

 INSTRUCTURE

The State of Assessment in K-12 Education

**2023
Research Study
& Trends**



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2023 Research Study & Trends

Is Being Assessment-Focused Enough?

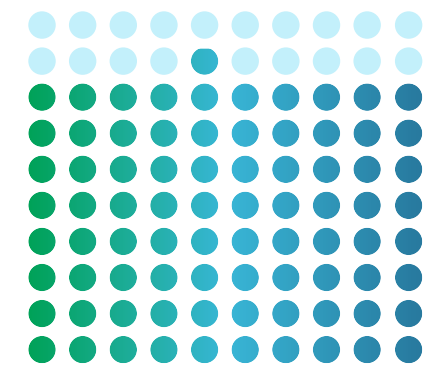
Only three years ago, school closures during the pandemic forced the cancellation of state summative assessments in all 50 states, and educators explored alternative methods to evaluate learning. This shift was forceful, and many educators paused to ask, “Is there a better way to measure student learning?”

Because of this vital question, and those brave enough to ask it, we launched our first assessment research study, [The State of Assessment in K-12 Education](#). Since the launch of that survey, educators have grappled with many complex challenges in the classroom. We’ve also heard conversations reimagining a future with assessment that is more equitable, accessible, and student-focused.

This year, we set out to dig deeper and better understand the current state of assessment in K-12 education and the impact of seismic changes from recent years.

With **81%** of educators agreeing that their school or district promotes a strong assessment-focused culture, we wanted to know what it really means to be assessment-focused. And—just as important—is being ‘assessment-focused’ enough for today’s schools? We wanted to highlight what works while uncovering the systems, processes, and partnerships needed to create and maintain a more effective assessment ecosystem.

Partnering with Hanover Research, we launched our second assessment-focused research study, surveying K-12 teachers and administrators across the United States to hear their thoughts on the role and value of assessment in education today and their perspective on the future outlook for assessment.



81%

of educators agree that their school or district promotes a strong assessment-focused culture



“We need to ensure all teachers know how to and are using data to drive instruction and to personalize learning.”

Survey Respondent

The Results

Across the country, most educators still prioritize assessment, but seek a more balanced approach. Some of the work ahead involves ensuring all educators are proficient in assessment literacy and have access to technology that streamlines the assessment cycle.

While assessment is vital for accurately measuring student growth and achievement throughout the year, many teachers still need help integrating high-quality assessments into the classroom. Removing the remaining barriers ensures all educators feel well-equipped to create, administer, and evaluate assessments.

Additionally, we noticed diverging perspectives between administrators and teachers regarding the value of assessment. Still, the findings highlighted the continued significance of quality and reliability in assessment practices, with a renewed focus on evaluating assessments annually and sourcing content that aligns with a district's scope and sequence.

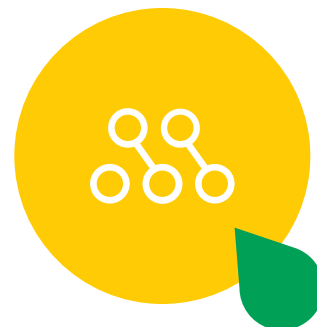
With the plethora of educational tools available, there's still a need for timely and accurate assessment data as educators strive to maintain balance in their assessment approaches. Formative, interim, and summative assessments each have roles to play in today's K-12 schools.



In response to these findings, the following questions remain top of mind:

- Which strategies can school districts implement to ensure rigorous and reliable assessments at scale?
- In what ways do administrators and teachers perceive and utilize assessment differently?
- What role does technology play in building an effective assessment ecosystem?

Five Key Trends



Our survey revealed five key trends that teachers and administrators across the country identified as important to assessment in K-12 education.

1

We need to prioritize assessment literacy.

Most educators discuss assessment frequently. However, there are still barriers to incorporating assessment into classroom instruction without disruption. Though it's clear assessment is considered a valuable way to measure student learning throughout the school year, there's work to ensure all teachers feel comfortable creating and evaluating high-quality assessments.

2

Both administrators and teachers value assessment—for different reasons.

Administrators and teachers have different experiences with assessment. These experiences inform their divergent opinions on assessment opinions. Teachers are more likely to believe that the current assessment model and creation systems negatively affect instructional time and want additional support. At the same time, administrators tend to prioritize professional development opportunities and data accessibility.

3

Quality and reliability (still) matter most.

As schools continue to evaluate assessments and consider changing their assessment model in upcoming years, they value three characteristics above all: reliability, validity, and quality. To reach these standards, they obtain assessment content from state & district-provided materials, publishers, and colleagues, all while ensuring alignment with standards and their district's scope and sequence.

4

The right technology provides the right assessment data at the right time.

Choosing the right educational tools is crucial for schools, given the abundance of options and approaching funding deadlines. Schools and districts prioritize technology that tracks student mastery, aligns to standards, and delivers real-time data efficiently, with teachers valuing instructional focus and administrators seeking real-time data delivery via dashboards.

