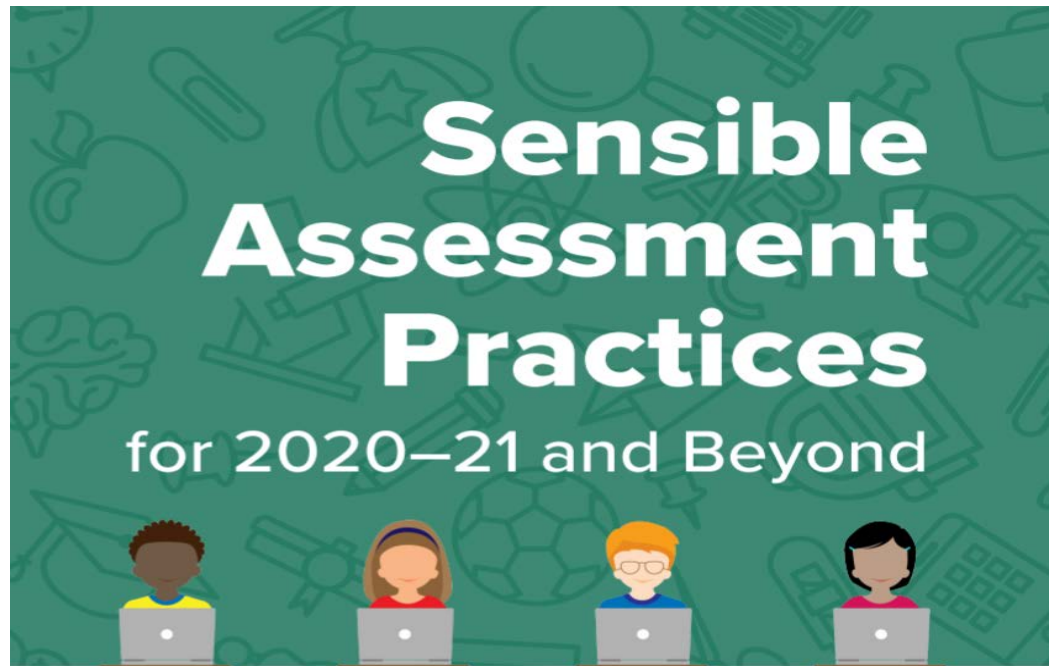





Building Community



Cristi Alberino
Deirdre Ducharme
Janet Stuck

Performance Office
CT State Department of Education



Sensible Assessment Practices Webinar Overview



Start of School Year Analyzing qualitative and quantitative data to make informed decisions for **ALL** students



Building Community Building an effective community of learners while meeting the needs of **ALL** students (onsite, remote)



Beginning with Units Designed for Success
Modeling a unit of instruction and assessment
-Grade 5 standards



Instruction and Assessment Cycle Building from the instructional plan established for the academic year



Focusing on Sensible Assessment Practices Year Round



Community is
about doing
something
together that
makes belonging
matter.

~ BRIAN SOLIS



Key Concepts



Community



Safety



Trust



Connection



Learning




Inspiration



Areas of Focus

- ▶ Build a team of educators and school staff to establish community
- ▶ Establish a safe and nurturing environment
- ▶ Keep parents/guardians involved
- ▶ Create norms and expectations
- ▶ Meet students where they are
- ▶ Focus on the whole child



Get to Know Students and Their Families

- ▶ Take time to **build relationships** with students and their families
- ▶ **Ask parents/guardians for assistance** in practicing “skills” with their learners
- ▶ Provide families with **ongoing communication** that encompasses support and caring and effective teaching
- ▶ **Check-in** with families and students and check in often



"What is the most underused resource in education today?"

"Parents."

-Lauren Tripp Barlis





Establish a Safe Learning Environment

- ▶ Design a classroom/online learning environment that promotes
 - ▶ safety
 - ▶ trust
 - ▶ compassion
- ▶ Establish routines
- ▶ Build in schedules that students can count on with specified goals and outcomes





Establish a Safe Learning Environment

- ▶ Talk about student experiences with COVID-19
 - ▶ check-ins may need to be conducted with the support of the school mental health professionals
 - ▶ consider checking in multiple times over a series of weeks
- ▶ Promote student discussion, collaboration, and self-advocacy



Establish a Safe Learning Environment

- ▶ Encourage mindfulness, self-care, and processing experiences and emotions
 - ▶ model/provide coping strategies
 - ▶ consider yoga, deep breathing
- ▶ Consider refraining from introducing new academic content until routines are firmly re-established





