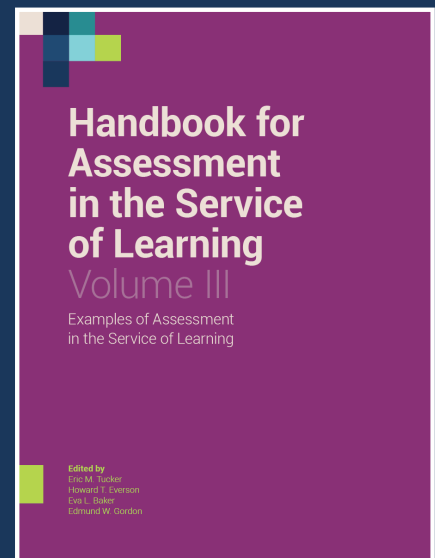
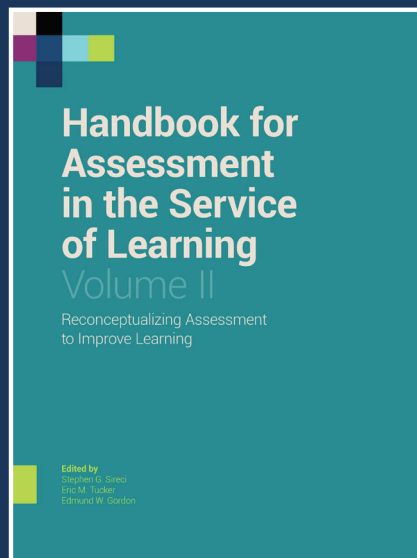
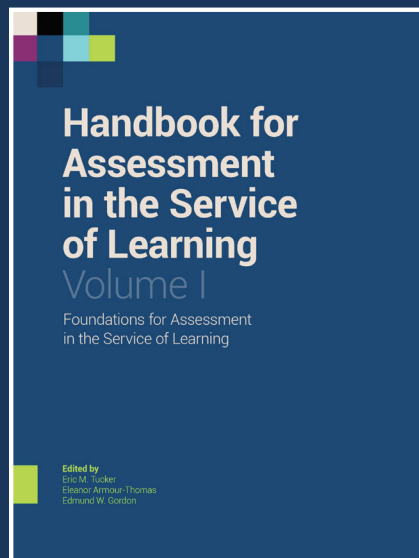


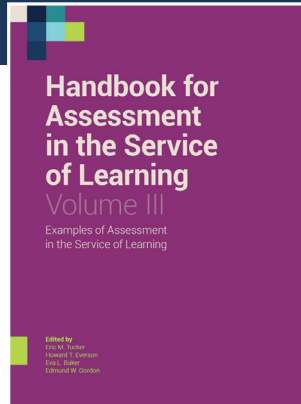
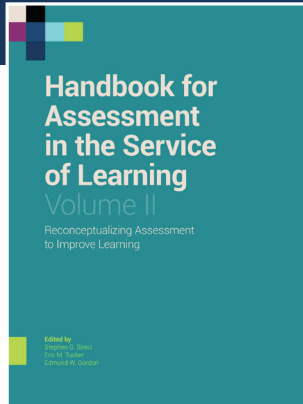
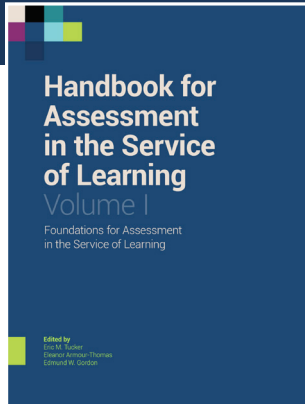


Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning



WHAT READERS ARE SAYING

HANDBOOK FOR ASSESSMENT IN THE SERVICE OF LEARNING



A new, free and open three-volume resource offering a roadmap for this transformation towards assessment in the service of learning.

Builds frameworks and tools for learner-centered, efficacious systems **that offer empirical insights and practical methods.**

Showcases real-world examples that embed assessment within instruction — demonstrating how feedback-driven, technology-enhanced practices can **make assessment a force for meaningful learning.**

Reimagines assessment as a catalyst for learning that grounds in learning sciences and improvement science, presenting a vision for integrating assessment with teaching to support growth.

