

PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING MTBBE ASSESSMENTS

MOTHER TONGUE POWER: LITERACY AND BILINGUAL EDUCATION

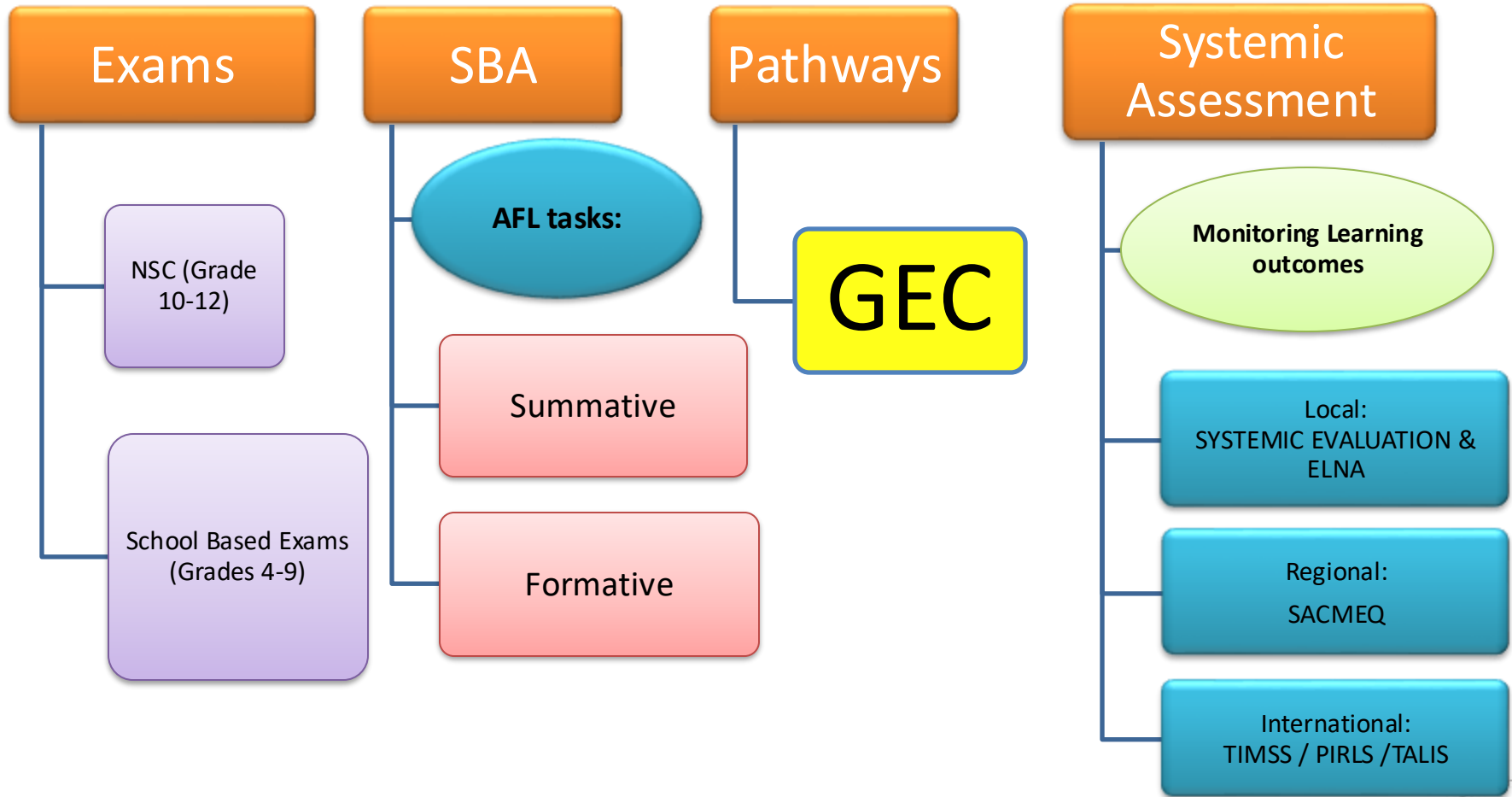
25 June 2024



MTbBE LOLT A – LANGUAGE OF LEARNING, TEACHING & ASSESSMENT (BILINGUAL)

