Conversations with Parents
Discussing ACSI Assessment with Parents

Today’s Agenda

ACSI Assessment and Parents
• Introducing TerraNova 3 to parents
• The Parent’s role in Pretest & Posttest activities
• Discussing test results with children
• Helping Parents understand assessment data – Data-Driven Parent-Teacher conferences

Introducing TerraNova 3 to Parents
• Most parents will be familiar with the practice of achievement testing
• Key Points about TerraNova 3:
  – Assessment designed to measure concepts, processes and skills taught throughout the nation
  – Areas to be assessed:
    • Reading
    • Language
    • Mathematics
    • Science
    • Social Studies
  – Strong research base & technical quality
  – 2011 norms – the newest available to ensure accurate comparisons of student performance
Introducing TerraNova 3 to Parents

- Mention additional testing, if any
  - PLUS tests
    - Short assessments to check foundation skills for each grade level
    - Word Analysis, Vocabulary, Language Mechanics, Spelling, Math Computation
  - InView (G 2-12) and/or Primary Test of Cognitive Skills (K-1)
    - Cognitive abilities tests
    - Measures verbal and non-verbal reasoning skills
    - Results help diagnose possible learning problems and ensure all students are achieving their potential

Uses of TerraNova 3 Data

- TerraNova 3 results can answer many questions about student achievement
  - Where is this individual student performing well, and where does this student need extra instruction and practice?
  - How are our students as a group performing compared to the national picture?
  - How well is our school’s curriculum and instructional program doing? Where can we improve?

How Will TerraNova 3 Results Be Used?

- Low stakes testing: Results will not affect report card grades or promotion to the next grade
- Support of Individual Students: Results can help...
  - Identify need for enhancement or extra support
  - Group students for specific instruction
- Curriculum and Instruction Review: Results will be analyzed by ACSI educators to see...
  - Where our current approach supports strong learning
  - Where we need to strengthen our current instruction
Parent’s Role Before Testing:

The Long View

• Focus on confidence: help your child recognize their strengths and feel good about themselves
• Assist child with homework – make completing assignments as priority
• Help child develop good study habits and a positive attitude toward school
• Ensure good attendance
• Encourage reading and play educational games that encourage thinking
• Help your child learn to follow directions

Parent’s Role Before Testing:

The Shorter View

• Explain that the tests are to help teachers help students
  — Encourage students to do their best
  — Be positive
  — Ask if child wants any help or support before the test, e.g., review math facts, practice sample questions
• Parent-Teacher conversation if parent has any concerns
  — Building test-taking skills to reduce anxiety
  — Use of practice tests at school, with a tutor or at home
  — Practice tests: from CTB or from Classroom Connections

Parent’s Role Immediately Before Testing

• Know the testing dates: don’t schedule doctor/dental appointments on those days
• Make sure child gets a good night’s sleep and healthy breakfast
• Don’t send child to school sick – make-up the test when child is well
• Relax: Be calm, positive and reassuring
• Encourage their best effort
  — Some questions will be easy, some may be challenging
  — Always try your best
Guidelines: Data Discussions with Parents

1. In general, focus on scores that are easily understood, such as National Percentiles and Stanines
2. Avoid educational jargon – talk in conversational (layman’s) terms
3. Connect to classroom learning whenever possible.
4. Talk about the school’s role and the parent’s role in supporting the students

Sharing Test Results with Parents & Children

- Don’t reduce a child to a single test score
- Emphasize effort
  - “How hard you worked to learn at school” vs “You’re so smart”
  - Praise effort at challenging things or difficult areas
- Maintain a positive outlook
  - Focus on how test results will help teacher and school
  - Talk about ways parents & children can help as a family
    - Playing games, reading together, practicing challenging tasks
- Ask the child’s opinions and feelings
  - “Are you happy with your performance?”
  - “What would you do the same or different?”

