



# dot it

## Simply Standards First

A research-based, user friendly system  
for connecting educators to the standards



To ensure everyone has the  
opportunity to master grade level  
standards, start with

# Simply Standards First.

## Resources

Clarify Expectations  
Simplify Experiences  
Share Efficacy

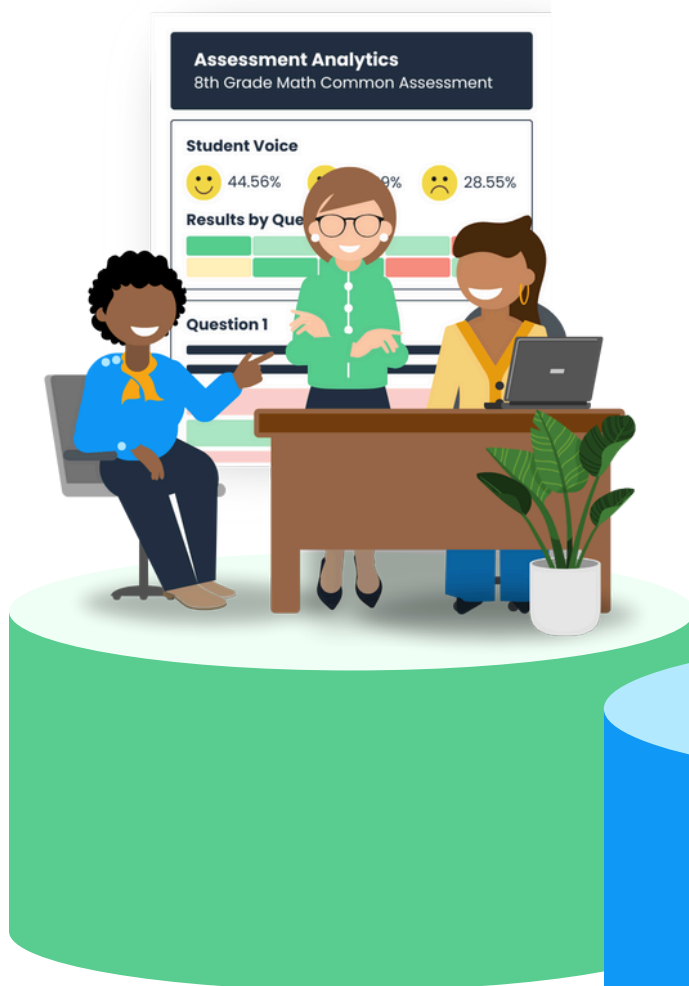


**dot it**

by Smart Learning Systems

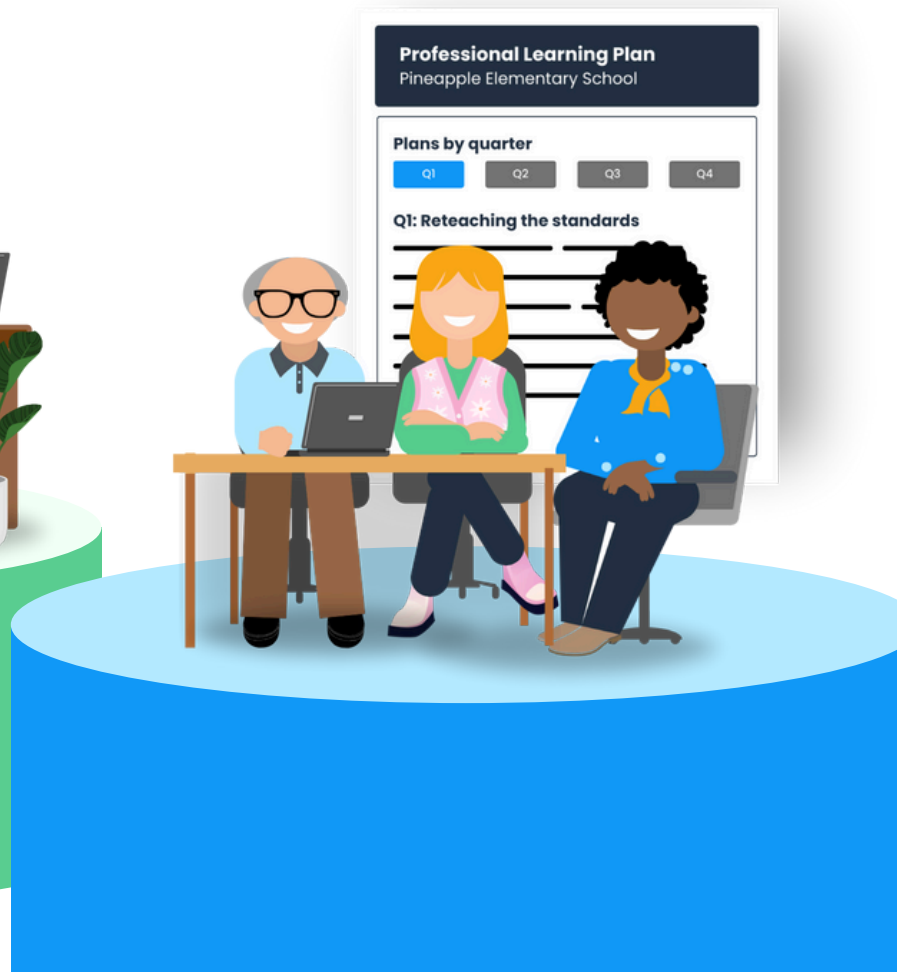
## Assessments 25

Clarify Information  
Simplify Problem Solving  
Share Improvement

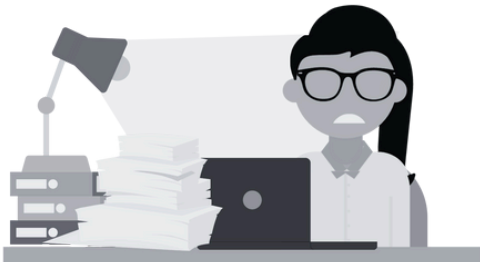


## Teamwork 51

Clarify Responsibilities  
Simplify Environments  
Share Success Stories



# **dot it** is designed for educators who...



don't have time to learn the standards, never mind teach them.



feel overwhelmed by new programs and initiatives.



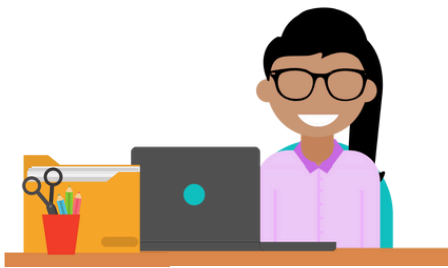
lack consistency across classrooms and don't know where to start .



are trying to impact schools where students are consistently underperforming .



# dot it will help you succeed in...



giving your staff knowledge in the standards so they use resources wisely.



providing embedded, coherent professional development



getting everyone in every role on the same page...LITERALLY.



ensuring all students have access to the grade level education they deserve.

# Our Story



We are educators like you. We are in schools almost every day. We understand the challenges you face and we are here to help you.

Like all caring educators we always aimed high for our classrooms. We trusted that every day would be filled with teaching to the standards. We invested time, money, and belief into tools and programs that promised to deliver the results we hoped to achieve. But, the results didn't match our expectations. We were missing a crucial point: without people sharing knowledge of the standards, no program can succeed.

It hit us that just adding new tools wasn't cutting it. We had to tackle the real issues causing our students to struggle. This sparked a fire in us to do something about it. Depending on program promises wasn't an option anymore. We had to carve our own way and build the system that educators truly need—a system that not only aligns to the standards, but inspires and empowers every educator in every role to EXPERIENCE the standards.

So, we founded Smart Learning Systems in 2018 in North Carolina and we built DOT IT. We hope you love it as much as we do.

*The Dot It Team*