5

Educators continue to balance the assessment approach.

All assessments—formative, interim, and summative assessments—have a place in today's K-12 schools. Despite lingering imperfections and anxiety, educators aren't ready to completely let go of state summative assessments and find more value in them today than in 2021.

1

We need to prioritize assessment literacy.

“Assessment literacy can significantly impact students’ attitudes toward learning.”

Survey Respondent

less than **2/3**

of educators feel comfortable with the state standards applicable to their specific courses

While most educators (81%) perceive their school or district culture as ‘assessment-focused,’ not all educators consider themselves proficient in assessment literacy (62%). Incorporating assessments into classrooms comes with challenges, with approximately half of educators (51%) expressing concerns about the current assessment model’s negative impact on instructional time and the excessive time spent on assessment creation (64%).

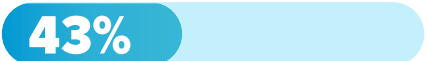
Less than two-thirds of educators (64%) feel comfortable with the state standards applicable to their specific courses, suggesting further efforts to promote standards literacy are needed.

Overall, the findings highlight the importance of addressing these hurdles and enhancing educational assessment practices. While a significant percentage of educators believe they have an assessment-focused culture, the discrepancies in assessment literacy, lack of comfort with state standards, and the burdensome nature of the current assessment model emphasize the need for relevant professional development opportunities and systemic improvements to create impactful and supportive assessment environment for both educators and students.



Perceptions of Assessment

See their district or school as proficient in assessment literacy



Responsible for reviewing and analyzing assessment results



- Administrators
- Teachers



Our Perspective

We must go beyond mere discussions about assessment and take actionable steps to support educators in implementing meaningful assessments in their classrooms. This transformation requires schools to establish a clear vision that communicates the value of assessment, sets clear goals, and defines the expected outcomes.

To effectively support teachers, they need access to high-quality assessments that minimize disruption to instructional time, whether through tools that facilitate assessment creation or by providing vetted, standards-aligned assessments ready for classroom use.

Assessment literacy is pivotal in this process, starting with the ‘why’ and extending beyond data analysis.

Assessment literacy encompasses the knowledge, skills, and processes needed to design, select, and implement assessments that foster student learning.

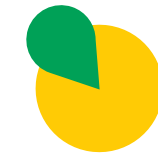
It also requires a firm foundational

understanding of standards. Additionally, building literacy includes evaluating the necessity and effectiveness of assessments, knowing how to formulate high-quality questions, and articulating the desired student outcomes. To progress, we must empower all educators with actionable and relevant learning opportunities and the tools to determine when assessments are necessary, how to construct high-quality assessments, and whether these assessments effectively showcase student learning.

By prioritizing these aspects, we can bridge the gap between the theoretical understanding of assessment and the practical objective of an assessment. It’s essential to provide educators with the support they need to navigate the assessment landscape successfully. This support entails equipping them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and tools to make informed assessment decisions, leading to improved student learning outcomes and a more comprehensive understanding of assessment practices.

“Equipping teachers with better assessment knowledge can help students improve their performance.”

Survey Respondent

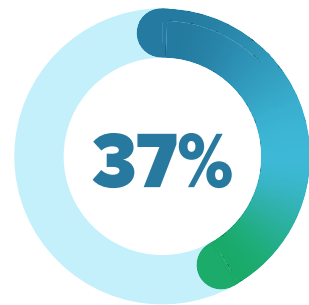


Considerations

- Acknowledge that we’re all in this together.** Administrators, teachers, and ultimately students benefit from a cohesive assessment strategy. No one stakeholder is solely responsible for the assessment culture. Every voice matters.
- Administrators—develop and communicate your school or district’s ‘why’ statement for assessment.** Why are we asking students to show what they know? Why are we asking educators to take precious time to build assessments? Listen to the hurdles teachers face while creating high-quality assessments and using assessment data to drive instruction. What tools are available that can streamline assessment creation and data analysis for them?
- Teachers—reflect on your reason for assessing students.** Is there a skill or concept you want to make sure they’ve mastered? Is that skill aligned with the relevant standards for your course?

2

Both administrators & teachers value assessment—for different reasons.



37%
of administrators agreed that the current assessment model negatively impacts instructional time

62%

of teachers agreed that the current assessment model negatively impacts instructional time

Schools continue to utilize a variety of assessment types, including formative (used most often – 85%), summative (84%), and interim assessments (79%), with performance or task-based assessments (77%), online assessments (72%), and proficiency scales (66%) being the most common formats. However, there is a discrepancy in the perceived value of assessment between administrators and teachers.

Teachers expressed concerns about the negative impact of the current assessment model (62%) and assessment creation systems (56%) on instructional time, with a higher percentage reporting this belief than administrators (37% and 38%, respectively). Teachers emphasize the need for tools to protect their time and support their professional development, particularly in questioning strategies and assisting English language learners (52% and 51%).