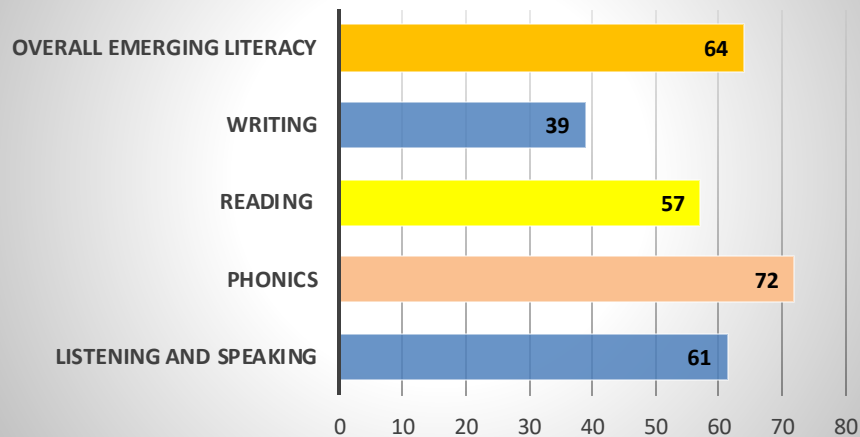


National Assessment Framework

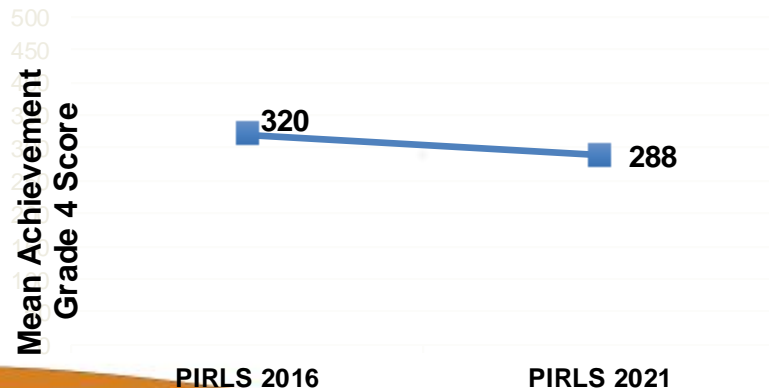
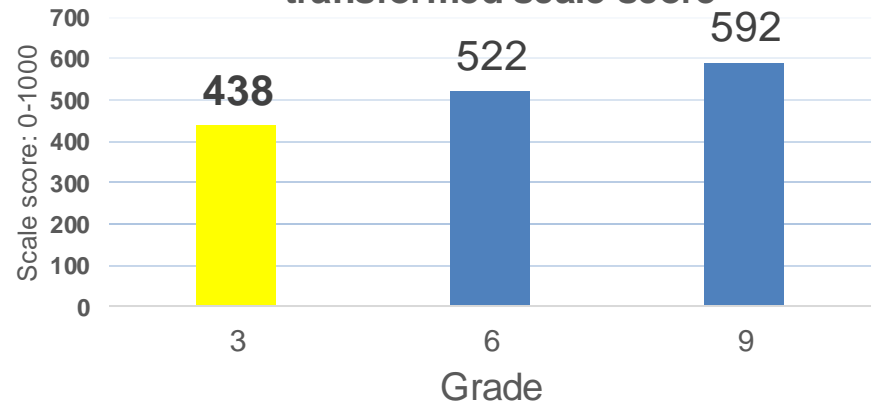


Context for MTbBE assessment

ELNA Grade 1 Mean (%)



