

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

Arizona Formative Assessment Summit  
January 30, 2019  
Nancy Gerzon, WestEd



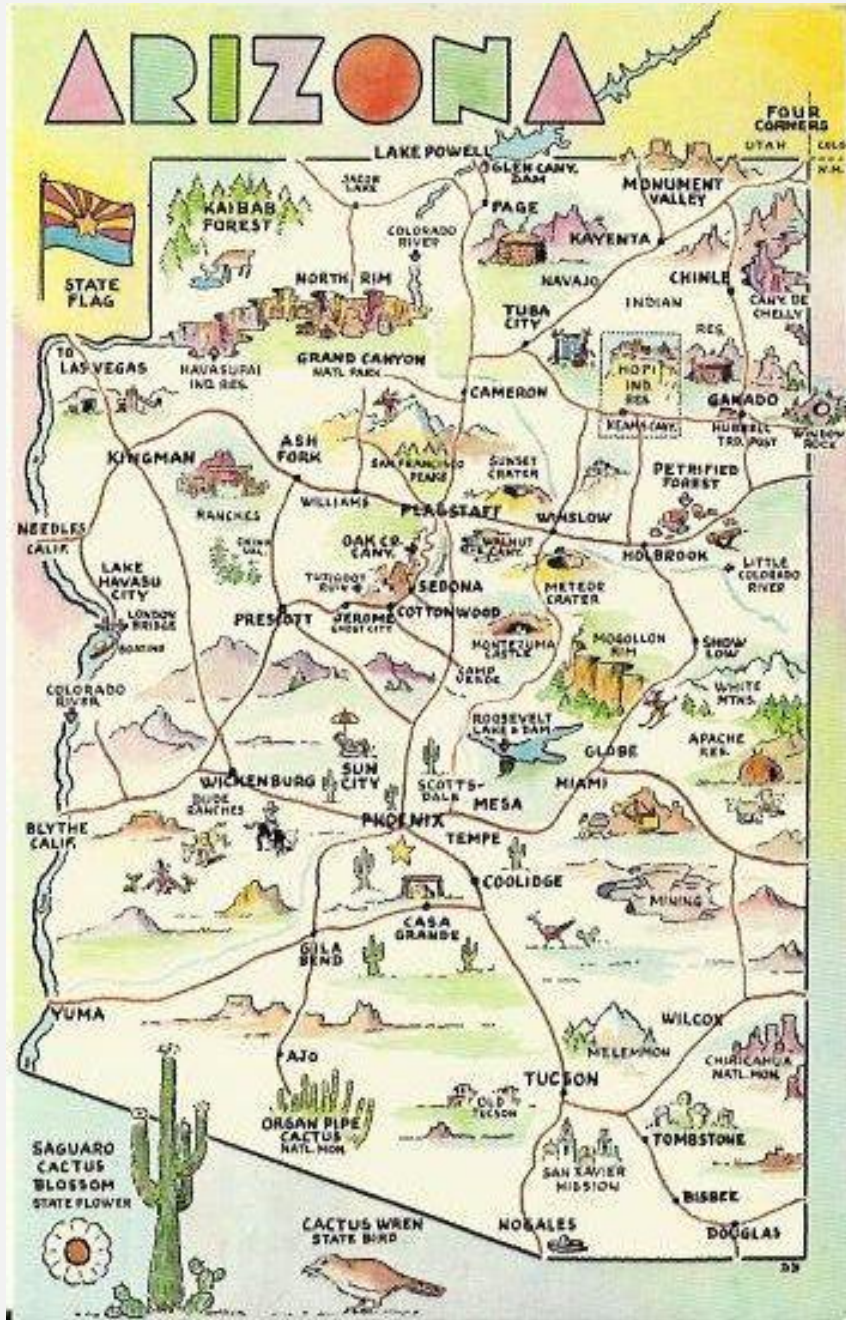
# Session Outcomes

## 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

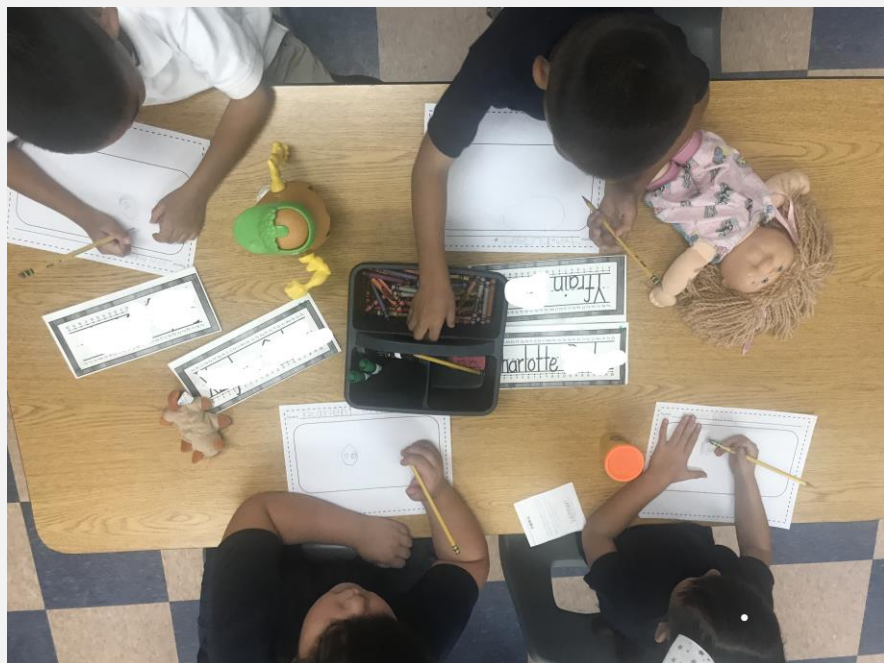
## Success Criteria

- 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



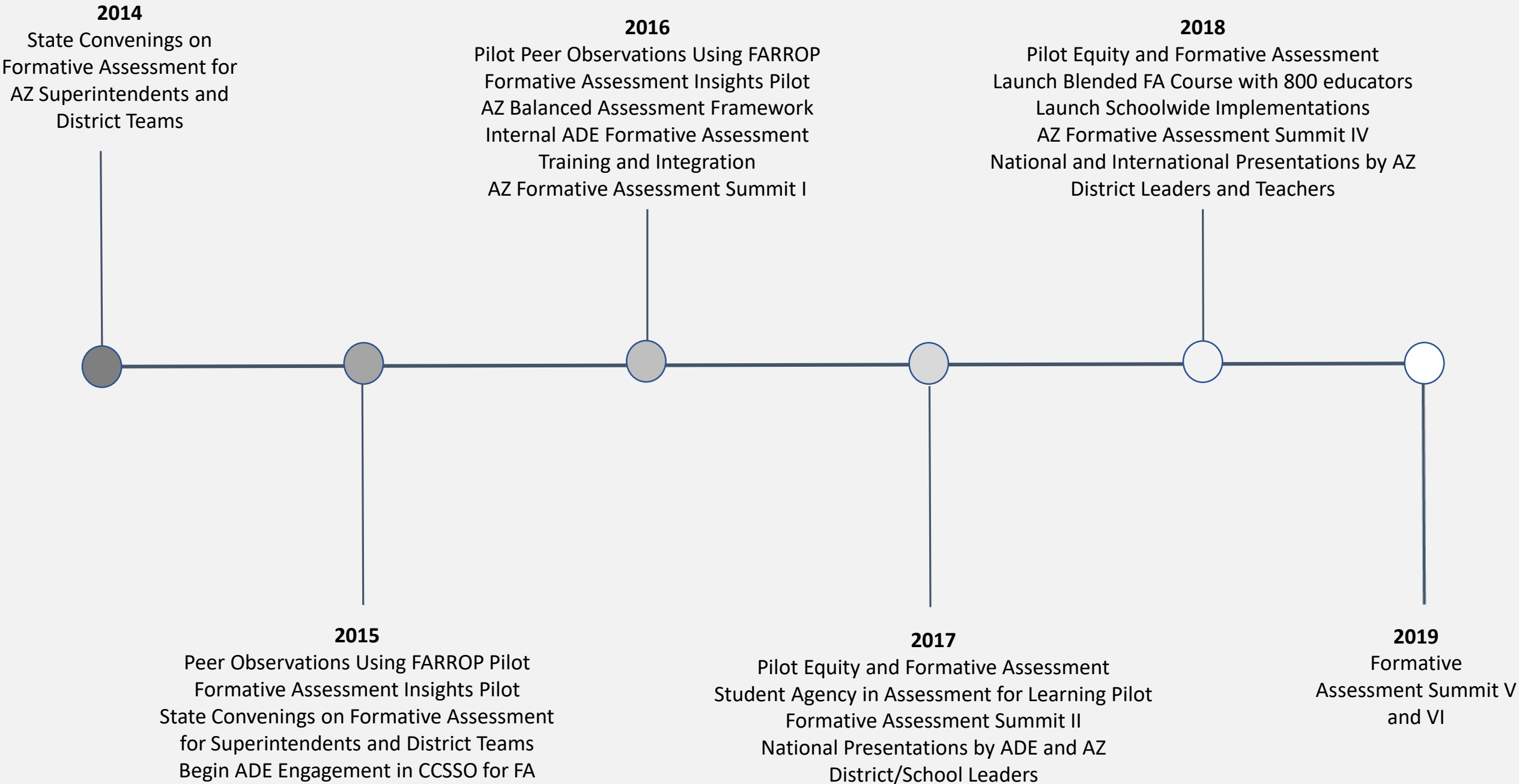
# What We Are Learning From Arizona Educators