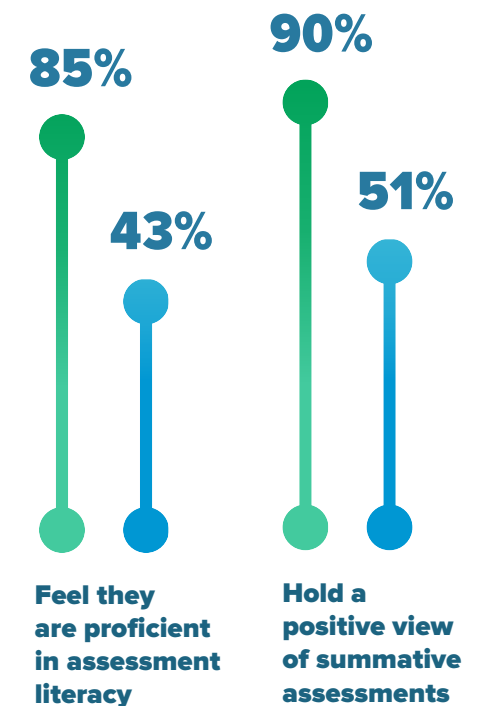
The impact of interim and summative assessments differs between teachers and administrators. Administrators (86%) are more likely to view interim assessments as an opportunity to measure student growth than teachers (69%).


Finally, there are different viewpoints on assessment results as well. Administrators are significantly more likely (55%) to believe that assessment results should play a more significant role in state accountability systems than teachers (10%).

These findings highlight the need to address teachers’ concerns regarding instructional time and provide them with effective tools and support for assessment practices. Schools can foster a more cohesive and effective assessment culture by bridging the gap in perceptions and priorities.



Perceptions of Assessment



 Administrators
 Teachers



Our Perspective

The experiences of administrators and teachers regarding assessment vary significantly, with administrators traditionally being more involved in data analysis. In contrast, teachers have been responsible for creating and implementing assessments aligned with state standards. These distinct experiences shape their perspectives on assessment.

While it can be frustrating when different stakeholders place varying levels of importance on various aspects of assessment, it is crucial to recognize that everyone is part of a collective effort. The individual experiences of administrators, teachers, and students shape the overall assessment environment within a school. Therefore, it is essential to consider all perspectives. In doing so, we can develop a balanced approach to assessment that benefits the entire educational community and has the greatest impact on improving student outcomes.

A more comprehensive assessment approach can be achieved by bringing together teachers' insights, who focus on student success at the individual and classroom levels, and administrators with a broader perspective on student success at the school and district levels. Formative assessments provide actionable insights for teachers while they're in the classroom. Summative and interim assessments, when strategically utilized and delivered with timely data, can reveal trends, provide valuable insights, and influence classroom instruction, benefiting all educators in their pursuit of improving student learning outcomes.

“We need data that is easy to understand or more quality training for teachers to understand data and its use relating to student progress.”

Survey Respondent

“Increasing our focus on formative assessment, greater emphasis on personalized learning, and continued use of summative and interim assessments would make the biggest difference.”

Survey Respondent

Changes that would make the biggest impact, according to administrators

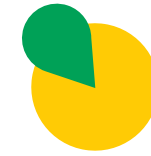
Changes that would make the biggest impact, according to teachers

“Day by day, observations and formative assessments guide instructional practices far better than a single summative assessment at the end of the unit.”

Survey Respondent

“I feel like moving away from singular summative assessments and moving to more daily observations, exit tickets, formative assessments throughout to gauge comprehension and mastery of the skill will be far more beneficial.”