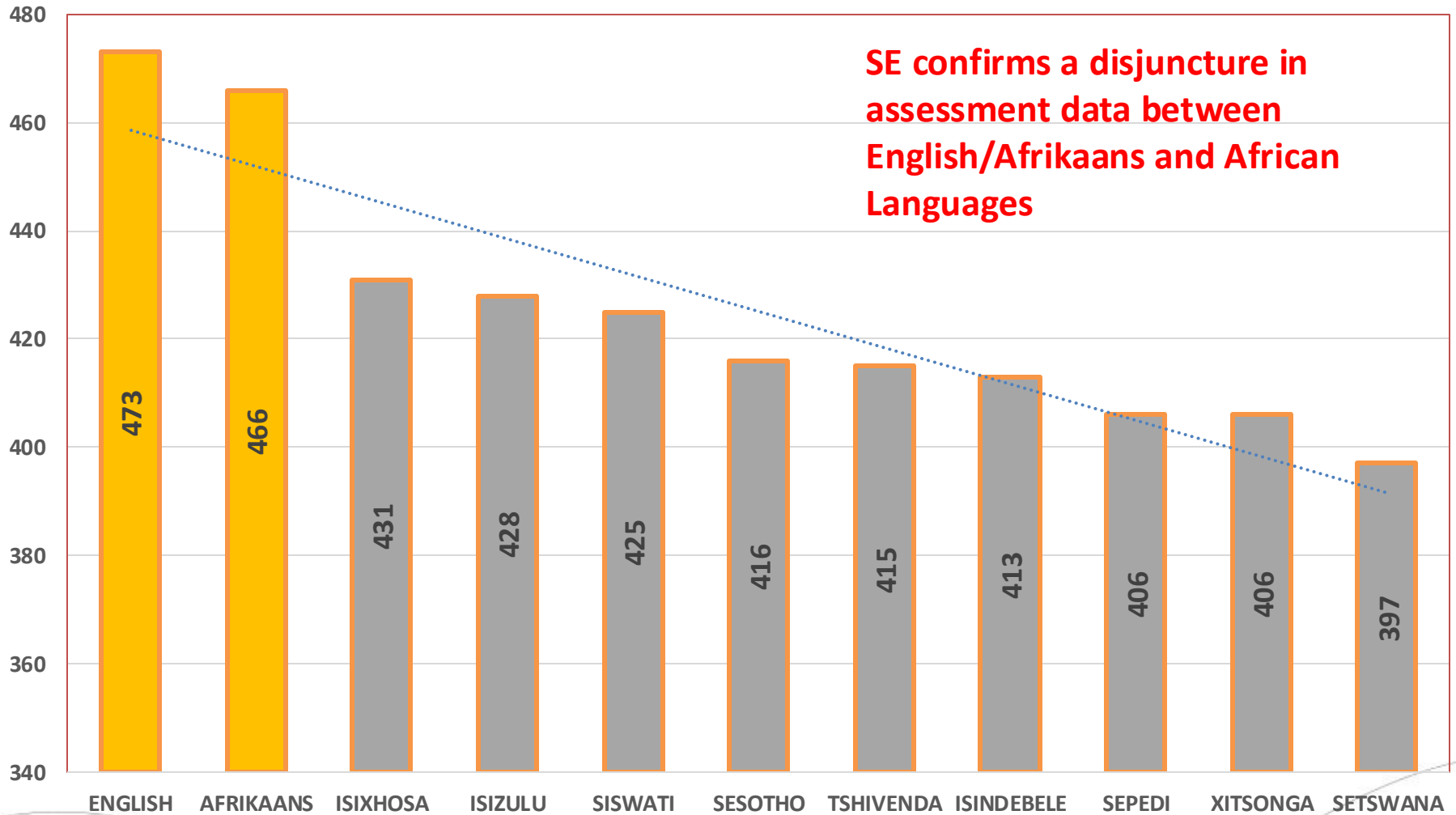
SE Reading Means by Grade – transformed scale score



