RIDE LINKING LEARNING & ASSESSMENT IN RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS

Facilitator's Guide for Module 2: Planning for Classroom Formative Assessment

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Facilitator's Guide for Module 2: Planning for Classroom Formative Assessment

The facilitator's guide for Module 2 contains the following:

- A review of the key concepts in Module 2;
- A participant's agenda and an annotated facilitator's agenda for the second 90-minute meeting of your community of practice (CoP); and
- Appendices (frequently asked questions or misconceptions with suggested responses, resource materials for the CoP meeting, a list of extended learning opportunities, and references).

Preparations for the CoP Meeting

In preparation for facilitating the second meeting with your community of practice, you will want to review the Module 2 online course and this facilitator guide, including its appendices. If you have not already done so, you will also want to read or skim the readings associated with the module:

- "Leveling the Playing Field: Sharing Learning Targets and Criteria for Success," Chapter 2 in *Advancing Formative Assessment in Every Classroom* by Connie Moss and Susan Brookhart; and
- *The Lowdown on Learning Progressions* by James Popham.

Prior to the CoP meeting, you may want to have informal conversations with each participant to get a sense of their understanding of the essential elements of formative assessment planning (big ideas, learning goals, success criteria, and learning progressions), what questions they might have about them or the homework, and which trio you might place them in for the segment of the CoP in which they are providing feedback to their peers on their lesson planning template. You will want to remind them to bring a hard copy of the CoP prep form (see Appendix A) that they filled out at the end of the lesson, their completed first page of the formative assessment lesson planning template, and the learning progression they developed to the meeting.

Where the CoP Has Been and Where It Is Going

At the conclusion of Module 1 and the first community of practice meeting, your CoP members have a common definition of formative assessment, are beginning to recognize the changes that formative assessment requires in their practice, and have an understanding of what they need to be doing "more of" or "less of" to implement a balanced comprehensive assessment system in their classroom and team.

Module 2 reinforces the fact that formative assessment is not a program to be adopted; there is no prescribed road map for it. It is more bottom up than top down—resting in the decisions that are made by

teachers. Formative assessment offers a set of guiding practices (the five attributes introduced in Module 1) that, when implemented, make it look different in every classroom.

In Module 2, teachers have been introduced to the essential elements of formative assessment planning (big ideas, learning goals, success criteria, and learning progressions). The next three modules will help members of your CoP think deeply about the guiding practices and use the essential elements of formative assessment planning, so that they can develop the skills to apply formative assessment processes in their own classroom.

During the next year, the expectation is that teams of teachers will use the unit planning template introduced in Module 2 to complete one or two unit(s). The template, through its use, helps to build teachers' capacity to plan for formative assessment. It is meant to help them learn the steps so they can ultimately attend to its instructional processes on their own.

Key Concepts in Module 2

Learning Goals for the CoP Meeting on Module 2:

- Clarify terms and definitions from course materials and align them with the school's context
- Learn strategies to introduce, discuss, and co-construct success criteria with students
- Enhance completed unit planning template through collegial dialogue

Success Criteria for the CoP Meeting on Module 2:

- I understand how planning big ideas, learning goals, success criteria, and learning progressions can help contribute to greater transparency in a student's learning experience.
- I have learned new approaches for using success criteria with students.
- I can develop a learning progression that outlines how learning typically progresses in a unit of study.

Planning for Formative Assessment

Given the complexity of teaching and learning, careful planning for formative assessment is **the only way** that teachers can use formative evidence "on-the-fly" during instruction. That planning involves identifying common misconceptions that students are likely to have as they work on learning goals, generating questions to gather evidence of learning, and determining options for responding to students' needs as revealed by the evidence gathered.

Formative assessment processes are aligned to learning goals and, ultimately, to standards—in Rhode Island, the Common Core State Standards that will be implemented by 2013-14. However, the standards, in and of themselves, are not sufficient to help teachers or students understand what students need to accomplish to meet mastery. Teachers need to unpack the standards, develop a common understanding of each standard, and identify the steps leading to mastery of each standard.

The formative assessment planning process is very similar to other standards-based lesson/unit planning frameworks, such as Understanding by Design (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005). Each of the elements of the formative assessment lesson planning template is quite intentional, but teachers may not see the value of each immediately. The formative assessment planning process includes:

- Understanding the **big idea** of the unit/standards being taught;
- Clarifying the specific **learning goals** of a unit;
- Outlining what success will look like for students (**success criteria**); and
- Clarifying what learning looks like as students progress toward the learning goal(s) (**learning progression**).

Definitions

Big ideas, learning goals, and success criteria are complex to disaggregate (see handout entitled "Definitions of Critical Elements of Formative Assessment Lesson Planning" on page 19 in Appendix C). For that reason, teachers may have difficulty understanding the unique purposes of each. It is helpful for them to look at their colleagues' examples of formative assessment lesson planning templates to see examples of how the elements can be approached.

