
'One-stop shop' helps teachers build, use formative assessments

[Curriculum Pathways](#). In addition, there's now a link to [Thinkfinity](#) instructional resources on the CIITS homepage.

The system also contains the [Kentucky Standard for World Language Proficiency](#), [Early Childhood Standards](#), [Kentucky Technology Standards](#), [ISTE National Educational Technology Standards](#) and [AASL Library Standards](#).

CIITS is available anytime, anywhere to all Kentucky public school educators with an Internet-connected computer. Video tutorials and training materials are available in CIITS to help teachers and administrators learn to use the system; more formal training is also being offered.

"The main goal of CIITS is to create a one-stop shop to support teachers in the instructional process. But it's actually what they do with the data in the system as a follow-up that's the critical piece," McCowan said.

Formative assessments

Craft and Stewart took training to learn how to use the formative assessment tools within CIITS in December as part of a group of 250 educators in 17 early adopter districts, McCowan said.

Teachers then were asked to create formative assessments for their students using the item bank in the system.

McCowan said teachers also can create their own questions and assessments using CIITS. Then, students take the test online or using an approved student response system, and the results are immediately scored and displayed in CIITS, he said.

[David Tate](#), who teaches 7th-grade math at Louisa Middle School (Lawrence County), wasn't familiar with CIITS before his formative assessment training. He is impressed.

"Some fields have a large database of questions already created that are linked to state standards. Thankfully math has a rather large amount of questions to pull from that have helped me create assessments for my students," he said.

Additional questions will be added to the item bank as the system grows, McCowan said.

"Also, the training showed us how to create our own assessments using questions we have created ourselves. Having the flexibility to blend the material in the assessments in an easy manner has been very beneficial."

Tate said the student mastery and item analysis reports allow him to see where his students are struggling.

"For example, if I see that 80 percent of the students who missed a particular question all chose the same incorrect answer, I am able to see a common mistake. If I have had given a regular formative assessment on paper, I may not have seen the pattern," he said. "The item analysis of the questions just lends itself to allowing teachers to have a greater understanding of their students' responses."

Tate said that while some teachers may say using the system costs them time tweaking lesson plans based on formative assessment results, he doesn't see it that way.

"Now I am starting to discover that CIITS is reducing the amount of time needed to create, grade and analyze assessments," the fourth-year teacher said. "It is nice to finally find a tool that saves time and actually improves the quality of analysis."

Using CIITS is affecting how other teachers teach, too.

http://www.kentuckyteacher.org/features/2012/03/06/2012-03-06-one-stop-shop-%e2%80%99-helps-teachers-build-use-formative-assessments/

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Teachers also can access videos to enhance their understanding and teaching of the [Kentucky Core Academic Standards for Mathematical Practice](#); a sample mathematics formative assessment lesson from the Kentucky Leadership Networks; and videos from Kentucky classrooms demonstrating highly effective teaching and learning he said. Videos and other resources from the [School Improvement Network](#) on teaching the common core standards are also available through CIITS.

“Once you log in, you have everything you need right there, with standards, instructional materials and student-level data, and then jump to the formative assessment process,” McCowan said.

The final component to CIITS will be the Educator Development Suite. McCowan said the state received federal Race to the Top money to add this [teacher and leader effectiveness](#) module. Current plans call for it to be field tested in the 2012-13 school year and be available statewide at the beginning of the 2013-14 school year.

Principals will store teachers' evaluations in CIITS, and teachers will be able to see their performance and track their goals, McCowan said. Teachers can then simply click on areas where they need improvement and find professional development materials within CIITS or opportunities to register for more training.

MORE INFO...

[CIITS log-in](#)

[KDE CIITS help page](#)

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http://www.kentuckyteacher.org/features/2012/03/%e2%80%9e-stop-shop%e2%80%99-helps-teachers-build-use-formative-assessments/