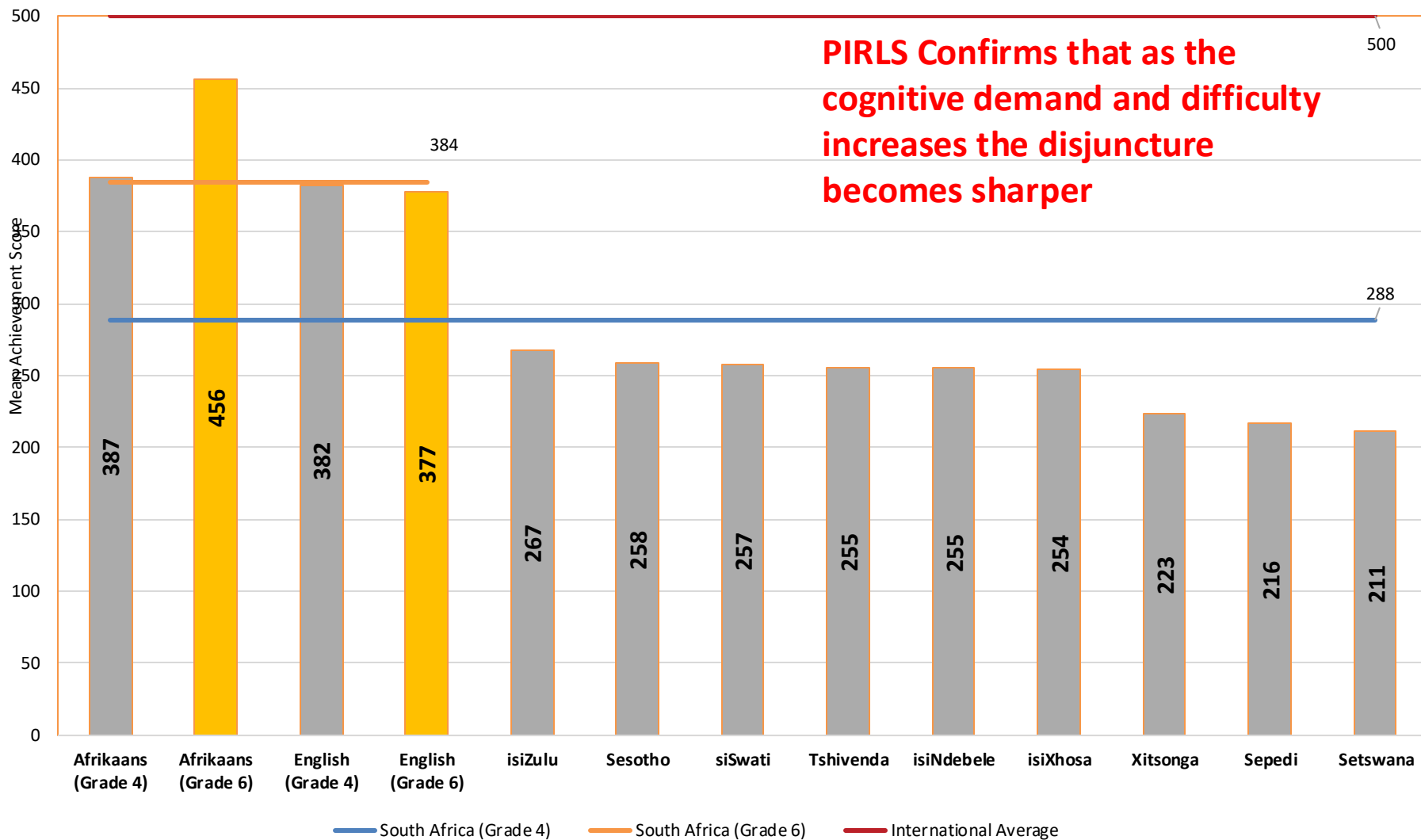
Policy makers need multiple data sources to inform planning. (Baird, 2023)

SE Grade 3

Reading Comprehension Scores



PIRLS Performance by Test Language



Limitations of PIRLS

Baird (2023) speaks to interpretation:

- Is the level of demand right for South Africa? – PIRLS curriculum seems to be over extensive for SA learners.
- Translation effects (what is an “amazing Octopus” in Sepedi?)
- Sampling issues (1.2% of Grade 4 learners stratified by 11 languages –reduces overall population estimates).

Rutkowski (2023) speaks to fit:

- 25% of learners **at or below guessing** → data is less reliable to make concrete inferences on reading comprehension.
- 25% of items function differently in 4th grade for South Africa, so the test is testing something else.
- Because of a substantial mismatch between students and the test that measures them, PIRLS **might not be the best measure of reading** for South African learners.