Intended for a broad audience, from test developers, assessment researchers, and learning scientists to educators, policy makers, and designers. It is a resource **for anyone interested in using assessment to help learners learn.**

Published by University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries at:

Volume I: [Foundations for Assessment in the Service of Learning](#)

Volume II: [Reconceptualizing Assessment to Improve Learning](#)

Volume III: [Examples of Assessment in the Service of Learning Individual](#)

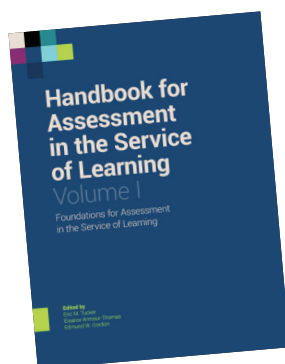
Chapters Available for Free Download at: [Assessment for Learning](#)

WHAT READERS ARE SAYING

“The three volumes of this Handbook are **immensely valuable for their conceptual, research-grounded, and practical roadmaps for assessment at its most powerful and beneficial.** Featured here are methods and tools for assessment that are aligned with how young people learn and how humans develop. The roots of these contributions in the scholarship of Professor Gordon are clear and to be celebrated.”

Stephen Plank

Vice President—Research, Evaluation, Evidence & Data, The Annie E. Casey Foundation.



“This book reflects Edmund W. Gordon's vision of assessment as a tool for understanding and supporting learning, not just measuring it. The volume gathers diverse examples from classrooms, digital platforms and games which illustrate how evidence of student thinking can guide instruction. The book **provides a range of perspectives, insights and practical examples of how formative assessment grounded in learning science can support student growth and will be an excellent resource for anyone focused on using assessment to improve student outcomes.**”

Steve Ritter

Founder and Chief Scientist, Carnegie Learning



The Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning is **a watershed achievement in the reconceptualization of educational measurement.** This three-volume series is packed with theory, practical solutions, and detailed examples that provide a road map for how and why the field can and, indeed, must change. It's all here written by leaders in educational measurement, the learning sciences, education, and many other adjacent fields, curated expertly by a stellar team of editors for all those interested in improving educational scholarship, policy, and practice.

Randy E. Bennett

ETS Research Institute



“This handbook compellingly propels forward Professor Gordon's vision for reimagining assessment. Through the collective insights of nearly 90 distinguished scholars, the Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning **challenges the use of assessments as mere reporting mechanisms that reduce learners to what they lack. Instead, these chapters invite us to see the power of assessment to celebrate students' knowledge, foster their growth, and serve as a tool for liberation.** May this series inspire us all to enact assessment practices that not only measure, but also nurture and sustain meaningful learning for all students.”

Jennifer Randall

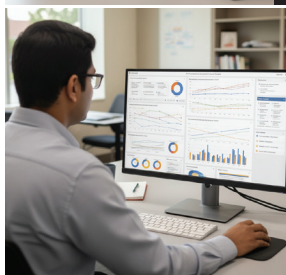
Founder of the Center for Measurement Justice and the Dunn Family Endowed Professor of Psychometrics and Test Development at the University of Michigan.



“**Assessment is not the end of learning—it's the spark.** The Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning brings together nearly 90 leading scholars to show how assessment can move beyond measurement to become a meaningful driver of equity, innovation, and deeper learning. **This groundbreaking three-volume series redefines assessment as more than a score, positioning it as a catalyst for teaching and learning, and charting a bold vision for the future of education.**”

Maria Elena Oliveri

Research Associate Professor, Purdue University



“Professor Gordon’s vision continues to shape how I think about excellence and learning. As a systems leader in education, **I want assessment to be more than a measure of what students know. It should build their confidence, support their growth, and prepare them for what comes next.** His call to reimagine assessment in the service of learning reminds us to create systems that honor every student’s potential and open real opportunities for success in college, career, and life. I am grateful for his legacy and how it inspires my work.”

Keeanna Warren

CEO, Purdue Polytechnic High Schools



Professor Edmund W. Gordon is a national treasure. **His unwavering commitment to using assessment as a tool for equity and learning—rather than gatekeeping and “gap widening”—has reshaped how we think about measuring student potential.** His century of leadership reminds us that assessments should illuminate, not exclude. Everyone who cares about opportunity for all will welcome the new Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning as a vital extension of his vision—offering the tools, frameworks, and courage educators need to build more just and generative learning systems.”

Michael Levine

Senior Adviser, Kapor Center



“Comprised of three groundbreaking volumes, the Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning is **poised to become one of the most influential and important collections of scholarship on the assessment for learning.** It includes fresh thinking and perspectives from researchers and scholars who are at the forefront of educational measurement and assessment and learning sciences. A range of topics is covered; however, a central theme of the three volumes is directed at transforming educational measurement and assessment as means for advancing both teaching and learning, especially for the most educationally vulnerable students. I highly recommend all three volumes to education researchers, scientists, practitioners, and policymakers who are interested in expanding their horizon on ways to transform teaching and learning through educational measurement and assessment. Kudos to the editors for assembling a world-class team of authors to contribute chapters in the three volumes.”

