May 28, 2015

Dear County and District Superintendents:

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

The California Department of Education (CDE) is extending a professional learning opportunity to teams of teachers to increase their understanding of classroom formative assessment practices through participation in an on-line course. The course is called Formative Assessment Insights. It was developed by the nationally respected expert in formative assessment, Margaret Heritage, and WestEd, and funded by the Hewlett Foundation. There is no charge for educators to participate. The purpose of the Formative Assessment Insights on-line course is to help teachers become skillful users of formative assessment in their classrooms in the context of college and career readiness.

The course consists of five modules for teachers to participate in over six months, from September through February of 2016. For the most part, teachers may participate on-line at times convenient to them. Teachers should expect to spend approximately two hours per week for a total of 40 hours over the six months. Teachers will participate in teams of six to eight teachers, to share experiences as well as give and receive feedback on their respective formative assessment implementations. (If desired, teachers may receive course credit.) A course syllabus is attached and provides additional information about the course and its timeline.

There are 400 spaces available across the state, or approximately 50 teams of teachers. When reviewing applications, the CDE will consider the extent to which:

- The team includes teachers of English learners.
- The team’s teachers have begun to implement the English language Arts/English-language Development (ELA/ELD) framework.
- The team’s local educational agency or members are positioned to build capacity with additional teachers at the school, district, or regional level through regional networks, etc.

We hope you and your staff will discuss this opportunity with your teachers as soon as possible.
This is a wonderful opportunity to strengthen the implementation of the ELA/ELD framework and strengthen the effective use of the resources in the Digital Library as we scale up professional learning in the areas of formative assessment process and practices.

**Applications must be submitted by June 26th, 2015, so there is a very short timeline for districts or schools to identify teams of teachers.** Teams will be notified of acceptance on or around July 15, 2015. This notification will be followed by a Kickoff Webinar in early September.

Thank you for your consideration of this professional learning opportunity. If you have questions regarding this subject, please contact Aileen Allison Zarea, Professional Learning Support Division, by phone at 916-319-0587 or by email at aalisonzarea@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

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