Using the ACSI Parent Report

- Spring report
- Uses simple graphics and explanations
- Easy for parents to understand
- Possible tool for discussing assessment results with student
Accessing the ACSI Parent Report

1. Log into ACSI Data Online – Class level
2. Select “PDF” option under TerraNova3 tab

3. Select “Parent Report” and open the file
4. Parent Reports for all students on the GIS will be in the file

ACSI Parent Report – Page 1

Student information
General introduction
Bar graphs of student’s results by subtest
ACSI Parent Report – Reading

Student’s Reading results by NP & Objectives

Recommended books based on Student’s Lexile

Suggested activities based on Student’s Reading Objective results

ACSI Parent Report – Math

Student’s Math results by NP & Objectives

Age & Grade-appropriate Mathematics Resources found online

Suggested activities based on Student’s Math Objective results

Data-Driven Parent-Teacher Conferences

• Our Attitude: Parents...
  – want what is best for their child.
  – are the child’s first and most important teachers.
  – are equal partners and collaborate with the school.

• Our Information at a Parent-Teacher Conference:
  – clear and straight-forward  no jargon or teacher talk
  – supported by samples of classroom work or tests

• Paper Report to Use: Individual Profile Report
Individual Profile Report

Objectives information

Moderate Mastery Range

Why is the Line through the Circle?

- Confidence Band
  - Takes into consideration "error of measurement"
  - Compensates for variations in performance if the student was to take the test again and again
- If this student took the test again, it is highly likely that his/her score would be somewhere on this line.

Suggestion: A 3-Step Approach

1. Positive Statement(s)
   • The student’s strengths as a learner

2. Constructive Information
   • Where improvement can be made
   • Why improvement is needed  share work samples & expectations for the grade level

3. Specific Next Steps
   • What the school & teacher will do
   • How the parents can help at home
Example Student

Reading Strength: Analyze Text
- Main idea
- Conclusions
- Story characters & setting
- Literary technique, e.g., metaphor, personification

Reading Challenge: Evaluate/Extend Meaning
- Generalize
- Fact/opinion
- Author’s purpose, point of view, bias
- Predict & hypothesize
- Extend/apply meaning

Example: Parent-Teacher Conference

1. Positive Statement(s)
   - In Reading, overall Teddy is performing near the national average. He did very well in Analyzing Text. This shows he is good at understanding important ideas and characters in stories.

2. Constructive Information
   - In Reading it was more difficult for him to evaluate and extend the meaning of the text. Tasks like understanding the author’s purpose or point of view were often challenging.
   - Share examples from class work

3. Specific Next Steps
   - Here at school I will teach specific strategies for analyzing the author’s viewpoint and purpose as well as how to think beyond the explicit meaning of a text.
   - It would be helpful if when you and Teddy read books together at home, you talk about what the author is trying to say. You might also ask what will probably happen in the next chapter based on what happened in this chapter.

Explaining Norm-Referenced Scores

- Page 2 of the Individual Profile Report
- Focus on National Percentiles
- NPs are easier to explain and understand
National Percentile Discussion with Parent

• In general, Teddy's performance in most areas is near the national average.
  – compared to other students at this grade
  – in the fall of the school year.
• Language was his highest performance area.
  – Teddy scored higher than 64% of students in the national comparison group.
  – This tells us he is performing better than about 2/3s of the students in the national sample for this grade in the fall of the school year.
• Reading and Math scores were slightly below the national average.
  – Teddy scored higher than 46% of students in the Reading national comparison group and higher than 47% in the Math national group.

Connecting TN3 and InView Results

• Is your child achieving his/her full potential?
• Focus on DIFF scores: Is achievement significantly Above or significantly Below what was expected?
• Blank DIFF column = anticipated and actual achievement are within the expected range in all areas.

Discussing InView with Parents

Look at Stanine scores
7, 8, 9 = Above Average
4, 5, 6 = Average
1, 2, 3 = Below Average

CSI = Age-dependent score
Focus on Range, not number
• 117 = Above Average
• 84-116 = Average
• 83 = Below Average
Summary of Today’s Session

Conversations with Parents: Taking a Closer Look at ACSI Assessment

- Introduce TerraNova 3 assessment program to parents
  - Describe purposes & formats of TN3 testing as well as uses of TN3 results
- Consider the Parent’s role in Pretest & Posttest activities
  - Focus on both the long-term picture & near-term testing activities
- Discuss test results with parents and children
  - Stay constructive, explain test results simply, plan action
- Hold a data-driven Parent-Teacher conference
  - Focus on positive results, areas for improvement & a plan for action
  - Understand & use key TN3 reports: ACSI-Parent Report (online); Individual Profile Report (paper report)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION