

# OFAST Professional Learning Design

Oregon Formative Assessment for Students and Teachers (OFAST) is a professional learning opportunity created by the Oregon State Department of Education to support Oregon K-12 teachers to implement formative assessment effectively in their classrooms. The professional learning design includes three aligned components:

**Online Modules.** The core of OFAST is a series of five, five-week modules that use a variety of resources, modalities, and activities to deepen teachers' and educators' understanding and application of formative assessment. The first two weeks of each module support teachers to learn the content necessary for implementation. Content is delivered through a variety of modalities. Videos show formative assessment in a range of grade levels and subject areas. Tools, templates, and self-assessments provide support for teachers to plan lessons and involve students in the formative assessment process. Online content will require 2 hours each week to complete and will be chunked into a series of short lessons so teachers can work through them at a comfortable pace as their schedules permit.

**Application Activities.** Following the online content, teachers have two weeks to apply what they have learned in their classrooms. For example, after studying routines to elicit evidence of learning in Module 3, participants are prompted to select a routine and use it to collect formative evidence, analyze the evidence using Success Criteria, and use their inferences to inform next steps in instruction. These application activities help bridge the gap between understanding formative assessment as a concept and using it as part of daily practice.

**Community of Practice (CoP).** Educators will collaborate with colleagues in meetings that take place at the end of each module. These meetings will be facilitated by a teacher leader or administrator. They represent an opportunity for participants to deepen their understanding of the content by discussing key concepts, asking questions, and aligning the work to their school context. The CoP Guide for each module will provide a suggested agenda, materials, discussion questions, FAQs, and guidance for troubleshooting.

# Key Features of the OFAST Learning Design

Formative assessment is not done in a uniform way across classrooms. Eliciting evidence of learning in an elementary reading class will look very different than eliciting evidence of learning in a high-school math class—yet the principles that ground instructional planning, evidence collection, and evidence use remain the same. Learning formative assessment involves internalizing these principles, then applying them to support new approaches to instruction and student learning. In other words, implementing formative assessment requires that teachers think deeply about what they are learning and make decisions about how to apply that in their own classrooms and context. The OFAST online learning modules use three design features to support individual and collective analysis, application, and reflection needed to do this work well.

**Self-Directed Learning.** Participants in OFAST engage in self-assessment early in the course and then set personal Learning Goals based on their interpretation of the assessment results. In addition, teachers and leaders are asked to align learning in the OFAST course with other initiatives that are underway at their site. Throughout the course, teachers continue to have opportunities to direct their learning choices. Personal reflections take place in each module that support teachers to consider actions they can take to advance their learning. Video galleries provide choices for viewing based on topic, age-range, and content area. Similarly, teachers can select from a range of tools, templates, and techniques to move their learning forward.

**Job-Embedded Learning.** Job-embedded learning refers to adult learning that takes place in teachers' classrooms and is closely connected to the actual work of teachers and their students. Job-embedded learning is intended to improve instructional outcomes by providing coherent, focused support that is aligned with school-wide professional Learning Goals. In OFAST, both the application activities and the CoP structure support job-embedded learning. Teachers apply new content with their own students and consider formative assessment practice in light of specific curriculum, instructional materials, and student needs.

**Peer-Supported Learning.** The CoP meetings allow for teachers to refine their use of new formative assessment practices through inquiry and feedback by peers. The CoP meetings also provide structures to explore shared ideas about next steps and establish shared accountability for this work. Some schools have reported positive outcomes from adding opportunities for additional peer review. For example, school leaders have encouraged partners to review each other's lesson plans prior to the CoP, had teachers visit one another's classroom during a new lesson, and shared video clips with peers at the CoP meetings.