From Formative Assessment to Student Agency: Lessons Learned from Arizona Educators

Arizona Formative Assessment Summit
January 30, 2019
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Session Outcomes

**Learning Goals**

- Gain an understanding of the changes to both the teacher and student role in formative assessment
- Explore fundamental shifts in teaching and learning that are evidence of formative assessment expertise

**Success Criteria**

- Articulate the difference between good instruction and formative assessment practice
- Notice shifts in teaching and learning that are evidence of formative assessment expertise
- Explore how formative assessment might support district goals and current improvement efforts
What We Are Learning From Arizona Educators
Learning from Arizona Students and Teachers
2014
State Convenings on Formative Assessment for AZ Superintendents and District Teams

2015
Peer Observations Using FARROP Pilot Formative Assessment Insights Pilot
State Convenings on Formative Assessment for Superintendents and District Teams
Begin ADE Engagement in CCSSO for FA

2016
Pilot Peer Observations Using FARROP Formative Assessment Insights Pilot
AZ Balanced Assessment Framework
Internal ADE Formative Assessment Training and Integration
AZ Formative Assessment Summit I

2017
Pilot Equity and Formative Assessment Student Agency in Assessment for Learning Pilot
Formative Assessment Summit II
National Presentations by ADE and AZ District/School Leaders

2018
Pilot Equity and Formative Assessment
Launch Blended FA Course with 800 educators
Launch Schoolwide Implementations
AZ Formative Assessment Summit IV
National and International Presentations by AZ District Leaders and Teachers

2019
Formative Assessment Summit V and VI
All learning begins with what we know
So, what do we collectively know about formative assessment?

At your table, discuss:

a) When did you first hear about formative assessment?
b) What you thought it was when you first heard about it?
c) If your definition has shifted, what is your definition now?
Building on your table discussion, identify and write 10 words that capture ideas from your current definition of formative assessment.
The Evolution of Formative Assessment
Formative assessment is a planned, ongoing process used by all students and teachers during learning and teaching to elicit and use evidence of student learning to improve student understanding of intended disciplinary learning outcomes, and support students to become more self-directed learners.

- CCSSO FAST SCASS, June 2017
Formative assessment is a planned, ongoing process used by all students and teachers during learning and teaching to elicit and use evidence of student learning to improve student understanding of intended disciplinary learning outcomes, and support students to become more self-directed learners.

- CCSSO FAST SCASS, June 2017
Before we talk about the what, let’s explore this idea of self-directed learners.
Find a partner, bring a pen and paper (or computer) to take notes
Think…
• Individually write down what you notice about students directing their own learning.

Share…
• What did you see the students doing that are moving them towards more self-directed learning?
• What do you imagine their teacher must do to support these students to be self-directed learners?
Jennifer Daniels’ Second Grade Classroom
Sunnyside School District
Peer Feedback on Fluency
Think...

• Individually write down what you notice about students directing their own learning.

Share...

• What did you see the students doing that are moving them towards more self-directed learning?

• What do you imagine their teacher must do to support these students to be self-directed learners?
What did you notice about the student role as learner?
Thank your partner and return to your flock....
Self-Regulated Learners

Set academic and personal goals

Make plans to accomplish those goals

Monitor their learning processes

Self-direct their actions to achieve those goals

(Hadwin, Järvelä, & Miller, 2011; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011)
Teachers’ Formative Assessment Foundation

✓ Knowledge of key elements of formative assessment
✓ Understand formative assessment as a process of continually gathering and using evidence
✓ Use models of how student thinking and skills develops in their discipline
✓ Know what a “good performance” looks like
✓ Understand ways to engage students in their learning through formative assessment
✓ Develop a strong classroom learning climate
Whatever the source of the evidence, the teachers’ role is to construct or devise ways to elicit responses from students that reveal where they are in their learning and to use the evidence to move learning forward.