## Learning from Arizona Students and Teachers





# All learning begins with what we know

# So, what do we collectively know about formative assessment?

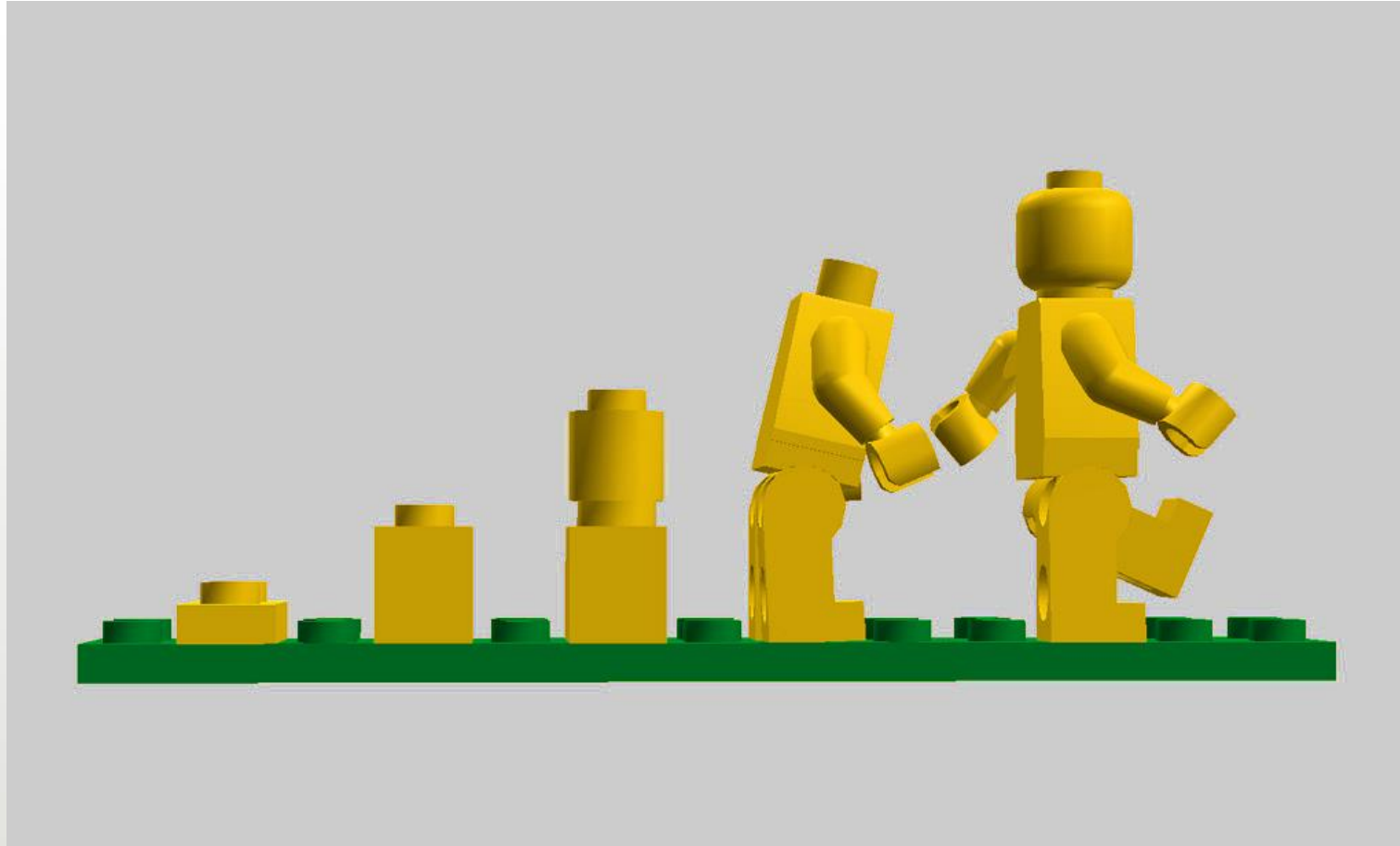
**At your table, discuss:**

- 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**

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- 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.

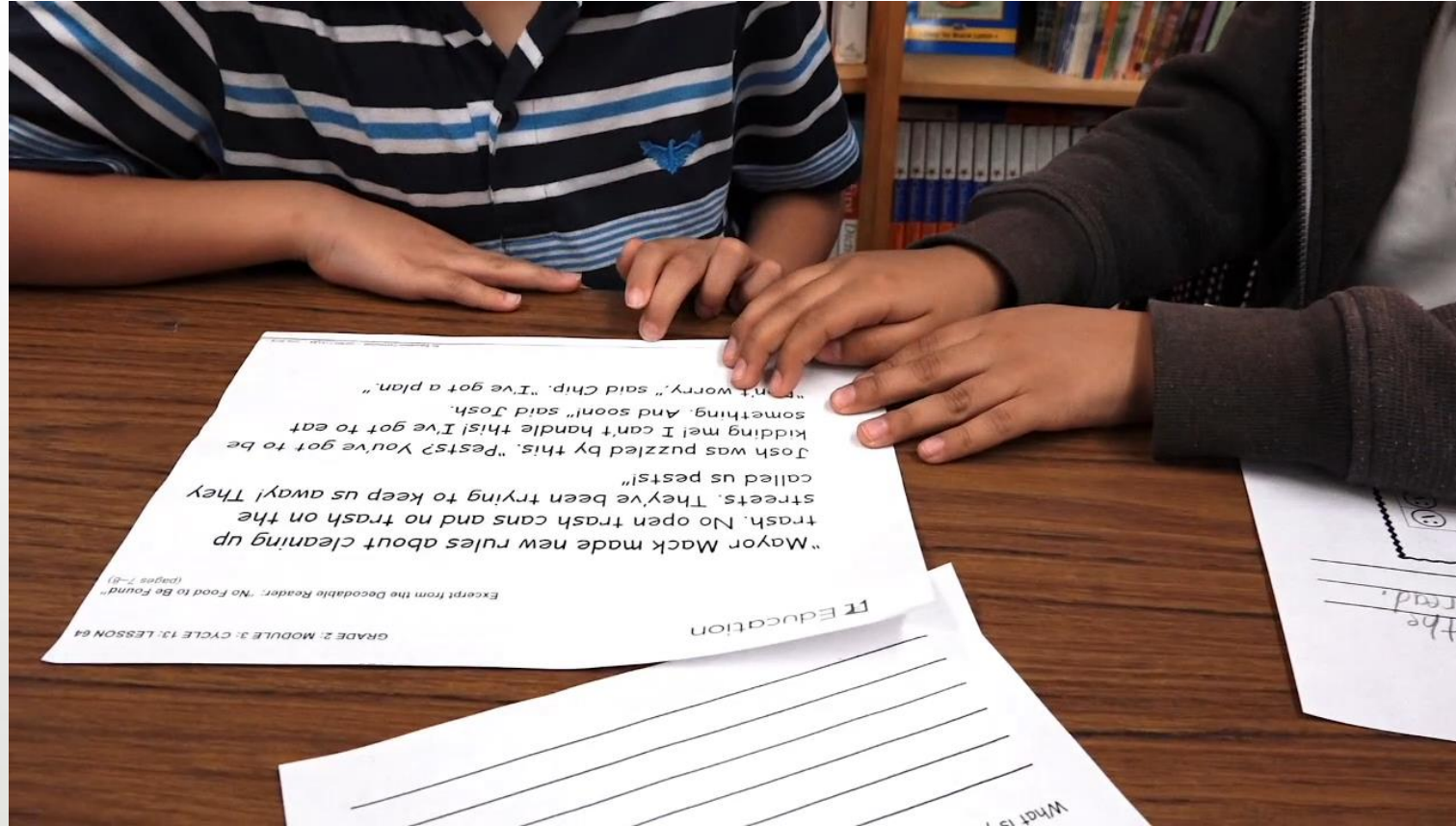
## Share...

- 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...

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## Share...