DOT IT is uniquely designed using the very best research to get the results good leaders want. Like polka dots, we are rooted in clarity, simplicity, and connection. Like the polka dance, DOT IT is made up of small steps that everyone can do easily in no time together.

## About Us

### **Mission:**

We provide a platform that motivates and enables educators to provide the standards first experiences all students deserve.

### **Vision:**

We envision educational environments where people are driven to tackle challenges and strive for excellence within a supportive and dynamic community.

### **Core Values:**

Our work is guided by knowledge of the standards, cohesive professional development, consistency between classrooms, accountability to students and families, accessibility of grade level assignments that lead to excellent results.

## Solutions

### **STANDARDS FIRST Resources:**

**DOT IT** connects standards-first pacing guides to resources that match the expectations exactly, simplifying planning and accelerating professional knowledge.

### **Uncompromised Assessments:**

**DOT IT's** premade common assessments provide the reliable information that simplifies analysis with actionable analytics to accelerate professional learning.

### **Coordinated Teamwork:**

**DOT IT** connects all your teams to protocols and reporting tools to streamline collaboration for more productive teamwork and a more valuable organization.



# Why Simply Standards First

Navigating through the standards is a big challenge. Yet, this is the exactly the journey educators are intended to make with their students every year.

According to research conducted by The New Teacher Project, students in typical schools engage with grade-level assignments only about 20% of the time throughout the school year (The New Teacher Project, 2020).

Simply Standards First means ensuring that every educator in every role has access to structures, information and processes that promote and support the delivery of a grade level education for everyone.

**DOT IT** is not like any other system you've seen. It produces continuous improvement with consistency and accountability and eliminates wasted time and energy to generate the most amazing results in the shortest time by simply putting the standards first.

**Join us in creating optimal learning experiences that prepare everyone from administrators to students for a lifetime of learning and personal development.**