Royce Sadler, 1989
Developing Teachers’ Technical Know-How: The Formative Assessment Feedback Loop
Teacher Expertise

- Provide a clear lesson-sized learning goal
- Use examples and models
- Ensure students understand what they will be able to say, do, make or write when they have met the learning goal

- Gather evidence of learning during each learning activity
- Recognize and prepare to respond to emergent, partial, or not-yet-there learning
- Teach students to interpret evidence, engage in peer feedback, self-assess and set goals
Formative Assessment

Student Agency
Formative Assessment
Helping students learn better

Student Agency
Helping students learn how to learn
Students:
• Understand what it will look like to meet learning goals
• Set purposeful learning goals

Students:  
• Continuously review progress towards goals  
• Can effectively analyze evidence that emerges during learning  
• Engage with peers to support learning and moving towards goals

Students:  
• Reflect and adjust learning behaviors  
• Engage in ongoing self-assessment to adjust and develop new goals
Learner agency is the set of skills, mindsets, and opportunities that enable learners to set purposeful goals for themselves, to take action in their learning to move toward those goals, and to reflect and adjust learning behaviors as they monitor their progress toward their goals.

- Assessment for Learning Project, 2018
What We’ve Learned from Arizona Educators

- Re-conceptualize the roles of students and teachers
- Align policies/practices to support instructional change
- Monitor student self-regulation and efficacy
- Support a culture of learning among adults and students
Re-conceptualize the roles of students and teachers

Jessica Kull, Third Grade Teacher, Summit View Elementary School
Monitor student self-regulation and efficacy

Ninth Grade Students
Align policies/practices to support instructional change

Pam Betten, Assistant Superintendent, Sunnyside School District, Arizona
Support a culture of learning among adults and students

Maria Montano, Principals, Summit View Elementary School, Arizona
What We’ve Learned from Arizona Educators

- Re-conceptualize the roles of students and teachers
- Align policies/practices to support instructional change
- Monitor student self-regulation and efficacy
- Support a culture of learning among adults and students
Review your original list of formative assessment “ideas”

1. Discuss and write at least three new ideas to include on your list.
2. Identify which items on your list relate to teacher expertise in formative assessment.
3. Identify which items on your list relate to student expertise in formative assessment.
4. Make a new list that outlines both the teacher and student roles
Break
Formative Assessment
Helping students learn better

Student Agency
Helping students learn how to learn
Shifts for Students
Shifts for Teachers
Formative assessment is defined as the process used by teachers and students to notice, recognize, and respond to student learning in order to enhance that learning, during learning.

- Cowie and Bell, 1999
Research on Noticing
Expert Knowledge...

Ball (2011) distinguishes that in professional noticing the teacher draws on expert discipline knowledge to know what there is to learn, and interpret from the perspective of the learner.

Choosing where to Focus...

Noticing involves cyclical and interrelated processes of attending to events by choosing where to focus, and then making sense of those events through interpreting, relating, charactering and responding (Sherin, Jacobs & Philipp, 2011).

Students’ Ideas...

Disciplined noticing is the process of working systematically to be able to act freshly / more creatively in the moment - working to become more sensitive to diverse potential learning opportunities and horizons in students’ ideas, actions and interactions. (Mason, 2002)
To change how I respond in a given situation, I must notice, in the moment, the possibility of choosing to act differently.

Mason, 2002
Developing a Practice of Noticing in Formative Assessment
Find a group of three, bring paper and pen (or a computer) and find a comfy place to sit.
Person A and B
Write down what you notice about the student role as learners

Person C
Write down what you notice about the teacher role in formative assessment
What did you notice about shifts in practice for students and teacher?
Say thank you, and return to your flock
Sometimes you need to press pause to let everything sink in.

Sebastian Vettel
Shifts in Student Formative Assessment Expertise

From
- Complying with teaching and directions
- Completing assignments
- Evaluating learning based on grades
- Not revising work that is “complete”
- Relying on grades for motivation
- Regarding learning as a private activity
- Students do not use feedback
- Independent learning
- Emphasis on correctness or completeness

To
- Generating personal feedback loops
- Setting academic and personal goals
- Evaluating learning using evidence
- Adapting learning tactics
- Internalizes criteria to support learning
- Engaging in feedback with peers
- Apply feedback to advance learning
- Learning in partnership
- Emphasis on what is being learned
# Shifts in Teacher Formative Assessment Expertise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A focus on what students will do</td>
<td>A focus on what students will learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher use of goals</td>
<td>Student use of goals and criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of static information</td>
<td>Use of patterns of evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One way to elicit evidence</td>
<td>Many ways to elicit evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective use of evidence</td>
<td>Individualized use of evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence shapes instructional actions for the future</td>
<td>Evidence shapes instructional moves that take place in the moment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-specific feedback</td>
<td>Feedback that scaffolds learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Random moments for feedback</td>
<td>Intentional and strategic feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on correctness</td>
<td>Emphasis on emerging understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver instruction</td>
<td>Share responsibility for learning with students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-teach based on percent correct</td>
<td>Shift instruction based on quality of student thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Decide who in your group will observe the video for teacher practices and who will observe for student practices.
Jennifer Daniels, Second Grade Fluency Lesson
Noticing Evidence of Practice