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- 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....**

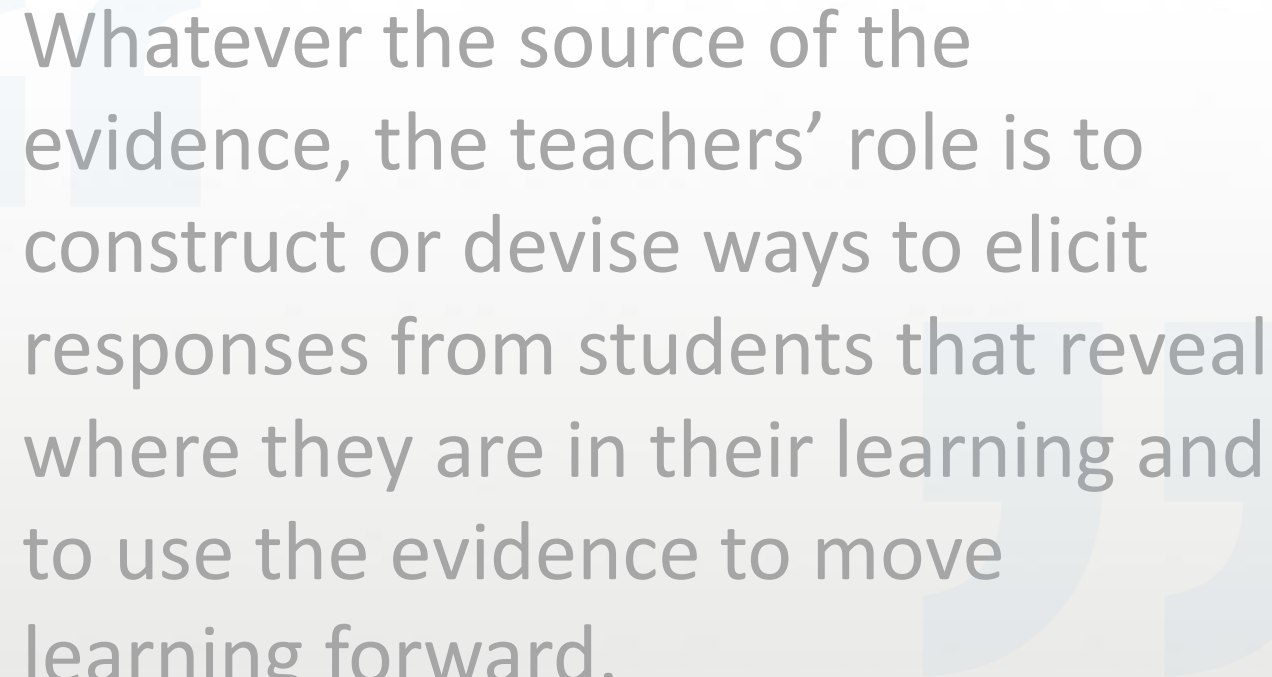


(Hadwin, Järvelä, & Miller, 2011; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011)

# 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

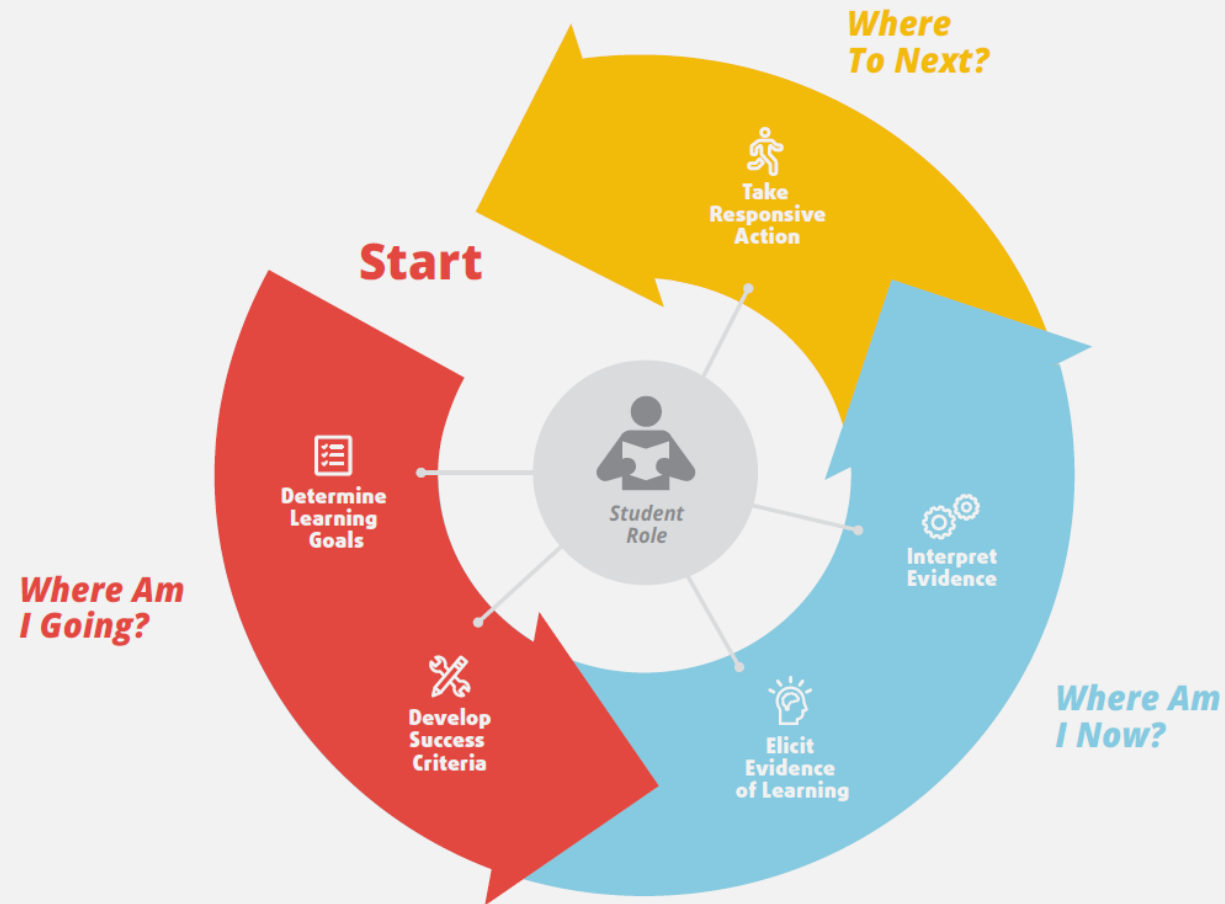




Whatever the source of the evidence, the teachers' role is to construct or devise ways to elicit responses from students that reveal where they are in their learning and to use the evidence to move learning forward.

