

# Using Scientific Research-Based Interventions to Improve Outcomes for All Students

*Universal Common Assessment*



# Assessment Inventory Activity

- What common assessments are already being administered to students in your school/district?
- How are the results of these assessments used to:
  - Identify students who are in need of intervention?
  - Determine the adequacy of core curriculums, instruction, and learning environment for all students?
  - Inform instruction/educational decisions?

# Assessment Definitions

**Benchmark Assessments** - interim assessments administered periodically to measure students' mastery of standards-based curriculum objectives

**Common Assessments** – a broad term for assessments that are given routinely to all students in a grade and that are the same for all students in a grade, and they may be summative or formative

**Common Formative Assessments** - assessments that are the same across a grade level and/or content area, are used to inform and adjust instruction and monitor progress. They are not used to evaluate student progress for a grade.

# Assessment Definitions, cont.

- **Diagnostic Assessments** – assessments used to clarify and target the needs of individual students when the information provided by other types of assessments, such as common assessments, is not sufficient or too broad
- **Formative Assessments** – assessments conducted during the process of student learning that are used primarily to inform instruction
- **Progress Monitoring Assessments** – assessments that yield data to track student progress towards a goal

# Assessment Definitions, cont.

- **Summative Assessments** - assessments that are employed mainly to assess cumulative student learning at a particular point in time (e.g., the Connecticut Mastery Test, the Connecticut Academic Performance Test)
- **Universal Common Assessments** – measures that are common to all students in a grade or districts that are administered to all of those students on a routine basis

# Purpose of Universal Common Assessments

1. **Predict** if learning and/or behavioral difficulties may arise in the future so that students who need help are provided with interventions early
2. **Identify** the adequacy and effectiveness of the Tier I core curriculums, instruction, and learning environment for all students

# Universal Common Assessment in SRBI

- **Universal Common Assessments** are also referred to as **Universal Screens** or **Universal Screening in Response to Intervention** literature
- Administered at least **three times** a year (e.g., fall, winter, spring) to **all students** in a grade level or content area

# Universal Common Assessment

- **Must be brief and easy to assess with quick turnaround of data.**
  - Universal “screening” detects a problem, but not the exact nature of problem.
  - Additional “diagnostics” may be warranted (e.g., DRA II, follow up interview, student self assessment)

# What should be assessed universally?

While most schools focus initially on reading, math, and behavior, any standards-based content area of concern can be universally assessed:

- Writing
- Science
- Arts
- Social Studies
- Social-emotional learning

# Universal Common Assessment

- **Academic Domain:**

- In elementary, may use curriculum based measures (e.g., fluency rates, running records, fact fluency) to identify students in need of additional support
- In upper elementary or secondary, may use existing benchmark or other summative assessments
- Purpose: “Screening” for students who are not meeting benchmarks in academic areas

# Universal Common Assessments: Academic

## Homegrown

- District Benchmark Assessments
- School developed common formative assessments

## Commercial

- DIBELS
- Aimsweb.com
- NWEA
- Blue Ribbon

[www.studentprogress.org](http://www.studentprogress.org)

# Universal Common Assessment for Social-Emotional / Behavioral

- **Discipline data** is an obvious choice for screening for “acting-out behaviors,” such as disruption, anger, truancy, etc.
  - **Discipline data not helpful** for “acting-in behaviors,” such as isolation, anxiety, self injury.
- **Other “screening” tools include:**
  - Self reports, surveys, screening days for specific concerns, teacher surveys, parent surveys.
  - Reports cannot be anonymous.
  - May stagger universal screening schedules by grade (grade 9 Sept., grade 10 Oct.)

# Universal Common Assessments: Social-Emotional / Behavioral

- Systematic Screening for Behavior Disorders (Walker & Severson, 1990)
- School Social Behavior Scale (Merrell, 1993)
- Drummond's Student Risk Screening Scale (Drummond, 1993)
- The Revised Behavior Problem Checklist (Quay & Peterson, 1987)
- Eyberg Child Behavior Inventory and Sutter-Eyberg Student Behavior Inventory (Sutter & Eyberg, 1999)
- SSIS Multi-Tiered Assessment and Intervention Model (Elliott & Gresham, 2007)

[www.casel.org](http://www.casel.org)

[www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)

[www.cber.org](http://www.cber.org)

# What does Universal Common Assessment data tell us about the academic domain?

Poor student performance across all classrooms →

## **Curriculum Problem**

*(Indicates need to strengthen Tier 1)*

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Poor student performance in “pockets” (certain classrooms) →

