

Assessment in action

Pathways for Instructionally Embedded Assessment (PIE)



The PIE project explores how instructionally embedded assessments can improve teaching and learning. The project gives us the chance to learn directly from general education teachers. This work is part of a broader effort to design assessments that add value to instruction rather than interrupt it.

PIE is a research and development project at Accessible Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Systems (ATLAS) at the University of Kansas. ATLAS successfully designed and has delivered an operational, peer-reviewed, instructionally embedded alternate assessment since 2015.



Immediate feedback and improved student learning

PIE's real-time results helped teachers adjust instruction and support students more effectively.

"I like the way [PIE] helps guide our instruction and helps us organize the way we want to teach the standards. It helps keep the students on pace."

One educator reported significant improvement in students' state assessment results compared to the prior year. Many teachers said the data helped encourage students and inform next steps.

"It was, I think, encouraging for some students to see...the check mark with the circle, like 'You guys were retested on that, and...you did great the next time around.'"

pie.atlas4learning.org

Developed in partnership with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education



Instructionally embedded assessments give teachers timely, actionable data during instruction. They reduce testing burden and help connect assessment to learning. Instead of pausing for interim tests that may not fully align with your curriculum, PIE assessments align to state content standards and fit into teaching.

PIE was designed to measure learning pathways that align to state standards and support instruction without adding unnecessary testing time. Teachers administer short assessments during the year and use real-time results to guide teaching. The results have the potential to build toward end-of-year reporting.

Helpful for teachers at any experience level

Teachers said the learning pathways supported instructional planning, especially when they were still building familiarity with state content standards.

"I was able to look at what they needed to know and pull in from things we might have already learned, or what we're going to learn next....I haven't been doing this for very long. So that was awesome to see. I really, really liked having [learning pathways] as a resource."

More responsive and meaningful instruction

PIE learning pathways helped teachers make connections among skills visible and usable. Many reported pulling up learning pathways "almost daily" to plan whole-class and small-group instruction.

"I feel like it's made assessments more useful for me. I would like to see it done for other subjects. I think it would be extremely helpful and useful."