Definitions of the Critical Elements in Formative Assessment Lesson Planning

Element	Definition
Big idea	• Highlights an essential concept or insight that resides at the heart of the discipline • Has lasting value, and helps support transfer of learning to other disciplines and beyond the classroom • Helps students link important facts and skills into a more coherent "mental map;" it is a theme or issue that gives meaning and connection to discrete facts and skills • May not be immediately obvious, and might need to be "uncovered" through learning
Learning goals	• Are directly aligned to the academic standards and the big idea of a unit • Use clear and precise language • Capture the skills and/or processes students need for learning to occur • Are focused on what students will learn as a result of instruction rather than what activities they will do • Help students make connections to prior learning and to envision future learning
Success criteria	• Clarify what it looks like when students are successful meeting the learning goal • Are used as the basis for students to judge the quality of their work • Are discussed and agreed upon with students prior to learning
Learning progressions	• Include major building blocks of learning required for students to meet the learning goal • Indicate how skills and concepts develop over time in the domain • Focus on what students can do at each level of the progression • Are checked against national and international research, when possible

Note: Sometimes you will find that teachers are using these words in their practice already, but they have a different meaning than in the formative assessment lesson planning template. The most likely culprits are big ideas and learning goals. For example, learning goals may also be called learning objectives, learning targets, learning intentions, performance objectives, or instructional objectives. To eliminate confusion, your CoP may use a different word in the template as long as its definition conforms to the meaning provided above for that particular element and their colleagues in the school share the same vocabulary.

A big idea is the core concept, principle, theory, or process that serves as the focal point of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. It signifies where teachers want students to be heading as they develop conceptual knowledge and understanding and is the basis for students' transfer of knowledge from use in one situation to another. A big idea helps students determine what is most important about this particular learning and aids them in identifying how ideas fit together.

Learning goals are statements that describe to students what they will know, understand, and be able to do at the end of a sequence of instruction around a big idea(s). They help students understand the concepts that matter most in the unit, and what skills and/or processes they will need to acquire for learning to occur. Students must internalize the learning goal and success criteria if they are to take their own next steps in learning. Student understanding of the learning goals(s) is an essential pre-requisite for students to monitor their learning through self- and peer-assessment.

Learning progressions depict a sequence of successively more complex ways of reasoning students are likely to take as they move forward in their learning over time. They are strengths-based, document learning, and show what students **can do** at different points along the progression. They are a tool to help teachers think about how learning develops in the classroom and how to scaffold it. They help teachers make decisions about a student's status relative to the prescribed learning goals, and assist the teacher and student to determine what the student's next step in the learning process will be.

Learning progressions are best developed locally by teachers. They have knowledge of their curricula and students and have experience with sequencing and scaffolding learning. Learning progressions are dynamic. They can and should be revised by teachers based on evidence they gather in their classrooms. In this way, developing, using, and revising learning progressions can function like an action research m model, where teachers apply new ideas and revise them based on the results. When collaboratively developed, they also build a common understanding among teachers about how to scaffold learning for a particular standard or big idea and provide an opportunity to strengthen a team's capacity.

Note: There is a lot of confusion about why and how to develop learning progressions. The handout entitled "Key Criteria for Developing Learning Progressions" on pages 20-22 in Appendix C explains the process.

As learning progressions are being crafted, you, as facilitator, should try to ensure that there is at least one educator in each team who is very experienced with the content knowledge under review.

Success criteria identify what quality work looks like and what the teacher should be looking for as evidence that students have met the learning goal. They are best developed through an analysis of student work. They allow students to check on their learning and better understand where they are in relation to the learning goal. They focus students on *how* they are learning rather than *what* they are learning, thereby creating a positive learning culture in the classroom and empowering students to become independent learners.

Hints for Using the Formative Assessment Lesson Planning Template

Initially, it is helpful for teachers to use the Formative Assessment Lesson Planning Template on pages 23-24 in Appendix C). Using this template, even if teachers do not typically write and/or share lesson plans, builds habits of mind, e.g., how to approach the work, how to explore different ways of thinking about the content and the path students take to meet mastery. Teachers may be tempted to short cut it, but it is not something to ignore.

If completed by a team of teachers, it provides an opportunity for them to engage in dialogue around the lesson's content, instruction, and the scaffolding needed. It also allows them to have a quicker turnaround when they think of responses to students. As teachers learn the steps, they will ultimately attend to these instructional processes on their own and will not need to use the template.

Note: When teachers first plan for formative assessment, it is helpful for them to re-plan a unit they have taught previously. They will be familiar with the content and have a sense of the path that student learning/progress typically takes, which will make the addition of formative assessment processes easier.

Collaborative planning also makes the work more manageable. When teachers work together, they can help each other think about the different expressions of mastery embedded within a particular standard and explore a range of instructional strategies that support learning throughout a unit. Teacher dialogue promotes shared understanding of the standards, deepens strategies for differentiating instruction based on evidence, and promotes personal accountability to implement new classroom formative assessment routines.

Agenda for Module 2 Community of Practice

As the facilitator, your role is to continue to provide opportunities for participants to reflect on their learning from the online course, deepen their understanding by discussing their learning, and determine how to embed formative assessment in their instructional practice.

The learning goals and success criteria for the second 90-minute meeting of your CoP are offered below. A participant agenda along with an annotated facilitator's agenda follow.