Survey Respondent

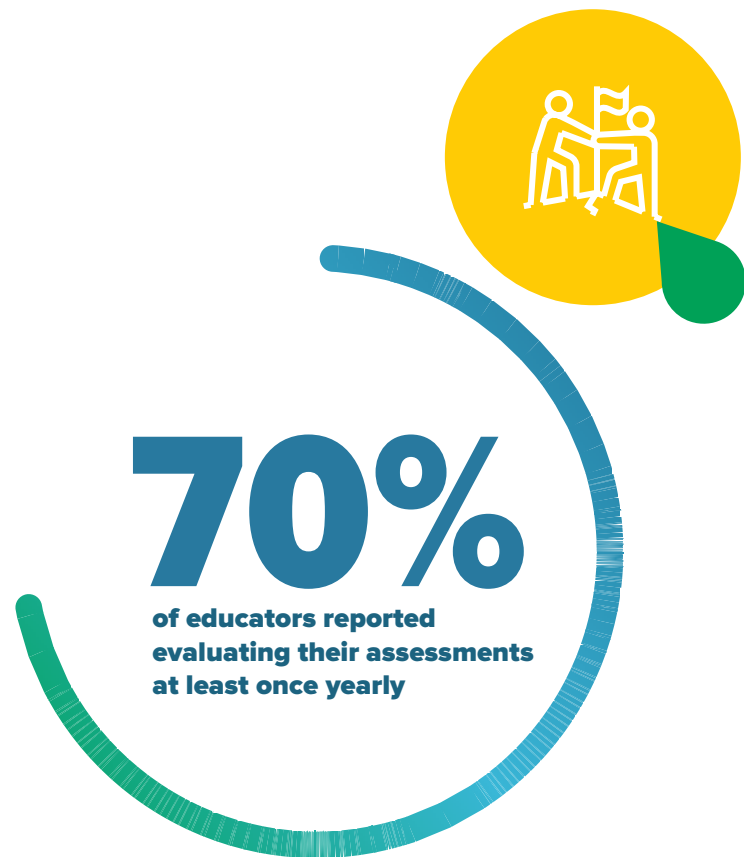


Considerations

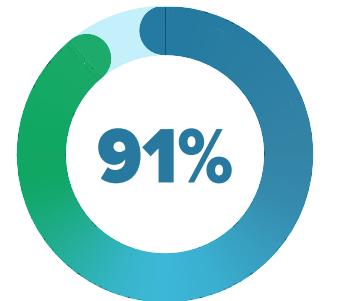
- Acknowledge the different drivers at your school as you look at the data together.** Find the places where your goals overlap and make student success the bridge for administrator-teacher collaboration.
- Establish a common language for assessment.** Ensure everyone knows what formative, interim, and summative assessments mean at your school or district—in literal definition and impact on student learning.
- Hear everyone's voices.** There should be active communication channels surrounding assessment between teachers and administrators—both digital and in-person. Find teachers seeing positive assessment results and amplify those successes through actionable PD and collaborative PLCs.
- Enable student engagement.** Assessments should serve students. While listening to administrator and teacher perspectives, give students the chance to talk about what is or isn't working when they're asked to showcase what they know. Do they have suggestions to improve assessment schoolwide? Their voices matter.

3

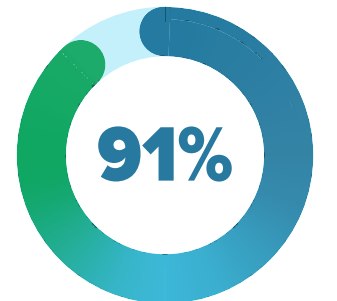
Quality & reliability (still) matter most.



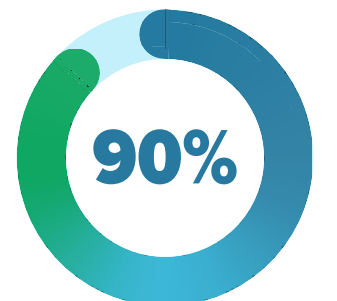
Top Three Factors When Evaluating an Assessment



Reliability of assessment



Validity of assessment



Quality of assessment items

Assessment quality remains top of mind. Every year, 70% of educators report re-evaluating their assessments, and 55% report implementing new assessments. In 2021, only 38% of educators reported implementing new assessments annually.

When evaluating assessments, educators prioritize characteristics such as reliability (91%), validity (91%), and the overall quality (90%) with almost equal importance, which have consistently ranked high on their lists in recent years. Aligning assessments with state standards and accurately representing the district’s scope and sequence is also crucial, according to 87% of educators.

Most educators find that assessments provide standard-by-standard information on what students know (84%). However, half of the educators believe assessments should measure student growth, not just achievement (50%).

Interestingly, this year, educators are more likely to be price-conscious when evaluating assessments (64%) than previously (53%), and value the reputation of assessment vendors (up to 72% in 2023 from 60% in 2021). There’s also an upward trend in educators utilizing district-created interim assessments (31% in 2023 compared to 22% in 2021), possibly indicating a shift toward consistency in assessment practices over the years.

The importance of measuring student growth, accessing diverse assessment sources, and considering the cost-effectiveness of assessment tools continues to be top areas of concern for educators.



Our Perspective

Assessment evaluation is a fundamental aspect of fostering assessment literacy among educators. We should recognize the key principles guiding this process:

- Assessments should be reliable and accurately reflect students' current abilities while also capturing their progress over time.
- In the face of teacher burnout, it becomes imperative to provide assessment tools that save time and alleviate the burden of assessment creation. Ideally, these tools should be designed with a cyclical understanding of the relationship between assessment and instruction.

When seeking assessment tools, school districts should prioritize vendors with a proven track record in assessment development. These vendors should demonstrate a rigorous methodology for creating high-quality test items and assessments that align with educational standards.

As the deadline for ESSER funding approaches in 2024, schools face budgetary decisions. It is crucial for educators to prioritize investments in tools that will have the most significant impact on student learning outcomes. By making informed choices and allocating resources wisely, schools can maximize the benefits of the available funding to enhance their assessment practices and support student success.



