

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT KEYS TO SUCCESS



To be successful in life and work as lifelong learners, students must develop the critical skill of learning how to learn. This requires students learn how to set goals, monitor learning and develop strategies to independently take next steps to move their own learning forward.

This process is best learned in classrooms where students are provided with routines, structures and processes to become **active agents** in their own learning, rather than sitting passively as information is delivered to them.

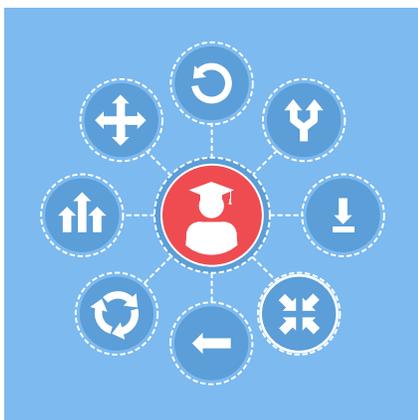


When formative assessment is done well:

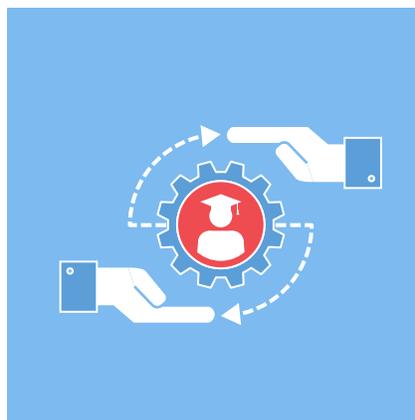
- Students become active agents in the learning process.
- Academic achievement increases.
- Classroom culture improves.
- Teachers and students have more positive interactions!

Three Essential Conditions for Formative Assessment

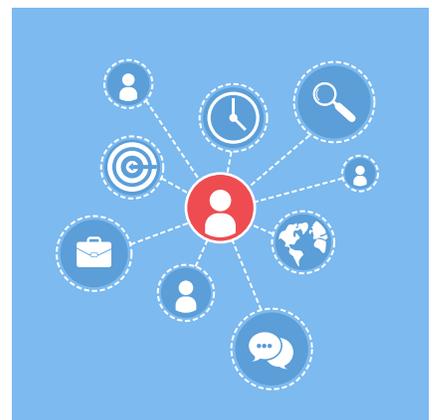
For effective formative assessment to take place, practitioners ought to;



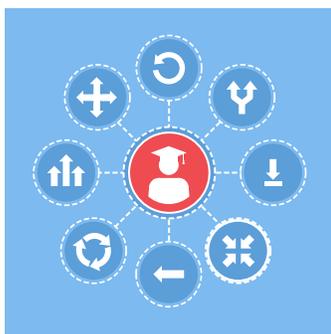
Understand formative assessment as a **SET OF PRACTICES**, grounded in disciplinary learning, rather than as a test event.



Sustain a **LONG-TERM COMMITMENT** to lead formative assessment **IMPLEMENTATION**.



Establish a **CULTURE, STRUCTURES AND SUPPORTS** for ongoing **PROFESSIONAL LEARNING** for teachers, principals and district leaders.



A Set of Practices

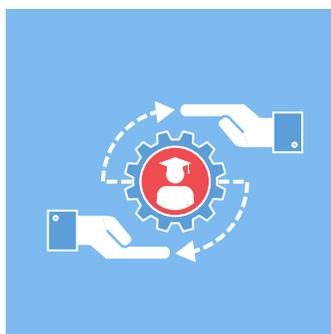
“Formative assessment is a planned, ongoing process used by all students and teachers during learning and teaching to elicit and use evidence of student learning to improve student understanding of intended disciplinary learning outcomes, and support students to become more self-directed learners.”²

Formative Assessment IS:

- A set of interrelated practices that have been found to improve student learning.
- Intended to inform learning during the process.
- A process in which students are actively involved.
- A practice that requires disciplinary knowledge.

Formative Assessment IS NOT:

- Individual practice done in isolation.
- Solely for summing up learning.
- Just for teachers.
- A single test event.



Long-Term Commitment by Leadership

Commitment and active engagement of leaders means that leaders must understand:

- What formative assessment is.
- How formative assessment contributes to learning.
- How to support teachers in their implementation.

Commitment to long-term change can be shown by:

- Developing a clear vision of formative assessment.
- Aligning this vision to district goals.
- Creating opportunities for sharing the vision and goals.



Culture, Structures and Supports for Professional Learning

School and district leaders must analyze **current structures for professional learning** and enhance or extend those opportunities to:

- Increase time for teachers to collaboratively learn about formative assessment.
- Develop mechanisms for teachers to receive feedback on emerging formative assessment practice.

Teachers who will become effective practitioners of formative assessment will collaborate with colleagues to:

- Evolve thinking about the relationship between instruction and assessment.
- See feedback as a central mechanism in promoting learning.
- Regard students as partners in the learning and assessment process.

Where to Start



DISTRICT LEADERS

- Communicate the vision and establish strategies
- Support teachers' long-term involvement and commitment
- Use data to scale new initiatives
- Identify and establish professional learning structures
- Ensure professional learning support for teachers and principals
- Provide structures for leaders to observe and reflect together
- Commit to a student-centered approach



SCHOOL LEADERS

- Communicate the vision and rationale for complex initiatives
- Support teacher learning collaboration
- Monitor and adjust implementation of new initiatives
- Actively learn about new instructional practices
- Learn alongside teachers
- Support teachers through observation, feedback and goal-setting
- Build structures for teacher support and feedback
- Encourage teachers to take risks, learn from mistakes and share challenges



TEACHER LEADERS

- Improve academic and pedagogical content knowledge
- Learn new ways to engage students
- Take risks, learn, reflect and refine
- Apply feedback to guide new learning
- Share new learning with peers

These factors are offered to guide successful local dialogue. When formative assessment is supported from the early stages of implementation

Source: This infographic content is derived from [Necessary Conditions for Successful Implementation of Formative Assessment](#), authored by Margaret Heritage, Nancy Gerzon and Marie Mancuso of WestEd.

For more information on the How I Know project, please go to formativeassessmentpractice.org.

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