James L. Moore III

EHE Distinguished Professor of Urban Education, College of Education and Human Ecology, The Ohio State University

“Dr. Edmund Gordon has been a giant in the field of psychology and education for decades. His work has had a profound impact on the field of education in many areas. He has personally mentored dozens of scholars (myself included) over the course of his illustrious career, and his legacy is far reaching. This new volume provides readers with insights into some of his most important work linking assessment, to child development, and learning. **For educators who remain committed to serving all children regardless of their backgrounds, this book will be a tremendous resource, one you will turn to again and again for insights, guidance and inspiration.**”

Pedro Noguera

Dean, Rossier School of Education, University of Southern California

“Assessment is the lynchpin on which the future of education turns. **If we can transform it into something that is both of and for learning—that drives deeper work with real evaluation and feedback to inform what students do next—we can start to drive more rigorous experiences and higher achievement for all.** It’s critical that we learn from these examples in these volumes.”

Michael Horn

Author, Choosing College & Job Moves

“Professor Gordon and some of the world’s most distinguished educational thinkers and actors have given us an extraordinary gift. **They’ve delivered a magnum opus, an unparalleled compendium of ideas and perspectives designed to catalyze educational opportunity at broad scale.** The authors contemplate assessment as a tool for human transformation and growth, and in so doing, chart a crystalline, hopeful course for the future of schooling. Whether you’re a student, technologist, practitioner, scholar or educational policy maker, you will find great treasure, wisdom, utility and inspiration herein.”

Timothy Knowles

President, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching



“The Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning honors the legacy of Professor Edmund Gordon’s transformative scholarship, rooted in a compassionate commitment to equity and access and influential in inspiring generations of educators, researchers, and policymakers. With contributions from an extraordinary group of scholars and practitioners, **this landmark series offers a vital roadmap for educators and researchers committed to realizing assessment’s highest purpose—to support every learner’s potential.**”

Margaret Honey

President & CEO, The Scratch Foundation

“One of Edmund W. Gordon’s early experiences in psychological assessment, as recounted in his introduction to the series, planted the idea of its potential to advance learning, and not just to measure and rank status. This is a tune that Dr. Gordon has hummed since that formative experience, elaborating it and creating a melody that made sense in a clinical community. He then expanded it to a cohort of scholars and students, encompassing a broad range of institutions. The melody became a chorus through the Gordon Commission for the Future of Assessment, funded by the Educational Testing Service. In this volume, through the efforts of a loyal group of associates that span the full range of humanity, the chorale has become an orchestra, if not an opera. Its conductor (Eric Tucker) demonstrates commitment and energy fit to the task. **The opera is performed by a Who’s Who in the field of learning and assessment, and contains many pockets of Gordon’s vision, infused with a generous spirit of inquiry, urgency, and hope.**”

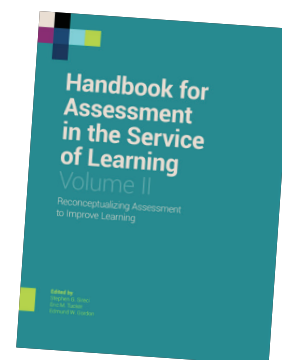
Kenji Hakuta

Lee L. Jacks Professor, emeritus, Stanford University Graduate School of Education

“The new three volume series Handbook of Assessment in the Service of Learning is a rich byproduct of the highly regarded Gordon Commission on the Future of Assessment in Education. **The series and its collaborators build upon Gordon’s considerable intellectual accomplishments, not to mention his vision, expertise, and wisdom in his concern for educating all of America’s children.** Moving beyond the traditional notion of assessment as a mere tool for measurement, Gordon and his colleagues focus on assessment as a means to enhance the complex multi-faceted nature of student learning. As our society turns again toward more standardized assessment tools, the Handbook of Assessment in the Service of Learning series is not only prescient, but critically important in understanding and supporting multiple modalities for learning and achievement among diverse learners. Once again Edmund W. Gordon and his collaborators are leading the way to broader knowledge and understandings in the complex world of student learning and achievement. Kudos to all involved in developing this series. All three volumes are a must read for anyone involved in teaching and learning within and outside the formal school context.”

Carol Camp Yeakey

The Marshall S. Snow Professor of Arts & Sciences, School of Arts & Sciences; Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health, Washington University in St. Louis



“Dr. Edmund Gordon is a true national treasure whose vision, compassion, and leadership have shaped generations. Now at 104, he adds another milestone to his extraordinary career with this three-volume Handbook. **Filled with insightful contributions from leading researchers in assessment and learning, it brings together groundbreaking work and practical insight.** At a moment when assessment often reinforces inequality, this Handbook offers a clear, transformative framework for using assessment to support meaningful learning. Thoughtful, comprehensive, and deeply inspiring, it will serve as an essential guide for educators, researchers, and practitioners dedicated to advancing equity and opportunity in education.”