Royce Sadler, 1989





## Developing Teachers' Technical Know-How: The Formative Assessment Feedback Loop

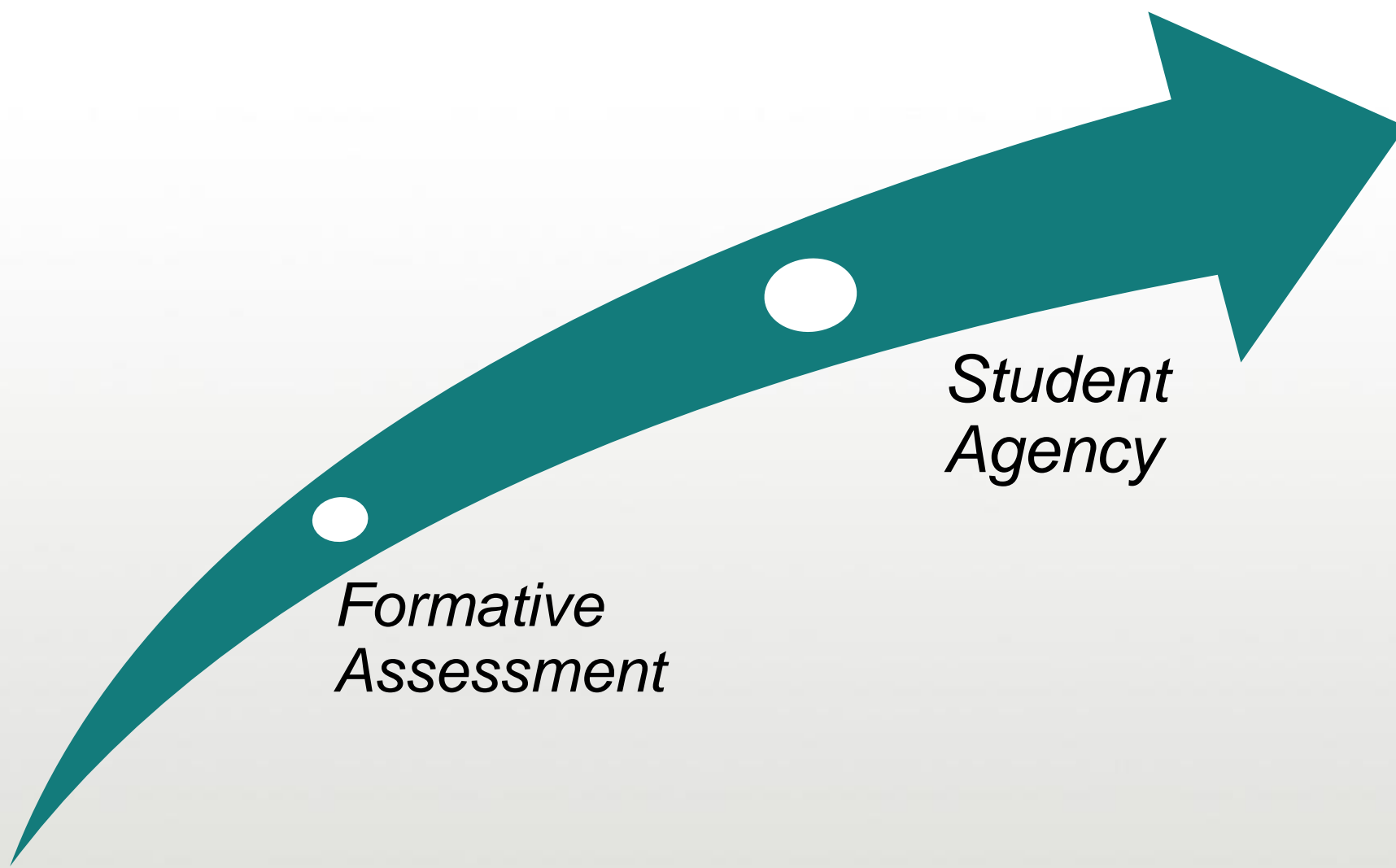
# Teacher Expertise



- 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

- Use evidence to guide next steps in learning
- Offer regular descriptive feedback
- Engage students in self-reflection; let them keep track of and share their learning

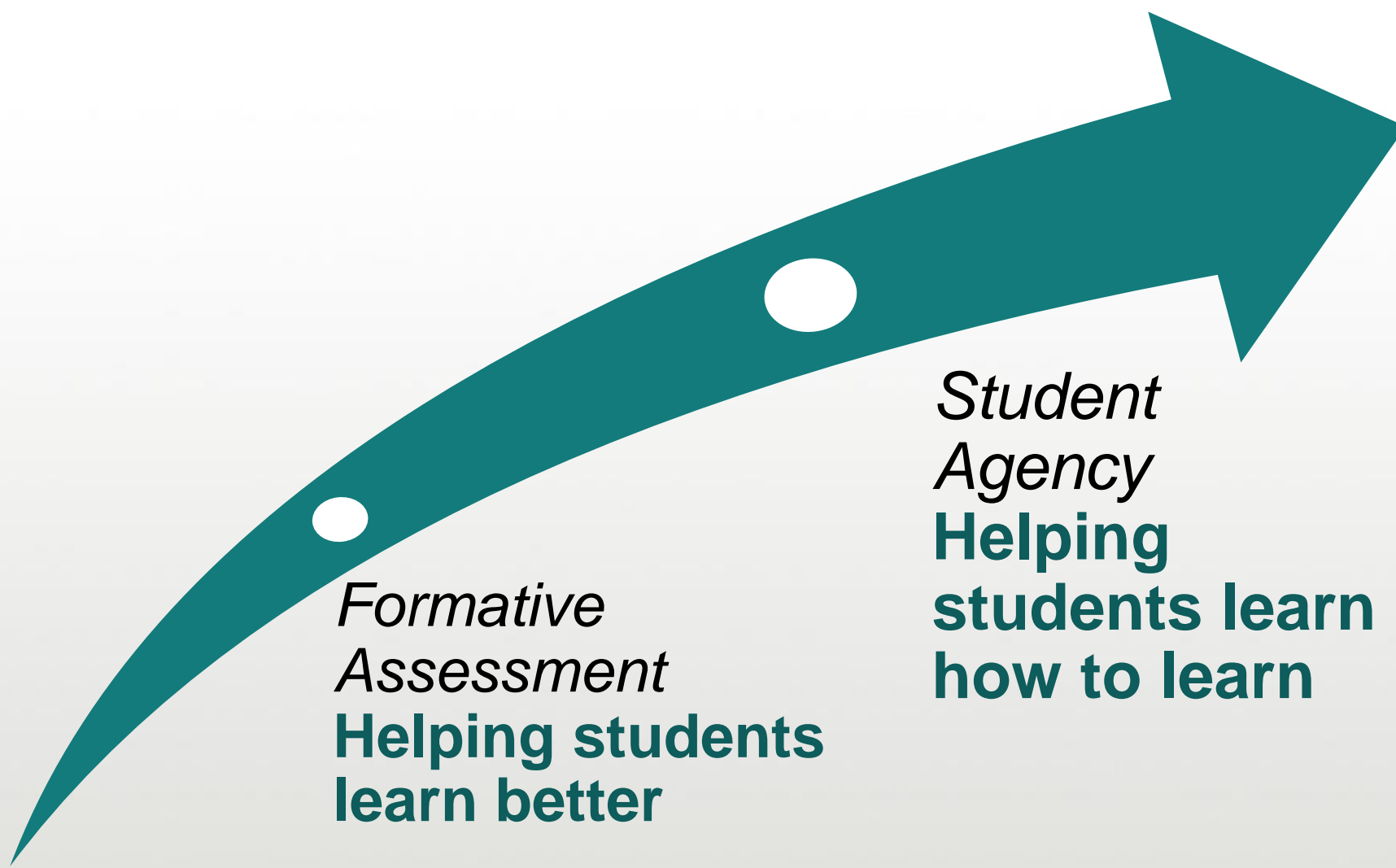
- Gather evidence of learning during each learning activity
- Recognize and prepare to respond to emergent, partial, or not-yet-there learning
- Teach students to interpret evidence, engage in peer feedback, self-assess and set goals



*Formative  
Assessment*

*Student  
Agency*

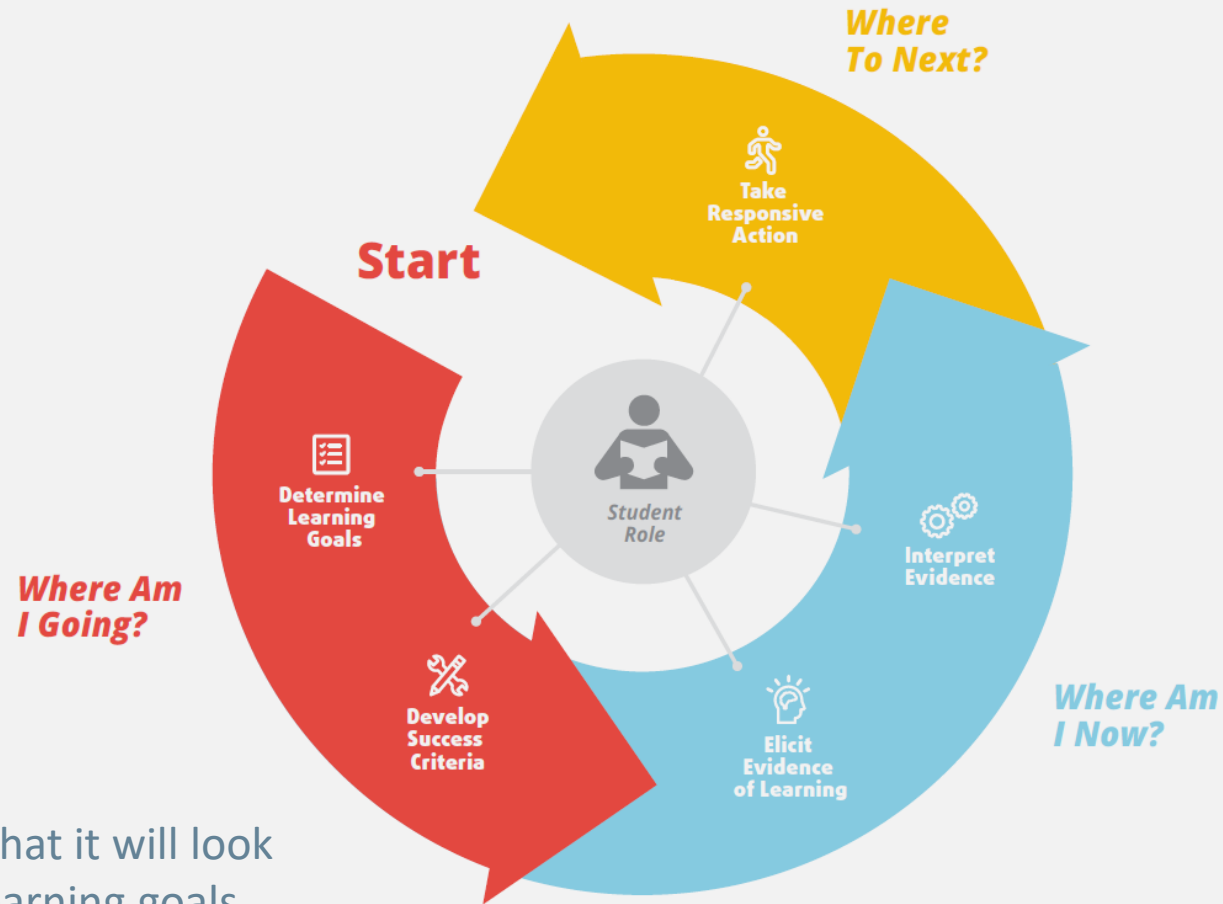




*Formative  
Assessment*  
**Helping students  
learn better**

*Student  
Agency*  
**Helping  
students learn  
how to learn**

# Student Expertise



Students:

