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Thinking Systemically about Assessment

June 24, 2011

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Purposeful Assessment

1. Screening to determine individual child's level of functioning
2. Guiding intervention and instruction
3. Evaluating performance of a program or society
4. Advancing knowledge of child development

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Only when the entire system is considered can reasonable decisions about assessment be made.

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EIGHT COMPONENTS OF AN ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

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1. Standards

A comprehensive, well-articulated set of standards for both program quality and children's learning that are aligned to one another and that define the constructs focused on in assessment.

The foundation for coherence across all other elements.

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2. Assessments

Multiple approaches to documenting child performance and reviewing program quality that are of high quality and connect to one another in well-defined ways, from which strategic selection can be made depending on specific purposes.

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3. Reporting of Results

Establish an integrated, user-accessible **database** of assessment results, provide for quality assurance and integrity of data, and generate reports for various audiences.

Ease and clarity of reporting should be considered when selecting assessments

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4. Professional Development

Ongoing opportunities provided to those at all levels (practitioners, administrators, program directors) to understand the standards and assessments, to learn to use the data with integrity, and to **create consistency (horizontal and vertical)**.

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5. Opportunity to Learn

Procedures for ensuring the environments in which children are spending time offer high-quality support for development and learning, as well as affectively positive relationships.

This is an important role for QRIS (as well as a pretty big gap in K-3).

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6. Inclusion

Methods to ensure that all children will be assessed fairly, regardless of their language, culture, or disabilities, and with tools that provide the most useful information for fostering their development and learning.

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7. Resources

Assurance that resources needed to ensure the development and implementation of the system components are available.

If you can't do it well, don't do it.

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8. Monitoring and Evaluation

Procedures for continuously monitoring the system itself to ensure that is operating effectively.

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THE PREK-3RD SYSTEM

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PreK-3rd is a System

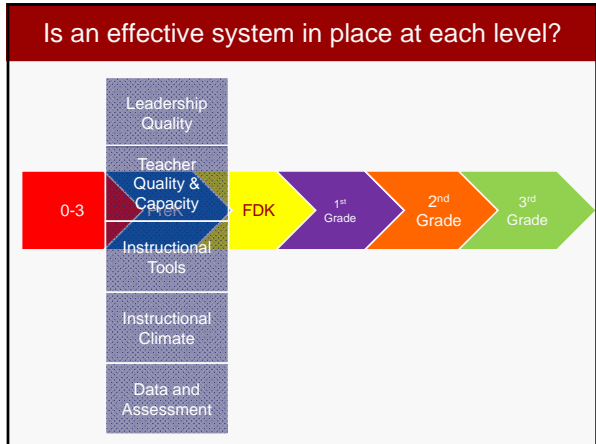
- Has subsystems
- Part of a larger system
- Interconnections are essential

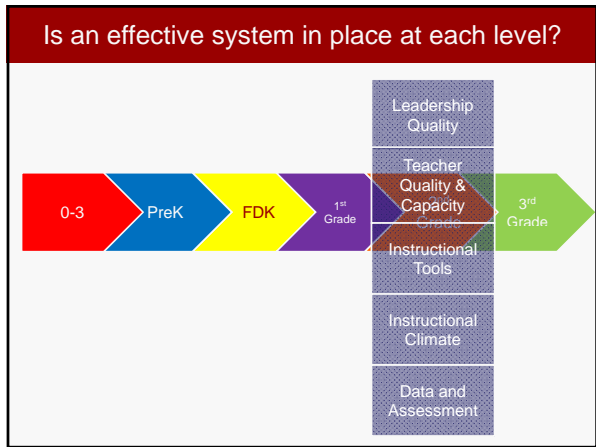
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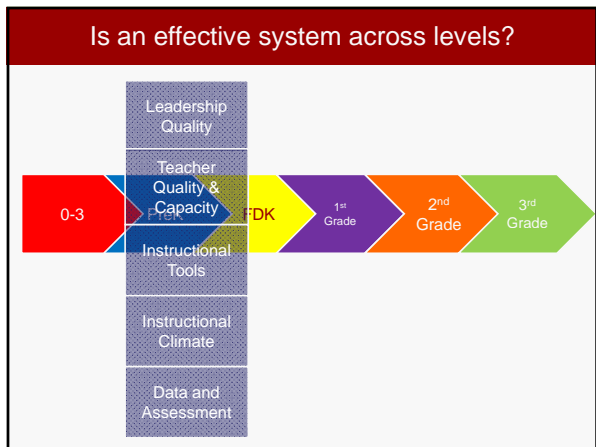
Three Types of Results

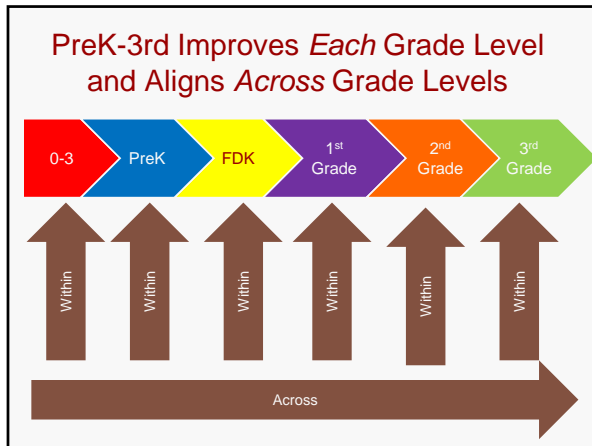
Within

Across









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The Goal is Coherence

Horizontal coherence: when curriculum, instruction, and assessment are all aligned with standards at each level.

Vertical coherence: when there is a shared understanding at and across all levels of the goals for children's learning.

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The Goal is Coherence

Developmental Coherence: takes into account what is known about how children's understanding develops over time and what is needed for learning to progress at each stage.

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Guidance

- Alignment is important, should be done intentionally, and should be a “living” process.
 - of assessment frameworks and standards.
 - of assessment tools with standards.

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Guidance

- Engage teachers, parents, principals, administrators in articulating the purposes and goals for assessment *before* selecting and implementing.

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Guidance

- Don't let perfect be the enemy of good-enough.
 - An intentional and inclusive process for making decisions is more important than selecting “perfect” instruments.

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Guidance

- Build a system, don't focus on a single test.
 - These assessment efforts are not about accountability, but about continual system improvement.

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Guidance

- To build shared understanding and investment across all levels of the system, Focus!
 - A core assessment establishes a common language and a centering point from which to build both horizontal and vertical discussions and improvement efforts.

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Guidance

- Engage teachers at every step.
 - Think about feedback loops (one-up/one-down).
 - Ensure meaningful time for teachers to work together to review, interpret, and act on the data.

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

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How do (or will) your assessment efforts link to standards/guidelines?

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How do (or will) your assessment efforts link to learning opportunities (the learning environment)?

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How do (or will) your assessment efforts link to horizontal professional development?

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How do (or will) your assessment efforts link to vertical professional development?

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