An incorrect Pre-text

Misdiagnosis



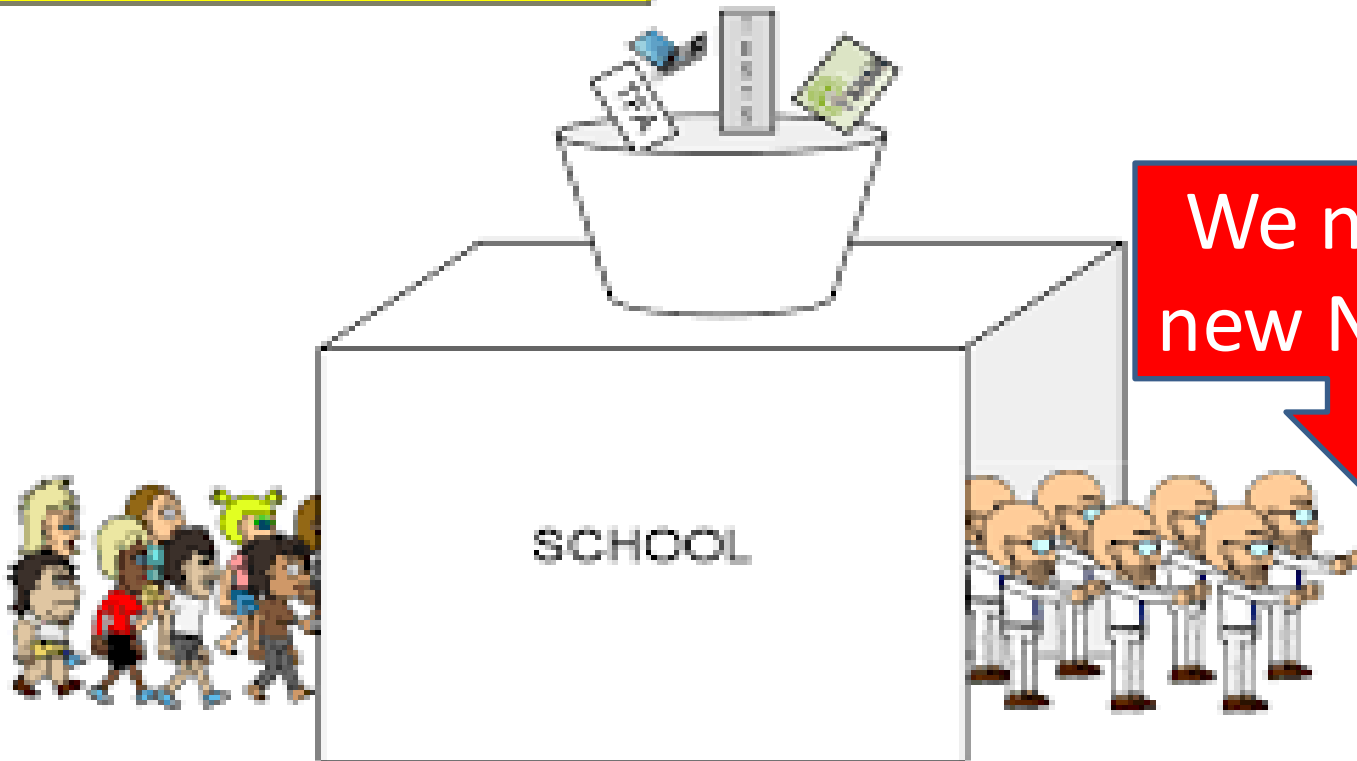
- 81% of grade 4 learners in South Africa unable to read for meaning in any language.

Fallacy

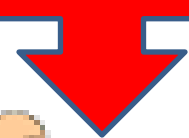


- If learning loss estimates are correct, it will still take approximately 86 years from 2023 until all Grade 4 children can read for meaning in South Africa.