## **Instructional Problem**

*(Indicates need to strengthen Tier 1)*

Individuals with poor performance in otherwise performing classrooms →

## **Student-Learning Problem**

*(Indicates student may need Tiers 2 or 3 in addition to Tier 1)*

Source: McCook, 2005

# What does Universal Common Assessment data tell us about the social-emotional-behavioral domain?

Poor student behavior across all classrooms →

## **School Culture Problem**

*(Indicates need to strengthen Tier 1)*

Poor student behavior in “pockets” (certain classrooms) →

## **Classroom Management or Relationship Problem**

*(Indicates need to strengthen Tier 1)*

Individuals with poor behavior in otherwise functioning classrooms →

## **Student Specific Behavioral Problem or Relationship Problem**

*(Indicates student may need Tiers 2 or 3 in addition to Tier 1)*

Source: Adapted from McCook, 2005

# Criteria for Universal Common Assessments

- **Reliable** – the extent to which the measurements of a test remain consistent over repeated tests of the same subject under identical conditions
- **Valid** – the extent to which an assessment measures the criterion that the assessment seeks to measure
- **Efficient** – can be administered and scored with relative ease in a short period of time
- **Culturally Relevant** – cultural knowledge, prior experience, and performance styles of all students should be considered to ensure that assessments are appropriate
- **Accessibility** – assessments are developed with Universal Design in mind to accommodate the needs of all learners

# Assessment Inventory Activity, cont.

Which of the assessments you listed on your Assessment Inventory meet the following *Universal Common Assessment* criteria?

- Reliable
- Valid
- Efficient
- Culturally Relevant
- Accessibility

# Now What?

## Decision Making Rules

- Universal Common Assessments must be accompanied with cut points to determine whether the core curriculums, instruction, and learning environments are effective for all students
- Cut points specify the score at which students would be considered for intervention or enrichment - which students are meeting academic benchmarks or behavioral expectations – why or why not?

# Cut Points and Norms

- Local Norms define student performance in relation to the population of the local school or district. If none exist, then they can be developed by gathering a database of students' performance on common assessments as SRBI is implemented
- National norms define student performance in relation to a national sample and are usually available with commercial products

# Cut Point Considerations

- When establishing initial cut points, be aware of the availability to provide resources to support Tier II and Tier III interventions
- Cut points need to be reviewed after each administration of Universal Common Assessment to determine whether or not there is a problem in Tier I

# Data-Driven Decision Making and Cut Points

- At least 80% of all students in a grade should be meeting important academic benchmarks for the core curriculums, instruction, and learning environment to be considered effective
- Simultaneous to enhancement of core, students who score in the bottom 25<sup>th</sup> percentile of the fall reading Universal Common Assessment will receive Tier II and/or Tier III interventions based on student need

# Sample Scenarios

- What if outcomes of Universal Common Assessments indicate:
  1. 60% of all students in Grade 2 are meeting literacy benchmarks in October with 30% of black students at grade level
  2. 40% of all students in Grade 10 are meeting behavioral expectations in January
  3. 95% of all students in Grade 6 are meeting math benchmarks in May

# Accuracy of Universal Common Assessments

- Universal Common Assessments must be revisited each year to determine the degree to which they satisfy the following:
  - Accurately identify effectiveness of core curriculums, instruction, or learning environment
  - Accurately identify students not meeting grade level expectations early on
  - Accurately identify students in need of Tier II or Tier III intervention (performance or skill deficit)
  - Accurately predict/identify students who will meet goal on standardized measures

# Additional Points to Consider

- Assessment Infrastructure
- Structure for Data Analysis
- Available Technology

# Assessment Infrastructure

## Administration of Universal Common Assessments

Who administers?

When/how often administered?

Where administered?

## Analysis and Communication of Results

How will data be stored and organized?

Displayed and disseminated?

Analyzed?

# Structure for Data Analysis

- Universal Common Assessment results should be collaboratively analyzed by teachers, administrators, and student support staff
- Data Teams are a powerful mechanism for the collaborative analysis of student data, including results of the Universal Common Assessments

# The Data Team Process

- Step 1: Collect and Chart Data
- Step 2: Analyze Strengths and Obstacles
- Step 3: Establish SMART Goals
- Step 4: Select Instructional Strategies
- Step 5: Determine Results Indicators
  - » How will we know that the strategy is being implemented (adult actions)?
  - » How will we know if the strategy is positively impacting student learning (results indicators)?

# Technology Considerations

- Technology is a key resource to implementing Universal Common Assessments
- Schools need a longitudinal database of information which includes demographic, assessment, and behavioral data
- Teachers need reasonably quick and easy access to data to be instructionally responsive to student needs and monitor progress over time

# SRBI Planning Tool

- Working with your teammates, discuss the following questions and record your responses on the *SRBI Planning Tool* page.
- Regarding your districts universal assessments:
  - What is your current state?
  - What is your desired state?
  - What are your next steps?