Valerie Shute

Professor Emerita, Florida State University

“When I joined Cito, the Netherlands, in 2002, I was relatively new to the world of educational measurement. I immediately understood, though, the importance of formative assessment, by creating a feedback loop in the learning process and thus improving learning outcomes. The student monitoring systems were a key factor for the Netherlands in achieving high scores in the PISA research at the time. It's through the accomplishments of pioneers like Edmund W. Gordon that we were able to advance our work in research and development of formative assessment. Gordon has been the leading advocate for shifting from 'assessment of learning' to 'assessment for learning'. This moving away from testing as a stand-alone was significant in the 2000s and 2010s but is in fact very relevant today as students still have to face summative and stand-alone assessments at various stages of their educational career. Moreover, **scientific and technological developments allow us to integrate the learning and the assessment processes much further and much smarter than in the early days, partly supported by advances in artificial intelligence.** Those are all reasons why I'm happy with this new Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning. It provides the reader with a number of working examples that are very current and innovative. This book is highly recommended for experts and educators working in educational measurement.”

Marten Roorda

Senior Advisor, Gates Foundation, Former CEO of ACT and Cito

“Professor Edmund Gordon's vision of Assessment as a tool that could transform countless lives has inspired generations of researchers. **These volumes speak as a testimony to his deep intellectual impact on top scholars around research fields and disciplines, who have contributed key perspectives on how the future of assessment in the service of learning can be enhanced and, indeed, reimaged.**”

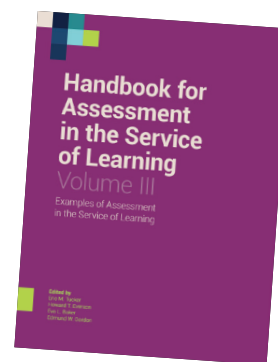
Ryan Baker

Professor of Artificial Intelligence and Education, Adelaide University

“Kudos to Professor Edmund Gordon and his co-Editor colleagues for compiling this major body of work. **The three volume Handbook is a major achievement and properly honors the wisdom and foresight of Ed Gordon by further developing his seminal thoughts on assessment and the earlier work of the Gordon Commission.** The Handbook's chapters offer state of the art insights about the 'what' of assessment, the 'how' of assessment, and the “value proposition” of assessment for learning, i.e., the interpretation and use of results from innovative assessments but with a particular focus on for whom we measure, and the interpretive value of the information obtained therein to promote teaching and learning. This Handbook will serve as a valuable resource for the multiple communities of scholars and practitioners concerned about maximizing equitable and valid uses of educational assessment.”

James Pellegrino

Emeritus Professor of Psychology and Learning Sciences, University of Illinois at Chicago



“The Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning is a three-volume call to rethink how we measure learning so that assessment actually helps young people grow. Instead of being about sorting, ranking, or checking boxes, these books show how assessment can become part of the learning process itself—sparking curiosity, guiding teaching, and giving students meaningful feedback they can use. **Across the volumes you'll find fresh design principles, research on how people really learn, and practical examples—from classroom strategies and state systems to new uses of technology and AI.** The contributors make a strong case that assessment can be human-centered, culturally responsive, and equity-driven, while still giving clear, trustworthy information to educators and families. Taken together, these handbooks are both a vision and a toolkit for anyone who wants to build an education system where assessments don't just measure success but help create it—and where every learner has the chance to thrive.”

Zoe Stemm-Calderon

Senior Director – Youth Serving Systems, Raikes Foundation

“ In 2016 I presented a paper at the annual meeting of the National Council for Measurement in Education entitled, “It’s the end of testing as we know it and I feel fine.” In that paper I argued that whether directly or indirectly, the only legitimate purpose of educational achievement testing is to improve learning. After my talk, a colleague found me in the crowded lobby and loudly berated me for minimizing the legitimacy of accountability testing programs that did not serve this purpose well. **Little did I know that Professor Gordon was gathering some of the finest minds in the field to think deeply about assessment in the service of learning.** His work ultimately led to these three incredibly important volumes that might influence the field and get us on the right track. Adding to the incredible cast of authors, the books can be downloaded for free.”

Neal Kingston

*Vice Provost, Jayhawk Global and Competency-Based Education
Director, Achievement and Assessment Institute, University Distinguished
Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Kansas*

“ Few voices match the clarion call of Ed Gordon. For decades, his expertise, intentionality, and humility have improved education—from creating early learning opportunities for young people, to reimagining how we teach them, and to reshaping how we assess and support their growth. It’s no surprise that his extraordinary impact was recognized with the prestigious Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize for Pre-K–12 Education in 2024. **This three-volume series reflects the depth of Professor Gordon’s transformative scholarship and his lifelong commitment to helping all learners thrive.**”

L. Michael Golden

*Vice Dean of Innovative Programs and
Partnerships, University of Pennsylvania
Graduate School of Education*



Transforming assessment begins with transforming how we think about it. **The work gathered here illuminates that transformation—showing how assessment is an essential part of learning rather than an afterthought.** Professor Gordon’s enduring commitment to the potential of assessment to advance the learning endeavor is an inspiration for us all.