- Understand what it will look like to meet learning goals
- Set purposeful learning goals

Students:

- Reflect and adjust learning behaviors
- Engage in ongoing self-assessment to adjust and develop new goals

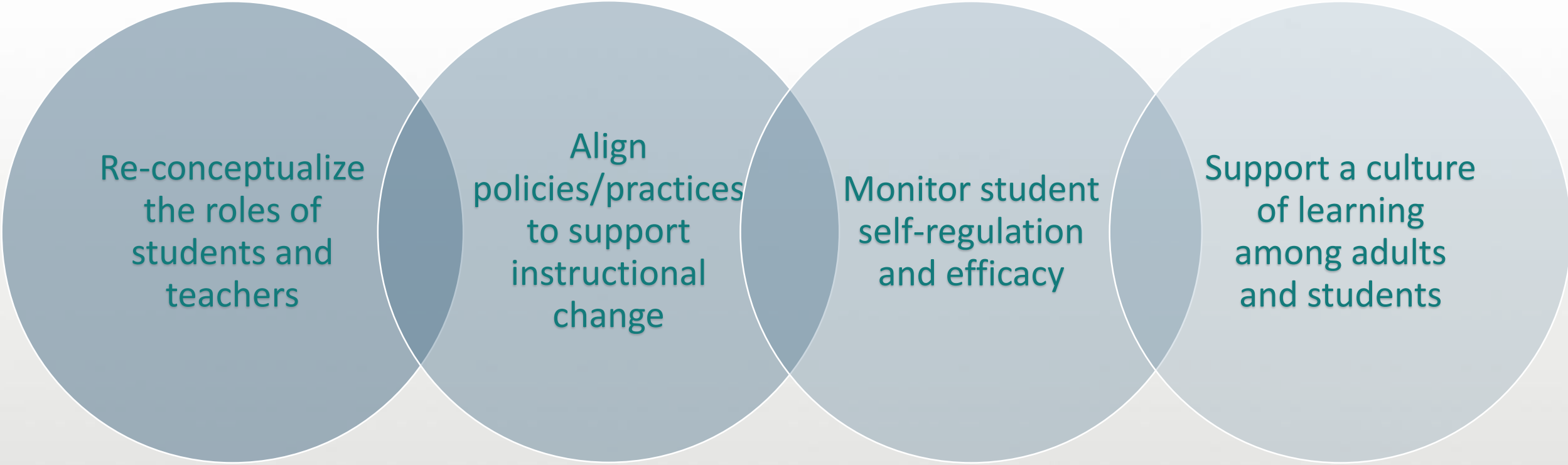
Students:

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

**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  
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teachers



Jessica Kull, Third Grade Teacher, Summit View Elementary School

Monitor student  
self-regulation  
and efficacy



Ninth Grade Students



Align  
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instructional  
change



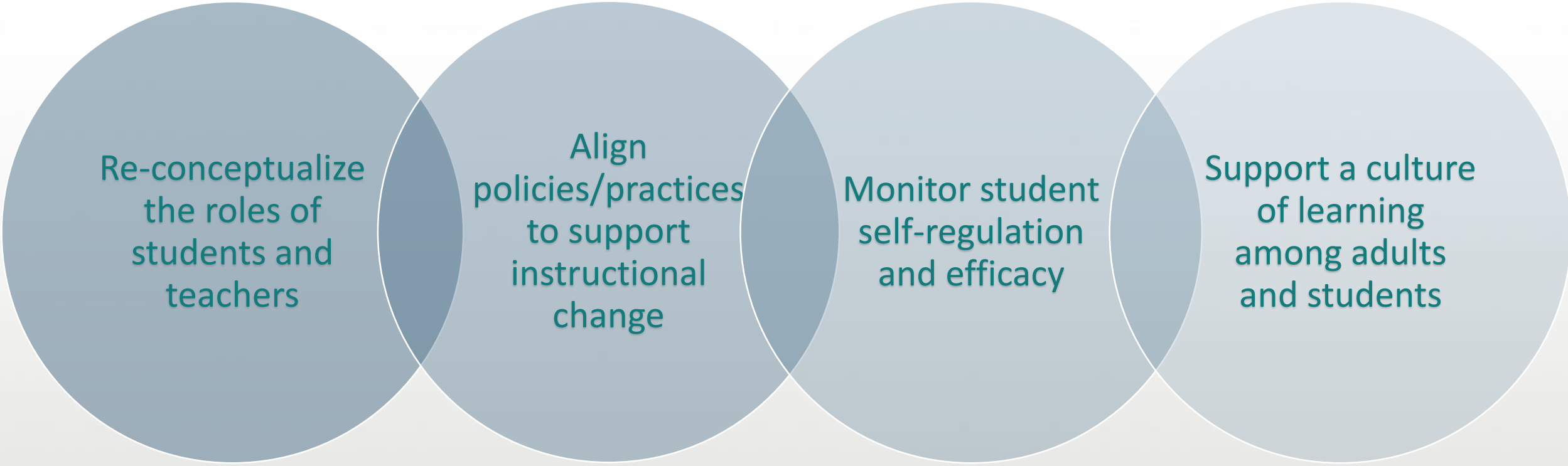
Pam Betten, Assistant Superintendent, Sunnyside School District, Arizona

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  
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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**



# WestEd



WEST  
COMPREHENSIVE  
CENTER



JUNE 23, 2017

## ARIZONA FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT Summit

equity & opportunity

NOT JUST WHAT THEY LEARN...  
BUT HOW THEY **FEEL**

TEACHER LEARNING & TRAINING

BECAUSE IT'S GOOD FOR **KIDS!**

PREPARE FOR FUTURE

BUILD CAPACITY

SEEK SUPPORT & SET PURPOSE

ACTIVE LEARNERS

PRESERVE THE SPIRIT & PERSEVERE

INTRINSIC MOTIVATION & OWNERSHIP

REFLECTIVE & INCREASE AGENCY

WHERE WILL WE GO NEXT?

Formative Assessment & INSTRUCTION BY **LETTER?**

OR BY **SPIRIT?**

SHIFT IN Pedagogy

FROM FOCUS

ON LESSON

TO STUDENTS ARE DOING!

IN PURSUIT OF THE ETERNAL CITY

WHEREVER YOU ARE **X** IS PERFECT!

CHANGE THE PARADIGM

FROM START HERE. **RELATIONSHIP**

NOT TINKERING WITH PRACTICE

Life-Long Learning

TO **FORMATIVE** collaborative discourse

grow community **CULTURE** w/ protocols

goals self-assessment reflection & **clear CRITERIA**

reflection & **clear CRITERIA**

STUDENTS HAVE **Agency** of Learning

WHY **CHANGE?** NOT JUST AN INITIATIVE.

✓ RESEARCH SAYS...

✓ COGNITIVE THEORY SAYS...

✓ CHANGING WORKPLACE

START WHERE THEY ARE...

INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE & **BEDROCK**

EQUITY & GROW

**WARM** PRESSURE

HERE'S WHAT'S WORKING!