Learning Goals for the CoP Meeting on Module 2

- Clarify terms and definitions from the course materials and align them with the school's context
- Learn strategies to introduce, discuss, and co-construct success criteria with students
- Enhance unit planning template through collegial dialogue

Success Criteria for the CoP Meeting on Module 2

- I understand how planning big ideas, learning goals, success criteria, and learning progressions can help contribute to greater transparency in a student's learning experience.
- I have learned new approaches for using success criteria with students.
- I can develop a learning progression that outlines how learning typically progresses in a unit of study.

Participant Agenda for Module 2 CoP Meeting

Learning Goals:

- Clarify terms and definitions from course materials and align them with the school's context
- Learn strategies to introduce, discuss, and co-construct success criteria with students
- Enhance unit planning template through collegial dialogue

Success Criteria:

- I understand how planning big ideas, learning goals, success criteria, and learning progressions can help contribute to greater transparency in a student's learning experience.
- I have learned new approaches for using success criteria with students.
- I can develop a learning progression that outlines how learning typically progresses in a unit of study.

Upon arrival	**Explore Our Learning from the Online Course** *Purpose:* Identify what I understand from Module 2, what I am unclear about, and what topics I would like to discuss with my colleagues to develop a common understanding of the critical elements of formative assessment lesson planning. *Outcome:* Identification of which topics need more exploration and dialogue for the CoP to have a clear understanding of the content in Module 2.
10 minutes	**Getting Started** *Purpose:* Relay what worked well when I shared success criteria with my students and what changes I observed in them; review the agenda, learning goals, and success criteria for this CoP meeting. *Outcomes:* Understand the power of success criteria; add information from my colleagues' experiences in sharing success criteria with their students to my own.
15 minutes	**Deepen Understanding of Key Content in Relation to Current Context** *Purpose:* Identify differences between terms and definitions in Module 2 with terms and definitions we use at school. *Outcome:* List of discrepancies in terms and definitions that will be shared by our facilitator with the school's leadership team for resolution.

20 minutes	**Reflecting Experience** *Purpose:* Observe how the relationship between teacher and students is redefined in a formative assessment classroom. *Outcome:* Strategies to share, discuss, and co-construct success criteria with students in my classroom.
30 minutes	**Integrating Key Concepts with Our Current Practice** *Purpose:* Obtain feedback from my peers that will enable me to strengthen elements of my formative assessment lesson planning template or my learning progression. *Outcomes:* Suggestions for refining elements of my formative assessment lesson planning template or my learning progression; better understanding of critical elements of formative assessment planning.
5 minutes	**Notice What's Changing, What's New** *Purpose:* Reflect on my learning. *Outcome:* Understanding of what in my thinking and practice is changing.
5 minutes	**Agree on Next Steps** *Purpose:* Identify what needs more discussion in the group to reach a common understanding of the concepts in Module 2; opportunity to ask questions about our homework assignment. *Outcomes:* List of concepts that need more discussion in our CoP, answers to my questions about the assignment at the end of Module 2, and confirmation of the teacher(s) or team I'll work to complete the assignment.
5 minutes	**Evaluation** *Purpose:* Assess my background knowledge of planning for formative assessment to help me determine my next step in learning, and provide feedback to the CoP facilitator. *Outcome:* Information for me and for our facilitator to use in planning the next meeting and providing assistance to individual CoP members.

Facilitator's Agenda for CoP Meeting for Module 2

Time Allotted	Purpose/Outcome	Facilitator's Tasks	Set-up
Upon arrival	**Explore Our Learning from the Online Course** ***Purpose:*** Identify what teachers understand from Module 2, what they are unclear about, and what topics they would like to discuss with their colleagues to develop a common understanding. Uncover misconceptions (see Appendix B for succinct responses to frequently asked questions and misconceptions). ***Outcome:*** Identification of which concepts in Module 2 need more exploration and discussion to come to a common understanding within the CoP.	Greet participants as they arrive and ask them to review the notes on their CoP prep form (see Appendix A), highlight one thing in each column that they would like to share, record each on a separate sticky, and post them in the appropriate column on the chart paper. (Other options: chart them or have participants share them orally.)	Post large sheet(s) of chart paper with three columns headed: • What's clear? • What's unclear? • What would I like to spend time talking to colleagues about to develop a common understanding? Place post-it stickies on the table.
10 minutes	**Getting Started** ***Purpose:*** Relay what worked well and what changes they observed in their students; review the CoP's agenda, learning goals, and success criteria. ***Outcome:*** Key thoughts to share with their colleagues about their experiences.	Ask two to four participants to discuss their experiences with sharing or co-developing success criteria with their students. When appropriate, probe for deeper responses, e.g., what they observed in their students. Review agenda, learning goals, and success criteria for this meeting; answer participants' questions.	Post agenda, learning goals, and success criteria for this CoP meeting on chart paper or show on a PowerPoint slide. Chart paper and markers.
15 minutes	**Deepen Understanding of Key Content in Relation to Current Context** ***Purpose:*** Identify differences between terms and definitions for the critical elements (big ideas, learning goals, learning progressions, and success criteria) used in the online course	Ask teachers, in pairs, to review the terms and definitions to: • Identify terms and/or definitions for the critical elements used in Module 2 that are different from those used in the school, e.g., learning goals vs. learning	Have enough copies of the handout entitled "Definitions of Critical Elements of Formative Assessment Lesson Planning" on page 19 in Appendix C for each participant. Post chart paper labeled "Differences in Terms

