



Overview

What is OFAST?

Oregon Formative Assessment for Students and Teachers (OFAST) is a partnership between Oregon schools, Oregon Department of Education, and Dr. Margaret Heritage and Nancy Gerzon (both contracted through WestEd) to provide formative assessment professional learning course.

The schools participating in 2016-17 are receiving grant funds that are mostly being used to cover time for teachers to engage in this professional learning. Following this course, the schools that received grant funding will be identified as demonstration sites where other school leaders or teachers can come to observe formative assessment practices. All OFAST course content will be licensed as open-educational resources so that any school or district in the state could engage in this professional learning without incurring any licensing costs and without limitations on sharing the professional learning resources.

Why formative assessment?

When teachers implement formative assessment as a process, in collaboration with their students, it can have powerful effects on student learning. Formative assessment involves teachers making adjustments to their instruction based on evidence they intentionally collect while student learning is developing, and providing students with feedback that helps them advance their learning. Students are equal stakeholders in the process and participate through self-assessment and providing peer feedback. Formative assessment requires significant changes in teacher practice, and the OFAST professional learning design supports teachers to implement formative assessment and builds internal knowledge and capacity to lead this work over time.

Which schools were selected to participate?

- Central Linn SD 552, Central Linn Elementary School
- Mapleton SD 32, Mapleton Elementary School
- Willamina SD 30J, Willamina Elementary School
- Lincoln County SD, Siletz Valley Schools
- Vernonia SD 47J, Vernonia Elementary School
- Jefferson County SD 509J, Warm Springs K-8 Academy
- Santiam Canyon SD 129J, Santiam Elementary School
- Oakridge SD 76, Oakridge Elementary School
- Lebanon Community SD 9, Multiple Schools

Professional Learning Design

Oregon Formative Assessment for Students and Teachers (OFAST) is about effective classroom practice. Not only does the course orient teachers' thinking (about lesson goals, evidence of student learning, purposive instructional responses, and supportive feedback), it also gives them concrete strategies to make teaching more responsive and learning more meaningful. All educators, regardless of the standards or curriculum they use, can implement and benefit from the content of the course.

Formative Assessment Summer Leadership Institute

The Summer Leadership Institute provides resources, tools, and guidance to help administrators and teachers leaders plan a successful launch of the formative assessment course. During the Institute, leaders will:

- Develop clarity around the definition of formative assessment and its place in a balanced assessment system.
- Consider ways to work with teachers to come to shared understanding of what the process of formative assessment looks like in practice, for both students and teachers.
- Become familiar with the online course content and the professional learning design for the Oregon course.
- Identify the professional learning design components that will take place onsite and develop strategies to support teacher application of formative assessment and to implement the Community of Practice meetings.
- Learn how to provide feedback to teachers as they adopt formative assessment, and explore how to align key principles of formative assessment with other observational tools in place in their schools.

Modules

The core of OFAST is a series of five, five-week modules that use a variety of resources, modalities, and activities to deepen educators' understanding and application of formative assessment.

5-Week Module Structure

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
New Content & Processing		Application Activities		Community of Practice

White cells: online content delivery; shaded cells: in-person

New Content & Processing

The first two weeks of each Module will include foundational formative assessment content and examples. Video examples of practice will illustrate what strong formative assessment practice looks like in a variety of classrooms. Tools and templates will support lesson planning, templates, and implementation tools.

Application Activities: Each module will offer activities that allow teachers to apply key concepts from the coursework to classroom practice. For example, after studying routines to elicit evidence of learning in Module 3, participants will be prompted to select a routine and use it to collect formative data, analyze the data using success criteria, and use their inferences to inform 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.

Course Timeline and Module Overviews

August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Leadership Institute in Salem Aug 18 and 19	M0: Sept. 12 -23 M1: Sept. 26 - Oct. 28 M2: Oct. 31 - Dec 9 <i>Winter Break</i> M3: Jan. 9 - Feb. 10 Winter Convening in Salem, date TBD M4: Feb. 15 - Mar. 17 <i>Spring Break</i> M5: Apr. 4 - May 5								

The timing for each module is somewhat flexible within the general outline above.

Reporting

Across the project, ODE and the program evaluators from Washington State University’s Learning and Performance Research Center will collect information about this project in order to build an understanding of what it takes for a school or district to be successful with implementing this professional learning initiative and what the impact of this initiative is on the local assessment practices. The program evaluators will collect surveys and program artifacts (about two per module), and videos of classroom practice from all participants; some participants will also participate in interviews or focus groups. The program evaluator will also collect teacher reflections about the change in practice between the first Module and the end of the course as well as student surveys. In addition, ODE will collect information about how grantees use the budget to illuminate what funding is needed to implement a professional learning initiative of this scope.