

Report on the 2016-17 FAME Research & Development Activities

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Introduction

During the 2016-17 school year, the Michigan Assessment Consortium (MAC) Formative Assessment for Michigan Educators (FAME) Research & Development Team (MR&D) carried out several activities in support of the FAME program on behalf of the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). The overall goal of these activities was to provide information to the FAME leadership team (MDE and the regional leads) to understand what FAME participants need in order to enhance their learning, how the FAME resources are used, and what resources might be created to improve the program for the future.

The MR&D team proposed in April 2016 to address the following objectives in its work during the 2016-17 school year:

1. Lead the writing of the revised guide to the FAME formative assessment process and other FAME resources, working with MDE FAME director and the FAME Leads.
2. Support the FARROP pilot (if Michigan is selected as a participating site) as necessary to obtain additional examples of classroom video to enhance and expand the MAC FAME formative assessment library.
3. Undertake the investigation of the ways in which building or district administrators facilitate, support, ignore, or hamper the work of FAME Learning Teams
4. Continue to work on the *Formative Assessment Self-Reflection Guide* with the regional Leads and returning Coaches to implement this resource.
5. Post selected formative assessment classroom videos, annotated as necessary, and organized to be most useful to users (e.g., by formative assessment component and element, grade level, and content area) on the new FAME website. Based on the desired versus actual video, determine additional video needed and plan how to obtain it.
6. Review the print resources found on the Measured Progress FAME website and catalog all of the print resources found on it. Then, curate these resources to determine which ones to offer in the future on the new FAME website.
7. Complete the editing of a previously-submitted draft journal article in order to prepare it for publication.
8. Monitor the work of the Coaches and their Learning Teams, through periodic monthly update surveys, collecting information on the activities of each Coach and provide the information to the Leads assigned to the Coaches in both summary and individual Coach format.
9. Conduct the annual survey of FAME Coaches.
10. Conduct the annual survey of FAME Learning Team members.
11. Continue work on the *Student Guide to Self- and Peer-Assessment* intended to provide definition and support for student self- and peer-assessment activities in support of teachers who wish to employ these formative assessment tactics with their students.
12. Work with MAC FAME teachers and others to develop resources to provide guidance to classroom teachers on how to provide descriptive feedback to students.
13. Participate in national formative assessment meetings to learn more about formative assessment and to provide external insights to FAME participants.
14. Participate in FAME project planning meetings with the Department and with the Leads.
15. Participate in meetings to transition the FAME program to FAME 2.0 after winning the contract to support FAME. These activities are not formally a part of this contract and thus are not described in this report.

The MR&D team carried out specific activities to address each of these objectives. This report provides a summary of the work of the MR&D team, as well as the outcomes obtained from the data collected by the MR&D team and others. This report is organized in two major sections. The first section provides an overview of the accomplishments of the MR&D team from this past school year. The second and larger section provides more detailed information about the work of the Research Team, providing considerable information about the FAME outcome data that was gathered and resources created by the Research Team.

Overview of the Work of the MAC FAME Research & Development Team in 2016-17

The MR&D team carried out a number of development and evaluation activities related to objectives listed above. A summary of these is provided below.

