

Assessing 21st Century Skills

Deer Isle-Stonington High School

History

- 2007-08 NEASC self-study & school-wide academic expectations.
- Community interest in proficiency-based learning... if not by that name.
- 2008-09: Planning.
- 2009-10: Implementation.
- 2013-15: All graduates demonstrated proficiency.

What the Heck Is a SWE?

- School-wide Expectation: both the standard and the assessment task.
- SWE: local vernacular for “school-wide expectation;” rhymes with “tea.”
- Refers to the assessment task, as in “I need to finish my US History SWE before progress reports.”

Our SWE's

- Creative and practical problem solver.
- Clear and effective communicator.
- [Link to school-wide expectations and rubrics.](#)

Table Talk

- Are there standards that apply to all courses and all grade levels?
- What 21st century skills has your school identified?

2013-18 SWE System

- Students need 15 examples of each school-wide expectation to meet standard in order to graduate.
- Each class is required to offer one problem solver and one communicator SWE.
- Students must score at least a 2.7 on the SWE task to be proficiency.

2013-18 SWE System

- SWE tasks are graded on a 4-point SWE rubric; indicator scores are averaged. A traditional (and somewhat arbitrary) grade is also included.
- Students can revise SWE for a set period of time after the end of the course.
- Not making progress on SWEs can trigger a student assistance team meeting.
- [Link to explanation of SWE system.](#)

Senior Exhibition

- Capstone assessment of each school-wide expectation.
- Self-directed, semester long project.
- Rubric is explicitly aligned to each school-wide expectation.

Student Voices

- SWE's are valuable:
- “I learned the process of problem solving through SWEs.”
- “I was pushed to be a better communicator” through SWEs.

Student Voices

- SWE's helped raise expectations:
- “It is important that there were some [assignments] that every student had to do well.”
- “With SWEs, I couldn't slack off on everything.”

Student Voices

- SWE's made learning relevant:
- “Good SWEs were just assignments where you filled in the blank... you really had to think on the good ones.”
- “Good SWE's asked my opinion and made me think- they made learning interesting to me.”

Table Talk

- Why is it important to assess 21st century skills?
- How do you know that your school has selected meaningful 21st century skills?
- What do your students think about your 21st century skills?

What Has Worked

- Common vocabulary, experience, and expectations for all teachers.
- Increased staff capacity for proficiency-based learning.
- Students see value in SWEs.
- Increased expectations for students.

What Hasn't Worked

- SWEs are too prescribed and teacher-centered; lack student choice.
- Poor alignment between some assessment tasks and SWE rubric.
- Inconsistent explanation of SWEs to students and parents by teachers.

SWE's 2.0

- Increasing the number of school-wide expectations (standards) from two to five.
- Grading and reporting just like content standards in proficiency-based system.
- Dramatically increasing student choice.
- Reducing number of SWEs per class to one as a safety net of opportunity.

Table Talk

- How can you integrate the assessment of 21st century skills into your school's vision and day to day work?
- What is the capacity of your staff to design and communicate assessments of 21st century skills?
- How can your school ensure the design of high quality assessments of 21st century skills?

More Information

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Questions?

... and hopefully some answers