Considerations

- **Audit your current assessments.** Are they coming from trusted sources? Are they addressing the right standards? How do you know they're getting students where they need to be? Do they highlight student growth over time?
- **Limit disruptions and scale high-quality assessment development to make an impact.** Listen to the hurdles educators face. Is assessment content genuinely aligned with state standards? Is the scope and sequence of the district being followed with fidelity?
- **Work with vendors that have a history of producing results.** At the beginning of the relationship, ask for success stories with evidence that showcase student growth.

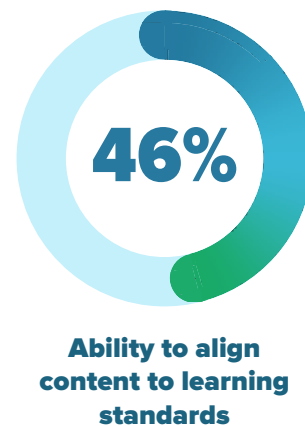
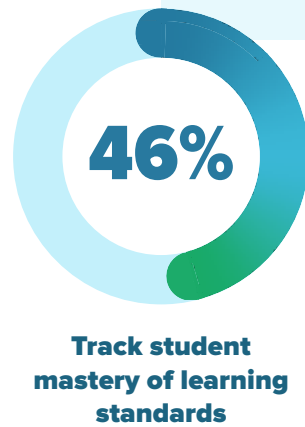


“Assessment needs to be valid and reliable and based on what students are learning. Their role should be to help teachers fill gaps.”

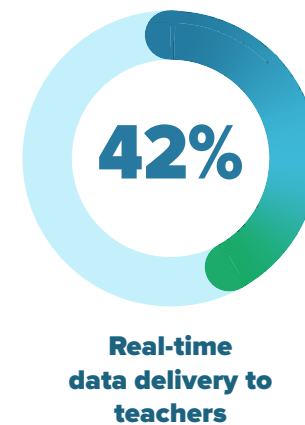
Survey Respondent

4

The right technology gives everyone the right data at the right time.



Top 3 Priorities in selecting assessment technology



As schools navigate the challenge of selecting the right tools amidst funding deadlines, making informed investments has never been more important. Educators have identified several key features they seek when adopting technology for assessment purposes. The ability to track student mastery of learning standards (46%), align content to standards (46%), and have efficient, real-time data delivery (42%) are top priorities.

In addition to these features, many educators report they are more likely to embrace technology that provides valuable data (51%), is promoted by school leaders (47%), and saves them time (47%).

It is also worth noting again that teachers and administrators have distinct preferences. Administrators commonly request real-time data delivery and data dashboards (37% and 36%), while teachers prioritize content alignment to standards and the ability to track student mastery (54% and 53%). Integrations with existing systems, adaptive capabilities, and tools for performance-based assessment are also in high demand.

By understanding and addressing these preferences, schools can make informed decisions when choosing assessment tools that enhance teaching and learning outcomes.

Top 3 Drivers

of technology use for administrators

- 1 It provides valuable data
- 2 Support resources available
- 3 It's embraced by leadership

Top 3 Drivers

of technology use for teachers

- 1 It provides valuable data
- 2 It's embraced by leadership
- 3 It saves teachers' time



“

Implementing technology systems and assessment tools can achieve better student results.”

Survey Respondent

“

Technology is important, and implementing it to impact student learning is crucial.”

Survey Respondent

“

Technology can help streamline assessment processes and provide more accurate and timely data. Schools should explore using digital assessment tools and analytics to improve the accuracy and effectiveness of assessments.”

Survey Respondent



Our Perspective

Seamlessly integrated technology plays a crucial role in simplifying the work of educators. It lessens the manual (and often unsustainable) workload of tracking student data, grading, and creating assignments.

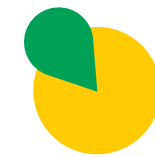
The right technology offers a solution by alleviating these administrative tasks and reducing the risk of burnout among teachers. Administrators seek accessible data presentations in the form of dashboards, giving them a comprehensive overview of student performance. On the other hand, teachers require quick access to data that enables them to track student progress and meet students where they are in their instruction.

The **ITS model** encapsulates the continuous nature of assessment implementation and personalization in the classroom:

- Identify student levels of understanding
- Target students for appropriate interventions
- Self-evaluate the efficacy of instruction and its impact on student learning

The right technology gives both administrators and teachers what they're looking for.

To effectively meet the needs of both students and teachers, it is essential to have a deep understanding of where they are. Data plays a vital role in this regard, providing insights into individual students' strengths and areas of improvement. By harnessing technology to amplify access to data, educators can make informed decisions to support student learning.