THE SMALLEST STEPS IN THE  
RIGHT DIRECTION HAVE THE  
**BIGGEST IMPACT.**

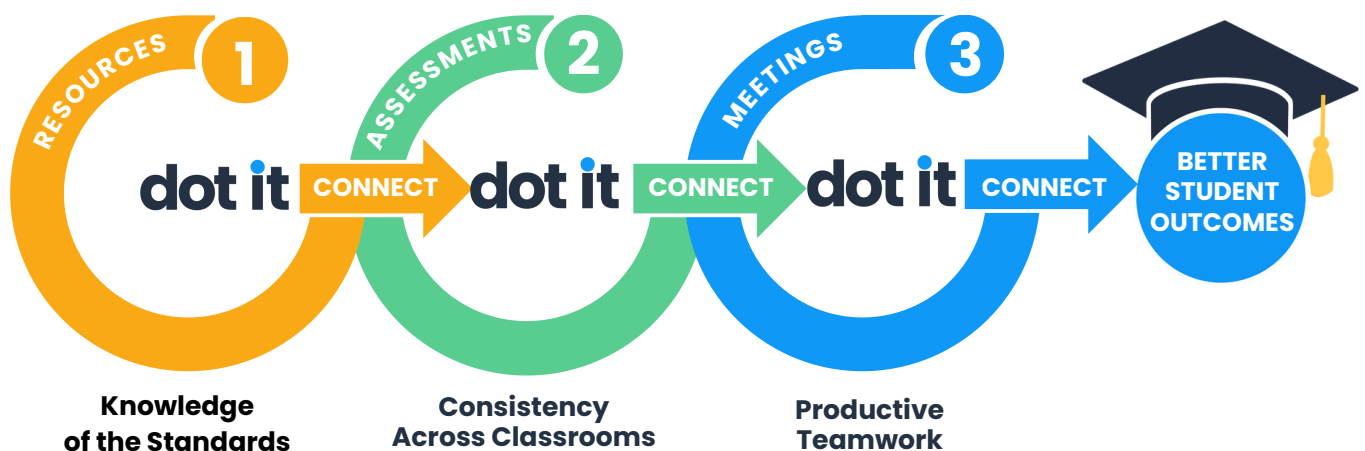


DOT IT is all about clear, simple connections. Like polka dots, we are rooted in clarity, order, simplicity, and optimism. Like the polka dance, DOT IT is made up of small steps that anyone and everyone can do easily in no time together.

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## Our Standards First System

**DOT IT CONNECTS** educators in a standards first system  
for better student outcomes fast.



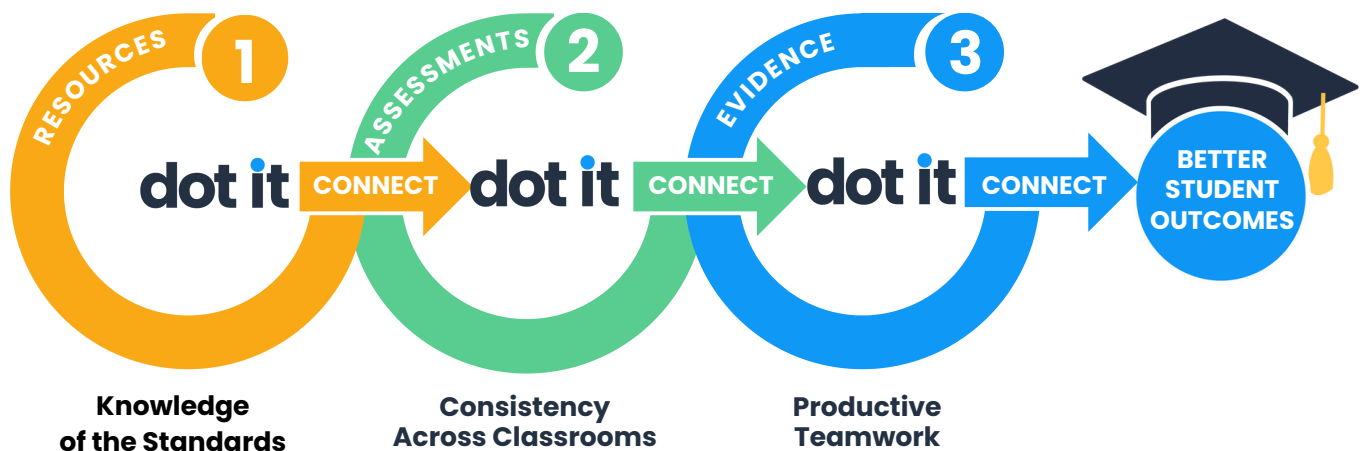
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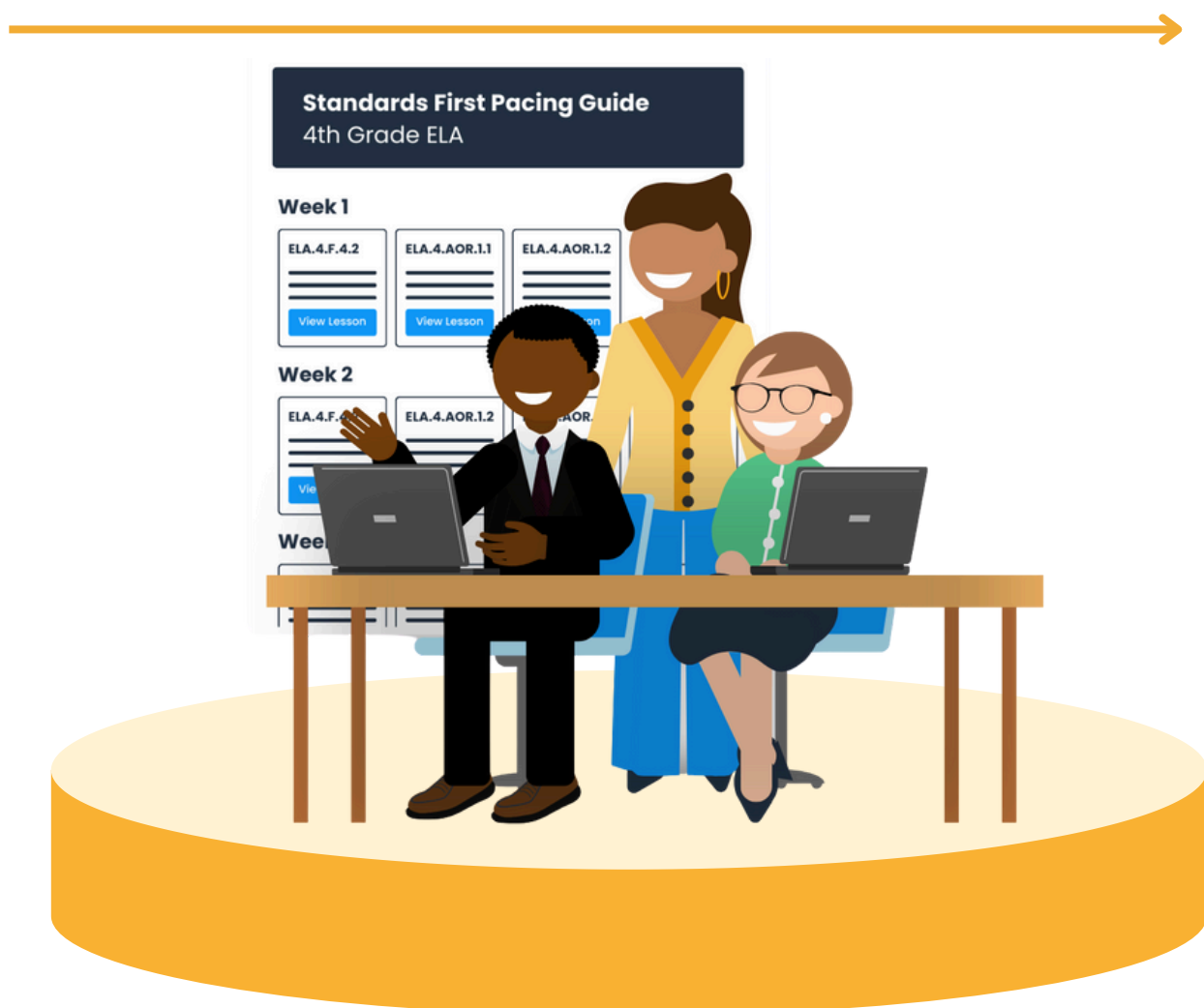
STANDARDS FIRST