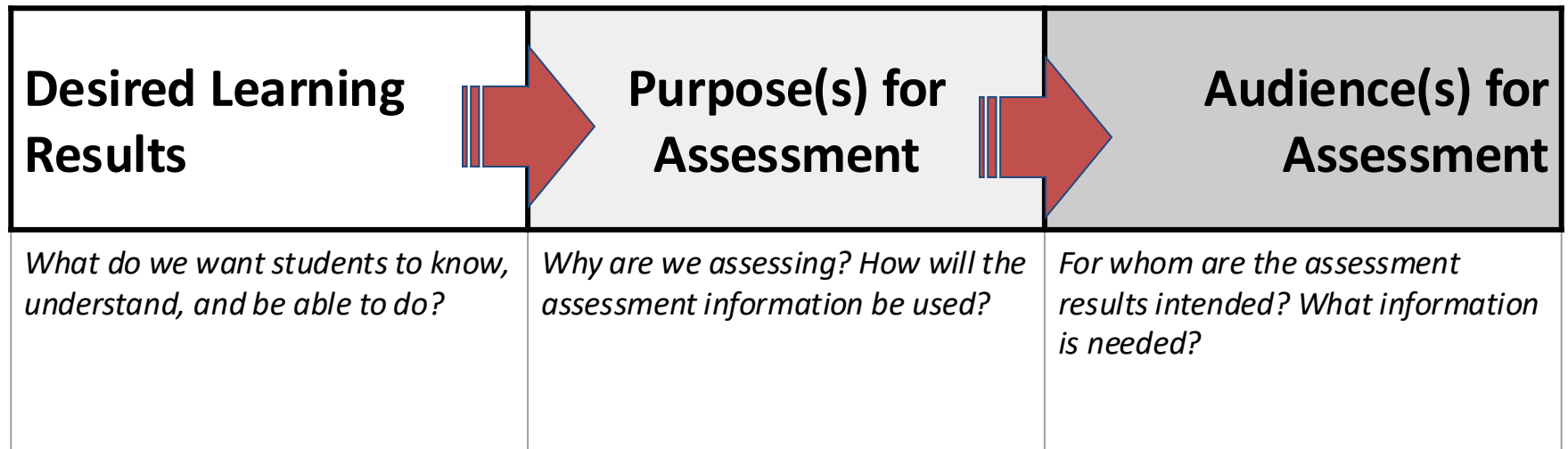
What to
avoid



We need a
new Normal



Begin with the End in Mind



Kanjee (2023)


So assessments play different roles for different people!

- Now we want assessments that have low burden and high value.

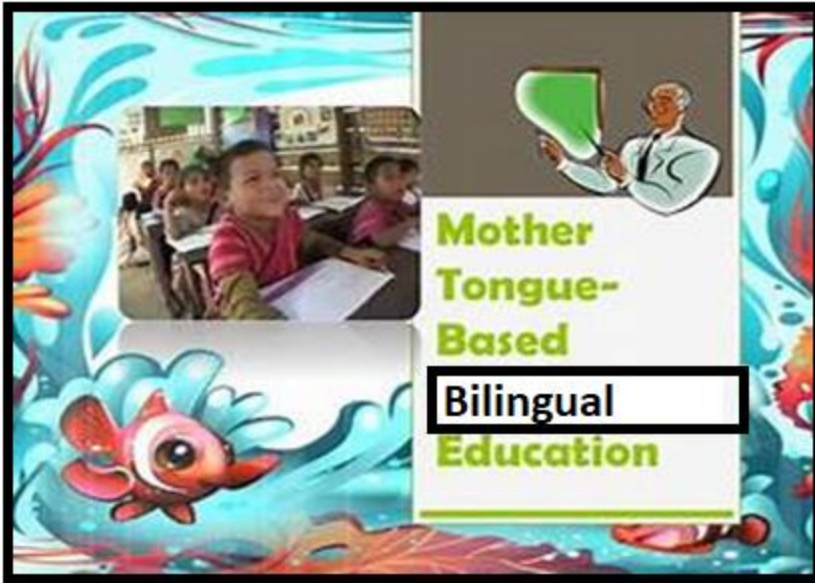
	Low Burden	High Burden
High Value	A	B
Low Value	C	D

Source: Buckley 2021

How do we add value



- Build on MTbBE assessments successfully implemented in MST subjects in all districts in the Eastern Cape.
- Expand the MTbBE programme to all provinces in 2025 (2024 – focus on preparation).
- Establish the first national Grade 4 assessment linked to an African language LOLT.
- Signal a move away from testing African home language speakers solely in English or Afrikaans.



