

A Continuum of Assessment Purposes

Results in Improvement

Provides a focus for, motivation to, and practice at learning content standards

Formative Purposes

Diagnoses students' learning strengths & needs, then prescribes needed instruction

Guides instructional decision-making

Supports and improves the teaching and learning processes

Monitors & communicates student performance relative to unit & lesson standards (short-term)

Provides status reports validating the long-term achievement of program and course/grade level standards

Monitors & communicates student performance relative to course/grade level standards, which provide the basis for placement decisions (long-term)

Summative Purposes

Evaluates the effectiveness of curricular, instructional, and assessment programs

Evaluates the effectiveness of school and districtwide improvement initiatives

Provides Accountability

Ongoing Feedback FOR LEARNING

Formative Assessments

Ongoing assessments that provide information to guide and improve teaching & learning throughout the learning cycle (units and lessons).

"Videotape" During Learning Process

Periodic & Culminating Evidence OF LEARNING

Summative Assessments

Periodic and culminating assessments that provide information to measure the achievement level at the conclusion of the learning cycle (course or grade level).

"Snapshot" at Conclusion of Learning Process