Time Allotted	Purpose/Outcome	Facilitator's Tasks	Set-up
	and those used in the school. ***Outcomes:*** Identification of discrepancies in terms and/or definitions of the critical elements and, soon after the CoP meeting, leadership's decision on terms to use and their respective online course definition.	targets, big ideas vs. essential questions. • Record these differences on a sticky and post on chart paper. Since this discussion could absorb the 90 minutes, teachers are to note differences in terms and/or definitions. Inform them that you will take the differences they have noticed to the school's leadership for resolution and will share leadership's decision with them as soon as possible. *Note: The terms may be different, but the definition needs to be the same as the one in the online course. For example, if a school uses learning objectives rather than learning goals, it has to have the same definition as learning goals in Module 2.*	and/or Definitions." Place stickies on each table.
20 minutes	**Reflecting Experience** ***Purpose:*** Provide an opportunity for teachers to elicit evidence of what teachers and students are doing in a formative assessment classroom; see how the relationship between students and teacher is redefined in a formative assessment classroom. ***Outcomes:*** Gain strategies to use with students in co-constructing success criteria, better understanding of success criteria and how they enable students to take charge of their learning.	Set up: Formative assessment transforms the way teachers teach and students learn. Using success criteria with students is a good place to begin implementing formative assessment. The use of success criteria is essential to enable students to take the first step in understanding their own learning. Tell teachers that they are going to view a video(s) of a teacher(s) discussing and/or co-constructing success criteria with their students. As they watch the video(s), ask teachers to write on index cards what they notice about the roles of the teacher and students in the	Computer, LCD projector, screen, and index cards. Select most appropriate video(s) for level of teachers in your CoP and have it (them) set up on your computer: **Elementary**: "Word Study in Action:" A grade 2 or 3 language arts classroom in which the teacher is creating success criteria with students (4:03 minutes) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cazZckbvBMc OR Ontario Ministry of Education's Assessment for Learning Video Series: Self-Assessment and Defining Success Criteria – An elementary math

Time Allotted	Purpose/Outcome	Facilitator's Tasks	Set-up
		video. After viewing the video(s), ask teachers to turn to a partner to describe what they observed teachers and students doing and how that differs from their own classroom. Ask one or two teachers to share their thoughts in the large group. Then, ask the group: • What are the benefits to the teacher and students from co-constructing success criteria? • What evidence did you observe of the success criteria being linked to learning goals?	class in which the teacher and students are co-creating success criteria (start at 4:38 and end at 10:36). Go to www.edugains.ca/newsite/aer2/aervideo/selfassessment.html and download Segment 2: Self-Assessment and Defining Success Criteria. **Secondary**: Ontario Ministry of Education's Assessment for Learning Video Series: Aligning Assessment with Instruction – A high school English class in which students and teacher are co-creating success criteria (start at 6:37 and end at 13:08). Go to www.edugains.ca/newsite/aer2/aervideo/planningassessmentwithinstruction.html and download Segment 7: Aligning Assessment with Instruction.
30 minutes	**Integrating Key Concepts with Our Current Practice** ***Purpose:*** Obtain critical feedback from peers that will enable teachers to refine elements of their formative assessment lesson planning template or their learning progression (assignment at end of Module 1 online course). ***Outcomes:*** Suggestions for strengthening elements of their formative assessment lesson planning template or learning progression, ideas and strategies from colleagues, and better understanding of the essential terms and definitions of formative assessment planning.	Ask participants to pull out their partially completed Formative Assessment Lesson Planning Template (pages 23-24 in Appendix C). Refer them to the handout on terms and definitions they previously used as a resource for this activity. In trios, with approximately 10 minutes per person, ask each participant to allow their colleagues two to three minutes to review their formative assessment lesson planning template and learning progression, then in the remaining seven to eight minutes the first presenter: • Shares something he/she feels good about their template or learning progression; • Discusses an aspect that he/she struggled with; and • Gets feedback/suggestions from colleagues	Directions on chart paper for the task: • Allow time for colleagues to review your template and learning progression • Share something that you feel good about the template or learning progression • Discuss an aspect with which you struggled • Obtain feedback/suggestions from colleagues to address that challenge *Note: An electronic version of the formative assessment lesson planning template is in the module and available in the resources section of the RIDEmap portal.*

