**FACILITATOR RESOURCE MODULE 1**

**At a Glance**

**PLC Focus**

* What formative assessment is and what it is not;
* How formative assessment is part of a comprehensive assessment system;
* In the context of multi-tiered systems of support/RTI, how effective formative assessment can improve all students’ learning.

**Materials needed**

* Audio slide presentation (you will need a projector and audio capability)
* Copies of Activity Sheets 1, 2 and 3 for all participants
* Copies of optional reading for all participants

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**Module Sequence**

| **Section** | **Purpose** | **Resources** |
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| **Review the focus** | Orient participants to the session’s content | Focus is written above and in Facilitator Guidance below |
| **Connection (5 minutes)** | To raise participants’ awareness of the assessments they currently use and to prepare them for thinking about formative assessment as part of a comprehensive assessment system | Activity Sheet 1 |
| **New Content (12 minutes)** | To deepen participants’ understanding of what formative assessment is and what it is not; to gain and understanding of formative assessment as an integral part of a comprehensive assessment system; help participants understand how formative assessment is an essential component in multi-tiered systems of support. | Module 1 Audio PowerPoint presentation  Activity Sheet 2 |
| **Discussion (18 minutes)** | Continue to deepen participants’ understanding of formative assessment; become familiar with a range of methods to use **intentionally** for generating evidence during a lesson; and to provide an opportunity to process ideas about formative assessment in multi-tiered systems of support | Activity Sheet 2 |
| **Next Steps and Closing (15 minutes)** | Reflect on today’s learning; preparation for follow-up activity  Direct participants to optional reading | \*See below preparation you will need to do for next steps section.  Activity Sheet 3  Access to optional reading |

**Facilitator Guidance**

**Review the focus of the PLC.**

After welcoming participants, let them know what the focus of this PLC will be.

**Facilitator**: *In this PLC we’re going to focus on:*

* *What formative assessment is and what it is not;*
* *How formative assessment is part of a comprehensive assessment system;*
* *In the context of multi-tiered systems of support/RTI, how effective formative assessment can improve all students’ learning.*

**Connection: Activity 1 (5 minutes)**

Each participant should have a copy of Activity Sheet 1.

**Facilitator***: To get started, we are going to think about the assessments that we currently use in our classrooms and the purpose of each one. Spend 3-4 minutes completing Activity Sheet 1.*

[Participants complete their sheets individually].

*For the last minute, please circle any of the assessment types that you think fit the description “formative assessment.”*

[Participants complete their sheets individually].

**New Content: Audio Slide Presentation (12 minutes)**

Let participants know that they are now going to engage with new content through an audio PowerPoint presentation. Then use the prompt below.

**Facilitator**: *While we listen to the first part of this presentation, be thinking about the assessment types that you have circled as “formative assessment” and how they compare to the information in the presentation.*

[Module 1 Audio PPT].

**Discussion: Participants will need to refer to Activity Sheets 1 and 2 (18 minutes)**

Use the following prompt to begin your discussion.

**Facilitator**: *Is the idea of formative assessment that we have just heard about similar or different to the idea you came to the PLC with?*

[Ask them to refer to what they circled on their assessment sheet as formative assessment. During the discussion, keep the focus on similarities and differences. Tease out how their ideas are similar or different asking probing questions such as *“can you say a bit more about how your ideas are different; did anyone else see it that way?”*]*.*

[After about five minutes of discussion, bring the discussion to a close by summarizing the main points that were made. Don’t worry if everyone’s ideas of formative assessment are different from what was presented. There will be opportunities to go deeper in the remaining modules to clarify teachers’ understanding].

Use the following prompt to continue your discussion.

**Facilitator**: *Now we are going to look at Activity Sheet 2 with the different methods of using formative assessment. Are you familiar with these methods and how often do you use them in your classrooms?*

[The purpose of this discussion is to have teachers reflect on these methods, identify them in terms of their own assessment practice, and expand their thinking about using these methods in their classrooms. As teachers begin to identify the methods, press on the idea of intentionality. For example, if a teacher says she uses observation ask *“how do you decide if observation is the best method for what you want to find out? How do you plan for using these methods during the lesson?* Also extend the participants thinking by asking *“are there some methods here that you have never intentionally included in the lesson? Why is that?”*].

After about 5 minutes or so, bring the discussion to a close. Provide a summary of which methods teachers have identified as most frequently used, offer some insights from the discussion about intentionality, and if nobody says they use them intentionally, let them know that this is something they will need to think more and which they’ll focus on in the next PLC. End this section by reinforcing the idea of intentional planning and choosing the most appropriate method for what they want to find out about learning.]

Use the following prompt to continue your discussion.

**Facilitator**: *Now we are going to move to multi-tiered systems of support.* *What are your thoughts about how formative assessment operates within a multi-tiered system of support?*

[The purpose of this discussion is to have participants process the idea of formative assessment within a multi-tiered system of support. Keep it open-ended so that teachers can offer their thinking. You may need to use additional prompts such as *“does everyone agree with that? Does anyone have a different idea? Other thoughts?*].

After five or so minutes of discussion bring this section of the PLC to a close and draw out the following themes from the entire discussion period (feel free to use your own words – below is just a guide for you) (2 mins):

* Formative assessment is an intentional practice intended to support all students’ learning;
* It is core to tier 1 instruction;
* There is no single method to obtain evidence of learning but evidence gathering needs to be planned as part of a lesson;
* There is no purpose to formative assessment if teachers do not act on the evidence they obtain with the intention of advancing learning.

If teachers have identified in the discussion that some of their ideas about formative assessment have changed during the session, also make reference to that and describe how. Conclude by asking teachers if they have any thoughts or comments about these themes or anything they want to add].

**Next Steps and Closing (15 minutes)**

In a round-robin, ask each participant to say what is one take-away for them from today’s meeting.

Explain to participants that their task between now and the next PLC is to choose one of the methods for obtaining evidence from Activity Sheet 2 that they do not frequently use and try it out in their classroom at least once. Then move to the preparatory activity.

**Facilitator**: *We’re now going to do some preparatory work for the gathering evidence activity. Could someone tell us the learning goal for a lesson you taught this week or last week and which standard it was related to.”*

\*[Wait for a participant to offer a suggestion and if no one volunteers, suggest one from a lesson you taught this week or last week].

**Facilitator**: *Which evidence gathering method from the chart on Activity Sheet 2 do you think would be most effective in obtain in evidence related to this goal?*

[The purpose of this preparation is to encourage participants to deepen their understanding of evidence gathering methods for particular purposes. When participants offer ideas, press them to explain why they think this is the best method and what information it would give that would be useful for instructional next steps.

Repeat this process with at least one more goal and standard, preferably two more].

Let participants know that they should complete Activity Sheet 3 and bring it to the next PLC to discuss with everyone. Make sure Activity Sheet 3 is given to teachers before they leave.

Refer participants to an optional two-page reading “Formative Assessment: An Enabler of Learning” that provides a brief overview of the entire formative assessment process. Tell them that while it is optional reading, it will be useful for providing them a framework for the work they will do in the next three PLCs.

Thank everyone for their participation and let them know the date and time of the next PLC.