



Formative Assessment Project

Purpose

The purpose of the Formative Assessment Project (FAP) is to develop teachers' capacity to frequently monitor the learning of all students and adjust instruction to better meet their needs. In Vermont, formative assessment is further defined as the use of evidence to inform instruction. Building on the extensive research on formative assessment and educator professional development, the project also creates small sustainable teacher learning communities (TLCs) in which participants learn and refine the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively implement and sustain formative assessment practices in their classrooms. The project is further supported by a DOE facilitated online community for the TLC leaders.

FAP is an extension of an earlier pilot involving nine schools and represents the continuing commitment of the Vermont Department of Education to support Vermont teachers in addressing and resolving student achievement gaps.

Link to School Quality Standards and Local Assessment

The VT DOE considers formative assessment (assessment *for* learning) to be an essential component of any comprehensive local assessment plan (*Core Principles of Local Assessment*). This same focused attention to equal opportunities for students, continuous progress monitoring, and professional learning communities that are central to FAP is mirrored in other concurrent statewide initiatives, including Responsiveness to Instruction (RtI), Creating Responsive Schools (CRS), and Teaching All Secondary Students (TASS)

Implementation Design

The use of the Keeping Learning on Track™ program offered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) provides a consistency of language and training as well as integrity of process. Combining this program with the efficiencies of regional access allows us to offer valid and sustainable professional development. The Department in partnership with the Educational Service Agencies (ESAs) provided training for approximately 150 teachers and 30 TLC leaders during the summer of 2007 to extend the project beyond the original nine schools.

To participate in FAP training, a school must send a team comprised of classroom teachers and the principal to a three day institute. Team members must commit to implementing formative assessment strategies in their classrooms throughout the school year and participating in monthly teacher learning community meetings. The team should determine in advance if one member will serve as TLC leader or if an external coach will be hired to facilitate the TLCs. TLC leaders must attend two days additional training.