Time Allotted	Purpose/Outcome	Facilitator's Tasks	Set-up
		on how to address that challenge. After 10 minutes, ask the first presenter to quickly bring the segment to a close and let the second teacher go through the same cycle. After 20 minutes, ask the second presenter to come to a close and let the last member of the trio proceed through the same cycle. *Note: Given information you have about group members, you may wish to predetermine the trios. You will want to make sure that each group has a mix of skills and knowledge. If there is someone who hasn't done the work or someone who got stuck on some aspect of the template, make sure to pair that teacher with someone who understands the process.*	
5 minutes	**Notice What's Changing, What's New** ***Purpose***: Individually reflect on their learning. ***Outcomes:*** Individual understanding of how CoP members' thinking and practice are changing and information for facilitator as to where each participant is and needs to move.	Ask participants to respond to a reflective prompt: "I used to think and now I think…" Facilitate sharing of reflections from two or three participants. Collect index cards, review responses after the session, and use in planning the next session.	Post reflective question on chart paper and place index cards on tables.
5 minutes	**Agree on Next Steps** ***Purpose****:* Identify what still needs more discussion from the initial activity and share appropriate extended learning opportunities with individuals or the CoP (see Appendix D). Clear understanding of the homework assignment that requires applying skills and knowledge learned in Module 2 (assignment at end of the Module 2 online course). ***Outcomes***: List of aspects of Module 2 that need more discussion; teams and units identified by	Facilitate group's review of status of their responses to the initial activity (e.g., what is clear, what needs more discussion to arrive at a common understanding). Ask participants to show with "thumbs up," "thumbs sideways," or "thumbs down," if they need more discussion on a particular topic. Place a star in front of ones that need more attention. After inserting appropriate dates, hand out directions for homework assignment from online course for Module 2. Ask teachers if they: • Have any questions.	Chart paper from initial activity, markers. Make enough copies of the directions entitled "Revise an Upcoming Unit Plan to Include Key Formative Assessment Planning Elements" for each participant (see pages 25-26 in Appendix C).

Time Allotted	Purpose/Outcome	Facilitator's Tasks	Set-up
	all participants in anticipation of completing homework assignment.	• Have chosen a familiar unit that will be implemented in 2-3 months. • Have identified colleagues who will dialogue with them as they add formative assessment processes to their unit plan and develop a learning progression. As facilitator, you may have to help them make the collaborative piece happen. They will gain deeper knowledge and skills through working with colleagues.	
5 minutes	**Evaluation** ***Purpose:*** Gather feedback that will help teachers to determine their next step in learning; obtain information that will assist you in planning the next session.	Ask participants to complete the evaluation form to obtain an understanding of their next step in learning and to help you plan for the next session.	Make a copy of the evaluation form on page 27 in Appendix C for each participant.
90 minutes in total			

Appendix A: My Initial Reflections on Module 2

Planning for Classroom Formative Assessment

Name: _____

What's clear	What's not clear
What would I like to spend time talking to colleagues about to develop a common understanding?	

Appendix B: Frequently Asked Questions/Misconceptions with Suggested Responses

To assist you in supporting members of your Community of Practice, we have compiled a few of the most common questions and misconceptions at this stage with recommended responses.

Q: Doesn't formative assessment just involve adding new strategies to my teaching practice?
A: No, formative assessment links teaching and assessment, so teachers need to carefully plan how they will elicit evidence and for what purpose. The evidence gathered by a student and the teacher allows an action to be taken as a result of it, e.g., next steps in learning for a student or an adjustment in instructional practice for a teacher.

Q: Aren't teachers the primary users of assessment data?
A: No, formative assessment is largely about the student's role in learning. Students are integral partners in the process with teachers, and will take ownership for learning with the right conditions. Ultimately, students are users of assessment evidence and use it to move their own learning forward.

Q: Aren't big ideas, learning goals, and success criteria the same?
A: A big idea highlights an essential concept or insight about a discipline. It's a core concept, theory, or issue that gives meaning to and connects discrete facts and skills (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005). A big idea is the basis for transfer of knowledge to a new challenge, e.g., figuring out what knowledge and skill matters and adapting what we know to address it. It outlines where you want students to be heading as they develop conceptual knowledge and understanding.

Learning goals specify the learning that is intended for a lesson or a sequence of lessons. They focus students on what new understandings they will have from the lesson, not the tasks they will complete. They enable students to know what they are learning and why.

Success criteria are primarily designed to capture what learning *looks like* when a student has reached proficiency. They show the kinds of evidence that a teacher or student can look for to see if learning is taking place.

Q: Aren't learning progressions the same as rubrics?
A: A learning progression is strengths-based. It identifies what students *can do* as they progress in their learning. A good one clarifies for teachers and students what successful learning *looks like* as students progress toward mastery. Learning progressions help teachers locate students' current status along a continuum and assist them in determining the most useful instructional actions that will move their learning forward.

A learning progression, unlike a rubric, is not meant to measure or evaluate learning. A good learning progression can show that learning can be messy and uneven. For example, as a student is learning a skill or concept, it is not always the case that the student moves from doing a little of something to a lot

of something as is usually described in rubrics. It is often the case that there is a gap in understanding, and then when that gap is addressed the student moves to a new and different kind of understanding.

Rubrics primarily document expectations for product quality that will be used to score or evaluate student work. Rubrics are often designed in ways that tell students what they have not done well, and as such are often deficit-based.

Q: Aren't learning goals and success criteria primarily for teacher planning?
A: No, learning goals and success criteria are primarily for students. Students must internalize the learning goals and success criteria to take their own next steps in learning. Learning goals enable them to understand what they have learned, what they are learning, and what they will learn next. Success criteria provide a way for the students, their peers, and their teacher to come to a common understanding of success that can be used to assess their learning.

