K-3 Formative Assessment Implementation Toolkit

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Introduction

Implementation science literature has identified three core elements that support successful implementation[1]. **Implementation teams** lead the implementation effort by making decisions about, monitoring, and supporting implementation activities. **Infrastructure supports** are the building blocks that allow implementation to be sustained over time. They include both the general knowledge and capacity of those involved as well as the skills and resources available to sustain implementation at multiple levels. **Data-driven feedback loops** are means for providing and receiving information about the implementation process to help make decisions as implementation progresses.

The following toolkit is designed to walk state administrators through the process of setting up the three implementation core elements to implement a formative assessment process in early elementary. Ideally, state teams would use these worksheets as they are beginning the implementation process, but the worksheets are designed to be useful at any stage of implementation. Additionally, state teams may want to revisit the worksheets regularly to make changes as necessary.

The toolkit consists of three worksheets to help administrators decide:

- Who is involved? Identifying implementation planning teams

- What is in place? Understanding infrastructure supports

- How is implementation going? Setting up data-driven feedback loops

Each worksheet provides:

- An overview of the topic
- An example for implementing the K-3 Formative Assessment
- Blank worksheets to be completed by state teams
- Discussion questions to support the planning process

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[1]Metz, A., Naoom, S.F., Halle, T., & Bartley, L. (2015). An integrated stage-based framework for implementation of early childhood programs and systems (OPRE Research Brief OPRE 2015-48). Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services.

Who's Involved?

Identifying Implementation Teams

The purpose of this worksheet is to assist you in identifying individuals who will serve on your leadership team as well as the stakeholders who will inform how the implementation process is going. The leadership team includes individuals who are ultimately responsible for the success of the K-3 Formative Assessment implementation. The leadership team has decision-making and oversight responsibility of the implementation process at multiple levels. Stakeholder groups are individuals or organizations that have an interest in the success of the K-3 Formative Assessment process but are not responsible for the implementation of it. Stakeholders can provide feedback at critical decision points and can provide ongoing support and guidance to the initiative.

Examples

The following examples are provided to give you a starting point to think about the individuals whom you might want to have involved in your leadership team or your stakeholder groups. You'll want to consider the individuals who have varying expertise at the school, district/county/region, and state level.

Examples of Implementation Team and Stakeholder Group Members, by Level			
Team Member Role	**School Level**	**District/County/Region Level**	**State Level**
Familiarity with school practices and policies	Principal, assistant principals	Superintendents, assistant superintendents	State administrators in Early Childhood or K-12
Grade-level curriculum experts	Curriculum specialist, literacy or math specialist, special education specialists	District-level curriculum coordinators	State administrators in Early Childhood or K-12
Assessment and data use experts	School-level assessment specialists, principals	District-level assessment specialists	State administrators in an Assessment Department
Individuals who will administer the assessment	Teachers, teacher aides, support staff, principals, special education teachers	District-wide teacher or principal networks or groups	Teacher or principal representation at state-level meetings
Individuals who supervise those who will be administering the assessment	Principals, curriculum specialists, lead grade-level teacher	Superintendents, district-level assessment or curriculum specialists	State administrators in Early Childhood, K-12, and/or Assessment departments, Governor's Office
Family perspective	K-3 parents	Parent-Teacher Association	Parent-Teacher Association state representative
Community or external partners	Any individual from the community who is engaged in the school	Community colleges or universities that offer teaching certificates or degrees, teacher union	State or national experts in early education and assessment

Exercise

1. **Circle** the individuals in the "Examples" table you might want to engage for your **leadership** team.

2. **Box** the individuals in the "Examples" table you might want to invite to provide feedback as a **stakeholder**.

3. Brainstorm and write down other individuals or roles your state might want to involve in the process.

4. When you are finished, list all the individuals/roles in the appropriate table(s) below, by level.

Your state's LEADERSHIP team members, by Level			
Team Member Role	School Level	District/County/Region Level	State Level
Familiarity with school practices and policies			
Grade-level curriculum experts			
Assessment and data use experts			
Individuals who will administer the assessment			
Individuals who supervise those who will be administering the assessment			
Family perspective			
Community or external partners			
Other expertise?			

Your state's STAKEHOLDER GROUP members, by Level			
Team Member Role	School Level	District/County/Region Level	State Level
Familiarity with school practices and policies			
Grade-level curriculum experts			
Assessment and data use experts			
Individuals who will administer the assessment			
Individuals who supervise those who will be administering the assessment			
Family perspective			
Community or external partners			
Other expertise?			

Discussion questions

How will you reach out to these individuals about their involvement in the K-3 Formative Assessment implementation process?

Do you anticipate any challenges, obstacles, or concerns with your identified teams? If so, how do you plan to address these challenges, obstacles, or concerns?

How regularly and in what format will you want to meet with the leadership team?

How regularly and in what format will you want to meet with the stakeholder groups?

How will you receive feedback from the stakeholder groups about the K-3 Formative Assessment? How will the leadership team make decisions about the feedback provided by the stakeholder groups?

What's in place?

Understanding Infrastructure Supports

The purpose of this worksheet is to assist you in detailing the infrastructure supports (i.e., the **people**, **policies**, and **procedures**) that are necessary to help your state successfully implement the K-3 Formative Assessment. This worksheet will help you identify what supports are already in place in your state and what supports you might need to set up.

Examples

The following table highlights a *selection* of strategies or activities that a state may do or put in place for successful implementation of a K-3 Formative Assessment system. Examples of what is already in place or needs to be established for a hypothetical state are noted for the selected strategies.

