

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium is an organization of member states committed to providing tools and resources that support teaching and learning. The three core components of the Smarter Balanced Assessment System are summative assessments, interim assessments, and formative assessment practices.

Formative Assessment is a **deliberate process** used by **teachers and students during instruction** that provides actionable feedback used to **adjust ongoing teaching and learning strategies** to improve students' attainment of curricular learning targets/goals.



There are four attributes in the Formative Assessment Process, represented graphically as a clover:

- Clarify intended learning
- Elicit evidence
- Interpret evidence
- Act on evidence

Two important components of **clarifying intended learning**, the first attribute of the Formative Assessment Process, are learning goals and success criteria. Learning goals state what students will know by the end of the lesson. They describe “big ideas” or concepts that are transferable and reflect the intent of the Common Core State Standards. Learning goals are written in student-friendly language, beginning with, “I understand.” Success criteria define the evidence that teachers and students use to determine how students are progressing toward the learning goals. They are also written in student-friendly language, but begin with “I can.”

The second attribute of the Formative Assessment Process, **eliciting evidence**, provides the information teachers and students need to determine where students are in their progress toward the intended learning. The evidence should be tightly aligned to the learning goals and is defined by the success criteria. Experts suggest that teachers and students consider student needs, interests, and learning styles when deciding how to elicit evidence so that students have a choice of different ways to meet the success criteria. It's also important to use multiple sources of evidence to draw accurate conclusions about student learning.

Teachers and students **interpret the evidence** they collect to determine where students are in relation to the learning goals and success criteria, identifying what students understand and don't yet understand. Students can independently analyze evidence of their own learning, though they benefit from sharing and discussing their interpretations with teachers and peers. Through careful analysis of the evidence, teachers and peers are able to provide actionable feedback. It is important to note that interpreting evidence is not a single event. Rather, evidence is interpreted in the Formative Assessment Process on an ongoing basis throughout instruction.

In the Formative Assessment Process, **acting on evidence** comes after teachers and students have clarified the learning and elicited and interpreted evidence of the learning. Once the evidence is interpreted, teachers and students use actionable feedback to determine next steps to continue to move learning forward. The steps may not be the same for all students and must take into consideration each student's readiness, interests, and learning preferences.