**COOL** FEEDBACK

**WARD** NOT A HAMMER!

Habits OF CHARACTER

MISTAKES ARE **GOOD**

WE ARE SMARTER TO-G-E-T-H-E-R

**RESPONSIVE** CLASSROOM

**COURSE** **THEORY** **SUPPORTS** WHERE AM I GOING? WHERE AM I NOW? WHAT'S NEXT?

**EVIDENCE**

**PRACTICE** to

**SAAL** PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

**STUDENT** **Agency** **TEACHER** **MEASURE & SYSTEMIZE**

**INTENTIONAL**

STUDENTS HAVE **Agency** of Learning

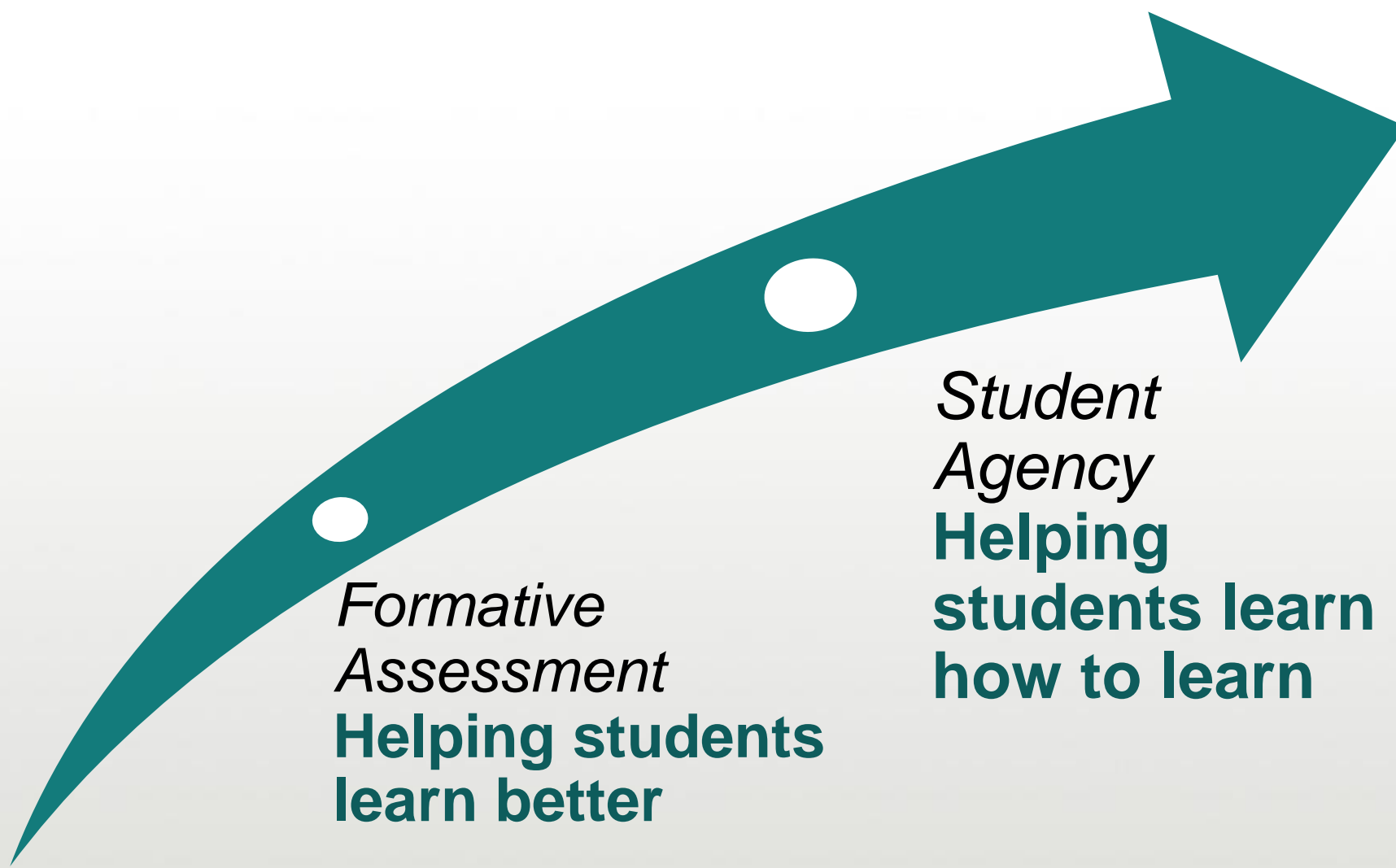
Set them free with their QUESTIONS

framethemessageink.com





Break



*Formative  
Assessment*  
**Helping students  
learn better**

*Student  
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**Helping  
students learn  
how to learn**

# Shifts for Students

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# 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)

From Christine Harrison, CCSSO FAST SCASS Meeting, Austin Texas, June 2017



***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

## From

A focus on what students will do  
Teacher use of goals  
Use of static information  
One way to elicit evidence  
Collective use of evidence  
Evidence shapes instructional actions for the future  
Non-specific feedback  
Random moments for feedback  
Emphasis on correctness  
Deliver instruction  
Re-teach based on percent correct

## To

A focus on what students will learn  
Student use of goals and criteria  
Use of patterns of evidence  
Many ways to elicit evidence  
Individualized use of evidence  
Evidence shapes instructional moves that take place in the moment  
Feedback that scaffolds learning  
Intentional and strategic feedback  
Emphasis on emerging understanding  
Share responsibility for learning with students  
Shift instruction based on quality of student thinking

**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.

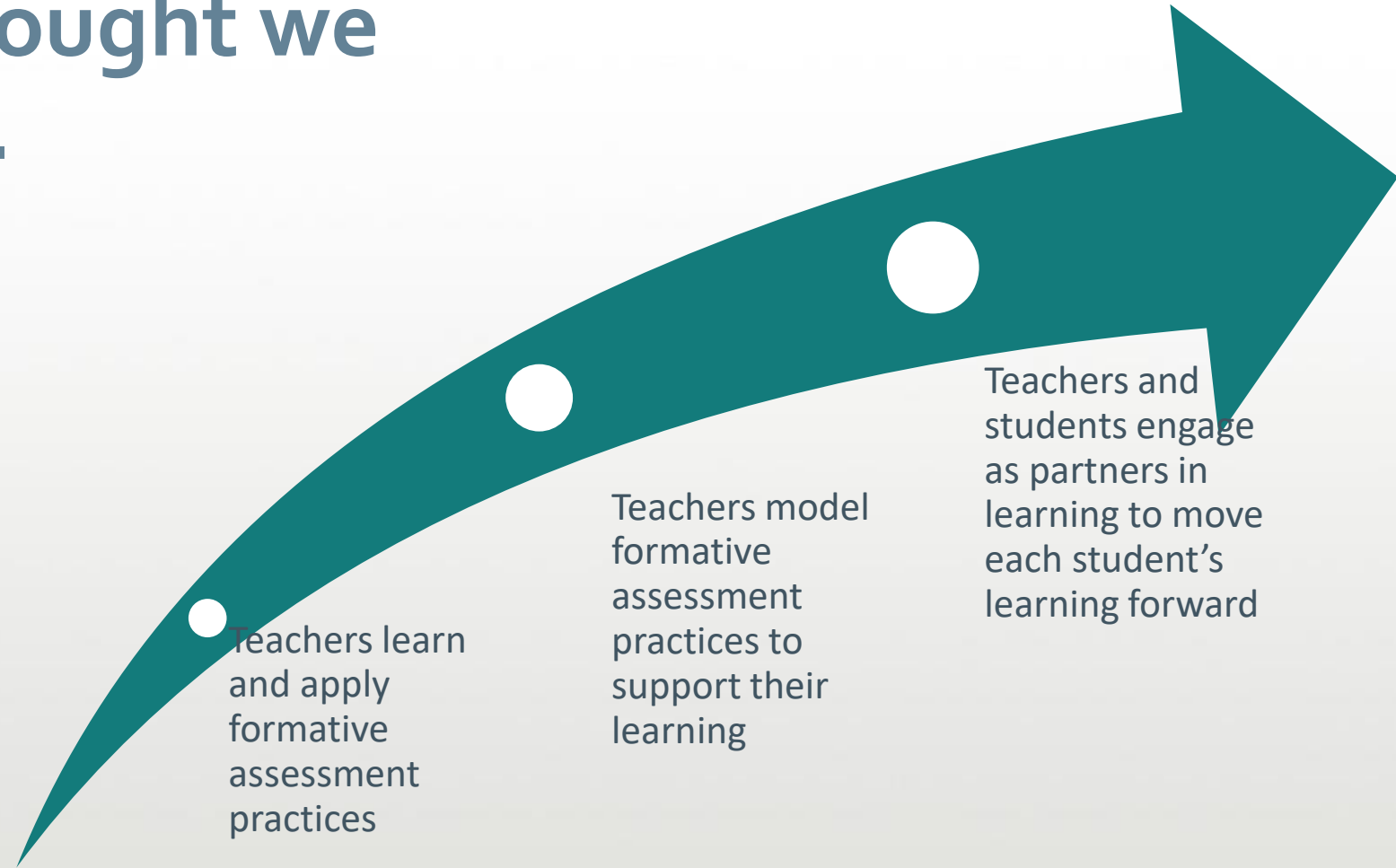
Pull a card off the top of the deck, and