Kristen Huff

*Vice President, Assessment and
Research, Curriculum Associates*



“ The Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning, published by the University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, is a three-volume guide that provides a comprehensive look at modern educational assessment. The series is grounded in the principle that assessment should be used to improve learning, not just to measure it. Volume I, “Foundations,” lays out the core principles for using assessment as a tool for student growth. Volume II, “Reconceptualizing,” explores innovative approaches to assessment that move beyond traditional testing. Finally, Volume III, “Examples,” offers practical case studies and models to demonstrate how these principles can be applied in real-world educational settings. **Together, the volumes offer a complete framework for educators seeking to align their assessment practices with effective teaching and student success.**”

Tom Vander Ark

CEO, Getting Smart

“ If the path to realizing human potential depends on optimal conditions and intervention, and optimal interventions in turn depend on following effective, informative assessment, then the Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning offers an ideal roadmap! The volumes in the AISL series lay out contexts and conditions, as well as methods and applications, for assessment aimed squarely at informing teaching, learning, and growth. With acute awareness that ignoring this learner-centered vision only reproduces inequity in the classroom and in societal disparities beyond, the Handbook offers a wealth of approaches to sampling relevant behavior to help develop useful pedagogical prescriptions and determine their success. Treating assessment as a dynamic, active transaction is a key to determining learner performance and adaptability in line with Edmund W. Gordon’s foundational concepts of intellectual competence and active adjustment; however, this approach is a template for approaching assessment in other domains of human behavior. **The Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning thus is timely, essential reading not only for educational purposes, but for all who value, explore, and promote human growth and potential.**”

David Rollock

Assistant Vice Provost, Office of the Vice Provost for Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Scholars, Purdue University



We are so grateful for Dr. Edmund Gordon's ground-breaking work, which has profoundly shaped the ways we approach educational equity and access today.

His dedication to understanding each child's perspective and his tireless efforts to expand opportunities for underserved children of color have paved the way for the work we do at Phalen Leadership Academies and Summer Advantage. Because of his vision, we are able to create programs that not only educate but uplift families, bridging opportunity gaps and giving children and parents the tools to thrive. His legacy continues to inspire and guide every step we take."

Earl Martin Phalen

Founder & CEO, George and Veronica Phalen Leadership Academies



"Professor Gordon's charge to make assessment part of teaching and learning comes alive in these volumes. The editors marry rigor with practicality: Volume I clarifies what high-quality, human-centered assessment requires, and Volume II reimagines practice with approaches that personalize and honor learner diversity. For those of us investing in breakthrough ideas for schools, this work is both compass and catalyst. **It points to an equitable future where evidence is timely, feedback is useful, and success is measured by how well we help students grow.**"

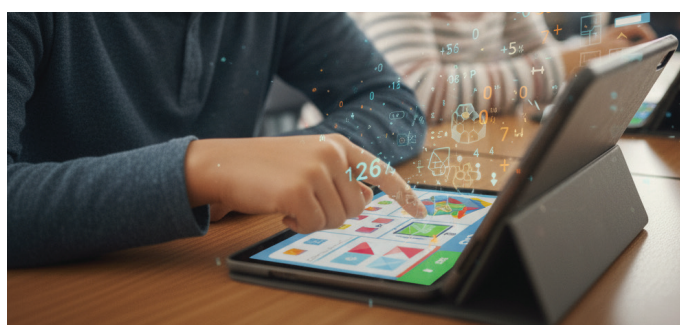
Frances Messano

CEO, NewSchools Venture Fund

"Finally, an extensive resource on the proactive potential of assessment.! The Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning offers theories, ideas, and practices focused on assessments as learning tools rather than performance checks. Most notable is that the volumes speak to the need to design assessments that are informed by the human capital brought by the learner rather than the cultural myopia of most tools in practice today. The Handbook reflects the evolution of more than eight decades of scholarship spearheaded by Professor Edmund W. Gordon in the service of better educating underserved populations. The series is a must-have resource for educators interested in helping students learn over simply assigning grades."

Brenda A. Allen

President, Lincoln University



"We cannot understate the power of assessments throughout our education system. We need to harness that power to bring real change. Assessments are often used to analyze, evaluate, and make resource allocation decisions, but their true power lies in improving teaching and learning. Assessments help us understand where each and every learner is, how they are growing, and what they need to reach their full potential. We can't let assessments limit what we teach or how students demonstrate learning. We need to use them to dramatically expand when, how, and where we capture student progress. When teachers, school leaders, and parents and caregivers are armed with this information, the entire community can work together to support all students."

