



Center for Transforming Learning and Teaching

Making sense of reform. . . bringing the pieces together.



School of Education & Human Development
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER



About Us:

The *Center for Transforming Learning and Teaching (CTLT)* was established within the School of Education and Human Development at the University of Colorado Denver in 2003 to support Colorado educators. Today, CTLT works across the U.S. providing support to states, districts, schools, and individual educators to catalyze and co-create the transformation of learning environments through the use of assessment so that all are engaged in learning and empowered to positively contribute in a global society.

Our Services

CTLT provides a variety of services, to support states, districts schools and individual educators as they engage in efforts to improve practice and student learning outcomes. CTLT services include Professional Development, Coaching, Consultation and Policy Development, and Resource Development. These services are available across a variety of topics.



Professional Development: The learning experiences provided by CTLT are active and “hands-on.” They engage learners in collaboratively constructing meaning of relevant research, developing products that they can use in their own context, trying out practices with feedback from peers and experts, and planning for how they will transfer these practices into their own setting. Learners track and monitor the progress of their own learning over time and provide feedback about their learning to CTLT trainers. CTLT adjusts learning experiences to meet the specific needs and contexts of the learners.



Educator Coaching: CTLT is committed to providing learning experiences that transform practice. We have found that integrating on-site coaching with professional development can deepen teacher learning and increase the likelihood of lasting practice change. The CTLT approach to coaching builds on a cognitive coaching model and incorporates classroom observation, modeling, immediate feedback, and also includes just-in-time support (on-site, or through e-mail, phone, etc.).



Consultation and Policy Development: CTLT staff members bring a background in educational policy and organizational system development at the state, district, and school levels. They are available to educational leaders to provide consultation on the implementation of state and federal policies as well as the development of local policies and procedures.

Resource Development: CTLT works with educational leaders to develop resources customized to their context in support of implementing educational reforms and improvement initiatives.



Learning Topics

CTLT provides professional development, educator coaching, consultation/policy development, and resource development related to various learning topics. In many ways, these topics are over-lapping and services related to different topics can be combined within the local context. They include the following:

Formative Assessment Practice — “A process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students’ achievement of intended instructional outcomes,” (CCSSO, 2006).

Student Learning Objectives for Educator Evaluation — An approach for measuring educator contributions to student learning growth.

Quality Classroom Assessment Practice — Incorporating changes in classroom assessment as part of standards implementation and supporting district development of a comprehensive assessment system.

Improvement Planning/Data-Driven Decision-Making — Developing unified improvement plans, monitoring the implementation of improvement plans and engaging in on-going data-driven decision-making.

Interpreting and Using Data from the Growth Model — Understanding state accountability ratings, and using growth data in improvement planning and principal evaluation.

Standards Implementation — Aligning curriculum and instructional resources, standards-based unit planning that incorporates assessment, and standards-based grading.

Formative Assessment Practice

CTLT services related to engaging in Formative Assessment Practice support educators as they repurpose and/or strengthen their use of assessment (formal and informal) as a tool that supports learning. CTLT considers formative assessment to be “part of everyday practice by students, teachers, and peers that seeks, reflects upon, and responds to information from dialogue, demonstration, and observation in ways that enhance ongoing learning,” (Third International Conference on Assessment for Learning, 2009). This places formative assessment at the core of learning experiences teachers facilitate and in which students engage. The focus of CTLT support for Formative Assessment Practice can be adjusted to reflect the local context and educator learning needs. CTLT support includes professional development for educators and educational leaders, consultation in developing policies and practices to support formative assessment practice, and customized resource development.

Formative Assessment Practice Learning Outcomes:

Clarify learning targets with learners:

- Use language learners comprehend.
- Describe and exemplify success criteria so learners understand.

Use a variety of methods to collect information about learning:

- Use formal and informal assessment methods to collect data about learning.
- Engaging students in questioning regarding their learning.

Use learning data to shape instructional decisions:

- Use assessment results to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction.
- Adapt and revise instruction based on assessment results.

Provide useful feedback to learners:

- Provide learners with descriptive feedback.
- Plan opportunities for learners’ use of descriptive feedback.
- Score and grade in a way that accurately represents students’ learning.

Engage students in peer- and self-assessment:

- Engage learners in providing feedback about the learning artifacts of their peers.
- Engage learners in assessing their own learning.

Support student goal-setting/progress monitoring:

- Engage learners in setting learning goals.
- Support learner monitoring of their own progress towards learning goals.
- Use dialogue to co-construct meaning of formal assessment results.

