

by: **Danielle LaPointe-McEwan, Dr. Christopher DeLuca**

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Assessment is top of mind in schools these days. Teachers are required to use assessments continuously in their practice, from initial Kindergarten readiness assessments to high school exit exams to accountability-driven provincial testing programs. Increasingly, teachers across grades are also expected to engage students in ongoing assessments during learning periods to provide regular formative feedback about their progress in relation to provincial standards.¹ Clearly, teacher assessment fluency has become a fundamental skill for teaching in today's schools. So, what does it mean for a teacher to be fluent in assessment? And, more importantly, what does it look like in practice?

Fluency – the skill to communicate with ease in a language – has the Latin root word *fluere*, “to flow.” For teachers, then, we conceptualize *assessment fluency* as the skill to integrate and use assessments within the flow of teaching and learning. Assessment fluency combines teaching, curriculum, and assessment to effectively support and report on student learning in classrooms.

4/5 FREE ARTICLES LEFT ~~Private is important~~, research suggests that many teachers do not feel sufficiently prepared to effectively use assessment in their classrooms to optimize student learning.² In this article, we present eight key

dimensions of assessment fluency as a framework for enhancing classroom assessment practices.

The Assessment Fluency Framework

In the past two decades, defining assessment fluency has been a focus of research and policy worldwide.³ Since the 1990 publication of the influential *Standards for Teacher Competence in Educational Assessment of Students*, a number of documents have been developed to articulate standards for classroom assessment and to guide teacher practice.

By analyzing changes over time in 15 of these documents (from Canada, the U.K., the U.S., Europe, Australia, and New Zealand), we were able to identify eight key dimensions for teacher assessment fluency.⁴ These dimensions are:

- Compare to other lists.
- understanding multiple **assessment purposes**
 - understanding the complete **assessment process**
 - effectively **communicating assessment results and decisions** to various audiences
 - understanding practices that contribute to **fair student assessments**
 - understanding the **ethics** of classroom assessment
 - effectively using **measurement theory principles** in assessment practices
 - effectively using **assessment for learning** principles throughout teaching and learning
 - providing effective **assessment education and support for teachers.**

Each of the eight dimensions reflects key considerations when assessing student learning, and combined they represent a framework for understanding and supporting assessment fluency. This framework serves as a tool to help teachers unleash the power of assessment fluency in practice. In the **table** on pp. 41–42, we identify core topics related to each of the eight dimensions of assessment fluency, then describe what it looks like in practice. We also provide key professional learning goals to support the teachers’ development across the dimensions.

Supporting professional learning in assessment

The Assessment Fluency Framework can be used to support teachers’ development of assessment fluency at individual, school, and district levels. Individual teachers can use the framework to identify personal areas of strength and areas for development. For example, with respect to the Assessment Purposes dimension of the framework, a teacher might reflect on the following questions:

- How do I define and distinguish between assessment *for*, *as*, and *of* learning?
- Do I understand when to use diagnostic, formative, or summative assessments in my classroom? How do I use the information gained from these assessments to support teaching and learning?
- How do I ensure alignment between various assessments used in my classroom and provincial curriculum expectations?

Teachers can then use the learning goals identified in the framework to target areas for personal learning.

Similarly, school and district administrators can use the Assessment Fluency Framework to determine professional learning strengths and goals in assessment across classrooms in schools and across schools in districts. Goals can then be incorporated into school and district improvement plans, providing the basis for professional learning opportunities for teachers. These opportunities might include school-based collaborative inquiries focused on specific aspects of classroom assessment or district-wide professional development sessions for teachers with assessment experts.

Becoming assessment fluent is a career-long pursuit requiring sustained and intentional professional learning. This framework provides a tool to engage focused learning toward teachers' effective use of assessment information in their classrooms. Supporting teacher learning in assessment across schools and districts will ultimately ensure that students gain the benefit of assessment-driven teaching.