Considerations

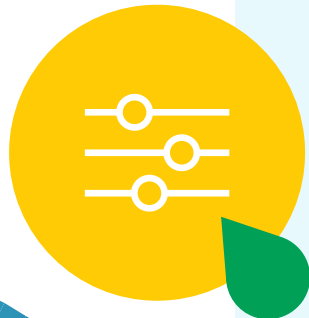
- **Encourage data-driven action.** Challenge PLCs to do more than data collection. Shift the focus to be action-oriented. What is the data telling us and what can we do to better meet student needs? Can we leverage technology to allow teachers to make data-informed instructional decisions in real time?
- **School and district leaders—If you ask your teachers to use technology, regularly communicate its value.** Why are you asking them to use it? What is the impact you know it can make? What are teachers' barriers to using it in the classroom?
- **Invest in intuitive, integrated technology.** The fewer clicks educators have to make to create and grade an assignment and connect with students—the better.

5

Educators continue to balance the assessment approach.

81%

of teachers report that assessments make students anxious



Even though much has changed in recent years, there's still a place for every assessment type in today's schools.

As mentioned previously, educators deliver formative assessments most often (**85%**), followed closely by summative (**84%**) and interim assessments (**79%**). Nearly all educators that use assessments to inform classroom instruction use formative (**93%**) and interim assessment data (**72%**). Educators in 2023 (**76%**) are also significantly less likely to use teacher-created formative assessments than educators in 2021 (**84%**).

Regarding interim assessments, many educators report using a combination of district-provided and vendor-licensed assessments (**43%**). One-third prefer formative assessments that are district-created (**31%**), and one-quarter only use assessments licensed through a vendor (**24%**). The majority appreciate the prompt availability of interim assessment results to inform classroom instruction (**85%**), and value an accessible format (**82%**).

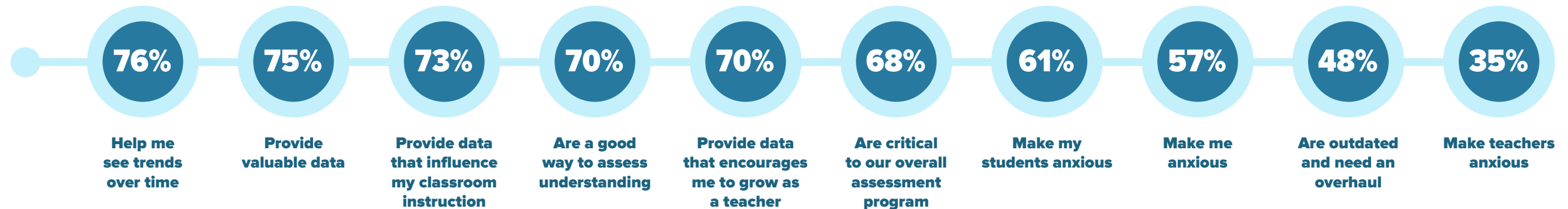
While still imperfect and causing some teacher and student anxiety, summative assessments are generally viewed more positively in this study than in our last survey.

Two-thirds of educators (**68%**) positively perceive summative assessments - up from **55%** in 2021. (Notably, **90%** of administrators positively perceive summative assessments, while only **50%** of teachers share this sentiment.) Educators claim that summative assessments help them to see trends over time (**76%**) and provide valuable data (**75%**) that influences classroom instruction (**73%**), and encourage them to grow as teachers (**70%**).

Educators are also slightly less likely to report that summative assessments are outdated and need an overhaul this year than in 2021.

However, teachers (**81%**) are still more likely than administrators (**36%**) to report that assessments make students anxious. The root causes of this anxiety can be explored further.

When asked about the impact of summative assessments, educators said:





Our Perspective


Canceling state summative assessments during the height of the pandemic sparked a broader conversation about their necessity and value. Then, the return of state summative assessments brought anxiety as teachers did everything they could to prepare students amid continued disruption to learning. In 2023, we're seeing summative-fueled anxieties fade compared to the pandemic years, but teachers still want more out of summative assessments.

While the discussion surrounding summative assessments continues, it is evident that educators still find them useful for now. As part of a balanced approach to assessment, they offer valuable insights, allowing educators to identify trends and patterns in student performance over time. Additionally, these assessments—when implemented mindfully—can catalyze professional growth, providing educators with opportunities to refine their instructional strategies and improve student outcomes.

Alongside the decreasing anxiety surrounding summative assessments, there has also been a decrease in the use of teacher-created formative assessments. This decline could suggest that schools are striving toward tighter assessment content consistency. Consistent, aligned, short formative assessments keep students on track to attain mastery of essential standards. Real-time data from formative assessments gives educators the insights they need to meet students where they are.

It is worth noting that some educators still prefer to create their own assessments, and many rely on recommendations from their colleagues. This indicates diverse preferences and practices regarding formative assessment approaches, highlighting the importance of providing educators with the flexibility and support they need to implement assessments effectively.

The ongoing dialogue and reflection surrounding the use of each type of assessment contribute to a more nuanced understanding of their role and potential benefits.



