Guiding Questions for Developing, Refining, or Validating Learning Progressions

I. Is this learning progression research based?

- What does the/our research say about learning this concept/skill?

- What additional research/data collection might be needed to validate the progression?

- How can we collect more data using our own action research?

Comments/Notes

II. What is the "essence" of learning in this progression or strand(s) of the progression?

- What are the core ideas/the essence of concepts and processes for this content area?

- Does the thread connect throughout the LP? And across grade levels?

- Are different conceptual ideas – threads – getting tangled in ways that prohibit really measuring progress made?

- What is a manageable number of core threads for this content area? (Is this essential learning an enduring understanding or simply a list of related facts/concepts to memorize?)

Comments/Notes

III. Does the learning progression describe a meaningful *range* of skills/concepts? How does understanding "grow" over time with instruction and learning experiences?

- Depth? Breadth? Complexity? Generalize/Transfer? (check both standards and DOK levels for increasing complexity across the progression)

- Does it describe Novice (Beginner) – to – Expert (Advanced/Far Transfer)?

- Is there enough clarity to design/align assessments? (check intended DOK and standards)

Comments/Notes

IV.   What do our assessment data (e.g., observations, student work samples) tell us?

- Are there critical gaps in the LP? (Do we need to better describe earlier learning/thinking, something between levels, later levels, important "side trips" on the map, etc.?)

- Are we getting enough/the right information from our assessments to: track progress over time; see learning patterns; locate where students are along the learning progression?

- Do we need to modify/expand our use of assessment tools? (Are there tools or approaches that will better capture what students are thinking and doing at each progress indicator? Are there tools we can use more than once during the instructional cycle to measure deeper understanding over time?)

Comments/Notes

Ways to Refine Learning Progressions & Progress Indicators – Indicate Revisions Needed

Clarifying core concepts and big ideas in LPs

o   Are the MAJOR core concepts linked with the "big ideas" of this discipline? Remember that topics are not big ideas or concepts. Lists of facts are not concepts. *Focus on the conceptual understanding that underlies the topics taught and why you teach them* (e.g., we teach counting and number sense so that students can reason abstractly using numbers).

o   Consider whether progress indicators along the continuum are somewhat arbitrary. Have you simply made a best guess about what learning might be "halfway" between two grade level benchmarks? (E.g., do most students learn half of what they need to know about visual and numeric patterns simultaneously or do they need to master concepts using visual patterns before they transfer or generalize those ideas to understanding numeric patterns? Formative assessment data will help to answer these questions.)

o   Check the coherence and range (from foundational to extending) of the core ideas/ unifying threads.

Refining wording in progress indicators

o   Is language clear enough for <u>identifying learning targets and designing formative assessments</u> that elicit differences (meaning a range of possibilities) of responses related to the same unifying thread?

o   Is language clear enough for distinguishing "steps" along the learning continuum?

Matching grain size of progress indicators to purpose: <u>The grain size of progress indicators should match the purpose of the LP.</u>

o   Larger grain size descriptors could be used across grades for program purposes or creating benchmark assessments

o   Descriptors used for within-grade monitoring might be of a finer grain size or are larger ones that can be unpacked for instruction and formative assessment development by "zooming in" on progress indicators.

o   Very small grain sized progress indicators are more narrow in scope and best for diagnostic testing.