Jon Deane

CEO, GreatSchools

"In these three volumes, Professor Gordon and his colleagues sound a clarion call: **Assessment should not only enumerate intellectual competence but enrich it; not just estimate, but empower; not just reveal, but reinvigorate. They provide arguments and examples that leave us with no excuses not to answer their call.** Looking down Professor Gordon's list of esteemed contributors to these volumes, you will see not just expertise, but a community—relationships fostered through conversations, sustained over decades. This, too, is be Professor Gordon's legacy: one of mentorship, convenings, and consensus."

Andrew Ho

Charles William Eliot Professor of Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education



“Professor Edmund W. Gordon has shaped how so many of us think about human development, learning, and what’s possible when we truly see the potential in every learner. His belief that assessment should support learning, not just measure it, has inspired my work and the work of so many others. **Today’s science makes his vision even more powerful: that who we become is shaped by context, relationships, and opportunity. He reminded us that potential isn’t fixed or predictable, and that’s a truth every educator, policymaker, and innovator should carry forward.** This Handbook is more than a collection of scholarship. It’s a statement of purpose. It reflects the charge Professor Gordon set for all of us, to make assessment a tool for equity, growth, and possibility. I’m honored to be part of this tribute and to help share the legacy of a person who has inspired generations to believe in what people can become.”

Pamela Cantor

CEO and Founder, The Human Potential L.A.B.

“The Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning, a three-volume series led by Dr. Edmund W. Gordon and stewarded by field leaders Stephen G. Sireci, Eleanor Armour-Thomas, Eva L. Baker, Howard T. Everson, and Eric Tucker, is a comprehensive and practical manifesto of assessment guidance that meets the moment. **By embracing human variance and equity at its foundation, the volumes are full of practical examples of both measures in action and measurement processes that elevate design thinking and encourage iteration and evolution in the service of all learners. Indeed, assessments can be designed to honor diverse systems of knowledge and be signals of opportunity and success for students.** These volumes eloquently and efficiently show the field how.”

Christina Cipriano

Associate Professor, Yale Child Study Center, Director, the Education Collaboratory at Yale



“For decades, discussion of student assessment has been dominated by accountability concerns. By contrast, **this rich and enlightening three-volume series from legendary scholar Edmund Gordon and his colleagues provides a re-set for the theory, design, and practice of assessment towards assessment in support of student learning.** The series is an essential new resource for researchers, students, and practitioners who are seeking a thoughtful approach to assessment in a wide range of education settings where the learning of all students is a primary goal.”

Adam Gamoran

President, William T. Grant Foundation



“These three volumes contain a treasure chest of well-articulated papers to help move us gain more expertise on developing and using assessments to help teachers and their students. **Teachers will understand their students better, and students will understand and accelerate their learning. This trend toward “assessment for learning” has been underway for decades but is now finally widely embraced.** Not only do the volumes contain papers from the pioneers and heroes in the effort to refocus our attention on assessment data used constructively and not punitively. It’s also important to see newer names expressing how our field is growing and expanding with fresh ideas on fairness, equity, and cultural sensitivity. Fortunately, there remains a strong focus on the science of assessment, which must grow to meet the fast-changing world of assessing student learning. These volumes are very timely, coming on the heels of the National Academy of Education book, Reimagining Balanced Assessment Systems.”

John Q. Easton

Interim Executive Director, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University

“These volumes are a revelation – finally, an actionable research-based path to break the rigid rank, sort, and certify cycle that leads students and educators to distrust tests and disengage with learning. The Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning demonstrates how to create assessments that can lead to human flourishing, not just for a privileged few, but for all. Importantly, this includes a call to embed principles of Universal Design and implicitly acknowledge what modern neuroscience has demonstrated – every human brain learns and processes information differently. If we are to meet the needs of the future, then assessment designers and educators must heed this call.”

Lindsay Jones
CEO, CAST



“For the better part of an incredible life and legacy, Professor Edmund Gordon has steered the field toward more insightful assessment that enables students and teachers to see and unlock the potential in each and all of them (both students and teachers). **In this latest series, he and some of the best and brightest chart a new course rooted in a deeper understanding of the Science of Learning and Development and the potential of new technologies to help achieve long held aspirations.** Together, they are a gift and a roadmap we can ill afford to ignore.”

