



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA  
Department of Education

July 25, 2014

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT: Formative Assessment Pilot**

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), in collaboration with the [Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center](#), will conduct a pilot of formative assessment professional development materials beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. Selected school teams will participate in structured activities correlated to online modules developed by the [Center of Standards and Assessment Implementation](#) and will use formative assessment strategies embedded in classroom instruction to enhance student learning. The modules were developed from the work of Dr. Margaret Heritage, noted expert on formative assessment. These modules represent evidence-based practices for promoting formative assessment strategies in the classroom drawn from years of work with teachers; they have been used by educators across the country to support teachers in this process. The results of this pilot will be used to inform the expansion of formative assessment professional development opportunities available from the VDOE for school divisions in the Commonwealth.

Participation in this pilot will be limited to a small number of elementary school teams. At the division level, one contact person to support the expansion of the use of formative assessment in the school division should be identified (Division Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Division Mathematics Supervisor, etc.). At the school level, the team will include a school administrator (principal or assistant principal) and a group of teachers who will meet at a minimum of every two weeks for 60 minutes each session at the participating school for the explicit purpose of the pilot. Teams will work through activities from the formative assessment modules at their home schools, implement activities in their classrooms, and reflect or report results online. A two-year commitment to participation in the pilot is expected of all participants and will be required for completion of all the formative assessment modules and activities. School teams selected for participation will attend one of two meetings, on October 20, 2014, or October 22, 2014. The locations of these meetings will be determined with input from participants.

The responsibilities associated with participation in the pilot are outlined in the [Attachment A](#), "Formative Assessment Pilot Participation Agreement 2014-2015," which is attached for your reference. Schools selected for participation are expected to sign and return this agreement to VDOE by September 5, 2014.

To indicate interest in participation, the school administrator should complete the Formative Assessment Pilot Recruitment Survey no later than August 20, 2014. The link to the survey is located at: <http://www.tinyurl.com/by-08-22-14>. A PDF copy of the survey questions can be found in [Attachment B](#) for your convenience so that you may preview the questions. Selected schools will be notified for participation in the pilot on August 27, 2014.

If you have questions about participation in the formative assessment pilot, please contact the student assessment staff by e-mail at [student\\_assessment@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:student_assessment@doe.virginia.gov) or by phone at

(804) 225-2102.

SRS/SLR/cb

Attachments:

- A. [Formative Assessment Pilot Participation Agreement 2014-2015](#) (Word)
- B. [Formative Assessment Pilot Recruitment Survey](#) (PDF)