Launch in 2024

The MTbBE Grade 4 National Assessment



1st Bi-lingual National Assessment

The New Normal

1. We are preparing the system - All learners in schools implementing MTbBE in 2024 will participate in a standardized Grade 4 national assessment in 2025.
2. The MTbBE Grade 4 assessment will replace the end of year Grade 4 examination in November 2025.
3. The initial scope will be testing Grade 4 Mathematics & Natural Science/Technology content and skills in African Languages.
4. It will count 20% of the promotion mark.
5. It will be marked by teachers and captured onto SA-SAMS.

The New Normal

6. Moderation will be done by the SMT and sample moderation will be done at the district level.
7. Provincial and district assessment coordinators will monitor the implementation.
8. The assessments will be incrementally scaled to Grade 5 (in 2026), Grade 6 (in 2027) and Grade 7 (in 2028).
9. The scaling up will also include the development of graded Reading Comprehension tests for Home Language and First Additional Language and an end of the year test for Social Science and EMS.
10. The tracking of results will be available on SA-SAMS for school, district, provincial and national analysis & will be included as part of the assessment dashboard development and modernization of SA-SAMS
11. In 2025, in 2 content subjects (Maths & NS/Tech), 80% of the content will be assessed in mother-tongue instruction (LOLTA).

Principles underpinning bi-lingual assessment

1. Language must facilitate learner responses rather than serve as a barrier.
2. The weighting of the bilingual assessment in the different grades will be as follows:
 - a) In Grade 4: 80% of the assessment will be conducted in the Mother-tongue and 20% in English.
 - b) In Grade 5: the bilingual assessment weighting shifts to 70:30;
 - c) In Grade 6: there will be a 60:40 weighting; and
 - d) In Grade 7: the weighting will be 50:50.
3. Translanguaging (language assists) in assessment should be used to reduce the language barrier.
4. The learner responses should also be aligned to the weighting articulated in point 2 (guiding principles).
5. The above assessment principles will apply in the standardised tests, SBA, and systemic assessments (national and international).

Its design features

Option 1:

There will be bi-lingual assists where support words if needed are also provided in English and vice-versa. There will be a hybrid of both languages (HL & FAL) within the weightings articulated in slide 15 (bullet 2).

Option 2:

Content domains that lend themselves to assessment in the Mother-tongue and those that lend themselves to assessment in English are distinguished and the assessment is set based on the weightings articulated in slide 13 (bullet 2).

Its design features

- Translanguaging and a functional approach to versioning as opposed to direct translations will feature stronger in the design of tests. The language register and orthography of both languages will be considered.
- In 2026 the bilingual assessment weighting of this cohort shifts to 70:30 (Grade 5); in 2027 it shifts to 60:40 (Grade 6) and then in 2028 to 50:50 in Grade 7.
- The intent is for the assessment tools to model MTbBE teaching and learning practice.

Its design features ...

- The content domains of Grade 4 CAPS tested at the end of the year will be the focus.
- The difficulty range of questions will have 3 levels: easy, moderate, difficult.
- The cognitive demand will be based on taxonomies for individual subjects indicated in CAPS and depth of knowledge levels.
- The design features of the tests will take into account a modernising of assessment scales for recording and reporting linked to a national standard setting process.
- The underlying theoretical discourse of the tests will be underpinned by an Assessment for Learning & Multilingual pedagogies.