Shuffle your card decks!
Each card represents either a student shift or a teacher shift.
Pull a card off the top of the deck, and
a) Identify if you noticed evidence of that shift in the video.
b) If you noticed that shift, discuss the evidence from the video that represents that specific shift in practice.
c) Be prepared to share one highlight from your discussion
What we thought we would see...

Teachers learn and apply formative assessment practices.

Teachers model formative assessment practices to support their learning.

Teachers and students engage as partners in learning to move each student’s learning forward.
What we’re actually seeing...

Changes in teacher skills focused on developing student independent learning.

Changes in teachers’ mindsets about what students can learn, leading to new alliances between teachers and students (and peers) and new roles for students as learners.

Changes in the ways in which teachers come to understand how each student learns, and value individual student identity and culture in the learning process.
There is no ‘quick fix’ that can be added to existing practice with promise of rapid reward. On the contrary, if the substantial rewards of which the evidence holds out promise are to be secured, this will only come about if each teacher finds his or her ways of incorporating the lessons and ideas that are set out above into his or her own patterns of classroom work.

This can only happen relatively slowly, and through sustained programmes of professional development and support.

Black & Wiliam 1998
Teachers' beliefs about learning and assessment influence their actions and decisions. The literature on teacher development suggests that change is a slow and difficult process and even more so when involving assessment practices.

Christine Harrison, 2009
Two primary challenges

You're a good teacher!!

what are other words for undervalue?

underestimate, underrate, depreciate, devalue, devaluate, disparage, minimize, belittle, disregard, misjudge
1. Come up with a range of leadership responses as to why formative assessment is “not just good teaching”, or, the similar frame, “I already do that”.

2. Consider how you might respond to the undervaluing equation
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Students actually DO the learning!
So, In Closing...
Through peer feedback and multiple drafts, we can create high-quality work!
Short Video Clips and Free Project Resources from Arizona Video Study in Formative Assessment Pilot

Student Voices

Empowerment

Students gain power and agency in the classroom - learning to direct their own learning, self-regulating their work and time, recognizing when they have learned something, and being able to help one another without adult intervention.

Empathy

Students learn to respect and seek differences in opinions, perspectives, and learning styles in peers.

Metacognition

Students engage in ongoing reflection on their own learning processes and develop awareness and understanding about how they learn. Structured opportunities to think about their own thinking and developing awareness and understanding to support metacognition.

Arizona Department of Education Formative Assessment Resource Page with Summit Handouts (and more)

Formative Assessment Resources

Formative Assessment process used by teachers can help them determine what their students are not learning, giving them the ability to adjust their teaching – in the moment and to move all learners forward. Embedding formative assessment dimensions in everyday teaching is a research based practice to improve individual student learning. The definition of formative Assessment is that the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) as a system embraces it from the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). This definition was developed by the Formative Assessment for Students and Teachers (FAST) State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) or FAST SCASS.

The definition of formative Assessment is:

Formative assessment is a planned, ongoing process used by all students and teachers during learning and teaching to elicit and use evidence of student learning to improve student understanding of intended disciplinary learning outcomes and support students to become more self-directed learners. Effective use of the formative assessment process requires students and teachers to integrate and embed the following practices in a collaborative and respectful classroom environment:

- Clarifying learning goals and success criteria within a broader progression of learning;
- Eliciting and analyzing evidence of student thinking;
- Engaging in self-assessment and peer feedback;
- Providing actionable feedback; and
- Using evidence and feedback to move learning forward by adjusting learning strategies, goals or next instructional steps.

Additional information about the formative assessment definition can be found on the CCSSO website. There is also a resource that provides an overview of the FAST SCASS revised definition on formative assessment.

Instructional Support Resources

Professional Learning Resources

Current Grant Projects

Previous Grant Projects

Additional Research

Classroom Videos

https://fa-insights.wested.org/saal/students/

http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/formativeassessrec/
Be a learning leader

Notice what students and teachers are learning

Engage in knowledge management

Attend to culture

Frame the Vision
Thank You