# Resources 3

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Clarify Expectations	4
Simplify Learning	5
Connect Knowledge	6

**DOT IT STANDARDS FIRST RESOURCES**  
provide crystal clear pacing guides with  
access to simple lessons and assignments  
that directly connect to each standard.





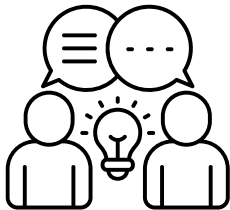
# STANDARDS FIRST

## Resources



### STANDARDS FIRST KNOWLEDGE

Schools that implement well-structured, standards based pacing guides with lessons and resources like **DOT IT** are more likely to meet state benchmarks and improve student performance (NCES, 2020).



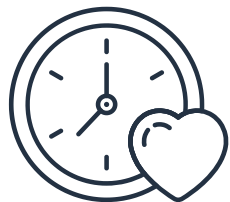
### SHARED EXPECTATIONS

Standard-based frameworks contribute significantly to the quality of teaching practices, facilitating teachers' adaptation and improvement in educational settings Fullan (2006)



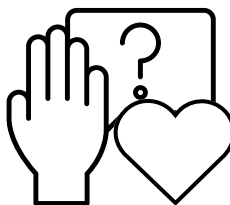
### CONSISTENCY ACROSS CLASSROOMS

With a standards first pacing guide, educators across different classrooms and even schools can maintain consistency in what is taught (DuFour and Marzano, 2011).



### PRODUCTIVE TEAMWORK

Pacing guides support productive lesson planning by offering a structured framework, which reduces the disharmony in planning and teaching. (Smith & Miller, 2020).



### OWNERSHIP OF OUTCOMES

Students in classrooms using pacing guides achieve higher scores on standardized tests and display improved comprehension of material (Journal of Educational Psychology, 2022).

# CLARIFY EXPECTATIONS

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Most schools are upside down. They are not designed for learning. They are designed for teaching.

**DOT IT** helps you flip that.

**DOT IT RESOURCES** clarify expectations for student achievement. Our comprehensive suite of tools streamlines planning time with accessible high-quality lessons that meet the standards. Integrating technology such as **DOT IT** has been shown to improve teacher efficiency and student outcomes (Smith and Johnson 45) through accessible resources that promote effective practices ("Transforming Education with Technology" 12).

**DOT IT** gives educators easy access to customized pacing guides tailored to their specific curriculum needs. Our standards first pacing guides ensure that teachers can effectively clarify learning objectives, deliver standards first lessons, and maintain a structured timeline. With **DOT IT RESOURCES** in place, educators can confidently challenge their students with rigorous content while ensuring that learning remains manageable (Hattie, 2012).

Additionally, **DOT IT** connects each standard to standards first assignments, differentiated mini lessons, assessments, and interactive materials. These resources empower teachers to engage students with diverse abilities, fostering an inclusive classroom environment. By accessing a variety of high-quality resources, educators can deliver lessons that not only meet academic standards but also inspire deeper engagement and critical thinking among students (Tomlinson, 2001).