“Assessments give students too much anxiety. I believe we should turn summative assessments to a quarterly type system or even a project-based system where students can show what they have learned through the year with projects and data things that they create on their own, rather than taking a formal assessment.”

Survey Respondent



Considerations

- **Acknowledge assessment anxiety.** Because teachers are still more likely than administrators to report that assessments make students anxious, explore the why. Encourage students to share their experiences. What can the lingering assessment anxiety teach us about our assessment approach?
- **Offer growth and flexibility.** Some teachers still prefer to create their own assessments between district assessments. With this in mind, it's essential to provide teachers the chance to build assessment literacy skills to ensure the assessments they create are high-quality. Knowing when to assess and how effective that assessment was are key to crafting an impactful, balanced assessment strategy.
- **Discuss summative assessment.** What value does it bring today? Has that perception changed in recent years? Explore the various formats summative assessments can take and the opportunities they present for students to showcase their learning.

The Future is Student- Centered & Data-Driven

For years, schools have prioritized the “what”—assessing students. Assessment still undeniably plays a crucial role in a student’s learning journey and equips teachers with valuable insights to refine practices. Educators are also clear that assessments are here to stay but should evolve to become more individualized to student needs.

As we progress, educators seek continued transformation that empowers students and teachers, fueled by a comprehensive strategy that promotes consistency and rigor. The shift towards a student-centric approach necessitates reevaluating current practices. We must ensure that all educators effectively utilize assessment data, students are not burdened by excessive testing, and that assessments remain flexible.

But how can schools channel their focus on assessment to support teachers and cultivate a strategy that keeps students on track and celebrates their progress? The answer lies in embracing the following key findings:

- 1** First, it’s evident that assessments need to continue evolving. Educators want a more holistic approach. Half of educators say assessments should measure student growth, not just achievement, indicating a growing need for data that tells a student’s whole story.
- 2** Second, using data to inform instruction is becoming increasingly prevalent. In 2023, most teachers (**60%**) reported using data to shape their teaching practices. This integration of data-driven instruction allows educators to identify areas of improvement, address individual needs, and maximize learning outcomes.
- 3** Third, the desire for change is still tangible, with more than half of educators (**58%**) indicating that their school or district will likely adopt a new assessment model within the next three years.

Additionally, **73%** of educators say they are willing to invest more in an assessment model—up from **55%** in 2021. This willingness to invest demonstrates their commitment to building the most effective assessment environment possible.
- 4**



As we embrace these key findings and continue to develop a deeper understanding of where assessment is headed, it’s essential to remember that the ultimate goal of assessment is not just to evaluate what students know but also to support their growth, nurture their potential, and celebrate their achievements.

By aligning assessment practices with these aspirations, we can all pave the way for a more inclusive, effective, and rewarding educational experience for every student.

Looking ahead...

We asked educators:
In your opinion, what
role will assessment play
moving forward?

“ We need to use the assessment data to determine the whys of students not making progress and figure out how to fix that.”

Survey Respondent

“ Educators will make data-based assessments that adapt to a student’s level, ensuring that each assessment is at the individual student’s level of understanding and not just at a standard grade level of understanding.”

Survey Respondent

“ I hope that assessments will guide instruction and help teachers create groupings for specific learners.”

Survey Respondent

“ Assessments will be modified to show student learning and understanding equitably.”

Survey Respondent

“ Assessment will reflect teaching more to the student’s needs than what we simply think should be taught.”

Survey Respondent

Resources

**Considerations,
Methodology,
& Demographics**



Consideration Checklist



To help guide the process as you re-evaluate your assessment strategy, we've highlighted key action steps that align with our study findings.

1

We need to prioritize assessment literacy.

- ❑ **Acknowledge that we're all in this together.** Administrators, teachers, and ultimately students benefit from a cohesive assessment strategy. No one stakeholder is solely responsible for the assessment culture. Every voice matters.
- ❑ **Administrators—develop and communicate your school or district's 'why' statement for assessment.** Why are we asking students to show what they know? Why are we asking educators to take precious time to build assessments and using assessment data to drive instruction. What tools are available that can streamline assessment creation and data analysis for them?
- ❑ **Teachers—reflect on your reason for assessing students.** Is there a skill or concept you want to make sure they've mastered? Is that skill aligned with the relevant standards for your course?

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Both administrators and teachers value assessment—for different reasons.

- ❑ **Acknowledge the different drivers at your school as you look at the data together.** Find the places where your goals overlap and make student success the bridge for administrator-teacher collaboration.
- ❑ **Establish a common language for assessment.** Ensure everyone knows what formative, interim, and summative assessments mean at your school or district—in literal definition and impact on student learning.
- ❑ **Hear everyone's voices.** There should be active communication channels surrounding assessment between teachers and administrators—both digital and in-person. Find teachers seeing positive assessment results and amplify those successes through actionable PD and collaborative PLCs.
- ❑ **Enable student engagement.** Assessments should serve students. While listening to administrator and teacher perspectives, give students the chance to talk about what is or isn't working when they're asked to showcase what they know. Do they have suggestions to improve assessment schoolwide? Their voices matter.

