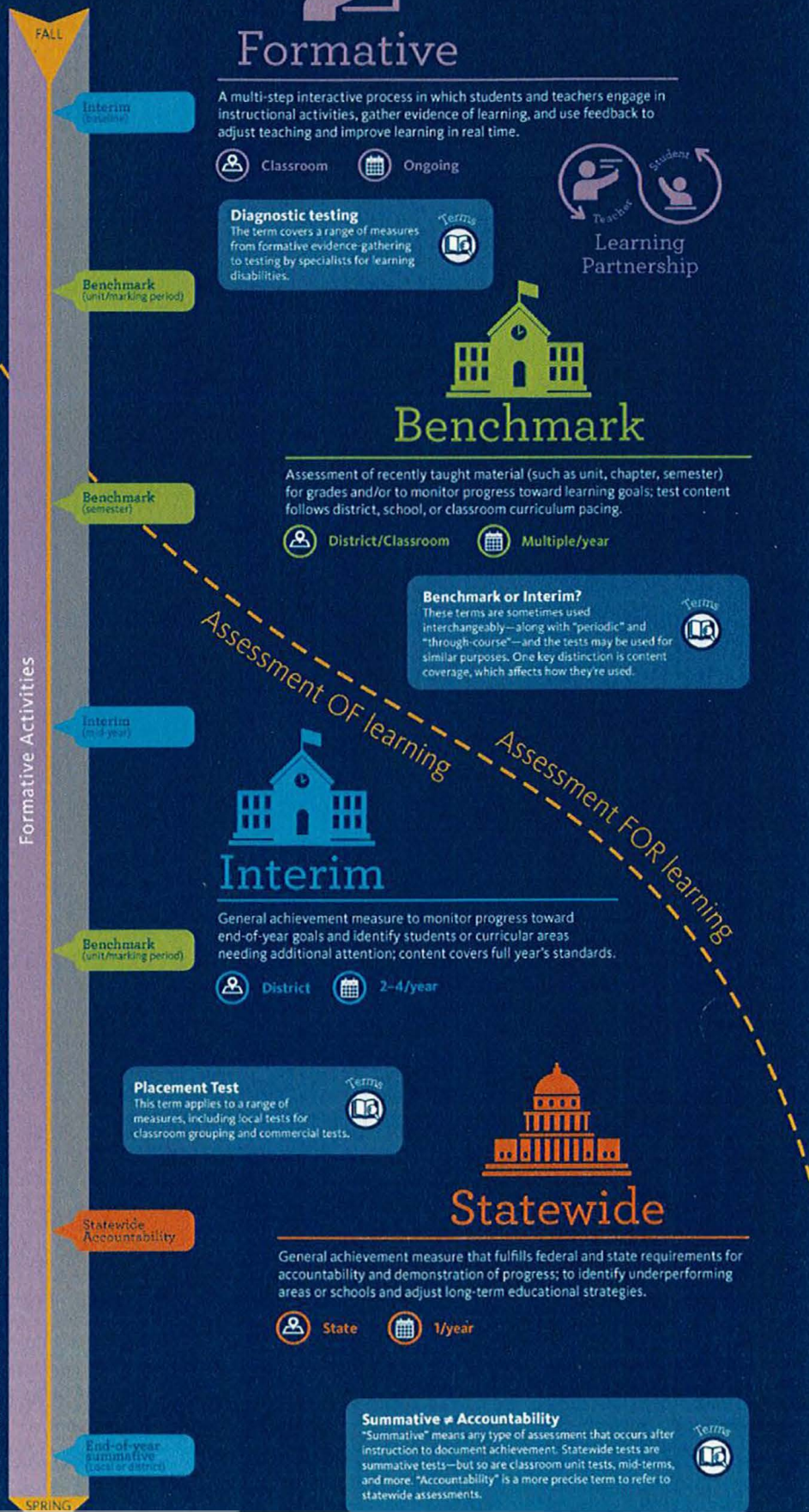


Balanced Assessment System

Sample Assessment Timeline



Formative

A multi-step interactive process in which students and teachers engage in instructional activities, gather evidence of learning, and use feedback to adjust teaching and improve learning in real time.

- Classroom
- Ongoing

Diagnostic testing
The term covers a range of measures from formative evidence-gathering to testing by specialists for learning disabilities.



Learning Partnership



Benchmark

Assessment of recently taught material (such as unit, chapter, semester) for grades and/or to monitor progress toward learning goals; test content follows district, school, or classroom curriculum pacing.

- District/Classroom
- Multiple/year

Benchmark or Interim?
These terms are sometimes used interchangeably—along with “periodic” and “through-course”—and the tests may be used for similar purposes. One key distinction is content coverage, which affects how they’re used.



Interim

General achievement measure to monitor progress toward end-of-year goals and identify students or curricular areas needing additional attention; content covers full year’s standards.

- District
- 2-4/year



Statewide

General achievement measure that fulfills federal and state requirements for accountability and demonstration of progress; to identify underperforming areas or schools and adjust long-term educational strategies.

- State
- 1/year

Summative ≠ Accountability
“Summative” means any type of assessment that occurs after instruction to document achievement. Statewide tests are summative tests—but so are classroom unit tests, mid-terms, and more. “Accountability” is a more precise term to refer to statewide assessments.

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