# SIMPLIFY LEARNING

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Studies show that streamlined teaching methods can enhance student engagement and learning efficiency (Marzano, 2007). **DOT IT** gives educators one click access to simplified evidence-based lessons and resources for each and every standard, saving time for developing their practices.

**DOT IT's** simply standards first lessons

- help educators understand the standards in seconds
- provide evidence based practice lessons for exactly how to teach them
- include mini lessons for differentiation including extension
- engage students in tasks that meet the standard expectation every time
- ensure immediate checks for understanding
- help teachers make better use of their textbooks and programs.

**DOT IT** lessons follow the eight evidence-based practices that Hattie and Marzano agree on (Killian, 2015). Our lessons prompt best practices in a familiar process that is not overwhelming.

## The DOT IT Standards First Lesson

- 1.Objectives & Materials
- 2.Clear Focus
- 3.Explicit Introduction
- 4.Engage and Apply
- 5.Working Together
- 6.Reflection and Feedback
- 7.Independent Mastery

When educators adopt a more structured yet flexible framework like **DOT IT**, they can significantly improve student engagement (Hattie, 2012), helping students navigate their learning journeys with greater ease and success.





# CONNECT TEACHER KNOWLEDGE

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DOT IT connects teachers through shared knowledge of expectations and simplified learning experiences. This leads to collective efficacy which plays a crucial role in fostering a standards first school.

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**KNOWLEDGE SHARED  
= KNOWLEDGE<sup>2</sup>**

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Collective efficacy refers to the shared belief among educators in their ability to positively influence student outcomes (Goddard, Hoy and Hoy, 2002). This belief not only enhances educators' motivation but also promotes a culture of shared responsibility in addressing student needs.

Collective efficacy is closely linked to the success of educational initiatives, as it empowers educators to collaborate and innovate (Bandura, 1997). The implementation of structured frameworks such as **DOT IT RESOURCES** can significantly bolster this sense of collective efficacy. When educational teams utilize tools like those found in **DOT IT**, they gain the knowledge and confidence needed to effectively teach and support their students in mastering grade level expectations.



STANDARDS FIRST

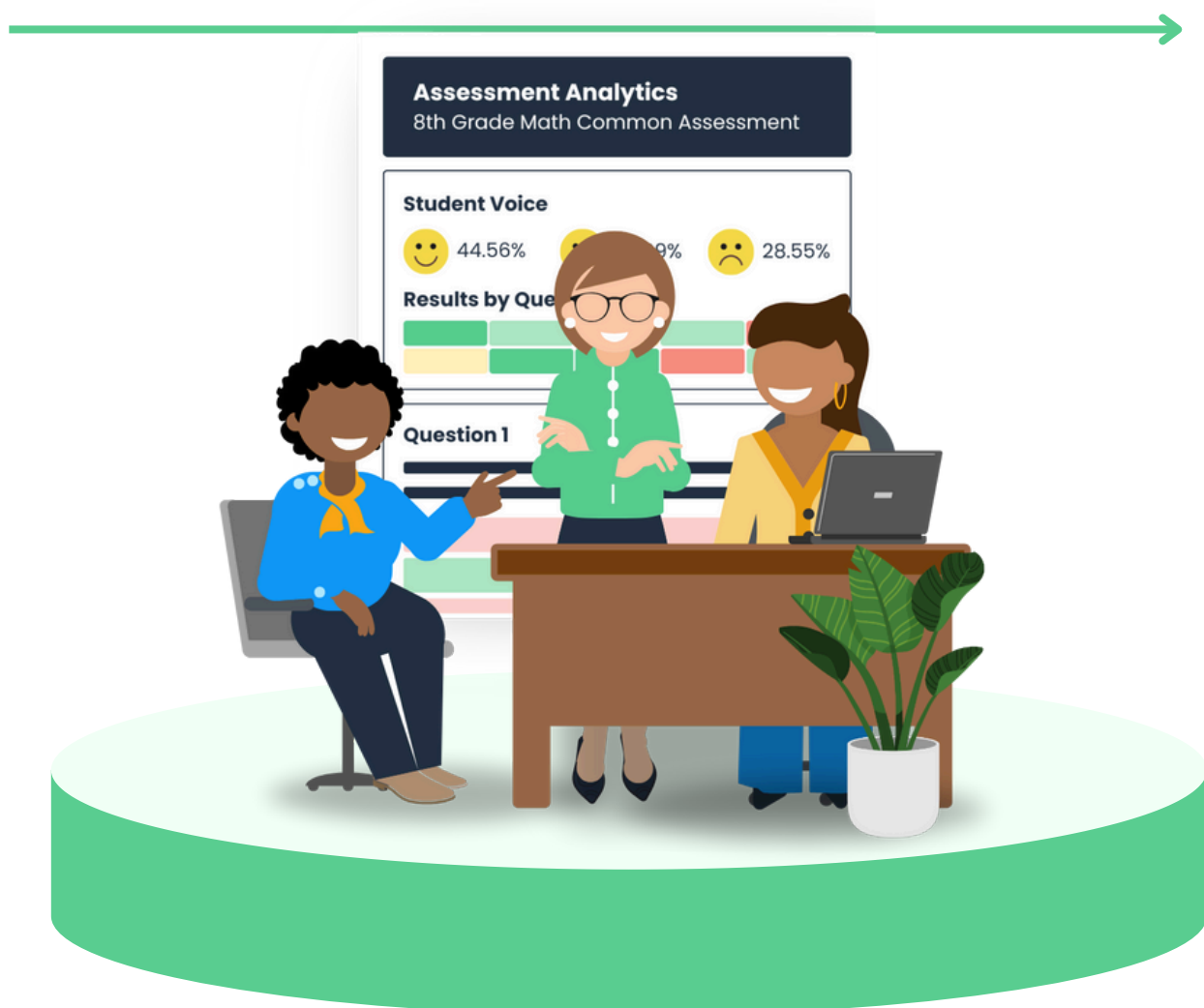
# Assessment

9

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Clarify Reality	10
Simplify Analysis	11
Connect Classrooms	12