Q: How can I take time away from teaching (or justify the time it takes) to co-construct success criteria with students?
A: Although making a change in classroom teaching requires extra work until it becomes routine, improving assessment practices results in increased student engagement and performance. It really involves a redistribution of effort (Black et al., 2004). For example, teachers may spend more time using formative assessment processes and less time on tests and quizzes in class or they may spend more time providing comments on student's written work and less on giving grades.

Q: What if students do not know enough about the knowledge and skills they are to demonstrate to identify success criteria?
A: You can activate prior knowledge by engaging students in activities to discuss the goals and/or task with a partner. You can also provide exemplars of the task or performance for students to analyze, and from their analysis they can develop success criteria.

Q: What if students identify criteria that are not relevant to the goals or task, or leave out criteria that are significant for successful demonstration of learning?
A: When co-constructing success criteria with students, the teacher doesn't relinquish the role as lead learner. If significant criteria are not generated, teachers should contribute them to the list. The teacher can also help refine students' thinking about the criteria as they are generated.

Q: Won't showing exemplars to students limit their creativity or encourage imitation?
A: If you show a diversity of samples or offer a choice in how to demonstrate their learning, the samples and options of expression will expand students' thinking. The use of exemplars usually encourages students to do better than those who completed the task before them.

Appendix C: Resources and Evaluation Form

Definitions of Critical Elements of Formative Assessment Lesson Planning

Big ideas

A big idea highlights an essential concept or insight that resides at the heart of the discipline. It is a theme or issue that brings meaning and connection to discrete facts and skills, and enables students to link important skills into a more coherent "mental map". It may not be immediately obvious, and may need to be "uncovered" through learning. But, it has lasting value, and is the basis for transferring learning beyond the classroom and to other disciplines.

Learning goals

Learning goals specify the learning that is intended for a lesson or a sequence of lessons. Learning goals focus students on what new understandings they will have from the lesson, not the tasks they will complete. They enable students to know what they are learning and why. Research has consistently pointed out the value of student review of learning goals. Students focused on learning goals develop greater intrinsic motivation (Ames, 1992; Dweck, 1999) as long as those goals are manageable, and as long as students understand both the learning goal and the success criteria.

Success criteria

Success criteria specify how students can demonstrate that they have met the learning goal. The success criteria help students understand what they will be able to do differently as a result of the lesson. Success criteria help students monitor their own learning. The use of exemplars and model products can be very helpful to show students evidence about the criteria that teachers will use to look for evidence of their learning.

Learning progressions

Learning progressions describe the pathways along which students are expected to progress. A learning progression provides the teacher with additional clarity regarding how student learning develops in a particular domain, or on a particular standard or topic. This progression is often not linear, and may not look the same for each student. Learning progressions help teachers locate students' current status along a continuum and help teachers decide on the most useful instructional actions that will move students' learning forward.

Key Criteria for Developing Learning Progressions

The NAEP 2009 Science Framework describes learning progressions as "a sequence of successively more complex ways of reasoning about a set of ideas; not developmentally inevitable but dependent on instruction and interacting with students' prior knowledge and new knowledge construction."

While there is quite some disagreement in the field about the use of learning progressions (Shavelson, 2009; Corcoran, Mosher, & Rogat, 2009), there is growing agreement that learning progressions can help teachers articulate how learning progresses in a particular domain. It can provide "a big picture of what is to be learned, support effective instructional planning, and act as a touchstone for formative assessment" (Heritage, 2008, p. 2). By helping teachers articulate a pathway of learning, learning progressions provide a framework from which to organize formative assessment strategies. More importantly, they help guide both teachers and students to more quickly and effectively consider next steps in learning.

For formative assessment purposes, learning progressions should:

- Provide a description of learning in each category that will support instructional planning.
- Provide sufficient detail to map formative assessment opportunities that will elicit evidence at key points along the progression.
- Support teachers to quickly identify where students are along the learning progression, in other words, to help define what the gap in learning is in relation to the learning goal.
- Support students to take next steps in learning.

Heritage (2008) describes two types of learning progressions: top down and bottom up. Top down progressions have been developed by research teams in a variety of disciplines, and are best known in science. These progressions often review long-term learning processes, by developing, for example, a K-12 progression. Their goal is to frame the key building blocks within a domain, and to address critical considerations related to how students learn specific concepts and skills. They generally begin with the big ideas in a domain and how these big ideas connect together.

Bottom-up progressions are those developed by teachers, teacher teams, or organizations of teachers. These progressions come from more of an action research approach. Teachers work to establish how learning progresses in a particular topic area or domain through their existing knowledge and observations of classroom practice. These learning progressions must be "constantly checked, updated and enriched" (Masters & Forster, 1996, p. 13). One well-documented bottom-up strategy for developing learning progressions is for teachers to collaboratively de-construct an academic content standard to determine key knowledge and skills required for students to attain proficiency on that standard.

If teachers have already developed formative assessment planning documents, and have worked to establish the big idea, learning goals, and success criteria for a unit, then developing a learning progression is relatively straightforward.