Student Learning Objectives for Educator Evaluation

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) are one option for districts to measure educators' individually attributable impact on student learning growth that does not require the development or adoption of additional local assessments and the calculation of technically rigorous growth metrics.

More specifically, Student Learning Objectives are a participatory method of setting measurable goals, or objectives for a specific class/course or professional assignment, in a manner aligned with the subject matter taught, and in a manner that allows for the evaluation of the baseline performance of students and the measureable gain in student performance during the instructional period.

CTLT supports districts and states in implementing SLOS by:

- Consulting in the development of policies/practices related to implementing SLOs that integrate the unique local context.
- Co-developing guiding documents (e.g. Handbooks, SLO Examples).
- Providing professional development to educators and educational leaders to build capacity to implement SLOs (on-site and on-line)
- Establishing pilot projects to implement SLOs.
- Providing on-site coaching for educators and educational leaders as they implement SLOs.

SLOs require educators to:

- Recognize and explain the purpose of SLOs as part of educator evaluation and in supporting effective instruction.
- Identify Learning Goals that reflect the “big ideas” of the class/course for the instructional interval (determine appropriate grain size, identify associated standards, evaluate cognitive complexity/Depth of Knowledge, and develop a rationale for the selection).
- Determine how Learning Goals will be measured, what assessment instruments or tasks will be used (recognize the characteristics of quality assessment, align assessment instruments to learning goals and targets, critique assessment tasks and instruments, select quality assessment resources, justify the selection).
- Appropriately score assessment instruments/tasks (recognize different scoring approaches, use high-quality rubrics, score assessment instruments for learning)
- Develop performance targets (select and analyze baseline data, identify performance groups, establish appropriate targets, translate student results into teacher ratings).
- Monitor student learning progress towards Learning Goals (develop learning progressions, identify “critical junctures” to measure student learning, collect data about learning progress, make appropriate instructional adjustments).

Quality Classroom Assessment Practice

Quality classroom assessment practice includes ensuring assessment instruments educators administer (or for which they receive results) provide accurate and usable information about student learning; expanding educators' data collection strategies to incorporate formal and informal strategies, and ensuring educators accurately and efficiently analyze and interpret the information gained about their students' learning. It also includes educators using assessment results effectively to shape and inform instructional practice and to engage students in their own learning processes.

CTLT support for quality classroom assessment practice includes the following:

- Consulting with district and school leaders on establishing systems of assessment that are comprehensive and adequately respond to the varied ways that educational stakeholders use assessment results, aligning the purposes and uses of assessment resources, and establishing policies and practices related that support effective classroom assessment practice.
- Developing customized resources to support effective classroom assessment practices.
- Providing professional development and coaching for educators to enhance their classroom assessment practice.

Effective Classroom Assessment Practice includes educators

- Recognizing how assessment can support learning
- Using quality assessment instruments
- Incorporating informal data collection strategies
- Accurately interpreting results from assessments administered outside the classroom
- Using assessment to shape instructional decisions
- Engaging learners in formative practice

Effective classroom assessment practice requires districts and schools to:

1. Provide a system of assessment resources that are comprehensive and balanced
2. Provide assessment resources (e.g. instruments, tasks, rubrics) aligned with valued learning objectives and consistent with how associated student results will be used
3. Establish policies consistent with effective assessment practice (e.g. standards-based grading, limiting use of classroom assessment for evaluation)

Improvement Planning/Data-Driven Decision-Making

CTLT is committed to the use of performance data to improve student learning and the transition from planning as “an event” to planning as “continuous improvement.” CTLT has worked closely with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) since 2009 to build capacity to implement the Educational Accountability Act and school and district Unified Improvement Planning (UIP). CTLT staff support a variety of local stakeholder as they interpret state accountability information and engage in improvement planning. This includes school and district staff members, school and district accountability committees, and local school boards.

CTLT services related to improvement planning include:

- Consulting with district and school leaders on establishing data systems to support improvement planning.
- Facilitating leadership teams as they engage in Unified Improvement Planning (up to 4 days).
- Providing professional development on the following:
 - Interpreting School and District Performance Framework Reports (½ day)
 - Unified Improvement Planning Basics (1/2 to 1 day).
 - Developing a Unified Improvement Plan (up to 4 days).