**DOT IT STANDARDS FIRST ASSESSMENTS are premade and peer reviewed to clarify your information and simplify analysis that connects consistently across classrooms.**



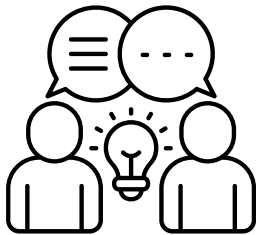
## STANDARDS FIRST

# Assessments



### STANDARDS FIRST KNOWLEDGE

Aligning assessments with state standards ensures that the everyone understands what needs to be effectively taught and that students are evaluated based on relevant expectations (Smith, John, et al., 2021).



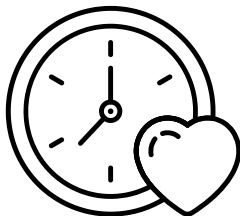
### SHARED EXPECTATIONS

The implementation of standards aligned common assessments promotes a culture of shared responsibility and continuous improvement among educators. (Reeves, Douglas B., 2004)



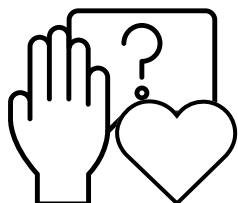
### CONSISTENCY ACROSS CLASSROOMS

With **DOT IT's** premade common assessments, educators across classrooms and schools can maintain pace, evaluate progress uniformly and improve outcomes. (Conley, David T., and Linda Darling-Hammond., 2012)



### PRODUCTIVE TEAMWORK

Most teachers lack the time or resources to develop quality assessments independently. Premade standardized assessments can ensure consistency and reliability in measuring student performance. (Shepard, Lorrie A., et al., 2018).



### OWNERSHIP OF OUTCOMES

Common assessments aligned with educational standards can lead to higher student achievement by providing clear expectations and targeted feedback (National Research Council, 2011).

# CLARIFY REALITY

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## Understanding the Current Landscape

Traditional assessment methods often prioritize comfort over rigor, which can dilute their effectiveness. Clarifying the reality of where your school stands throughout the year allows for informed decision-making.

## Moving Forward with DOT IT's Assessment System

Our premade assessments never compromise. Every **DOT IT** assessment is reviewed by experts for quality, rigor and relevance to the pacing guides. Better yet, **DOT IT** assessments help educators:

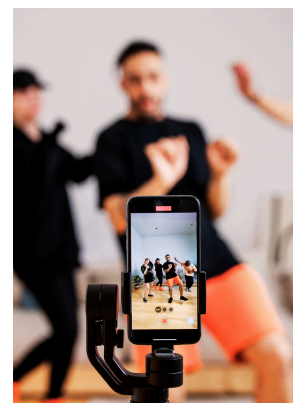
**Maintain Pace:** Connecting **DOT IT** assessments with **DOT IT** pacing guides ensures that educators are consistently aligned with educational standards. This alignment is essential for maintaining educational rigor and ensuring that students are prepared for state assessments (Marzano, 2010).

**Stay Focused:** **DOT IT** analytics keep state expectations in view and allows educators to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Regular reflection on teaching practices can lead to enhanced practices that align more closely with these standards (Hattie, 2009).

**Adapt Practice:** Utilizing data effectively is key to informing practices. Implementing **DOT IT's** structured system of quizzes, common assessments, benchmarks, and progress monitoring provide the timely and relevant information educators need (Stiggins, 2005). This data-driven approach enables educators to adjust teaching methods in a way that meets their unique classroom needs before it's too late.







# SIMPLIFY ANALYSIS

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Educators don't have too much information. They have too much irrelevant information. DOT It's assessment system simplifies problem solving by providing just the right information to just the right people at just the right time.

## Benchmarks

Quarterly Benchmarks can effectively predict student performance on standardized tests, thus serving as valuable tools for educators (Kingston and Nash, 2011). **DOT IT** standards first benchmarks align to you **DOT IT** pacing guides.

## Common Assessments

When teachers utilize frequent formative common assessments, they can provide timely feedback and tailor their teaching strategies to meet the specific needs of their students, which enhances learning outcomes. (Black and Wiliam, 1998) **DOT IT** provides standards first common assessments that align to your **DOT IT** Pacing Guide every three weeks.

## Quizzes

Quizzes as formative assessments enhance student engagement and motivation by providing immediate feedback. When aligned with specific standards, these quizzes can serve as pre-assessments, post-assessments, and allow students to improve their understanding through retakes (Bangert-Drowns et al., 1991). **DOT IT** provides quizzes designed to be used exactly this way.

