**Factors for School Divisions to Consider in Reviewing Growth Assessments for Local Use**

School divisions are encouraged to consider the following topics and questions before contracting with any vendor.

* Clearly define the purpose for using the assessment. Is the intended purpose to:
  + Support delivery of differentiated instruction?
  + Evaluate the effectiveness of specific interventions and/or programs?
  + Evaluate teachers?
* Determine if the alignment of the test items to the Standards of Learning (SOL) is sufficient for the stated purpose. For each grade level and content area, school divisions should consider the following:
  + What evidence is there that the items included in the assessment measure the SOL for the content area and grade level?
  + To what extent do the items cover all of the SOL included for the content area and grade level? If there are SOL not addressed by the assessment, what impact will this omission have on the use of the assessment for the stated purpose?
* Determine the student population to be assessed. Are assessments needed for:
  + Entire grade levels, courses, schools, divisions? Does the test bank proposed appear to be sufficiently deep and broad to meet the identified need(s)?
  + Unique student populations (i.e., special needs students, remediation groups, etc.)?
* Review the test administration requirements for the assessment under consideration.
  + What delivery modes are available (paper/pencil, online, hybrid)?
  + What is the recommended or required group size for administration (class/group, small group, one-on-one)?
  + What are the parameters for test administration windows, or is there flexibility for determining testing windows at the school division level?
* Review the technology requirements enumerated by the vendor, including:
  + Is there an ability to use Mac/PC/portable devices for test administration, data entry, and for accessing report?
  + What concurrent user and bandwidth issues might arise?
  + What IT supports will be provided by the vendor?
  + What is the availability of vendor IT support during test administration?
  + What IT supports will be required by division staff prior to and during testing?
  + What is the local network impact during testing?
* Determine the training needs at the school division level and at the school level.
  + Which staff need to be trained and for what reason?
  + What is the duration of training and recurrence planned by the vendor?
  + How and where will training be delivered?
* Identify the resources needed to process and analyze results, including:
  + What reports are readily available and produced by the vendor and at what levels (by student, teacher, grade level, school, division)?
  + How easily are reports manipulated/ aggregated/ disaggregated?
  + Are reports available online? Are reports accessible via portable devices?
  + What are the requirements for entering data before, during, and after testing (e.g., electronic upload, manual entry by teacher, scanning documents)?
* Determine the training needs at the school division level and at the school level.
  + Which staff need to be trained and for what reason?
  + What is the duration of training and recurrence planned by the vendor?
  + How and where will training be delivered?
* Identify the cost associated with the assessment, including:
  + Financial cost (initial, recurring, training, ancillary materials).
  + Other resources that need to be allotted, such as:
    - Time for teachers/staff to be trained, administer tests, analyze test results;
    - Information technology (IT) needs;
    - Acquisition of materials for testing, processing answer sheets;
    - Staff to analyze data by division, school, student; and
    - Time from instruction.