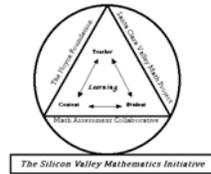


The Silicon Valley Mathematics Initiative



Formative Performance Assessment Program

The Silicon Valley Math Initiative is focused on improving student learning in a whole school context. An important part of this work, of course, is an improvement in instruction. The SVMI believes that meaningful professional development can not take place without rigorous standards and a means to assess student learning.

With the support of the SVMI, a number of school districts are using standards and performance assessment tasks as a formative evaluation process that promotes professional development discussions around student work and real student performance data. Examining student performance products is useful in making educational decisions regarding student achievement and future instruction. The periodic administering of performance assessment tasks, scoring the students' work, comparing the results to stated standards and analyzing the data is a powerful professional development process that provides formative evaluation information to teachers. In the classroom, the review, revision and reflection of the student's performance enhances student learning.

The Silicon Valley Math Initiative is interested in supporting schools and districts in an ongoing program of performance assessment. That program includes the scoring and analysis of student work against the established national performance standards. The Silicon Valley Math Initiative has supported the following student assessment model as a method of analyzing and improving mathematics instruction.

1. The Silicon Valley Math Initiative has compiled a bank of performance assessment tasks, rubrics and anchor papers from the Mathematics Assessment Resources Service also known as the Balanced Assessment. The organization is comprised of representatives from UC Berkeley, Michigan State and the Shell Centre at Nottingham England. These tasks target grade 2 through grade 10. Each task comes with a rubric, anchor papers and a history of performance by students in the Bay Area.
2. School districts, with technical support from the Silicon Valley Math Initiative, have been successful in administering and scoring the tasks periodically throughout the school year. In some cases this occurs once a month, in some cases it occurs once every six week maybe to coordinate with an instruction unit, and in other cases it occurs once each quarter.
3. After a task is administered, the teachers are provided professional development time (either release time or paid after school time) to score the student work. The scorers use the associated rubric and anchor papers to standardize scoring procedures in order to utilize comparison data from other district and scores from previous years. A student score can be judged against the core standards points that indicate whether a student met standard on a task.
4. The scored papers are used by the teachers to make instructional decisions and should be shared with the students to enhance the learning experience. The only overall data that is recorded is the numbers of students who accomplished the task (met the standard) and those who did not, along with the student's grade level and/or math course.



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5. Teachers will know their own students' results and may compare their data with the overall data. They can also compare the growth of their students from one test opportunity to the next. In some cases the same tasks may be given to three different grade levels in a grade span. By examining the scoring results, discussions ensue over the growth or lack thereof from one grade level to the next. All these factors are helpful in making formative evaluation decisions.