To complete a learning progression template for a specific unit (a bottom-up approach), consider the following steps:

1. Start with level 3.
   Describe what you see proficient students doing when they demonstrate the knowledge and skills expected for this set of unit goals.
2. Go to level 2.
   Describe what you would expect to see as knowledge and understanding emerging or developing in this area. Describe what you see happening when students have simpler, more basic knowledge and understandings in this area.
3. Go to level 4.
   Describe what you would expect to see when students have gone beyond what you expect in this unit. What are those more advanced concepts and skills that will be stepping stones for students' future understanding in this area?
4. Skip back down to level 1.
   Describe what you see when students have simple or partial understanding in this goal area.
5. Write typical student misconceptions you have seen in this goal area. Check back to levels 1-4 and clarify how and when these misconceptions might manifest. Discuss if there is a way to elicit potential misconceptions prior to the unit, or address them early in the unit.

Once teachers have implemented a learning progression, it is critical to revisit and refine, as these are not as simple as they first appear. The following questions can be helpful **action research** questions during collaborative planning:

- Were all the major building blocks addressed in the learning progression? Were any key skills/knowledge sets missing? If so, where would these be added?
- Did the learning progression help make links to the big idea? Did the learning progression support students' conceptual understanding of the big idea?
- Were there teachers who were not involved in creating the learning progression who might have been asked to use it? What was their experience of the learning progression?
- Has anyone cross-checked to find out if there is research available on this progression? If so, does it align with the way you have articulated the development of knowledge and skills in this area?
- Consider doing a vertical check on the learning progression, to see what teachers in grade levels above and below might think about emergent and advanced knowledge (level 4)?

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Formative Assessment Lesson Planning Template
Part 1 – Clarifying and communicating the focus of the lesson

Academic content standard(s)	
Big idea	
Learning goal(s) *Students will know and be able to:*	**Success criteria** *Students can:*
Student-friendly learning goals *Students are able to:*	**Student-friendly success criteria** *I can:*
Misconceptions students are likely to have as they work on the unit learning goals	
Strategies to share learning goals and success criteria with students	

_____ Unit/Grade _____
Formative Assessment Lesson Planning
Learning Progression

Big Idea	
Unit Learning Goal(s):	
Level 4	*At level 4, the student demonstrates knowledge and application that goes beyond what was explicitly taught in this unit.*
Level 3 <u>Proficient level</u>	*At level 3, the student demonstrates the knowledge and skills expected for the unit learning goals.*
Level 2	*At level 2, the student has mastered simpler knowledge, skills, and processes that serve as building blocks for the unit learning goals.*
Level 1	*At level 1, the student shows partial understanding of some simpler knowledge, skills, and processes, but may require more structure, scaffolding, and support to do independent work.*
Possible misconceptions	*List typical misconceptions students might have about this unit learning goal.*

Template inspired by Robert Marzano, *Handbook for the Art and Science of Teaching, 2009.*

Module 2
Team assignment
Due _____

Revise an Upcoming Unit Plan to Include Key Formative Assessment Planning Elements

Learning task:

Revise an upcoming unit plan to include key formative assessment planning elements, including the big idea, learning goals, success criteria, and a learning progression.

Purpose of learning task:

- Apply skills and knowledge learned during Module 2.
- Deepen understanding of how the formative assessment planning elements align with current lesson/unit planning.
- Dialogue with your "team" to review essential content of an upcoming unit, and explore how to make the learning goals and success criteria more accessible to students.

Decisions to make before you begin the work:

- This work is best done through dialogue with colleagues. Which colleagues you choose to work with to revise your unit plan is up to you. You may choose to work with the team who is attending the CoP with you, or you may choose to work with a team at your building who shares your students or teaches in the same discipline.
- Select an upcoming "unit" to review/revise. This unit should be one that is well-known to those of you doing the review (not a new unit or new piece of content).
- Beyond revising this unit plan, you will continue work on this unit to develop formative strategies to implement. In other words, you will continue work on this unit after the third CoP meeting. Given this, it will be best if the unit is taught in _____.

Process for task completion:

1. Discuss what you want students to learn in this unit. Have this discussion before you look at various teacher lesson/unit plans.

2. Review the standards that are taught in the current unit plan. Discuss what the standards mean to you, and, in particular, what level of understanding students are meant to attain on this standard.

3. Review the Formative Assessment Lesson Planning Template (Part 1). Sketch out some initial thoughts your group has about big ideas and learning goals.

4. Discuss the success criteria you each have for this unit. What does it look like when students are successful (on this unit) in your class?

5. Review your existing unit/lesson plans for this unit. Is what you have documented consistent with what you have talked about to this point? Come to agreement on the following:
    a. Which elements of our plan align with the criteria to develop formative assessment lesson plans (the big idea, learning goals, success criteria)? If you agree these meet the criteria, these can be transferred to the formative assessment lesson plan template.
    b. Which elements of our plan don't align with the criteria to develop formative assessment lesson plans? Those elements will need to be re-crafted to meet the new criteria.

6. Develop a learning progression using the "bottom up" approach discussed in class.
    a. Begin by outlining what you see happening in class when students are proficient (level 3). This will be tightly aligned with the success criteria in your unit plan.
    b. Go down a level (to level 2), and explore what kinds of things you see as students have emergent or developing knowledge on this topic.
    c. Recall some examples of students who exceeded expectations in this work in the past. What did you see these students doing that went beyond the standard? Include these ideas at level 4.
    d. Explore what you are likely to see at level 1, where students have only the simplest aspects of knowledge, understanding, or skill in this area. Write down what you are likely to see happening at this level.
    e. Ask yourselves, does what we have written represent the full range of student learning in my class? If no, revisit to see where you can clarify your expectations.