- 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

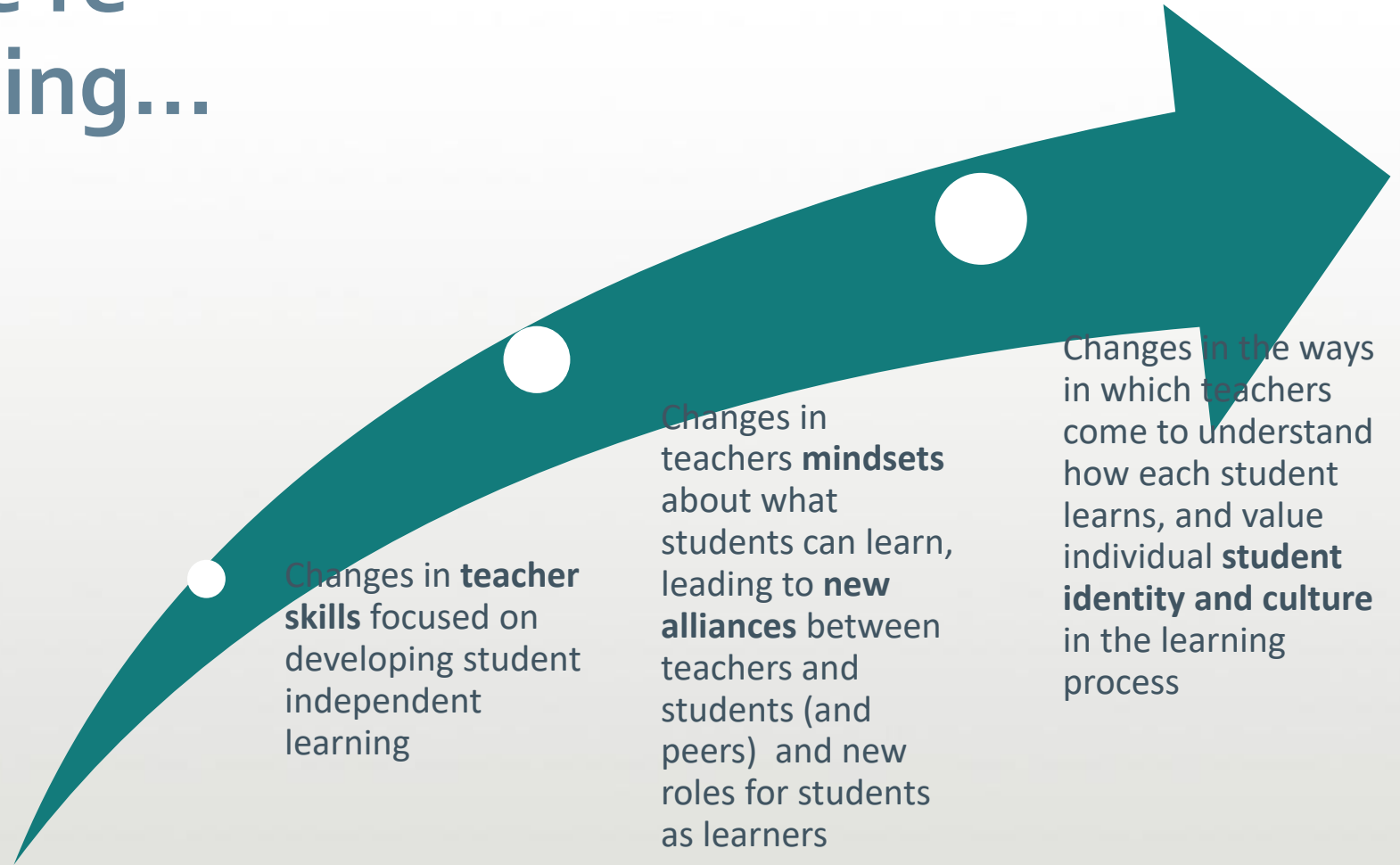


**S**  **IFT**

# What we thought we would see...



# What we we're actually seeing...






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**

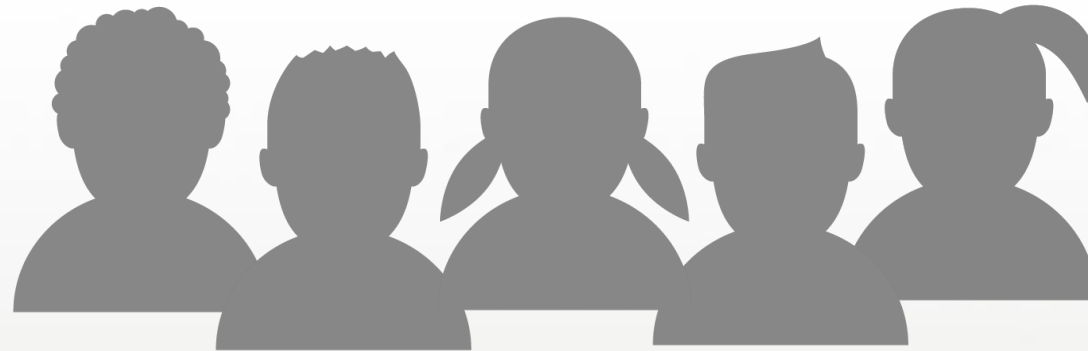
# Session Outcomes

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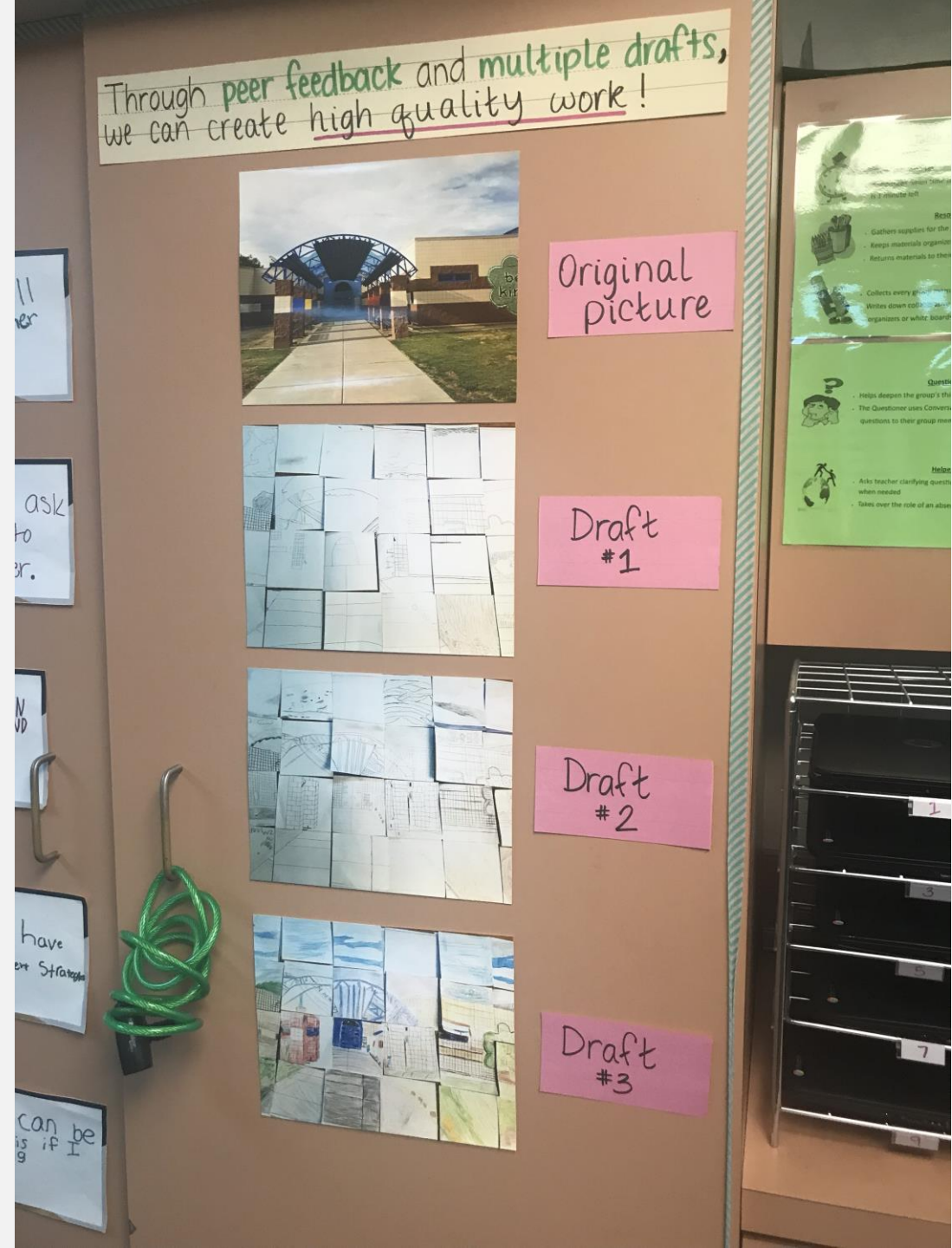
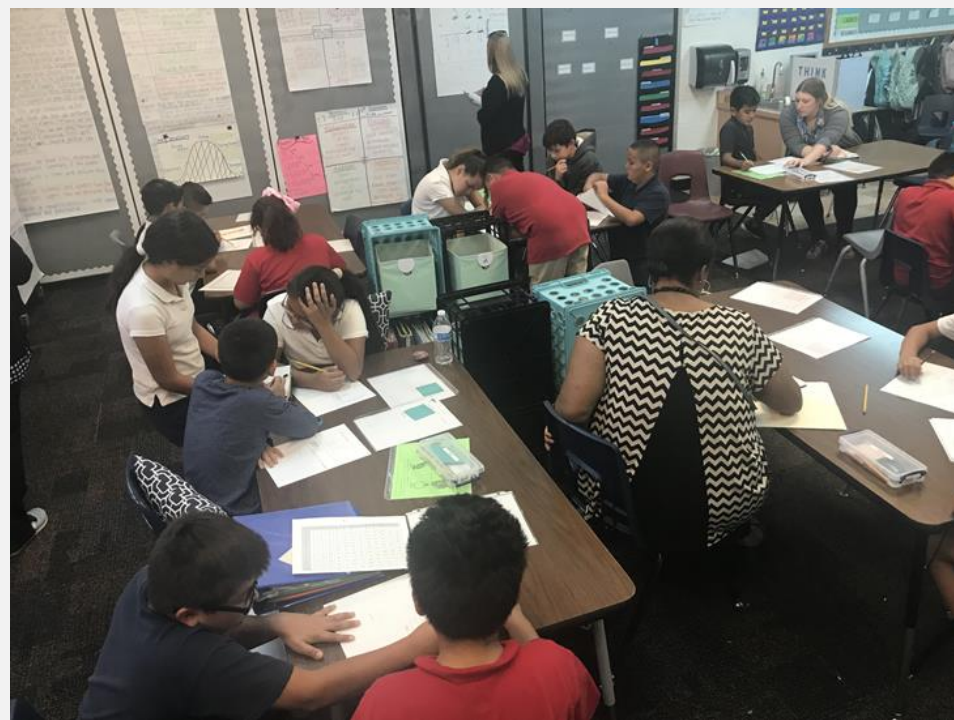
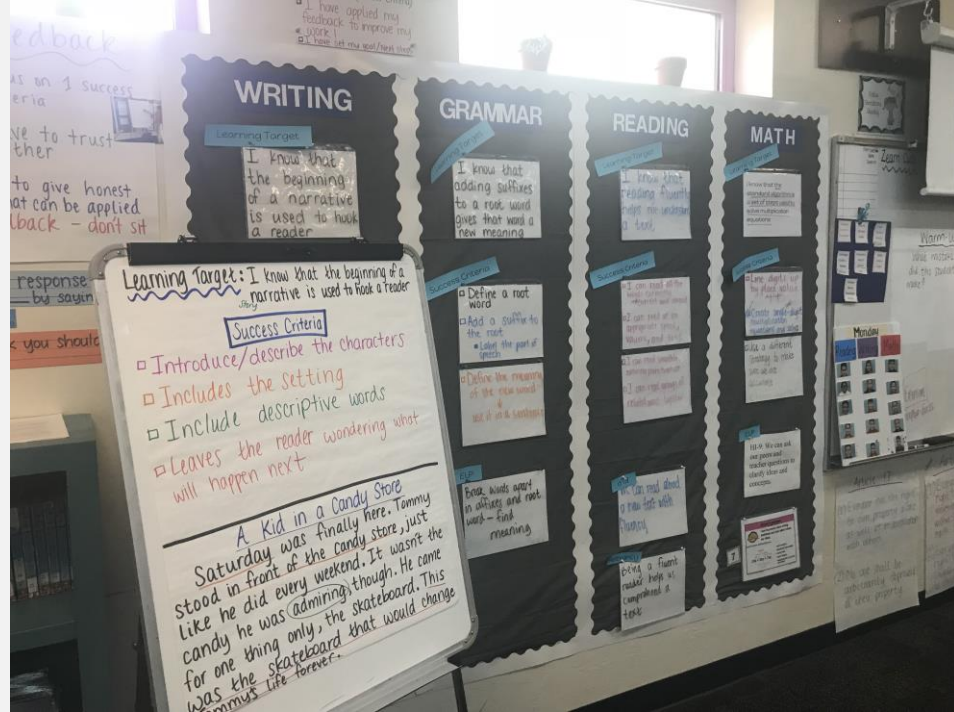
**Students actually DO the learning!**







**So, In Closing...**





# Short Video Clips and Free Project Resources from Arizona Video Study in Formative Assessment Pilot



FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

PROJECTS BY WestEd

### Student Voices

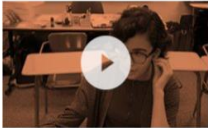