## Progress Monitoring

Regular progress monitoring, such as that provided by **DOT IT**, is crucial for identifying students' learning needs and adjusting accordingly. Best practices in special education and MTSS frameworks, emphasize the importance of data-driven decision-making (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006).



## CONNECT CLASSROOMS

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Student growth depends on professional growth. Professional development includes utilizing data to tailor pedagogy to meet students' needs (Knight, 2013).

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### IT MAY BE TIME TO GET MOVING

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Research supports the idea that students often have the potential to work at grade level, even if they initially appear behind. According to a study by the National Center for Education Statistics, many students who receive targeted interventions and support can close achievement gaps and meet grade-level expectations (NCES, 2019). **DOT IT** Tier 1 Differentiation and MTSS and IEP tools support access to standards for everyone.

While acknowledging current academic challenges, educators should focus on providing opportunities and resources to help students excel beyond the basic standards.

Schools that accelerate student growth give consistent grade-level assessments to ensure that all students are being evaluated against the same standards. **DOT IT** prepares students for state tests from the onset of the school year, a strategy supported by research on effective teaching practices. Popham (2001) argues that when teachers are aware of the specific content and skills that state tests will assess, they can better align their instruction to cover these areas thoroughly, ensuring students are well-prepared. **DOT IT** develops teacher knowledge and skill in teaching to the standards.



## STANDARDS FIRST

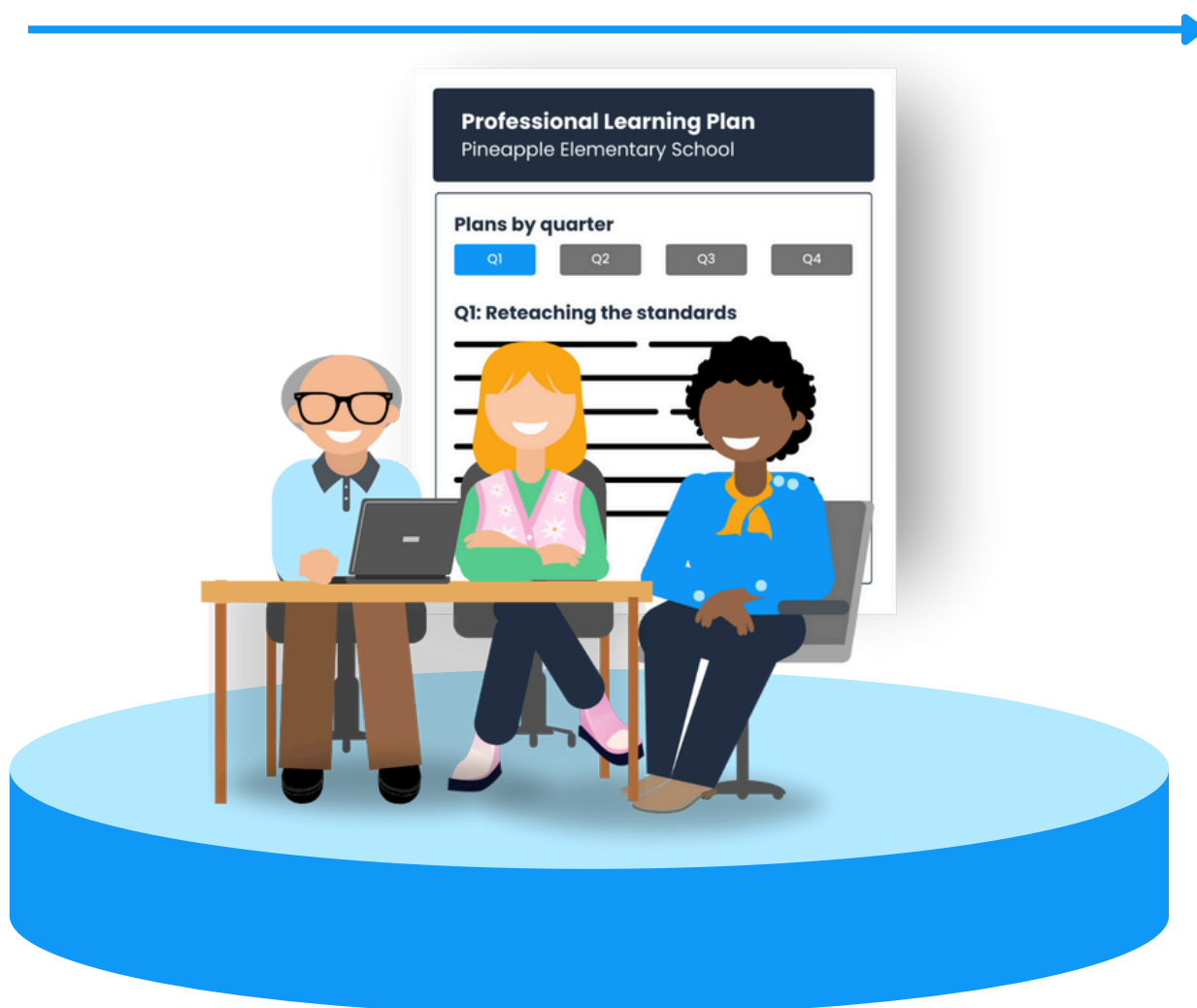
# Meetings

15

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Clarify Responsibilities	16
Simplify Evidence	17
Connect Teamwork	18

**DOT IT MEETINGS clarifies responsibilities and simplifies problem solving to connect teamwork for better student outcomes.**

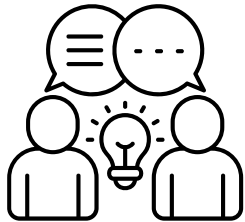


# STANDARDS FIRST MEETINGS



## STANDARDS FIRST KNOWLEDGE

From Leadership Teams to IEP Teams, with **DOT IT** every meeting focuses on how to provide a grade-level education to everyone. Inclusive education enhances the learning experiences of all students (Smith et al. 2020).



