



## ***News for Teachers: K-8 Formative Assessment Initiative***

Arlington Public Schools (APS) awarded [CORE K-12](#) with a contract for an aligned, electronic formative benchmark assessment system (K-8) in reading and mathematics.

### **WHO: *Who is involved in the formative assessment initiative?***

Formative assessments will be administered to all students in grades K-8 in English Language Arts/Reading and Mathematics.

### **WHAT: *Which assessments will APS use and which assessments will be eliminated?***

APS is interested in using benchmark assessments as well as the *ipGrowth* model, a nationally normed scale of student achievement in reading and mathematics that documents growth over time, for students in grades K-8 in reading and mathematics. *An assessment calendar will be developed as we conduct a partial roll out from January to June.* It is likely that these assessments **will replace the quarterly math assessments, the Developmental Reading Assessment, and the SOL Released Item tests** currently given in the schools. (Please note that the DRA would remain available and used on an as needed basis for individual students). More information will follow.

### **WHEN: *When will the CORE K-12 formative assessments be implemented?***

All APS elementary and middle schools will implement the formative assessments using CORE K-12 in reading and mathematics beginning in the fall of 2012. An assessment schedule including SOL aligned preconfigured benchmark tests and use of the *ipGrowth* model will be provided.

### **WHERE: *Where will CORE K-12 formative assessments be implemented?***

A partial roll out of the formative assessment system in reading and mathematics will begin in January 2012 at Hoffman-Boston, McKinley, and Oakridge elementary schools and Kenmore Middle School. Full implementation will occur starting in the fall of 2012 at all elementary and middle schools.

### **WHY: *Why is APS investing in an electronic formative assessment benchmark system?***

The APS Strategic Plan commits to ensure that every student is challenged and engaged and achievement gaps are eliminated. The use of formative assessments provides teachers with a consistent, valid and reliable tool to monitor the progress of every child. Formative assessments may include benchmark assessments, teacher made, or growth model measures.

## What are the benefits to using a systematic formative assessment?

Benefits include:

- Provides schools a consistent and comparable review of student achievement in English language arts and mathematics(K-8)
- Provides immediate, accurate, valid and reliable data on the assessments
- Provides a user-friendly paperless electronic system for students and teachers
- Provides a consistent measure of effectiveness for interventions in reading and mathematics
- Recaptures instructional time for students due to electronic administration
- Allows access to user friendly reporting for teachers and parents

## Who is CORE K-12?

CORE K-12 is a national leader in formative assessment and has worked with large diverse school systems including districts in California, Texas, and New York. They have served over 20 million learners. CORE K-12 website ( [http://www.coreecs.com/k12\\_education](http://www.coreecs.com/k12_education) )

## What types of formative assessment does CORE K-12 offer? Which tests will be available?

CORE K-12 offers three types of formative assessment. All will be available to teachers:

- 1) **Benchmark Assessments:** Benchmark assessments are designed to assess a students' learning and to monitor progress toward a final objective or set of objectives. The CORE K-12 preconfigured benchmarks will be aligned with the Virginia Standards of Learning and will monitor progress toward proficiency on the SOL assessments in reading and mathematics.
- 2) **Teacher Made assessments:** The formative assessment system has the capacity to allow teachers to create their own periodic, unit based tests. This will be optional and also serve as a type of formative assessment.
- 3) **ipGrowth Measure:** The ipGrowth measure is used to assess a students' proficiency in mathematics and/or English Language Arts. Based on assessment, it assigns a scaled score which is nationally normed for individual students aligned with a grade level proficiency.

For more information, please contact Dr. Michelle Picard, Director of Early Childhood and Elementary Education at [michelle.picard@apsva.us](mailto:michelle.picard@apsva.us)

*Thank you to the teachers, administrators and staff who participated in the formative assessment sessions and provided valuable time and expertise to this process. We look forward to continuing to work with the APS community as CORE K-12 is implemented at the elementary and middle school levels.*