

## Why Should We Use Formative Assessments?

*Effective use of formative assessment, developed through teacher learning communities, promises not only the largest potential gains in student achievement but also a process for affordable teacher professional development (William & Thompson, 2007).*

*“There is strong and rigorous evidence that improving formative assessment can raise standards of pupils’ performance. There have been few initiatives in education with such a strong body of evidence to support a claim to raise standards.” (Black & William, 1998, p. 20)*

*“Assessment for learning . . . when done well, this is one of the most powerful, high-leverage strategies for improving student learning that we know of. Educators collectively at the district and school levels become more skilled and focused at assessing, disaggregating, and using student achievement as a tool for ongoing improvement.” (Fullan, 2005, p. 71)*

*“Studies have demonstrated assessment for learning rivals one-on-one tutoring in its effectiveness and that the use of assessment particularly benefits low-achieving students.” (Stiggins, 2004, p. 27)*

*“Formative assessments are one of the most powerful weapons in a teacher’s arsenal. An effective standards-based, formative assessment program can help to dramatically enhance student achievement throughout the K–12 system.” (Marzano, 2006, back cover)*

*“Formative assessment is a potentially transformative instructional tool that, if clearly understood and adroitly employed, can benefit both educators and their students . . . formative assessment constitutes the key cornerstone of clearheaded instructional thinking. Formative assessment represents evidence-based instructional decision-making. If you want to become more instructionally effective, and if you want your students to achieve more, then formative assessments should be for you.” (Popham, 2008, p. 3, 15)*