3

Quality and reliability (still) matter most.

- ❑ **Limit disruptions and scale high-quality assessment development to make an impact.** Listen to the hurdles educators face. Is assessment content genuinely aligned with state standards? Is the scope and sequence of the district being followed with fidelity?
- ❑ **Work with vendors that have a history of producing results.** At the beginning of the relationship, ask for success stories with evidence that showcase student growth.
- ❑ **Audit your current assessments.** Are they coming from trusted sources? Are they addressing the right standards? How do you know they're getting students where they need to be? Do they highlight student growth over time?

4

The right technology gives everyone the right data.

- ❑ **Encourage data-driven action.** Challenge PLCs to do more than data collection. Shift the focus to be action-oriented. What is the data telling us and what can we do to better meet student needs? Can we leverage technology to allow teachers to make data-informed instructional decisions in real-time?
- ❑ **School and district leaders—If you ask your teachers to use technology, regularly communicate its value.** Why are you asking them to use it? What is the impact you know it can make? What are teachers' barriers to using it in the classroom?
- ❑ **Invest in intuitive, integrated technology.** The fewer clicks educators have to make to create and grade an assignment and connect with students—the better.

5

Educators continue to *balance* the assessment approach.

- ❑ **Acknowledge assessment anxiety.** Because teachers are still more likely than administrators to report that assessments make students anxious, explore the why. Encourage students to share their experiences. What can the lingering assessment anxiety teach us about our assessment approach?
- ❑ **Offer growth and flexibility.** Some teachers still prefer to create their own assessments between district assessments. With this in mind, it's essential to provide teachers the chance to build assessment literacy skills to ensure the assessments they create are high-quality. Knowing when to assess and how effective that assessment was are key to crafting an impactful, balanced assessment strategy.
- ❑ **Discuss summative assessment.** What value does it bring today? Has that perception changed in recent years? Explore the various formats summative assessments can take and the opportunities they present for students to showcase their learning.

Research Methodology

We developed the State of Assessment in K-12 Education survey with Hanover Research. The survey was designed to understand further how K-12 teachers and administrators across the United States define the role of assessment in education today, how they use assessments and assessment data in practice, and their opinion of the future of K-12 assessment.

The survey was fielded in April 2023 and was cleaned and analyzed by Hanover Research. After fielding and data cleaning, the study comprised 1,000 qualified, completed responses from 550 teachers, 340 school or district-level administrators, and 110 assessment specialists. The data is cut into cross-tabs by role, region, and district urbanicity. We performed statistical significance testing across segments with a 95% confidence level using a Z-Test with $p = \text{less than } 0.05$ and a margin of error $\pm 1\%$ for the overall sample size.

For any questions regarding the underlying methodology or data, please contact us at k12assessment@instructure.com.



1,000
qualified, completed responses

550
teachers

340
school or district-level administrators

110
assessment specialists

Demographics

2023 (n = 1000)

Years in Education

0 to 1 years	0%
2 to 5 years	10%
6 to 10 years	32%
11 to 15 years	24%
16 to 20 years	14%
21 years or more	20%

Years in Current Role

0 to 1 years	1%
2 to 5 years	16%
6 to 10 years	37%
11 to 15 years	20%
16 to 20 years	11%
21 years or more	16%

Number of Students in School / District

Less than 1,000	31%
1,000 to 4,999	33%
5,000 to 9,999	18%
10,000 to 14,999	9%
15,000 to 19,999	6%
20,000 to 24,000	1%
35,000 or more	2%

Number of Teachers & Staff in School / District

Less than 250 employees	46%
250 to 499 employees	30%
500 to 999 employees	17%
1,000 to 4,999 employees	6%
5,000 to 19,000 employees	2%
20,000 employees or more	0%

Familiarity with Assessments used in School / District

Slightly familiar	5%
Moderately familiar	12%
Very familiar	39%
Extremely familiar	44%

Age

25 to 34	22%
35 to 44	41%
45 to 54	23%
55+	14%

Region

South	33%
Midwest	23%
Northeast	26%
West	18%

Urbanicity

Urban area	48%
Suburban area	38%
Rural area	14%

Race / Ethnicity

White or Caucasian	86%
Black or African American	8%
Hispanic	7%
Asian	2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%
Other	0%
Prefer not to say	0%

Gender

Female	59%
Male	41%

Employment Status

Full time	94%
Part time	6%

Job Role

School Teacher	55%
Assessment Specialist	11%
School Level Administrator	28%
District Level Administrator	6%

Decision Maker Status

Primary decision maker	50%
Share decision-making authority	20%
Participate but no decision-making authority	22%
Do not participate and no decision-making authority	8%



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Learn more at instructure.com/k-12.