1. During such of the school year, the MR&D team was occupied with writing, reviewing, editing, producing, and printing of new guides for the FAME program. These included the *Introduction to FAME for Coaches*, *FAME Learning Guide*, and the *FAME Learning Guide–Coach Edition*. These as well as the *Formative Assessment Self-Reflection–A Source-Guide for Formative Assessment Practices* and the *Formative Assessment Self-Reflection Coding Booklet*, will be used in the FAME program starting in Fall 2017.
2. The MR&D team helped write the proposal to WestEd (and SCASS FAST) to secure funding for a field test of the Formative Assessment Rubrics, Reflection and Observation Tools to Support Professional Reflection on Practice (FARROP) guide. Michigan was one of about 10 states that received funding this activity during the 2016-17 school year. The MR&D team supported the work of the two lead districts – Oakland Schools and the Ann Arbor Public Schools – in the field test of four dimensions of the FARROP guide with Algebra I teachers from about 11 school districts. Specifically, the MR&D team assisted in the formative and summative evaluations of the field test, and prepared a thorough evaluation report on the success of the field test at the conclusion of it.
3. The MR&D team continued the study of how administrators support the participation in FAME and the work of FAME Learning Teams. This was through a question added to the periodic Coach survey (see below) and through interviews with Coaches at FAME events where the Coaches gathered.
4. The MR&D team field conducted an online webinar on the *Formative Assessment Self-Reflection Guide*. Several returning Coaches were in attendance or viewed the webinar recording at a later time. The *Guide* was used by several teachers and feedback on it was provided to the MR&D team. The feedback was informative and was used both to enhance the *Guide* and improve the manner in which the *Guide* will be rolled out in the 2016-17 school year and beyond.
5. Videos collected in the 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years were catalogued according to the dimensions of formative assessment contained in the *Formative Assessment Self-Reflection Guide*. These will become a useful resource for Coaches and Learning Team members who are new to the FAME program (to show them what each component of formative assessment looks like when implemented in different content areas and grade levels) as well as for those who have been involved in the FAME program for two or more years (providing video samples that could be used in training to use the *Guide*). The best videos were selected for inclusion on the new FAME website.
6. Print resources contained on the former FAME website were also catalogued according to the dimensions of formative assessment contained in the *Formative Assessment Self-Reflection Guide*. These will also become useful resources for Coaches and Learning Team members who are new to the FAME program as well as those who have been involved in the FAME program for two or more years. The best resources were selected for inclusion on the new FAME website.
7. The MR&D team completed the revision of a journal article previously submitted for publication, based on a case study featuring the implementation of the FAME program and the use of the *Formative Assessment Self-Reflection Guide*.
8. The MR&D team conducted periodic update surveys of each of the FAME Coaches about the

activities of their Learning Team during the previous month(s). Surveys were sent to Coaches in October, November, January, February, March and May. These update surveys were summarized across all of the Coaches for each Lead, as well as for each Coach assigned to a Lead. The updates provided the Leads with information about Coaches' activities and needs, so that the Leads could be more responsive to meeting Coaches' needs for resources and assistance in working with their Learning Teams.

9. The annual survey of FAME Coaches was conducted in the spring, using the sets of questions that have remained virtually unchanged over the past several years. The surveys continue to show the value of FAME to Coaches, as well as the utility of the FAME model for improving teachers' instruction and students' learning.
10. The annual survey of FAME Learning Teams was also conducted in the spring, using the sets of questions that have remained virtually unchanged over the past several years. Like the surveys of Coaches, the Learning Team survey continues to show the value of FAME to Learning Team members, as well as the utility of the FAME model for improving teachers' instruction and students' learning.
11. The MR&D team began work on a *Student Guide to Self- and Peer-Assessment*, intended to provide definition and support for student self- and peer-assessment activities in support of teachers who wish to employ these formative assessment tactics with their students. Individual research team members drafted sections of the *Guide* and provided drafts for team review.
12. Given the activities listed above, the MR&D team did not have time to begin the development of a teacher resource on providing descriptive feedback to students. This is an activity that is scheduled to start in 2017-18 school year.
13. Representatives of the MR&D team participated in national formative assessment meetings (the SCASS Formative Assessment for Students and Teachers meetings) and national conferences (the CCSSO National Conference on Student Assessment).
14. The MR&D team participated in project planning meetings with the Department and with the Leads, lending our insights about research and development strategies in helping to improve the FAME program.
15. The MR&D team also participated in meetings to transition to FAME 2.0. After winning the contract to support FAME. This involved working to create a new website, produce new FAME resources, and support all FAME event functions, as well as continue and expand the research and development work. These activities are not formally a part of this contract and thus are not described in this report.

Summary of Research Findings

1. WRITE AND PRODUCE SEVERAL NEW GUIDES FOR THE FAME PROGRAM

Described above.

2. SUPPORT AND EVALUATE THE FARROP FIELD TEST

The MR&D team developed a pre- and post-project survey, collected information from participants following each project meeting, and surveyed participants before each subsequent meeting to provide project facilitators with information on the needs and successes of the participating teachers. At the conclusion of the project, the MR&D team prepared a comprehensive project evaluation report that provided summaries of all of the information collected throughout the field test. The evaluation report showed strong support for this work, and an even stronger desire on the participants to continue their learning.