Be Mindful of Barriers

▶ Consider the **impact of masks** on:

- ▶ individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing
- ▶ English-language learners
- ▶ students with disabilities, including those with physical disabilities
- ▶ individuals with respiratory conditions

▶ Consider the **impact of masks** on the ability to

- ▶ read emotions and facial expressions
- ▶ follow speech
- ▶ participate in speech-related interventions
- ▶ generally participate and focus on academics





Meet Students Where They Are



Acknowledge
learning loss



Avoid labeling
(i.e., COVID-19
compromised)



Shift from deficit
framing and
focus on
students' assets



Smooth the
pathway for
learning



Validate

- ▶ Do not assume students will voluntarily disclose their distress or want to talk immediately
- ▶ Teach **validation skills**, acknowledging everyone has had a different experience with COVID-19
 - ▶ not everyone will respond in the same way
 - ▶ experiences will vary significantly
 - ▶ validate that some are **disappointed**, some are **grieving**, some are **exhausted** from added responsibilities, some are **scared**, yet some had positive experiences





Empower

- ▶ Teach, reteach and model expectations and routines
 - ▶ **avoid punitive approaches** when managing physical distancing requirements when possible
- ▶ Consider opportunities for students to work cooperatively, feel empowered, and assist others, which can prove restorative following significant disruption and stress
- ▶ Provide students opportunities to voice concerns, challenges, and needs



Engage

- ▶ Promote accessible instructional modalities
- ▶ Maximize synchronous and asynchronous learning using both digital and paper/pencil learning opportunities
- ▶ Integrate digital tools and resources that foster student engagement and collaboration
- ▶ Use multiple data sources to group students in purposeful ways based on interest, need, or skill level using a variety of formats and structures



Inspire

- ▶ Teachers who create connections, build empathy, and a culture of caring will build a positive community of learners regardless of location (remote or in-person)
- ▶ Teachers can motivate and model appropriate skills and strategies
- ▶ Positive communities move learners from passive participants to active drivers in their own learning



Foundational Resources

- ▶ [Sensible Assessment Practices](#) This document offers guidance to educators on how they can “assess” their incoming students when schools re-open without necessarily having to “test” them. The assessment and instructional practices in this document are intended to apply to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners.
- ▶ [Plan for Reimagining CT Classrooms for Continuous Learning](#) The purpose of this document is to provide a framework for developing local Continuous Learning Plans to support the reopening of all schools that will provide continuity of learning.
- ▶ [Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut’s Plan to Learn and Grow Together](#) This document is intended to be a fluid document that will evolve based on the public health data trends as well as the understanding of the best way to mitigate spread. To close the digital divide in Connecticut and empower students across the state to learn from home, Governor Lamont recently announced this initiative [Everybody Learns Initiative](#) to fill any device and/or connectivity gaps that may still remain.





Resources

- ▶ [How to Build an Online Learning Community](#) (In 2020). Learn Worlds, April 28, 2020. Defines an online learning community and gives 8 tips to building your own online community.
- ▶ [Creative Ways Teachers are Building Classroom Community Online](#) Lists ideas used by educators during online teaching, from using Quizlet to hosting virtual themes.
- ▶ The TIES Center developed a framework for [building student engagement](#) with distance learning for students who learn differently. TIES also released resources on [morning meetings](#), [collaborative behavioral supports](#), and [effective specially-designed instruction](#).





Resources

- ▶ [5 Virtual Ways to Build a Classroom Community](#) April 1, 2020. Provides teachers with examples of activities for synchronous and asynchronous teaching and for building community in a virtual classroom.
- ▶ [Mindfulness for Educators](#) is a webinar by hosted by Sanford Harmony. In this webinar you'll learn how to tap into the power of mindfulness to increase engagement and emotional intelligence in your classroom.
- ▶ [Emotional Intelligence and Resiliency: Teaching During COVID-19](#): This webinar by Sanford Learning is for educators who are struggling with the transition to remote teaching.
- ▶ [When Kids Return to School, Kids May Have More Agency. Are We Ready?](#) July 20, 2020. This article presents student views on remote learning and discusses the benefits of remote learning.





CSDE Performance Office Staff

Abe Krisst
Bureau Chief
Abe.Krisst@ct.gov
(860) 713-6894

Janet Stuck
Janet.Stuck@ct.gov
860-713-6837

Deirdre Ducharme
Deirdre.Ducharme@ct.gov
860-713-6859

Dr. Cristi Alberino
Cristi.Alberino@ct.gov
860-713- 6862