

School-Based Assessment Framework for Learners Version 2.0

The New Normal

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Abstract: *This paper presents a School-Based Assessment Framework for Learners this COVID-19 Pandemic in a triadic representation. The framework is primarily anchored on DepEd's Vision, Mission, and Core Values and the equally important contribution of school, home, and community in the education of our learners is likewise highlighted. The role of assessment as the heart of teaching-learning engagement for the growth and development of learners comes into three dimensions, the assessment 'for' learning, 'as' learning, and 'of' learning. The center of the paradigm are the learners who are expected to complete the K to 12 Basic Education Program and acquire the assigned learning competencies to prepare them holistically into a higher ground as productive citizens with 21st century skills. The inevitable relationship of the identified triadic variables will help all other educators and stakeholders to realize that the continuous improvement of our learners is all anchored on the existing policy guidelines and issuances of the department especially this challenging time when the landscape of the education system came into metamorphosis due to the COVID-19 pandemic.*

Keywords—learning assessment; assessment framework; learner-centered

1. INTRODUCTION

With the sudden change of education landscape worldwide brought by COVID-19 pandemic this year 2020, DepEd Philippines strategized concrete policy guidelines in ensuring the continuity of teaching and learning in the basic education level across the country, and this was made possible through the issuance of The Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan in the Time of COVID-19 in May of this year [1]. As Sec. Leonor Magtolis Briones stated in this issuance, the issued continuity plan of the department is an integrated output of DepEd from a series of consultation with partners and advisers, legislators, executives and directors, teachers, parents, learners, and the general public (p. 1).

To ensure the continuity of schoolchildren's education despite the community quarantine protocol of the government, DepEd implemented major adjustments from all levels of governance at a magnitude never done before (p. 28.) These adjustments include: (1) the streamlining of the K to 12 Curriculum into the Most Essential Learning Competencies or MELCs; (2) introducing different learning delivery modalities; (3) the updating of learning resources; (4) the strategies for Kindergarten to Grade 3; (5) the learning assessment; (6) the strengthening of the Alternative Learning System or ALS; and (7) the establishment of a committee for the development, acquisition, and deployment of learning resources (pp. 28-40).

The department explicitly stated the importance of assessment in all stages of teaching-learning engagement with this provision on the said issuance: *"The learning outcomes in the form of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values will be assessed. Learners shall prepare their portfolio/e-portfolio to include written works, and performances (and products), whether hardcopy, softcopy, or*

a combination of these. The portfolio/e-portfolio content will be assessed using rubrics that capture the evidence of learning. Testimonies of parents and other adults including community leaders aside from teachers may also be considered in the assessment." (p. 36)

2. THE SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK FOR LEARNERS THIS COVID-19 PANDEMIC PERIOD

To address the needs of teachers and learners in the assessment of learning, this school-based assessment framework as a localized and contextualized version of DepEd's perspective of learning assessment anchored on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (1978, as cited in DepEd Order 8, s. 2015) [2] is hereby revised/updated based on the existing guidelines of DepEd. Similar to the previously crafted paradigm, this localized/contextualized framework is a product of a series of internal and external stakeholders' common interpretation and understanding on the importance and sanctity of a valid and reliable assessment in ensuring a culture of quality teaching and learning engagement at all times.

The school upholds DepEd's notion that classroom assessment is a joint process that involves both teachers and learners as an integral part of teaching-learning process. Moreover, the school recognizes the significant roles being played by parents at home and the community at large in assisting the learners to widen their thoughts and experiences to fully grasp the necessary skills they need as productive citizens of the 21st century. To make each teaching-learning episode appealing to the inquisitive minds of today's learners, various forms of assessment must be given in the most appropriate time, thus gauging learners' level of competencies not just as terminal evaluation but as well as helping learners in all parts of the teaching-learning engagement, from beginning to end. [3]

Moreover, the school embraces the following premises on learning assessment as explicitly stated in the aforementioned issuance:

“It facilitates the development of learners’ higher-order thinking and 21st-century skills.”

“It acknowledges the unity of instruction and assessment.”

“It is a part of day-to-day lessons and extends the day-to-day classroom activities that are already in place in the K to 12 curriculum.”

In support to the provisions of DepEd’s BELC Plan, another issuance was released focusing on learning assessment by DepEd Order No. 031, s. 2020 [4] titled Interim Guidelines for Assessment and Grading in Light of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan stating that as the department pursues learning continuity, it is imperative for schools to take stock of assessment and grading practices that will most meaningfully support learner development and respond to varied contexts of this time (paragraph 3). The said order likewise reiterated on paragraph 4 that the policy is grounded on the following assessment principles: (1) assessment should be holistic and authentic in capturing the attainment of the most essential learning competencies; (2) assessment is integral for understanding student learning and development; (3) a variety of assessment strategies is necessary, with formative assessment taking priority to inform teaching and promote growth and mastery; (4) assessment and feedback should be a shared responsibility among teachers, learners, and their families; and (5) assessment and grading should have a positive impact on learning.



Fig. 1. School-Based Assessment Paradigm for Learners this COVID-19 Pandemic Period

Figure 1 presents the *School-Based Assessment Paradigm for Learners this COVID-19 Pandemic* in a triadic representation. The outer-most triangle which serves as the main thrust is the DepEd’s Vision, Mission, and Core Values stipulated in DepEd Order No. 36, s. 2013 [5]. These foundational statements set a clear direction on how all the people in the department shall focus their efforts to realize the organizational mandates of delivering quality education based on the standards of today’s generation.

The second triangle illustrates the equal contribution of school, home, and community in the education of our learners. As the immemorial African quotation says, “It takes a village to educate a child”, the school strongly believes that learners’ maximum development can only be achieved if those three institutions work hand in hand in achieving a conducive learning environment anywhere.

The third triangle highlights the role of assessment as the heart of teaching-learning engagement for the growth and development of learners which comes into three dimensions, the assessment for learning, as learning, and of learning. These three forms of learning serve as the guiding light of teachers on how to make each lesson delivery appropriate to the development needs of their respective learners. By carefully crafting an assessment tool for learning, learning gaps will be addressed promptly and appropriate enrichment initiatives could be implemented to further enhance the innate talents and skills of our learners.

At the center of paradigm are the learners who are expected to complete the K to 12 Basic Education Program and acquire the assigned learning competencies to prepare them holistically into a higher ground as productive citizens with 21st century skills, which include: (1) information, media, and technology skills; (2) learning and innovation skills; (3) communication skills; and (4) life and career skills, that the world is looking for now.

The arrow at each corner signifies the inevitable relationship of the identified triadic variables which will help all other educators and stakeholders realize that the continuous improvement of our learners is all anchored on the existing policy guidelines and issuances of the department.

The circle enveloping the whole paradigm represents the novel landscape of the education system this COVID-19 pandemic, which include (1) required health standards; alternative learning delivery modalities; and (3) learning resources, which considerably posed an equally significant impact on the learning assessment of our learners throughout their school journey this school year in the so called New Normal. Observing minimum health standards is a must to avoid further transmission of the disease and this is the reason for implementing new learning delivery modalities such as distance online learning and modular distance learning, allowing learners to attend classes or perform designated learning tasks from their respective residences. Learning

resources likewise metamorphosized from Learner's Material (LM) or book to Self-Learning Modules (SLM) and Learning Activity Sheet (LAS), employing the irresistible assistance of ICT in the production and utilization of learning assessment this pandemic period. Truly, our education system now needs to move away from looking ICT as just a different format of presenting text, but rather consider it with instructional design in mind (p.45). [6]

3. REFERENCES

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