

# Affirm Refine Aspire

Holy Spirit Catholic Schools - Learning Services 5/1/2020

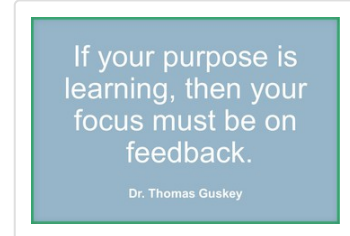
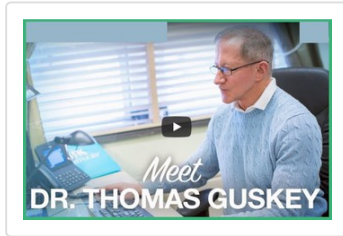
## Starting with our 'Why?'

I know everyone is familiar with the image of the 'Golden Circle', and may be familiar with the work of Simon Sinek and 'Start with Why'. Sinek's work reminds us of the importance of being very clear and intentional with the purpose behind any decisions or actions. In order to ensure that everyone within an organization is working cohesively, it's imperative that everyone know the 'why'.

In recent days, the topic of assessment and year-end reporting has been on the forefront for many – parents and teachers alike. What does assessment look like during a cancellation of classes? What can a report card issued during a pandemic tell us about student learning? At this time, **the purpose of assessment is to facilitate ongoing student learning**. In order for assessment to be a meaningful part of the learning process (not just the event at the end of the learning), we need to use assessments in a formative way.

Once we have a clear understanding of 'why', the 'how' and 'what' can be identified more easily and put into action. In this edition of 'Affirm, Refine, Aspire' you will find many practical resources for gathering assessment data and using it formatively to further the learning for all of your students. I hope you are able to use some of these 'ready to go' tools & strategies to transform assessments into becoming an integral part of your instruction.

**Carmen Larsen, Director of Learning**



## Assessments & Grading in the Midst of a Pandemic

The following is a quote from **Thomas R. Guskey**:

*'The coronavirus pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges to educators throughout the world. Schools have had to change entire instructional programs in widely varied contexts with inequitable access to technology and other vital resources. School closures and requirements for social isolation have created untold hardships for students and their families, especially those with multiple children at different grade levels, whose parents cannot stay at home, whose English may not be the primary language, and where the parents are also teachers. In making these changes, educators recognize that we can't do everything we did before.*

***We must examine our purposes, establish priorities, and decide what is truly most important.'***

## A New Lens on Assessment

According to **Rick Stiggins**, we need assessment that will:

- Encourage, not discourage
- Build confidence, not anxiety
- Bring hope, not hopelessness
- Offer success, not frustration
- Trigger smiles, not tears

For our remote learning environment, we could also add that we need assessment that will invite students to lean in to the learning, rather than push away.

***"Teachers involve students in assessment by sharing clear learning destinations, using samples to help students understand quality and development, and involving students in co-constructing criteria and in self and peer assessment. They also involve students in collecting evidence of learning and communicating evidence of that learning to others."***

- Anne Davies & Sandra Herbst

## Formative Assessment Tools & Providing Feedback

As we engage students in virtual learning experiences, it continues to be important to check for understanding and to provide meaningful feedback to students. Here are **key considerations** when offering feedback in a virtual environment. As well, listed below are suggestions for digital tools available to teachers to support formative assessment.

1. **Know your purpose for assessment.**
2. **Collect data over time.**
3. **Focus on feedback..**
4. **Check for understanding**
5. **Have personal conversations with students.**

For details & resource links click [here](#).

[How to Do Formative Assessment in Distance Learning](#)

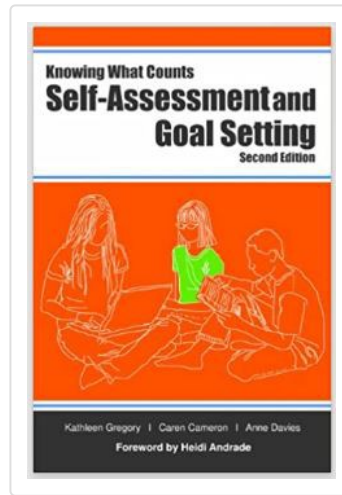
[Top Tech Tools for Formative Assessment](#)

Dylan Wiliam: Formative assessment



**Dylan Wiliam**, in his book *'Embedded Formative Assessment'*, highlights 5 key elements he believes are keys:

**The Importance of Student Self Assessment**



## Co-Constructing Success Criteria

Now more than ever, it's important to be clear about **what counts**. Co-creating success criteria helps students and teachers focus on what is most important in a task and **what successful learning looks like**.

To create success criteria with students:

1. **Review exemplars of excellent work;**
2. **Determine the attributes that contribute to a high level of quality;**
3. **Link these attributes to specific evidence in the exemplars;**
4. **Sort the attributes, and determine category names or "big ideas"; and**
5. **Craft statements to name the criteria for success.**

Read more: [Co-Constructing Success Criteria](#)

## The Importance of Student Self-Assessment

Gregory, Cameron and Davies in **Self-Assessment and Goal-Setting** (2000) share three types of self-assessment activities.

- **Pause and Think** - Students take a moment to reflect on their learning.
- **Look for Proof** - Students reflect on their learning but then choose a sample of work as evidence of their learning and provide comments about their work.
- **Connect to Criteria** - Students assess their work according to predetermined success criteria and show evidence that their work has met the criteria.

## The Power of Descriptive Feedback

**'Descriptive feedback is the most powerful tool for improving student learning.'**  
*Black, Harrison, Lee & Wiliam*

This video explains the **importance of assessment and descriptive feedback** using swimming lessons as an analogy. [Benefits of Descriptive Feedback](#) - Dave Del Gobbo

For more discussion about descriptive feedback and **suggested strategies** to use with students read [Descriptive Feedback and Some Strategies](#).

**It is the nature, rather than the amount, that is critical when giving students feedback.**  
*Black and Wiliam*



Google Meet Special Edition 2020.pdf

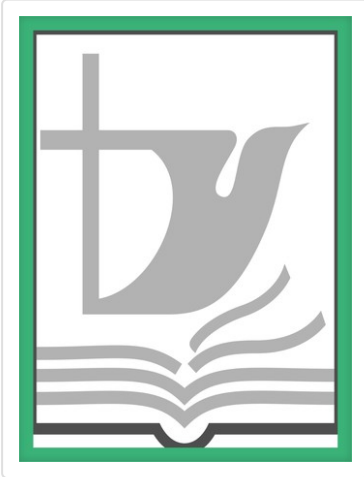
All About Google Meet - At Your Fingertips!

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# You're Invited to The Staff Room & Upcoming Meetings

Click here for dates/times to meet us in The Staff Room for conversation & connection AND for dates/times for upcoming Grade Level Meetings.



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