Download the Assessment Fluency Framework

The Assessment Fluency Framework

Dimension	Core Topics	What It Looks Like in Practice	Professional Learning Goals
Assessment Purposes	Diagnostic/readiness, formative assessment, summative assessment, assessment for, of, and as learning, accountability, standards-based, monitoring progress, norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessments	Teacher chooses appropriate and multiple forms of assessment based on clearly stated instructional goals and assessment purpose (e.g. Aol, Afl, Aal).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distinguish between Aol, Afl, Aal, diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment purposes Understand the role of multiple forms of assessment Identify differences and intersections between classroom-based, provincial, and standardized assessments
Assessment Processes	Assessment design, question construction, rubrics, assessment for and as learning strategies, feedback strategies, student-driven assessment, self and peer-assessments, standardized assessments, differentiated assessments, aligning assessment with curriculum and teaching, administering assessments, portfolio assessment, electronic assessments, scoring/grading, moderated marking, analyzing results/assessment data at student and class levels, assessment-based decision-making	Teacher constructs, administers, and scores different forms of assessments for multiple purposes. Teacher interprets assessment results to facilitate instructional decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design reliable forms of assessment that include products (i.e. tests and rubrics), conversations, and observations Engage in pedagogical documentation, monitoring teaching practice and students' responses to instruction Incorporate diverse forms of assessment beyond tests to assess student learning and response to instruction Administer assessments to diverse groups of students Collect and score assessment data Interpret scores and use assessment data to make instructional decisions Develop grading procedures that yield valid information about student achievement
Communicating Assessment Results & Decisions	Communicating assessment processes and philosophies, reporting student results, report cards, communicating with diverse audiences (students, parents, teachers, administrators), technology-based communication	Teacher communicates assessment purposes, processes, and results through a variety of methods to multiple stakeholders (e.g. students, parents, administrators, other teachers).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulate approach to assessment and grading procedures to key stakeholders Establish a regular method for communicating assessment information and processes to key stakeholders Engage stakeholders in regular conversations about student learning
Fair Student Assessments	Standardized assessments, differentiated and equitable assessments, individualized assessments, accommodations and modifications, technology-supported assessments, differentiated reporting, assessment in diverse classrooms, assessment for social justice	Teacher cultivates a fair assessment context for all learners with sensitivity to student diversity, learning approaches, and exceptionalities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect on sources of bias within assessment processes and establish methods for enhancing fairness Distinguish between systematic and random sources of error within assessment processes Ensure students with exceptionalities receive accommodations and modifications Acknowledge student diversity and make assessment provisions that build on students' strengths
Assessment Ethics	Privacy, propriety, confidentiality, student rights in assessment, consistency of assessment practices across students, assessment consequences (social, emotional, personal, and academic)	Teacher analyzes and discloses ethical implications of assessments. Teacher protects the rights and privacy of students throughout assessment processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect on ethical issues within assessment processes and establish methods to enhance ethical decision-making Ensure students' rights to privacy are protected throughout assessment processes Maintain opportunities for students and other stakeholders to express ethical concerns
Measurement Theory Principles	Reliability, validity, bias, error, psychometrics, item analyses, class data analyses, norm- and criterion-referenced assessments	Teacher understands psychometric properties of assessments including methods for establishing reliability assessments that yield valid interpretations about student learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand methods for establishing reliability across multiple forms of assessment Consider threats to reliability and validity within assessment construction, administration, scoring and interpretation of results Distinguish between norm-, criterion-, and growth-referenced models for assessment
Assessment for Learning	Aligning assessment with curriculum and teaching, diverse feedback strategies, types of feedback, self- and peer-assessment, connections between summative and formative, progress monitoring, student involved and directed assessment, learning goals and plans, success criteria	Teacher uses student-centered formative assessment strategies throughout instructional periods to guide teacher practice and student learning. Teaching and learning are feedback-driven (i.e. self-, peer-, and teacher feedback).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop multiple feedback-driven assessment strategies that include self-, peer, and teacher-assessments Engage students in identifying learning goals, establishing a plan for their learning, and monitoring their learning toward goals
Assessment Education and Support for Teachers	Professional development strategies (workshops, collaborative inquiries, professional learning communities, instructional rounds, action research, etc.), assessment resources and sharing	Teachers regularly analyze their assessment fluency and engage in ongoing learning about classroom assessment. Teachers utilize diverse resources to support their individual and collective professional learning needs and goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect on classroom assessment practices using assessment fluency dimensions Identify professional learning goals (individual or collective) Establish a professional learning plan and identify key learning resources and opportunities Self-assess professional learning and changes in assessment practice

EXPLORE YOUR ASSESSMENT PROFILE

Want to learn more about your approach to classroom assessment?

Try the Approaches to Classroom Assessment Inventory (ACAI) at <http://educ.queensu.ca/acai> and generate your personal assessment profile. Based on your profile, you can identify and select personal learning goals to enhance your assessment fluency.

En Bref : L'évaluation constitue une compétence essentielle pour enseigner dans les écoles contemporaines. Cet article présente huit dimensions destinées à soutenir et à renforcer la maîtrise de l'évaluation par les éducateurs et à améliorer les pratiques d'évaluation en classe. Les sujets fondamentaux et objectifs d'apprentissage de chaque dimension sont indiqués pour guider l'apprentissage professionnel des enseignants en évaluation.

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1 C. DeLuca, L. Volante and L. Earl, "Assessment for Learning across Canada," *Education Canada* 55, no. 2 (2015): 48-52.

2 C. A. Mertler, “Teachers’ Assessment Knowledge and their Perceptions of the Impact of Classroom Assessment Professional Development,” *Improving Schools* 12, no. 2 (2009): 101–113; L. Volante and X. Fazio, “Exploring Teacher Candidates’ Assessment Literacy: Implications for teacher education reform and professional development,” *Canadian Journal of Education* 30 (2007): 749–770.

3 C. M. Gotch and B. F. French, “A Systematic Review of Assessment Literacy Measures,” *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice* 33 (2014): 14–18; S. Brookhart, “Educational Assessment Knowledge and Skills for Teachers,” *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice* 30 (2014): 3–12.

4 C. DeLuca, D. LaPointe and U. Luhunga, “Teacher Assessment Literacy: A review of international standards and measures,” *Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Accountability* 21, no. 4 (2016): 248–266.

MEET THE EXPERT



Danielle LaPointe-McEwan

Danielle LaPointe-McEwan is a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Education at Queen’s University, researching how teachers use data to support their professional learning. She works closely with teachers throughout Ontario and has

been the lead research partner with the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network's (EOSDN) *Closing the Gaps in Mathematics Project* for the past three years.

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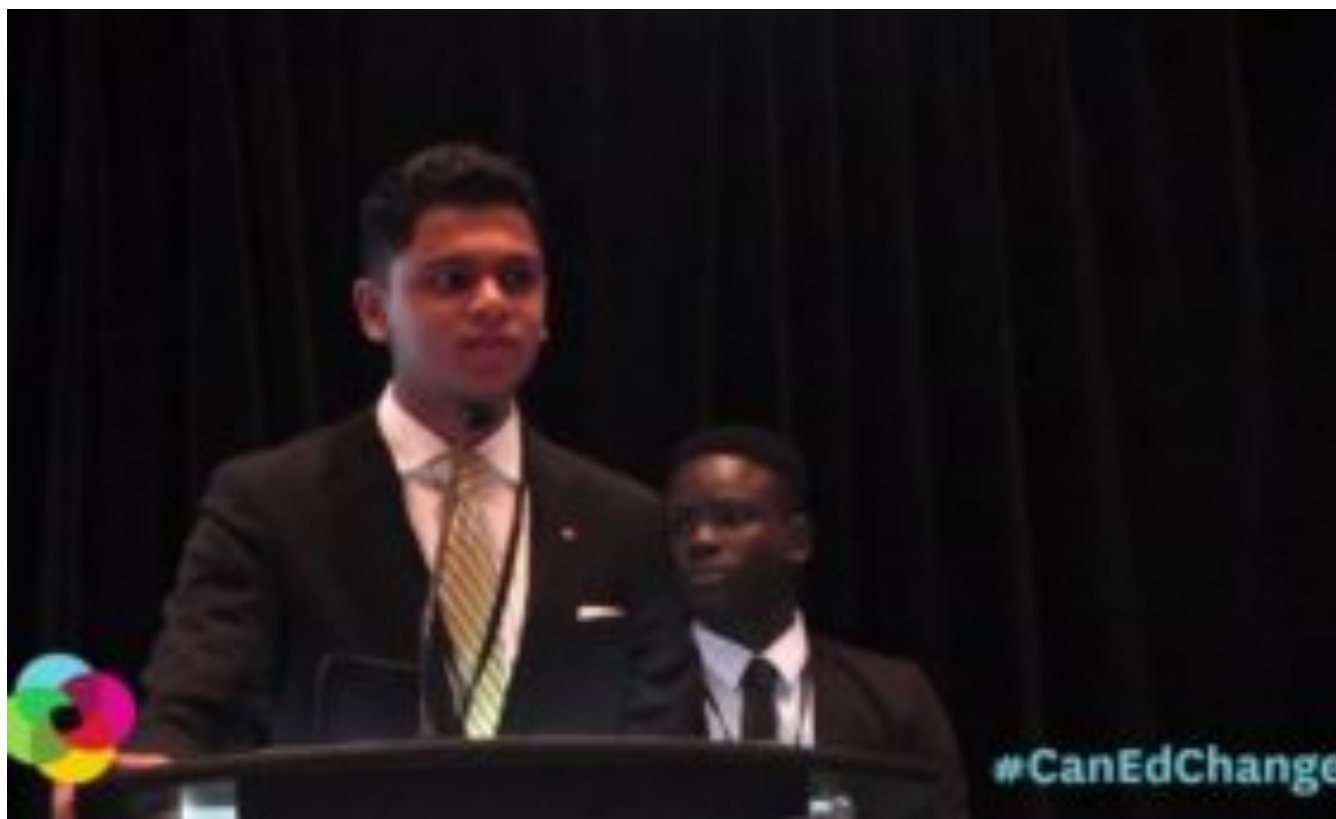
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