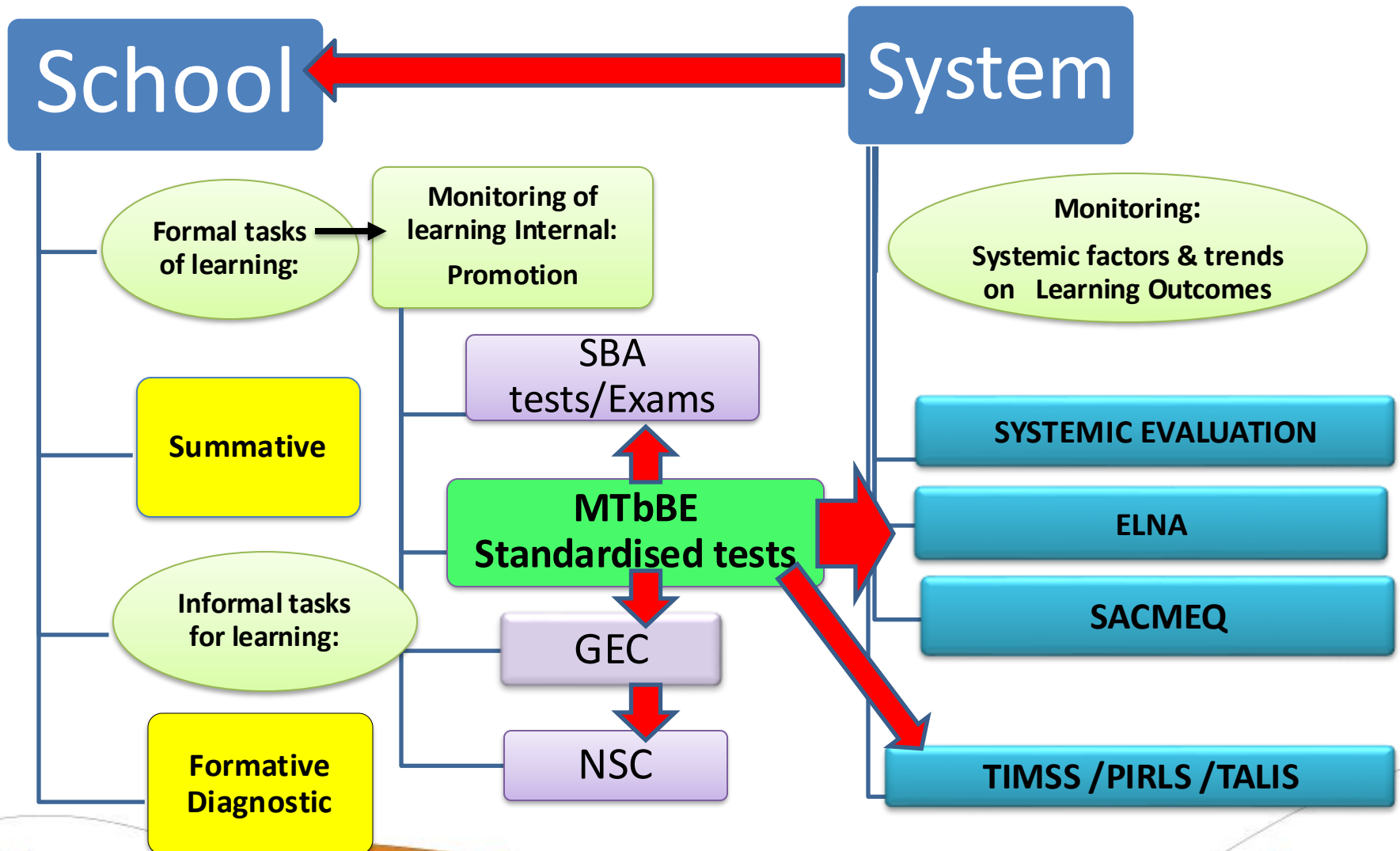
The Policy Framework

- In terms of assessment framework, it will be necessary to lift the MTbBE assessment framework implications in the national curriculum statement in terms of:
 - a) CAPS – curriculum strengthening
 - b) N4PR – amendments to the programme of assessment
 - c) NPA – amendments to teacher recording and reporting tools

Concessions for learners

- In Grades 4-9, we have interim directives on mark adjustments and condonations.
- In the FET, we need to look at the MTbBE assessment framework implications for learners in the FET:
 - Language compensation
 - concessions for learners – extra time.
 - Other implications

M&E Framework for MTbBE- NAF



2 Concluding Comments

1. Despite the perceived challenges surrounding the implementation of multilingual pedagogy in teaching, learning & assessment, this approach has persevered in its unofficial application.

Prof Nhlanhla Mpofu (2024)

2. As we traverse the labyrinthine world of educational policy and practice, assessments serve as both our map and our light.

Yet, let's not forget, a map is not the territory, and a light can sometimes only illuminate what it is directly pointed at.

**So lets point the light
so that –
All children can learn**



Rutkowski, 2023

