

Professional Development Online Modules on the **Formative Assessment Process**



R.I. Department of Education (RIDE)

This guide provides an overview of the professional development modules on the formative assessment process that are being developed through Race to the Top.

What is formative assessment?

- ◆ **Formative Assessment** is a process that teachers and students use to gather information during (as opposed to after) the learning process and to make adjustments accordingly. (from W.J. Popham in *Transformative Assessment*, as quoted in the [Comprehensive Assessment System: Rhode Island Criteria and Guidance](#) document)
- ◆ A teacher using formative assessment knows where students need to end up and regularly checks in with students, using a wide variety of methods, to determine where they are in the learning process. Once the teacher clearly understands where students are, instruction is adjusted to accommodate the needs of the students.
- ◆ For more information, please see the *Comprehensive Assessment System: Rhode Island Criteria and Guidance* document on the RIDE web site at www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment/CAS.aspx.

What will the online modules look like?

- ◆ This resource will be a series of online modules (akin to an online course) on the formative assessment process, accessible to all Rhode Island public school educators through the Instructional Management System (IMS). This allows for flexibility in when and where participants access the professional development, and the pace at which they move through it. Modules will be interactive and include direct instruction, video models of practice, and assessment of learning.
- ◆ The modules will be available through the IMS beyond the Race to the Top grant period.

What kind of content will the online modules contain?

- ◆ The modules will address a variety of topics on assessment, learning, and classroom culture.
- ◆ Topics include: general assessment literacy, an overview of the formative assessment process, learning progressions, learning goals and criteria for success, eliciting evidence and providing descriptive feedback, self and peer assessment, creating a collaborative classroom culture, and integration of formative assessment at the building level.

How are the modules being developed?

- ◆ RIDE has conducted a pilot in order to receive feedback on our course materials and capture video of Rhode Island educators engaged in learning the formative assessment process. The pilot, which ran from December 2011 until April 2012, involved teams of educators from six schools around the state (3 elementary, 2 middle, 1 high school). Participating schools represent urban, urban-ring, and suburban districts. One charter school participated in the pilot.
- ◆ During pilot professional development sessions, teachers received direct instruction on the formative assessment process. During and after instruction, RIDE's video production partner worked with participating teachers to capture their discussions, reflections, and classroom instruction on camera, for use in the online modules.
- ◆ Once the course content is developed and the pilot video is captured, TechComm Partners of Smithfield, RI will build the e-learning modules.

How will these modules be used?

- ◆ Educators can complete these modules individually.
- ◆ Teams of teachers are encouraged to go through the course as a community of practice. To support this process, RIDE will also produce facilitation guides which will include discussion questions, troubleshooting ideas, and extension activities for each module.
- ◆ In addition, LEA may use RTTT funds allocated to this project for stipends and/or additional training for district or building-level facilitators of the formative assessment work.

When should districts/LEAs begin implementing these modules?

- ◆ The resource will launch in the fall of 2012.
- ◆ LEAs will have flexibility with when they choose to launch the modules in their district: Fall 2012, Summer 2013, or Fall 2013.

How can I stay informed about new developments?

- ◆ Updates and new information will be posted on the RIDE web site at www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment/CAS.aspx.
- ◆ Check out the Commissioner's Weekly Field Memos, posted online at www.ride.ri.gov/Commissioner/fieldmemos/default.aspx.

This brochure can be downloaded from www.ride.ri.gov/Division-EEIE/docs/RTTT/Formative_Assessment.pdf