CTLT services related to monitoring the progress of improvement plans and data-driven decision-making include:

- Consulting with district and school leaders on the development of processes (scheduled time to engage in inquiry) and structures (meaningful data reporting) to support data-driven decision-making and progress monitoring
- Providing professional development and coaching on using collaborative inquiry to analyze and interpret data (data-driven dialogue) for progress monitoring/on-going data-driven decision-making.
- Facilitating on-site progress-monitoring sessions
- Developing customized resources to support data-driven decision-making and progress monitoring

Data-Driven Decision-Making and Progress Monitoring Learning Outcomes:

- Identify interim assessment results used in collaborative inquiry.
- Select/adapt data reports to support collaborative inquiry.
- Develop implementation benchmarks to measure application of action steps.
- Identify structures (e.g. data teams, PLCs) to organize staff for collaborative inquiry.
- Develop a calendar for progress-monitoring sessions.
- Engage in collaborative inquiry including: predicting/identifying assumptions about data, exploring/analyzing results, explaining/interpreting results and determining next steps.

Interpreting and Using Data from the Growth Model

CTLT has been a key partner with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment to build capacity and provide support to educational leaders in implementing the Colorado Growth Model. As other states also implement the Colorado Growth Model, CTLT has provided similar support outside of Colorado. CTLT services related to Growth Model implementation include the following:

- Strategic planning for building stakeholder capacity to use data from the Colorado Growth Model;
- Designing and customizing Growth Model learning resources; and
- Direct provision of professional development for educators and educational leaders.

Growth Model Learning Outcomes:

- Use Growth Model terminology appropriately.
- Explain student Growth Model metrics.
- Read and interpret student-level growth model views/reports.
- Explain school and group-level growth metrics.
- Read and interpret school-level and group-level Growth Model views/reports.
- Use growth data to identify trends in school-level performance over time (at least 3 years).
- Set annual growth performance targets.

Standards Implementation

CTLT supports districts as they make standards meaningful for instruction and for learners, creating the foundation for standards-based instruction and using assessment to support learning. CTLT support for districts and schools focuses on aligning curriculum and instructional resources, engaging in standards-based unit planning that incorporates assessment, and implementing standards-based grading. CTLT services include the following:

- Consulting with educational leaders on the development of district policies and procedures that support standards-based unit planning and standards-based grading.
- Facilitating on-site curriculum development and alignment of instructional resources.
- Incorporating assessment into standards-based unit plans (aligned with and as an expression of district curriculum).
- Professional development and on-site coaching focused incorporating assessment into unit plans (including planning summative and formative uses of assessment,) and standards-based grading.

CTLT within Colorado

CTLT has been the lead partner working with the Colorado Department of Education since 2009 to implement the Educational Accountability Act (SB09-163). In the past two years, CTLT has provided learning experiences to over 2000 educators and educational leaders in the following Colorado schools, districts and BOCES:

Abraham Lincoln High School, DPS
Adams County School District 50
Arickaree School District
Aurora Public Schools
Boulder Valley School District
Buffalo School District
Canon City Schools
Cheraw School District 31
Colorado Springs School District 11
Creede School District
Crowley County School District
Del Norte School District
Denver Public Schools
Douglas County School District
Elizabeth School District
Ellicott School District
Falcon School District 49
Free Horizon Montessori Charter School
Gilpin County School District
Holly School District
Holyoke School District
Huerfano School District
Jefferson County School District
Karval School District

CTLT across the U.S.

In the past few years, CTLT has expanded to engage with other state departments and districts outside of Colorado, including the following:

- Belle Plaine School District in Minnesota
- Clark County School District in Nevada
- Hawaii Department of Education
- Maine Curriculum Leaders Associate
- Mississippi Department of Education

Our Partners

La Jara Elementary
Lake County School District
Las Animas School District
Lewis-Palmer School District
Manual High School
Moffat County School District
North Conejos School District
Otis School District
Pinnacle Charter School
Platte Valley School District
Poudre School District
Primero School District
Pueblo City Schools District 60
Ranum Middle School
Scott Carpenter Middle School
Sheridan School District
Sierra Grande School District
South Central BOCES
Thompson School District
Trinidad High School
Trinidad School District
Weld County School District
Weld RE-9 School District



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Pricing

Within Colorado:

On-site training: \$1500 per day (30 people)

On-site coaching: \$1200 per day

(Travel outside metro area and materials not included.)

Consultation: \$1,000 per day

Outside of Colorado:

On-Site training: \$1700 per day (30 people)

On-Site coaching: \$1500 per day (Travel and materials not included.)

Consultation: \$1200 per day (Not on site.)

CTLT Institutes: \$150 per person per day (Price includes materials.)

For more information:

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