

**On Bridging the Gap Between Classroom and Large-Scale Assessment:
Towards Building Coherent Systems of Assessment**

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Much has been written and debated about the form, function, interpretation and/or use of assessments that are in close proximity to the processes of teaching and learning versus those that are more distal. The former are used by teachers as part of their ongoing classroom practice, whereas the latter are typically used by other education stakeholders for purposes such as policymaking and accountability. Often the discussion is about the ways in which these varying assessments conflict, conceptually and otherwise, and the extent to which large-scale assessments tend to dominate the discourse about educational attainment while also skewing the processes of classroom teaching and learning. Less often is there a discussion of their respective roles and purposes in the educational system and how they can and should be properly designed to serve the needs of different stakeholders in the educational enterprise. This presentation will focus on bridging the gap between classroom and large-scale assessment by considering what is common to all assessments – a process of reasoning from evidence – what differentiates assessments – their intended interpretive use – and how they can and should cohere within coordinated systems of assessments. The latter systems should be designed to support the intended users and uses of assessment at each level of the system and design should be guided by a set of system principles in addition to theories and research on the nature of learning and knowing. Examples of what such a system should look like and what makes for high quality assessment at each level of the system will be provided. The examples will be drawn from multiple disciplines such as the language arts, mathematics and science. Consideration will be given to the pragmatic and political challenges associated with developing such assessment systems and the need to refocus assessment design and development on quality tools and practices at the classroom level to achieve better balance relative to the increasing emphasis on large-scale assessments in the United States as well as in other countries including in Europe and Asia.