3. CONTINUE INVESTIGATION OF HOW ADMINISTRATORS SUPPORT PARTICIPATION IN FAME

Throughout the school year, the majority of the Coaches reported that their administrators were either supportive or highly supportive. For the time period of December through March, 71% of

Coaches reported that their administrators were either supportive or highly supportive. In contrast, only 13% of Coaches reported that their administrators were either a little supportive or not at all supportive. A number of activities carried out by administrators in support of FAME Coaches are listed in the complete report.

4. CATALOG AND CURATE VIDEOS COLLECTED IN PAST SCHOOL YEARS

Described above.

5. CATALOG AND CURATE PRINT RESOURCES FROM THE FORMER FAME WEBSITE

Described above.

6. CONDUCT AN ONLINE WEBINAR ON THE *FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT SELF-REFLECTION GUIDE*

Described above.

7. COMPLETE THE REVISION OF A JOURNAL ARTICLE PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED FOR PUBLICATION

Described above.

8. CONDUCT PERIODIC UPDATE SURVEYS OF FAME COACHES

Overall, there were ten different types of support that the Coaches requested more frequently than any others. In the 2016-2017 school year, the top ten requests for support were in the following categories: Direction and Guidance; Resources; Learning from Other Teams; Articles and Research; Online Resources; Videos; Continued Lead Support; Time/Scheduling; Formative Assessment Tools and Strategies; and, Elementary Resources. The top ten requests were similar to the top ten requests for support in the 2015-2016 school year. Additional information is provided in the complete evaluation report.

9. CONDUCT ANNUAL SURVEYS OF FAME COACHES

The end-of-year surveys indicate once again that the Coaches felt that participation in the FAME formative assessment learning activities was of high value, really helping them to learn more about the uses of such practices in their classrooms, to use formative assessment practices more frequently in their classrooms, as well as helping Learning Team members to do so as well. They appreciated the support provided by the Lead assigned to them, although they did have several areas where they requested assistance (as borne out in the periodic surveys). Coaches spoke to others about the program frequently, another sign of its value and importance to them.

10. CONDUCT ANNUAL SURVEYS OF FAME LEARNING TEAM MEMBERS

The end-of-year surveys of Learning Team members indicated once again that those who participate in the FAME program are energized by their work on their Learning Team. Many see the payoff in higher student achievement and engagement, and thus feel the spark that led them to seeking teaching as a career. Learning Team members report greater understanding of formative assessment, increased use of the components of formative assessment in their classrooms. Learning Team members frequently spoke to others about the FAME program, another sign of its value and importance to them.

11. PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT MEETINGS

The MR&D director participated in the CCSSO SCASS FAST project meetings held during the school year, as well as the CCSSO National Conference on Student Assessment.

12. PARTICIPATE IN DEPARTMENT AND LEAD PROJECT PLANNING MEETINGS

The MR&D team participated in project planning meetings with the Department and with the Leads.

DETAILED REPORT OF THE WORK OF THE MAC RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT TEAM IN 2016-17

The full report of the MAC Research & Development Team in 2016-17 provides more detailed information about the work of the MR&D team, provides considerable information about FAME outcomes gathered, as well as the resources created by the research team. The complete report is divided into several categories.

1. Write and produce several new guides for the FAME program.
2. Support and evaluate the FARROP field test.
3. Continue the Investigation of How Administrators Support Participation in FAME
4. Catalog and curate videos collected in past school years.
5. Catalog and curate print resources from the former FAME website.
6. Conduct an online webinar on the *Formative Assessment Self-Reflection Guide*
7. Complete the revision of a journal article previously submitted for publication
8. Conduct periodic update surveys of FAME Coaches
9. Conduct annual survey of FAME Coaches
10. Conduct annual survey of FAME Learning Teams
11. Participate in national formative assessment meetings
12. Participate in project planning meetings with the Department and with the Leads

The complete report contains summaries of each of these work activities of the MR&D team for 2016-17 FAME program.