

Session 6B: Discussion about the Practical Guidance

Implementing Balanced Assessment Systems: A Practical Guidebook for Districts and Schools

Table of Contents

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION	Introduction.....	3
	Background on Balanced Assessment Systems.....	4
	Criteria for Balanced Assessment Systems.....	5
	An Updated Vision.....	6
	Barriers to Balanced Assessment Systems.....	7
SECTION 2: THREATS TO BALANCE.....		11
	Common Threats to Efficiency.....	13
	Threat 1: Too much testing overall, particularly early or later in the year.....	13
	Threat 2: Redundant assessments.....	14
	Threat 3: Unused assessment results.....	16
	Practical Next Steps: What can a district or school do to investigate and evaluate threats to efficiency?.....	18
	Common Threats to Usefulness.....	20
	Threat 4: Not having a clear match between the assessment purpose and design.....	20
	Threat 5: Assuming all tests can inform instruction.....	21
	Practical Next Steps: What can a district or school do to evaluate and investigate threats to usefulness?.....	23
	Common Threats to Coherence.....	25
	Threat 6: Inconsistency between assessments and instructional vision.....	25
	Threat 7: Policies that distort practice.....	26
	Threat 8: Over-emphasizing the role of summative assessment.....	28
	Practical Next Steps: What can a district or school do to evaluate and investigate threats to coherence?.....	30
SECTION 3: DISTRICT & STATE VIGNETTES.....		31
	Background.....	31
	District Vignettes.....	34
	Katy Independent School District.....	34
	Howard-Suamico School District.....	37
	Cupertino Union School District.....	40
	Cañon City Schools.....	43
	Summary of District Vignettes.....	47

This practical guide was written to help **district and school education leaders** implement the teachings from *Reimagining Balanced Assessment Systems*.

We also intend for **state leaders** to use this guide to best support local education systems move towards more balanced assessment systems.

FIGURE 2-1 Eight threats to balanced assessment systems.

Common Threats to Efficiency:

Threat 1: Too much testing overall, particularly early or later in the year.

Threat 2: Redundant assessments.

Threat 3: Unused assessment results.

Common Threats to Usefulness:

Threat 4: No clear match between the assessment purpose and design.

Threat 5: Assuming all tests can inform instruction.

Common Threats to Coherence:

Threat 6: Inconsistency between assessments and instructional vision.

Threat 7: Policies that distort practice.

Threat 8: Over-emphasizing the role of summative assessment.

How did some or all of the threats show up across sessions?

Raise your hand and we will bring you a microphone.

Feedback on the DRAFT Guidebook

We are going to ask you to focus your table group discussion on **Section 2: Threats to Balance** using the following two questions:

1. What did you like about the threats to balance section?
2. What did you think could be improved in the threats to balance section? (e.g., what did you think was missing, wrong, misleading, or only partially correct/explained)

Process

- We are together for a reason! And as the old adage goes: Two heads are better than one.
- We ask that you **discuss Section 2** at your table and **add your consensus opinions and thoughts** to a **Google form** linked on the next slide and also on the conference website. We will use this feedback to revise the paper.
- We aren't sure how long it will take, so if you only get to Section 2—that's great! **If you have additional time, please move on to Section 3 and then Section 4.** The Google form is set up so that those questions are not required to submit.
- We will not do a whole group shareout. Rather, **we will ask each group to hold up a green, yellow, or red piece of paper at the very end** to give us a sense of how ready your group thinks this document is for publication.

<https://tinyurl.com/RILS2025-1>

Practical Guidebook Feedback Form

RILS 2025

* Indicates required question

Select Table # *

Choose ▼

Next

Clear form



Stoplight Quick-Check

How ready does your group think the Practical Guidebook is for publication?

[and, no, we are not going to define the scale in more detail—use your judgment]



Next Steps for the Practical Guide

- Incorporate feedback from the survey
- Potentially add one or two additional vignettes
- Publish before the end of 2025
- Share with all attendees and on our social media platforms
- Potentially have a webinar