

Building Capacity for Standards-Based Teaching and Learning with Formative Assessment

ESSA gives states the flexibility and responsibility to target how to improve educational outcomes for all students. States need to ensure that educators have the training and help they need to best support their students. Proposed ESSA regulations ask states to describe their strategies to support and develop excellent educators, including efforts to enhance and expand their systems of professional development.

CSAI tools can help states build teachers' capacity and ability to implement and support their students' success with rigorous college and career ready standards. All options below incorporate formative assessment as a major emphasis, but they differ in overarching context and framing. We offer these options as conversation starters.

Planning for effective standards-based instruction with formative assessment

This option draws on CSAI curriculum and instruction resources to help guide teachers' thinking and planning for standards-based teaching and learning. (See <http://www.csai-online.org/collection/1505> for the current resources, which are the source documents for this option.) Teachers will be guided in laying out the building blocks for accomplishing given standards and then developing and/or revising specific lesson plans that incorporate both established principles of learning and a systematic formative assessment process.

Online formative assessment training modules

We offer stand-alone, online modules for teachers to build their capacity to engage in formative assessment. The modules help teachers and students collect and use evidence to close the gap between where students currently are relative to lesson goals. Current modules include PowerPoint slides, facilitator guides, related readings, and associated tasks and assignments. The modules may be scaled to state interests and context.

Formative assessment observation protocol

Developed by Formative Assessment for Students and Teachers (FAST) State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), the formative assessment observation protocol (with associated training) is a tool that teachers use to observe peers and reflect upon and improve their own teaching with regard to formative assessment practices.

Model lessons with embedded formative assessment

A series of middle school social studies/history and science lessons that integrate English language arts standards and mathematics lessons that integrate math content and practices are available. The lessons embed formative assessment practices and lesson design elements introduced in the curriculum and instruction resource series (see item #1). These resources are intended to serve as models in professional development and/or to be used directly with students to achieve specified learning goals.

These resources can be customized and combined in various ways to meet RCC and state interests, opportunities, and constraints (e.g., webinar, in-person training, various forms of support).

Building Capacity for Success with Diverse Learners

ESSA recognizes the diversity of students attending U.S. schools. The proposed regulations ensure that states have targeted support for chronically low-performing subgroups of students and equitable access to resources for all students, especially those who are traditionally underrepresented. CSAI provides resources to help states build teachers' capacity to address the needs of diverse students, in particular English learner (EL) and American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) students.

Language learning progressions for English learners

Dynamic Language Learning Progressions (DLLP) helps teachers assess and improve EL students' language as they develop students' content skills. The DLLP is an interpretive framework that teachers use to attend to students' explanations in the content areas and take instructional action to advance students' language learning. Through a partnership with the DLLP project, CSAI can offer training to EL coordinators and other educators to support teachers in adopting the DLLP for instruction, language development, and formative assessment. (For additional information about the DLLP project, visit DLLP.org.)

Effective instruction for English learners

In curriculum and instruction, EL students require different approaches to ensure progress towards proficiency in English and in content-area knowledge and skills. We developed a resource that pinpoints key instructional principles for EL students and offer curated collections of materials to help address students' unique needs.

Formative assessment for AI/AN students

At CSAI, we can customize our formative assessment resources to address AI/AN and EL students' need for culturally responsive formative assessment. This work is intended to meet the instructional and assessment needs of AI/AN students, including students learning their Native language or English as a second language.

Assessment literacy development for AI/AN stakeholders

Assessment literacy development is important for AI/AN stakeholders. CSAI's comprehensive assessment framework, developed initially in collaboration with Colorado, is used to describe how various types and levels of assessment are supposed to work. The framework helps AI/AN stakeholders evaluate their assessment needs and move towards better, more informative systems for AI/AN students.

Targeted literature review and synthesis in response to state requests

In response to specific practical problems states face with standards, assessment, and accountability, CSAI can conduct a literature review on the topic and synthesize findings and available tools.