

# The Formative Assessment Process

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In 2006, in response to growing national interest around formative assessment, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) formed the Formative Assessment for Students and Teachers (FAST) State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS). FAST SCASS provides guidance and resources to state-level policy makers on formative assessment. The FAST SCASS addressed this need by developing a definition of formative assessment based on the current research literature. Michigan has been an active part of the FAST SCASS since 2006.

FAST SCASS presents three discussion prompts intended to:

- spur the understanding of the components of the formative assessment process
- promote dialogue with district leadership and instructional staff on the formative assessment process

Michigan's recognized definition of the Formative Assessment Process:

*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

## Discussion Prompt #1:

After reading the above definition, what word or phrases connect with your current understanding of the formative assessment process?

Effective use of the formative assessment process requires students and teachers to integrate and embed five practices in a collaborative and respectful classroom environment.

### Discussion Prompt #2:

Reflect on the following five formative assessment practices and explore how they are evident within classrooms in your district/building.

1. In what ways are **educators clarifying learning goals within a broader progression of learning?**
2. How are **educators eliciting and analyzing evidence of student thinking?**
3. In what ways are **students and educators engaging in self-assessment and peer feedback?**
4. How are **educators and students providing actionable feedback?**
5. In what ways are **educators and students using evidence and feedback to move learning forward by adjusting learning strategies, goals, or next instructional steps?**

### Discussion Prompt #3:

When thinking about the following classroom scenario and the five formative assessment practices, what does the teacher do that might be considered formative? What student actions may be considered formative?

The teacher provides students with an open-ended question related to a learning outcome and asks the students what they think should be included in the response to demonstrate full understanding of the concepts. The teacher makes note of each suggestion then provides students several examples of responses given by students in previous years. The students are asked to analyze the responses to determine if the responses show full understanding, partial understanding, or no understanding of the concepts, and why they do so. As this thinking is shared, the list of things to look for when answering the open-ended question is further refined until a set of criteria emerges which students can use to self-assess their own performance when answering similar questions.

When you/your team have worked through the discussion points above, there may be a need for further information and/or resources around formative assessment.

The link below provides awareness opportunities or extended learning and job-embedded professional learning to help your district/building implement high quality formative assessment practices to help all learners achieve their highest potential.

[www.michigan.gov/formativeassessment](http://www.michigan.gov/formativeassessment)