

## BCTF Year of Action

### January: Authentic Assessment

The most effective assessment of student progress is the assessment that teachers do every day in the classroom. Teachers have always worked to develop and refine their practice, balancing their instruction with assessment that provides students with immediate feedback about their progress and helps them to learn more productively on their own and with others. Teachers use this process of ongoing assessment to respond to individual student needs, to reflect on their teaching, and to improve their teaching strategies. The current emphasis on standardized testing results in ever increasing amounts of time being spent on data collection to meet accountability requirements and encourages teaching to the test. It takes time and attention away from the many elements, beyond academics, that are essential to a rich educational experience—music, visual arts, physical education, leadership, and social responsibility that simply cannot be quantified.

The BCTF's Better Schools for BC Plan contains the following three recommendations on authentic student assessment:

- Support teachers' **authentic assessment** practices (for *Talking points on authentic assessment*, see reverse).
- Adopt a scientific, structured sample approach to the administration of the FSAs.
- Work with the BCTF to address ministry, teacher, and parent concerns related to both student and system-wide assessment.

<http://www.betterschoolsbc.ca/>

#### Additional resources

BCTF flyer entitled: What really counts! Rethinking accountability <http://www.bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Education/Accountability/ProvExams.pdf>

A number of our Provincial Specialist Associations have taken a stand on mandatory Ministry exams for grades 10 and 11.

The BC Mathematics Teachers have written a letter to the Minister of Education which can be found at [www.bcmat.ca](http://www.bcmat.ca).

The website of the BC Science Teachers, [www.bcscta.ca](http://www.bcscta.ca), contains a link to the re-released video *One test does not fit all*, as well as the Science 10 Survey report they compiled and a letter of response from the Minister of Education.

#### Participate in a Joint VSTA/VESTA Mark-In

**Where:** Kingsgate Mall  
370 East Broadway  
**When:** Wednesday, January 30<sup>th</sup>  
4:00-5:00pm



**Teaching is more than an 8:00-3:00pm job!**

## Talking points on authentic assessment

### **Authentic assessment definition:**

Authentic assessment is a form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills—Jon Mueller, Professor of Psychology, [North Central College](#), Naperville, IL, 2012.

### **Authentic assessment is:**

- driven by students' learning.
  - a demonstration or performance of students' learning.
  - a fit between the classroom learning and the demonstration or task performed.
  - finding out what students know and can do with that knowledge.
  - an aid to inform a teacher's practice.
- Students who perform authentic assessments know that the learning is what is important.

### **Traditional assessment definition:**

Traditional assessment is the forced-choice measures where students select an answer or recall information to complete a test or exam, e.g., multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blanks.

### **Authentic assessment is not:**

- memorization and regurgitation of facts.
- studying material from a textbook.
- memorizing irrelevant or disconnected information.
- how the real world works.
- driven by report card bureaucracy.
- one "test/model" fits all.

Students who engage in authentic assessments are not focused on marks.