Strategy	What is already in place?	What needs to be set up?	What action steps can be taken?
Provide comprehensive training to all teachers AND administrators and other support staff	- Professional Development (PD) days in the beginning of the school year (*policy*) - Principal meetings during the summer - PD days throughout the school year	- Trainers to train teachers (*people*) - Trainers to train administrators and other support staff - Specific days during PD days dedicated to training on the K-3 Formative Assessment	- Start initially with a subset of teachers, not all of them at once (*procedure*) - Identify/hire trainers - Contact school districts about a K-3 Formative Assessment training day
Create assessment materials and schedules	- Materials from SRI (training slides, assessment binder, online teacher resources, data collection schedule)	- State-specific data collection and entry deadlines (*for K entry time point only*) - State-specific technology platform	- Adapt SRI materials for our state (*process*) - Determine technology platforms' integration with state education data system (*process*)
Provide support to teachers	- Nothing yet!	- Re-definition of existing state or regional consultants' duties to provide support - Funding to pay state or regional staff to provide ongoing support - Technical assistance specialists for the technology platform	- Secure funding for the state/regional support staff - Seek approval for the position(s) - Post position(s); interview and hire - Train new or existing staff
Support teachers' participation in the formative assessment process, especially at the beginning of the school year	- Support staff in the building (*people*) - Assistant teachers	- Regional/building level staff to support the K-3 Formative Assessment (see row above) - Guidelines for what participation ideally looks like and possibly the minimum requirements	- Secure extra release time for teachers at the beginning of the school year (*policy/procedure*) - Pilot a "staggered start" to the kindergarten year (*policy*)

Exercise

1. Select up to three different strategies for K-3 Formative Assessment implementation that you will use in your state. You can select from the examples above or come up with other strategies.

2. For each strategy, list what your state already has in place that you can use for that strategy.

3. Brainstorm other supports your state would need for the success of each strategy.

4. Detail the action steps needed to accomplish the task.

Strategy	What is already in place?	What needs to be set up?	What action steps can be taken?

Discussion questions

What are three action items that you can start now to build your state's capacity for the successful implementation of the K-3 Formative assessment?

Do you anticipate any challenges, obstacles, or concerns about establishing the necessary supports for the implementation of the K-3 Formative Assessment? If so, how will you address these?

Think about the timing for when all of your supports need to be in place in order to successfully implement the K-3 Formative Assessment. What resources or assistance do you need to make sure that you are able to prepare the supports in time? How can your Leadership Team or Stakeholder Groups assist you? (See *Implementation Worksheet: Who is involved?* for more information about leadership teams and stakeholder groups.)

How is implementation going?

Setting up data-driven feedback loops

The purpose of this worksheet is to identify and cultivate the information that schools and school systems in your state will need to collect to determine if the formative assessment process is working as planned. Leadership teams should use this information to improve and sustain the K-3 Formative Assessment system over time.

Examples

Below are examples of pieces of information that leadership teams and stakeholders will want to know to ensure that the formative assessment process is working well. Information should be used to improve and strengthen best practices; therefore, please think about how the data will be gathered and who needs to use the data to make changes, as needed, to support the use of the K-3 formative assessment. The table below illustrates some questions state and local leaders will likely want to monitor over time for their K-3 Formative Assessment System and how answers to these questions may inform changes in the formative assessment process.

What information do I need?	How will I get this information?	When (and how often) will I get this information?	How might I or others use this information?
Are my teachers well-trained in the formative assessment process?	- Teacher surveys - Observations of a subset of teachers in the school building	- Immediately after trainings - Periodically throughout the year	- Revise trainings - Provide additional time to practice - Change timing or length of trainings - Provide booster trainings
What challenges are my teachers facing with the formative assessment process?	- Teacher informal feedback - Teacher surveys - Coach/TA staff feedback - Regional TA provider feedback	- During regular teacher team meetings - 30 days and/or 60 days after assessment process starts - Regular coaching meetings - Regular calls with state leadership	- Add supports - Develop necessary resources - Change policies or procedures to address challenges
How is the technology platform working?	- Teacher feedback - Data downloads	- During regular teacher team meetings - Weekly technology platform data checks	- Fix data entry problems - Increase linkages to existing data systems - Provide additional training
Are teachers using the information from the formative assessment to individualize instruction?	- Teacher surveys - Examination of lesson plans - Discussions during regular teacher meetings	- 60 days after assessment process starts - Periodically throughout the year	- Provide specific professional development - Develop necessary resources

What information do I need?	How will I get this information?	When (and how often) will I get this information?	How might I or others use this information?
How are parents feeling about the formative assessment?	Survey and/or discussion with parents at a parent event	Beginning and end of the school year	- Adjust parent-teacher conferences to allow more time to go over assessment results - Modify format of parent reports produced from the technology platform
What do school principals think about the formative assessment?	Principal feedback	During regular calls with state leadership	Adjust policies/procedures to address challenges
How are community partners and other stakeholders feeling about the formative assessment?	Survey and/or discussion during partner or stakeholder meetings	At the end of the first year of implementation	Create a public awareness campaign for the community about formative assessment

Exercise

1. Select three questions you might like to answer for your state. You can use the examples above or come up with other pieces of information you want to know.

2. List the ways that you may be able to get this information (e.g., paper or online survey, discussions, phone interviews).

3. Brainstorm when and how often you might be able to get this information. Think about what meetings may already be in place as well as opportunities you may want to create for this effort.

4. Determine the ways that you or others plan to use the information you gather.

What information do I need?	How will I get this information?	When (and how often) will I get this information?	How might I or others use this information?

Discussion questions

Who will be in charge of collecting and summarizing the feedback provided?

Who needs to see the feedback?

How will the leadership team use the feedback to make decisions?

How will the stakeholders know that their input made a difference? In other words, if changes are made, how will those be communicated to stakeholders?

Do you anticipate any challenges, obstacles, or concerns about collecting feedback about K-3 Formative Assessment implementation? If so, how will you address these?