Jim Shelton
Chief Executive Officer, Blue Meridian Partners



Professor Gordon's enduring legacy is a call to return assessment to its moral purpose: to serve learning and affirm human potential. At ANet, we see this charge as both timeless and urgent. His work taught the field that assessment should be in dynamic relationship with teaching and learning, facilitating a continuous cycle of insight and improvement. **That vision is the heartbeat of our formative assessment work and the foundation of our innovations. We aim to design assessments that don't interrupt instruction but amplify it.** And work alongside schools to create tools that help educators see what students understand, adapt in real time, and sustain momentum in learning. In this way, we hope to extend Gordon's profound legacy of assessment as an engine for equity, reflection, and transformation. And honor his conviction that every learner's experience is worthy of understanding and support.”

Michelle Odemwingie
Chief Executive Officer, Achievement Network



“It is now beyond question that our education system needs fundamental rethinking, and yet one of the biggest factors which preserves the status quo is our outdated system of assessments. Conversely, evolving our assessment regime may be one of the most potent levers for sparking the long overdue R&D we need to innovate on educational delivery models. This is why the Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning could not be a more vital nor more timely gift to the field. This three volume series is not only comprehensive and rigorous, it is also eminently practical – with case examples and models that have real-world applicability. I have huge appreciation to the Gordon Commission on the Future of Assessment in Education for such an important contribution to the transformation we urgently need.”

Jeff Wetzler
Co-Founder, Transcend

“Professor Gordon taught us that assessment should serve learning, not the other way around. For too long, narrow standardized testing has done the opposite. It flattens what matters, narrows the curriculum, dulls curiosity, and sidelines teacher judgment—especially in the places that most need innovation and deeper learning. This three-volume Handbook points to a better approach. **It gathers research and practice that help teachers see what students know and can do. Examples include analysis of authentic student work, performance tasks, and feedback cycles that guide next steps. The focus is practical: evidence that informs instruction and opens opportunity. The volumes also describe the conditions that make this work possible. Teachers need time to look closely at student work.** They need tools that organize evidence and support professional inquiry. They need shared expectations for high-quality tasks and responses. When those pieces are in place, assessment becomes part of teaching, not an event apart from it. The invitation here is clear: use assessment to know children well and to improve learning in real time. That is the heart of Professor Gordon's charge. These pages show how to carry it forward in ways that nurture curiosity, build competence, and keep human development at the center.”

Shael Polakow-Suransky

President, Bank Street College of Education

“The Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning comes at an important time for education. Assessments have evolved over the past 20 years, their data substantiating the accountability systems our schools, districts, and states depend upon. And with this progress noted, we must remain committed to their intrinsic purpose – capturing the propensity of knowledge and varied experiences to fuel empowerment, agency, and equity. The Handbook provides an evidence-based roadmap for how assessments can be used responsibly, not just as a measuring stick but a useful tool to inform instructional practice, improve pedagogy, and provide individualized supports to students. This book is a must-read for school leaders and policymakers and a testament to Edmund Gordon's legacy.”

Jessica Heppen

President & CEO, American Institutes for Research

“These volumes of the Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning are a blessing, a gift, ...a passing of the torch. In his own clear voice Professor Edmund Gordon tells us once more about his relational and uplifting vision for assessment entwined with the processes of learning and teaching. Then he summons around him a remarkable assemblage of esteemed scholars and practitioners, who have taken up this vision in myriad learning contexts inside and outside of schools. **Chapter authors help us understand complex theoretical foundations for learning and development that undergird, in turn, the design of innovative learning environments and assessment prototypes.** We are offered captivating case studies and extensions, even, to what socially relevant and culturally responsive assessment could mean for large-scale applications. Instead of traditional testing of outcomes when learning is finished, here we see profound rethinking of what assessment could be if used to elicit and nurture the development of learner capabilities.”

Lorrie A. Shepard

University of Colorado Boulder



“The educational assessment community is once again indebted to Professor Gordon and his collaborators for providing laser-sharp focus on the “why” that brought us to this work in the first place—the improvement of learners' lives. **Portraying both learners and educators as actors in the multidimensional drama of learning, this volume offers a comprehensive treatment of the mental frames we must bring to the endeavor, presents the latest thinking on the topic, and integrates assessment insights accumulated over decades.** Truly a handbook that will serve as an enduring reference for years to come.”

John Behrens

Professor, University of Notre Dame

“Professor Edmund Gordon has long challenged us to see assessment not for sorting, but as a catalyst for deeper learning, and to see learning, teaching, and assessment as a deeply interconnected cycle. **This landmark collaboration across an extraordinary array of researchers, experts, builders, and innovators - provides a powerful vision for assessment that serves learning and learners, as well as giving us pragmatic tools and for charting a course for the future of learning our young people need and deserve.** Reshaping the why, how, and for whom of assessments is crucial to realign how we guide learners, track mastery of knowledge and complex skills, and ensure learners are inspired and prepared to thrive in this emerging Age of AI. As we look ahead to what young people need to flourish in the future, this Handbook offers both foundational research frameworks and pragmatic tools and guides for designing new forms of measurement that serve learners and capture what truly matters.”