#### Empowerment

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 process to develop awareness and understanding about how they learn. Structured opportunities engage them in thinking about their own thinking and developing awareness and understanding to support metacognition.

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

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

Formative Assessment Resources

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [Share](#)

**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 is 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

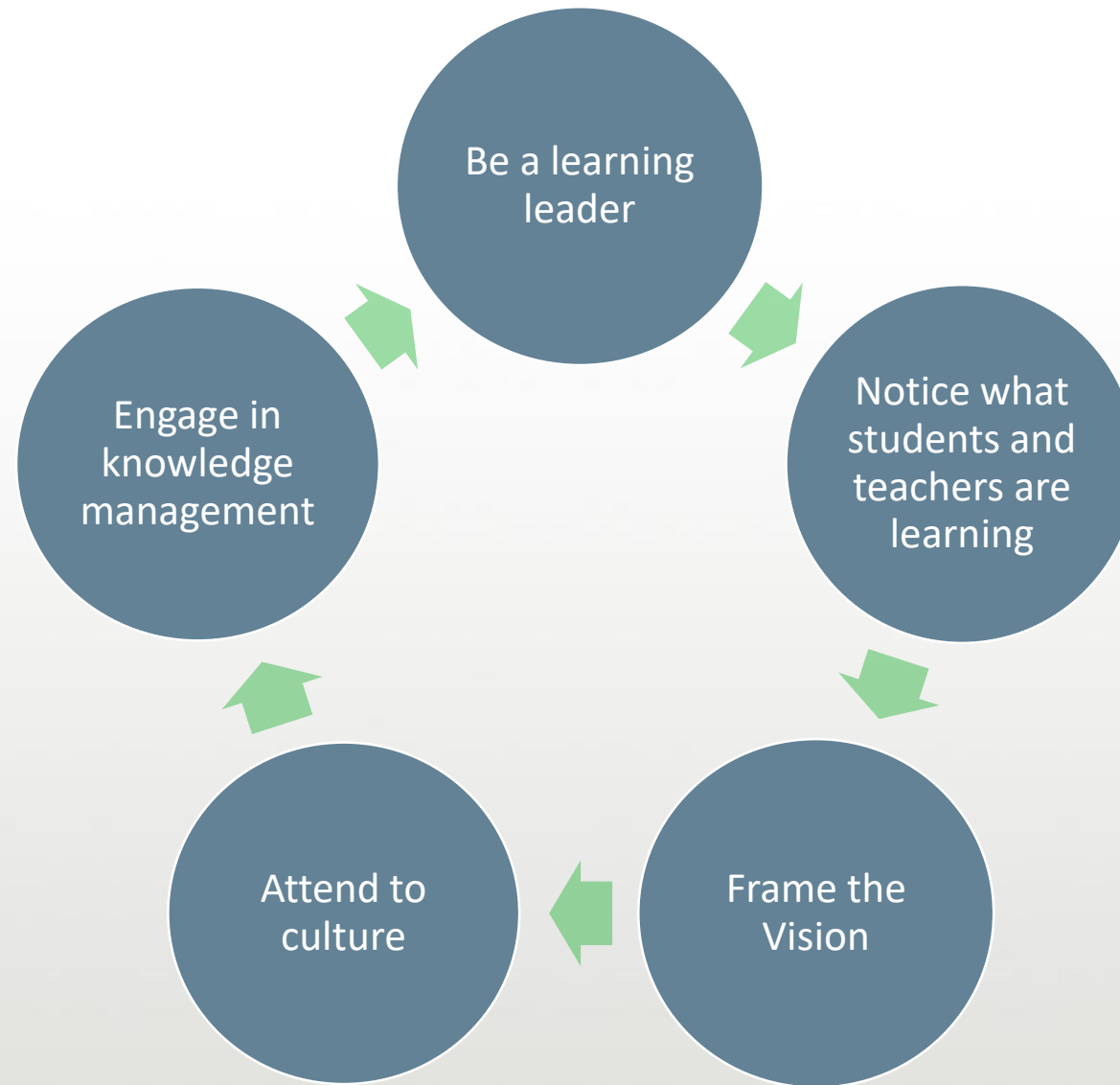
▶ Previous Grant Projects

▶ Additional Research

▼ Classroom Videos

[azed.gov/standards-practices/k-12standards/k12engagement](#)

<http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/formativeassessrec/>



Thank You

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