b> Proficiency scales should be used to explicitly articulate the continuum of knowledge and skill for specific measurement topics and explicitly guide the measurement process.</p> <p><b>Tenet 3.4:</b> To ensure students are aware of the continuum of knowledge on which they will be assessed, educators should develop specific proficiency scales for the following types of content: declarative knowledge, mental procedures, and psychomotor procedures.</p> <p><b>Tenet 3.5:</b> A single proficiency scale can incorporate two or more elements if those elements can be shown to covary.</p> <p><b>Tenet 3.6:</b> When designing proficiency scales for declarative and procedural knowledge, consider the internal hierarchical structures of these types of knowledge before using external taxonomies.</p>
<b>Chapter 4: Scoring Classroom Assessments</b>	<p><b>Tenet 4.1:</b> Classroom assessments should utilize a broad spectrum of assessment types to gather information about each student's current status on specific topics.</p> <p><b>Tenet 4.2:</b> Teachers should administer and score multiple assessments for each student on each measurement topic using an approach that involves assessments administered to all students and assessments administered to individual students.</p> <p><b>Tenet 4.3:</b> When designing multiple assessments for a specific measurement topic, teachers should use the proficiency scale to ensure the assessments are parallel.</p>

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<b>Chapter 4: Scoring Classroom Assessments</b>	<p><b>Tenet 4.4:</b> Some assessments should be used as instructional feedback and therefore do not have to be scored or recorded.</p> <p><b>Tenet 4.5:</b> Teachers should only enter scores in a gradebook that they deem acceptably reliable and valid.</p>
<b>Chapter 5: Aggregating Classroom Assessment Scores</b>	<p><b>Tenet 5.1:</b> Research thus far has demonstrated that formative assessment can have powerful effects on student learning, but the average effect is rather modest.</p> <p><b>Tenet 5.2:</b> The term <i>formative assessment</i> has no specific agreed-on definition, but there is some commonality in descriptions regarding it being a process used to gather evidence about students.</p> <p><b>Tenet 5.3:</b> A student's current status on a measurement topic should never be determined by a single test.</p> <p><b>Tenet 5.4:</b> Formative scores for a specific measurement topic derive from individual assessments. Summative scores for a specific measurement topic do not derive from an individual assessment but from the collective evidence provided by the formative scores.</p> <p><b>Tenet 5.5:</b> Averages can provide summary information about a student's performance but, especially when scores are tracked by assessment type, do not provide information about a student's current status on specific topics. Decaying averages, while acknowledging student growth, nevertheless mask important information that should also be used when computing summative scores.</p> <p><b>Tenet 5.6:</b> When computing a summative score for a specific measurement topic, teachers should consider which mathematical model best fits the student's observed scores.</p> <p><b>Tenet 5.7:</b> The method of mounting evidence is a viable method of estimating students' summative scores on measurement topics that does not rely on mathematical calculations.</p> <p><b>Tenet 5.8:</b> When reporting summative scores that have been computed using the method of mathematical models for specific measurement topics, select a rounding approach that preserves differences in estimates and offers an appropriate level of precision, or simply report the raw score.</p> <p><b>Tenet 5.9:</b> The reliability coefficient does not provide useful information about the precision of summative score estimates for individual students. If a measure of reliability is desired, use estimates from the mathematical model of best fit or Bayesian statistics.</p> <p><b>Tenet 5.10:</b> The argument-based perspective of validity (criterion, construct, and content) fits well with a model of assessment that utilizes proficiency scales to generate and score parallel assessments on a specific topic and uses multiple formative scores to generate a summative score. The instrumental perspective of validity does not.</p>
<b>Chapter 6: Grading Systems</b>	<p><b>Tenet 6.1:</b> Grades on report cards should be measures of what students know and can do relative to academic content that has been taught, as opposed to compliance with school-imposed behavioral or attitudinal norms.</p> <p><b>Tenet 6.2:</b> At the end of a grading period, summative scores should be aggregated only within their respective domains.</p> <p><b>Tenet 6.3:</b> Averaged summative scores within a subject area or domain may be converted to traditional letter grades and percentage scores; cut scores for grades should be articulated as typical levels of competence on a proficiency scale.</p> <p><b>Tenet 6.4:</b> The conjunctive approach should be considered as an alternative to compensatory approaches when aggregating summative scores across measurement topics within a domain.</p> <p><b>Tenet 6.5:</b> Schools and districts should annually update the validity coefficients for their reporting systems and make changes in those systems as necessary.</p>
<b>Chapter 7: Competency- Based Systems</b>	<p><b>Tenet 7.1:</b> A competency-based system that allows students to improve on previously assigned scores introduces students to the concept of working on a topic until they master it, but can still employ a traditional letter-grading system.</p> <p><b>Tenet 7.2:</b> A competency-based system that allows students to work on content not yet addressed in class and improve on scores previously assigned encourages students to seek mastery on topics beyond their current grade level and can employ a traditional letter-grading system.</p> <p><b>Tenet 7.3:</b> Report cards can be designed for competency-based systems that show students' status and growth for every year they have been in a competency-based system.</p> <p><b>Tenet 7.4:</b> In a competency-based system, student pace can be quantified and used as an overall measure of progress toward graduation.</p>