Kim Smith

CEO and Founder, LearnerStudio

“The volumes in this series offer a bold new version of assessment as a future-oriented—rather than backward-looking—endeavor that is focused on bringing all learners into a more just future. The series is essential reading for those seeking a primer on contemporary developments in assessment, along with practical illustrations of what assessment can be when put in the service of learners and learning. **It takes up issues of validity in fresh ways, ways that attend to learner variation and the distinct requirements of validity arguments about how assessments can support equitable learning.** Most importantly, it invites us each to roll up our sleeves to turn these existence proofs into more equitable systems of assessment in schools and gives us key ideas and tools for doing so.”

William Penuel

Distinguished Professor, University of Colorado Boulder



“Professor Gordon's vision of assessments as catalysts for learning carries profound implications for how society will support human capital development for decades to come. Learning is not a static measurement but a dynamic, ever-evolving process of thinking critically and applying knowledge in context. **To truly unlock the potential of each individual, we must rethink assessment—not as a mere tool, but as an essential part of the cognitive journey itself. This empowers learners to take ownership of their learning, adapt, and grow continuously—not just for the moment, but for a lifetime.** In an age of unprecedented change and innovation, the ability to process information critically and navigate new knowledge is more vital than ever. Teachers equipped with the insights and skills to integrate evolving assessment methods will be essential to preparing students for the future of learning and work. Only through this shift can we ensure that education stays aligned with the dynamic world we are shaping.”

LaVerne Srinivasan

*Former Vice President National Program,
Program Director Education, Carnegie Corporation of
New York*

“This book is a great handbook for the Assessment in the Service of Learning. Too often researchers have focused on the “assessment” part, not the process of learning. **This book will start to fix this oversight.**”

Neil Heffernan

Co-founder, ASSISTments



Professor Gordon challenged the field to think of assessment not as an end point, but as an instrument for learning. In a moment when technology is blurring the distinction between learning and evaluation, that vision is within reach like never before. The Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning series advances the charge of the Gordon Commission by forth a bold vision for assessment at the dawn of the AI era.”

Ben Wallerstein

CEO and Co-Founder, Whiteboard Advisors

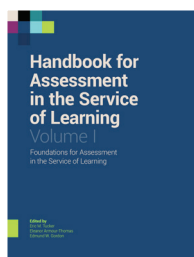


“As experts continue to develop new and more impactful forms of assessment, there has also been a significant erosion in public trust in assessment through misinterpretations of their value and application. This Handbook series serves as an essential reminder that high-quality assessment grounded in research and empathy remains one of our most powerful tools for advancing equity and excellence in education. **This resource not only shares best practices but helps us understand how to better communicate those practices to parents, caregivers, educators, and other key stakeholders.** When thoughtfully implemented and clearly understood, assessment can deepen our collective understanding of teaching and learning, and most importantly, help ensure every learner has access to a high-quality education.”

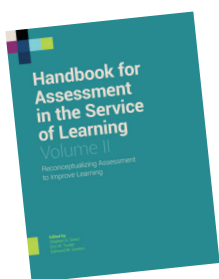
Jane Swift

Former Massachusetts Governor, president of Education at Work.

ABOUT THE VOLUMES



Volume I: Foundations for Assessment in the Service of Learning offers a theoretical and research-grounded vision for transforming educational assessment into a catalyst for learning. Drawing on contemporary learning sciences, measurement theory, and improvement science, the volume is organized into three sections that offer principled design and conceptual frameworks for integrating assessment with teaching and learning; ground assessment in the social, cultural, and developmental nature of how people learn; and examine how emerging technologies like artificial intelligence might enrich balanced assessment practices while upholding technical requirements of validity: fairness, scientific soundness, utility and creditability.



Volume II: Reconceptualizing Assessment to Improve Learning

moves from foundational principles to the conceptual tools and methods needed to build assessment systems that actively improve, not just measure, learning. Volume II of this Handbook for Assessment in the Service of Learning provides blueprints and validation guidance to inform assessment systems that support learners—bridging Volume I's foundations to Volume III's examples.

Volume III: Examples of Assessment in the Service of Learning bridges the gap between aspiration and application, by translating core design principles into practice through a collection of examples. This volume presents tangible "existence proofs" from a broad range of educational contexts—including digital learning platforms, PreK–12 classrooms, game-based learning environments, and skills-based credentialing programs. By showcasing assessments that are seamlessly integrated with learning and instruction, this volume advances the proposition that to assess is, fundamentally, to teach and to learn. It offers practical models and designs that embed assessment within instruction to cultivate skills and support meaningful learning.

