

Creating a Culture for Teaching and Learning

Align, Assess, Achieve II

Facilitator Guide



Introduction

(3:02 minutes)

Transcript of Opening Narrative:

This DVD represents the collaboration of two educational organizations: Measured Progress and Align, Assess, Achieve. Both are committed to bringing high-quality classroom assessment practices to educators across the country. The student, teacher, and administrator stories you will hear express the challenges and successes of creating a positive culture for teaching and learning based on the belief that formative assessment cannot be separated from instruction.

Formative assessment is a process that involves both teachers and students and informs every aspect of the instruction and learning cycle. Through firsthand experiences, these stories illustrate how the implementation of effective classroom assessment practices impacts student engagement, ownership of learning, and, ultimately, achievement.

Research supports the belief that quality instruction is informed instruction. But how can teachers make informed decisions about student learning? Formative assessment is a process that provides teachers with the information needed to inform their instruction and engage students.

Before Viewing:

- ♦ Ask participants to reflect on the questions below.
- ♦ Discuss the responses as a whole group, a table group, or in pairs.
- ♦ If you are viewing the DVD individually, respond to the questions and then reflect.
 1. What do you already know about formative assessment (assessment for learning)?
 2. Based on what you know, what questions or concerns do you have about implementing formative assessment?

 **View the segment titled “Introduction,” and then stop the DVD.**

After Viewing:

Ask the following:

1. What did you hear in the teachers’ comments that mirrors your questions or concerns?

Part I—Aligning Standards to Targets: Enduring Understandings and Learning Targets

(10:52 minutes)

Transcript of Opening Narrative:

Clear learning expectations are a crucial component of formative assessment. Both teachers and students benefit from clear learning targets. Learning targets allow students to take ownership of their learning as they track and reflect on their academic growth. Learning targets help teachers to focus instruction on what is essential for students to know and be able to do.

Before Viewing:

- ♦ Ask participants to reflect on the questions below.
- ♦ Discuss the responses as a whole group, a table group, or in pairs.
- ♦ If you are viewing the DVD individually, respond to the questions and then reflect.
 1. How do you currently share learning intentions or expectations with students prior to instruction?
 2. What sources or documents do you use to develop and document your learning expectations for students?
 3. How do you reinforce your learning intentions or expectations during the teaching and student learning cycle?

 **View the segment titled “Aligning Standards to Targets,” and then stop the DVD.**

After Viewing:

Ask the following:

In this segment, a literacy support teacher states: “Before, our teachers were so frustrated not understanding why can’t they [students] get this, why can’t they do this, and it’s forcing them [teachers] so much more to look at their own instructional practices and really say, ‘It’s my teaching. I

need to be clearer about the steps I need to take as a teacher to get my students to be successful at the end.”

1. How does this comment about the changes in teacher instructional practice influence your thoughts about how you engage your students in their learning?
2. Based on the student voices you heard in this segment, how has the use of learning targets improved the level of student engagement and personal accountability for learning?

In this segment, a fifth-grade teacher says: *“Before, I would focus on what would be fun and what activities could I do to fit in this topic. Now, I am much more focused on looking at the state standards and creating learning targets and developing activities that center around that [learning targets] to make sure I hit on all of the items that kids need to get before they move on to the sixth grade.”*

3. Based on this comment, how do learning targets help keep the instruction focused?
4. What are the benefits for planning and instructional time when both are focused clearly on student learning targets?
 - ♦ How did the teacher implement and manage the strategy?
 - ♦ How did the strategy affect student learning?
 - ♦ How might you adapt this instructional strategy(ies) for your classroom purposes?

In this segment, a high school math teacher states: *“Grading has always been a problem for me in that class. I have upper-level students who want to get an A. And when we were just dealing with the point system, all they wanted to do was grade grub . . . They would determine how much effort they were going to put into something by how many points it is worth . . .”*

A twelfth-grade student states: *“With formative assessment I would be free to write and take risks in my writing. Before, if you would take a risk you would have the chance of getting points [taken] off, and nobody wants the experience of getting a lower grade just because you are trying something new.”*

5. How do these comments influence your thinking about your own grading practices?

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