Setting Performance Benchmarks

Rising above the whims of change
University of Hawaii at Manoa
Children's Center

Lani Au       Education Coordinator
Jeffrey Bock  Education Specialist
Why are we here today?
Quick overview of terminology
Assessment

- Evaluation of the quality of a program
- Estimation of the ability of an individual

- You cannot do both at the same time
Standards

- Curricular aims that define intended learning outcomes.
- They should realistically represent what students can actually learn in school given the limits of instructional time, and ought not be a wish list (Popham, 2011).
Standards

- Composite standards should be assessed both holistically and analytically.

- Indicators within a composite standard should be directly related to each other (Popham, 2011).
Standard 4: Writing:
CONVENTIONS AND SKILLS:
Use the writing process and conventions of language and research to construct meaning and communicate effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences using a range of forms.
Benchmarks

Performance benchmarks represent target indicators that, when joined with other indicators in the overall assessment, present a snapshot of where an individual is on a developmental or curricular continuum.

Performance benchmarks look at one aspect of the application of a skill or concept – an indicator.

A composite standard should have a benchmark to address each component.
LA.2.4.1 Write in a variety of grade-appropriate formats for a variety of purposes and audiences, such as brief narratives with logical sequencing and some detail, simple explanations of an event or circumstance.
Hawaii Early Learning and Development Standards

HELDS is proposed to replace Hawaii Preschool Content Standards.

A quality preschool should therefore be able to demonstrate that it meets or exceeds HELDS.
HELDS

- HELDS joins to HCPS III performance benchmarks for kindergarten and works downward.
- HELDS benchmarks are banded by age range to show progression.
Our Story
Split Focus

- Accreditation year
  - Classroom and Child portfolios based on DAP and HPCS
- HELDS issued in September
- NGSS issued in April
- Spring interns
  - Required to work with HELDS
- HAEYC asked us to help create a HELDS implementation book.
- Potential tie-in with Universal Preschool.
THE GOOD

- Banded benchmarks show what is targeted at each age level.
- Progression between bands shows how one benchmark is built over time.
THE BAD

- Benchmarks strongly favored recall skills over other cognitive thinking skills.
- Benchmarks did not address all the requirements our program routinely monitors regarding:
  - NAEYC accreditation
  - CREDE standards and practices.
  - UHMCC mission and culture
HELDS

* Benchmarks often struggled to balance development with HCPS III demands.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birth</th>
<th>12 months</th>
<th>24 months</th>
<th>36 months</th>
<th>48 months</th>
<th>KE</th>
<th>End of Kindergarten Standards (CCSS, HCPSIII, and GLO)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use senses to explore the immediate environment (AL/LA.12.a)</td>
<td>Explore the environment in close proximity to and in constant sight of caregiver (AL/LA.24.a)</td>
<td>Explore the environment independently but seek occasional approval from near-by adults (AL/LA.36.a)</td>
<td>Try new activities and experiences independently (AL/LA.48.a)</td>
<td>Show eagerness to learn about a variety of topics and ideas (AL/LA.KE.a)</td>
<td>Works independently and asks for help when needed (KGLO #1.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Creating Our Own

UHMCC benchmarks looked at what we regularly tracked based on:
- HELDS
- HCPS III
- CCSS (Common Core State Standards)
- NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards)
- NAEYC / DAP
- CREDE (Center for Research on Equity and Diversity in Education)
- UHMCC core curriculum
- The talent and experience of UHMCC educators
**Our Benchmarks**

How we addressed KGLO #1.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approaches to Learning</th>
<th>Work Habits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGE 2 TO 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is curious about learning new things and is willing to try new tasks and experiences; may participate by observing.</td>
<td>Demonstrates interest in independence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGE 3 TO 4</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is curious about learning new things and willing to try novel tasks and experiences independently or with a partner</td>
<td>Attempts to complete activities or tasks independently before asking for help or letting others do it instead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGE 4 TO 5</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is curious about learning new things and is willing to try novel tasks and experiences independently within and outside the classroom.</td>
<td>Works independently in a focused, comfortable manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KINDERGARTEN to GRADE 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No specific benchmark</td>
<td>KGLO 1.1 Works independently and asks for help when needed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UHMCC Benchmarks

- Seek to better address what HELDS tried to address.
- Seek to create benchmarks that are assessable and indicative of where a child stands on both the developmental and curricular continuum.
- Reflect a curriculum that is personally relevant and accessible to the child.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Science</th>
<th>AGE 2 TO 3</th>
<th>AGE 3 TO 4</th>
<th>AGE 4 TO 5</th>
<th>KINDERGARTEN to GRADE 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Begins to understand the difference between actions on living and non-living things (e.g., hitting a peg is different than hitting a peer).</td>
<td>Begins to understand basic differences in ways to care for living things and non-living things.</td>
<td>Begins to understand basic similarities between natural structures (e.g., the a trunk supports branches) and manufactured structures (e.g., the way a post supports crossbars).</td>
<td>SC.K.1.3 Participates in (group) data collection about living and non-living things.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our Next Steps

- We have too many benchmarks
  - Working to prioritize, edit and cull
  - Reduces ability of the teacher to move flexibly to respond to the needs of the children.

- Benchmarks define a core curriculum
  - Do they truly reflect what we believe?
  - Are they consistent?
  - Do they reflect current research and thinking?
Why this is important?

- The benchmarks better define the curricular standards we hold ourselves to.
- The benchmarks clearly defined standards that were previously felt or assumed.
- The process encourages collaboration of staff across age groups.
- The process and the product create a collaborative dialogue with ECE community (including UH College of Ed).
Why would you do this?

- As a quality program, you must be able to demonstrate your assessment philosophy.
- Children, families and staff will benefit.
- NAEYC accreditation standards clearly state the expectation for a program’s assessment methods to be understood by constituents.
- The HELDS system is unsupportable in its current iteration.
- NGSS revises STEM, which the state is aligned with.
- Because of the explicit tie, if HCPS changes HELDS must also change.
- HELDS is here because of the potential of Universal Presechool.
Next Steps for You….

- Do your homework
  - Identify what is being required
  - Find experts

- Dream
  - Clearly identify what you think is important

- Leverage your talent pool
  - Create opportunities to discuss and collaborate within your program.
People grow best...
Resources

- Start in house
  - Collaborate

- Other tools

- Come see us, our door is always open!

- Lani and Jeff: auleilan@hawaii.edu 956-7963