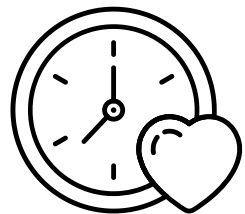
## SHARED EXPECTATIONS

Excellence depends on people sharing experiences that add value. When individuals share their diverse experiences, it enhances collective problem-solving capabilities and drives organizational success (Johnson, 2018).



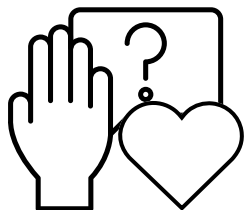
## CONSISTENCY ACROSS CLASSROOMS

"Collaborative cultures, which by definition have close relationships, are indeed powerful, but unless they are focused on the right things they may end up being powerfully wrong" (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012).



## PRODUCTIVE TEAMWORK

Educators have increasingly limited time for collaboration, making it crucial to maximize the productivity of teamwork. **DOT IT** utilizes structured collaboration methods can enhance both efficiency and effectiveness in these limited timeframes. (Hattie and Zeirer, 2017).



## OWNERSHIP OF OUTCOMES

Quality teamwork significantly enhances student outcomes by fostering a collaborative learning environment. Effective teamwork encourages active learning and increased engagement, which are crucial for student success (Johnson and Johnson, 1996).



# CLARIFY RESPONSIBILITIES

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Schools function as sociocultural systems. People share (social) experiences (culture) and work together to provide value (Coleman, 1990). These interactions rely heavily on the flow of information, where the quality and efficiency of information exchange determine the value provided (Hargreaves, 2001).

A significant challenge in our schools is the presence of information that hinders value and builds barriers to efficient information flow (Fullan, 2007).

**DOT IT** addresses these challenges with a system that connects people and enables them to share the best information about optimal experiences. This connection allows for the delivery of valuable grade-level education to everyone. **DOT IT** Teamwork is built on 3 Pillars:

**Standards First Professional Learning:** **DOT IT** Meeting Protocols embed professional development aligned with academic and behavioral standards to enhance teaching efficacy (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

**Standards First Distributed Leadership:** **DOT IT** Teamwork documents shared leadership and interconnected roles to improve decision-making and school performance (Spillane, 2006).

**Standards First Team Science:** **DOT IT** Teamwork is built on the best research for developing a coordinated and functional multi-team system, including fostering team skills, human-centered design, and team learning and effectiveness. (Salas et al, 2008).





# SIMPLIFY EVIDENCE

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Environments conducive to collaboration that supports a standards first approach is central to the effective functioning of teams. Team engagement contributes to common goals (Johnson et al. 5). **DOT IT** simplifies evidence for accreditation and continuous improvement with guides and protocols for productive teamwork and easy documentation of team decisions.

## **District Teams**

District Teams focus on creating a unified vision. They ensure that schools share common goals related to standards. They foster a culture of continuous learning and gather evidence to support accreditation processes. (Smith and Brown 23).

## **School Leadership Teams**

School Leadership Teams focus on benchmarks. They drive continuous improvement aligned with the School Improvement Plan and maintain focus on long-term educational goals (Thompson 42).

## **Data Teams, MTSS Teams, and IEP Teams**

Data Teams in tiers focus on common assessments and collaborate with coaches. This leads to solutions that improve teachers' understanding and delivery of standards-based education for everyone. (Davis 67).

## **Grade Level Teams**

Grade Level Teams utilize assessments to pinpoint areas where standards require further attention. They document decisions and strategies to address these gaps, thereby ensuring that teaching practices are continually refined and aligned with standards (Garcia 89).





## CONNECT PRODUCTIVITY

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The value of your school depends on the knowledge and skill of your people. Their motivation to learn the standards and their ability to teach them is what determines the success of your school.

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### THE BEST WAY TO BOOST PRODUCTIVITY IS TO ELIMINATE WORK.

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**DOT IT** helps schools create communities of practice that are crucial for effective learning through shared experiences and knowledge (Wenger and Lave 98). **DOT IT** makes your teams more productive by eliminating irrelevant information tedious tasks that sap the joy of learning.

Instead, **DOT IT** guides teams with the best pedagogical strategies to inspire and engage their students. When schools use DOT IT, they are getting the ongoing training and development that leads to better student outcomes (Darling-Hammond and Richardson 46).

Celebrating achievements, no matter how small, can boost morale and motivate everyone to strive for excellence. Recognizing effort and progress can enhance motivation and promote a growth mindset among learners (Dweck 34). By nurturing a community that values education and growth, schools can create a positive impact that extends beyond the classroom, empowering students to become lifelong learners and successful contributors to society.



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**[contact@dotit.app](mailto:contact@dotit.app)**

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