7. Congratulations! You have created a formative assessment lesson plan.

Rhode Island Department of Education
Formative Assessment Community of Practice
Module 2 Evaluation

*Consider the following **before and after** questions, which help us better understand your background knowledge:*

	Mostly unfamiliar	Somewhat unfamiliar	Somewhat knowledgeable	Very knowledgeable
Before this CoP meeting, my knowledge of planning for formative assessment was…				
After this CoP meeting, I would characterize my knowledge of planning for formative assessment as...				
Before this CoP meeting, my knowledge of using strategies to engage students in understanding learning goals and success criteria was…				
After this CoP meeting, I would characterize my knowledge of using strategies to engage students in understanding learning goals and success criteria as….				
Before this CoP meeting, my knowledge of how to use learning progressions as a tool to develop appropriate formative assessment strategies was…				
After this CoP meeting, I would characterize my knowledge of how to use learning progressions as a tool to develop appropriate formative assessment strategies as…				

Please clarify what you would change about today's meeting or where you are seeking additional support:

1. To move my own learning forward in formative assessment, I could use continued support in the following:

2. What didn't work for me (or what I would change) from today's meeting:

Appendix D: Extended Learning Opportunities

If teachers are having difficulty understanding the importance of learning goals and success criteria, they might discuss the following with another colleague or their grade-level or content-area team:

- Why are learning goals and success criteria essential prerequisites for students to become independent learners?
- How can identifying, sharing, and clarifying learning goals and success criteria nurture collaborative learning between teachers and students?

If secondary school teachers are having difficulty understanding the importance of learning goals, they might read the following article and discuss its themes and implications for teaching and assessing in their classroom with their team members or sharing partner in the CoP.

- Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B., & Wiliam, D. (2004). Working inside the black box: Assessment for learning in the classroom. *Phi Delta Kappan, 86*, 8-21.

If individual teachers or a team are overwhelmed by the challenges of creating learning goals and success criteria, ask them to complete the self-reflection tool, "Where Am I Now," on the next page. It may help them identify what they are already doing well (or what individual team members can share with others) and an area of practice that a teacher or team would like to implement or improve.

If teachers are having difficulty visualizing or establishing success criteria with their students, they might wish to view the following and discuss with their partner or their team:

- "Primary Assessment Formative Assessment, an elementary (year 6) science lesson on light (15 minutes). An elementary teacher shares learning goals and success criteria with students and works with students to gather their knowledge base, and share how she has developed formative assessment techniques that promote students being "in charge" of their learning. (http://teachfind.com?teachers-tv/primary-assessment-formative-assessment-2 or 1)
- Secondary Assessment for Learning – Geography (15 minutes). In this high school geography class, the teacher works with students to unpack the scoring rubric for national exams to clarify what a quality response would include. Students work in pairs to evaluate anonymous samples of work (and internalize the success criteria). They then work together to peer-assess their own work samples. (http://teachfind.com/teachers-tv/secondary-assessment-learning-geography)

Where Am I Now?

Consider each of the following statements, and indicate R (rarely), S (sometimes), or U (usually).			
A. Developing, Sharing, and Clarifying Learning Goals	**R**	**S**	**U**
I/We ensure that students know what they are expected to know, understand, and do by:			
• Identifying learning goals based on overall and specific expectations			
• Writing clear, concise learning goals in student-friendly/grade-appropriate language			
• Stating learning goals from the students' perspective (e.g., "We are learning to…")			
• Designing the learning in incremental steps to build student knowledge and skills			
• Developing learning goals that identify a progression of incremental, scaffolded knowledge and skills			
• Sharing the learning goals at appropriate times in each cycle of learning, usually at the beginning			
• Posting the learning goals visibly in the classroom			
• Having students record the learning goals in their notebooks			
• Making connections to the learning goals during instruction and when students are engaged in learning activities			
• Clarifying learning goals with students to ensure that students and teacher share the same understanding of what is to be learned			
• Providing students time and opportunity to reflect on and discuss the learning goals			
• Asking students to monitor their progress in relation to the learning goals			
B. Success Criteria	**R**	**S**	**U**
I/We ensure that students understand what successful learning looks like by:			
• Identifying the criteria for success on the learning goals and the assessment tasks when planning assessment and instruction			
• Sharing and clarifying success criteria with students			
• Co-constructing the success criteria with students for significant tasks and learning goals			
• Describing the success criteria in student-friendly language and observable behaviors			
• Using samples, models, and exemplars to identify and clarify success criteria			
• Providing opportunities for students to discuss, review, revise, and come to agreement on the success criteria			
• Modeling applying criteria to concrete samples of strong and weak work			
• Having students practice applying criteria to anonymous work samples			
• Using success criteria as the basis for teacher feedback and for self- and peer-assessment			

Source: Ontario Ministry of Education. (2010). *Learning Goals & Success Criteria Viewing Guide (p. 39)*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

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