



Foreword

Formative Assessment for California Teachers (FACT) is a performance-based, formative assessment and support system developed collaboratively by practitioners and researchers throughout the state, under the direction of the California Department of Education and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The system is the next generation of California's long-standing formative assessment system, California Formative Assessment and Support System for Teachers (CFASST). The system showcases assessment processes originally developed in California by California educators working with both ETS and West Ed research agencies.

The development of FACT is an example of how teachers, universities, research agencies, and state agencies can work together to produce useful, high quality products to support the professional development of teachers. The contributions of these agencies, and dedicated California educators are gratefully appreciated. Thanks to all of the participating teachers who have participated in this development effort and who are about to participate in FACT.

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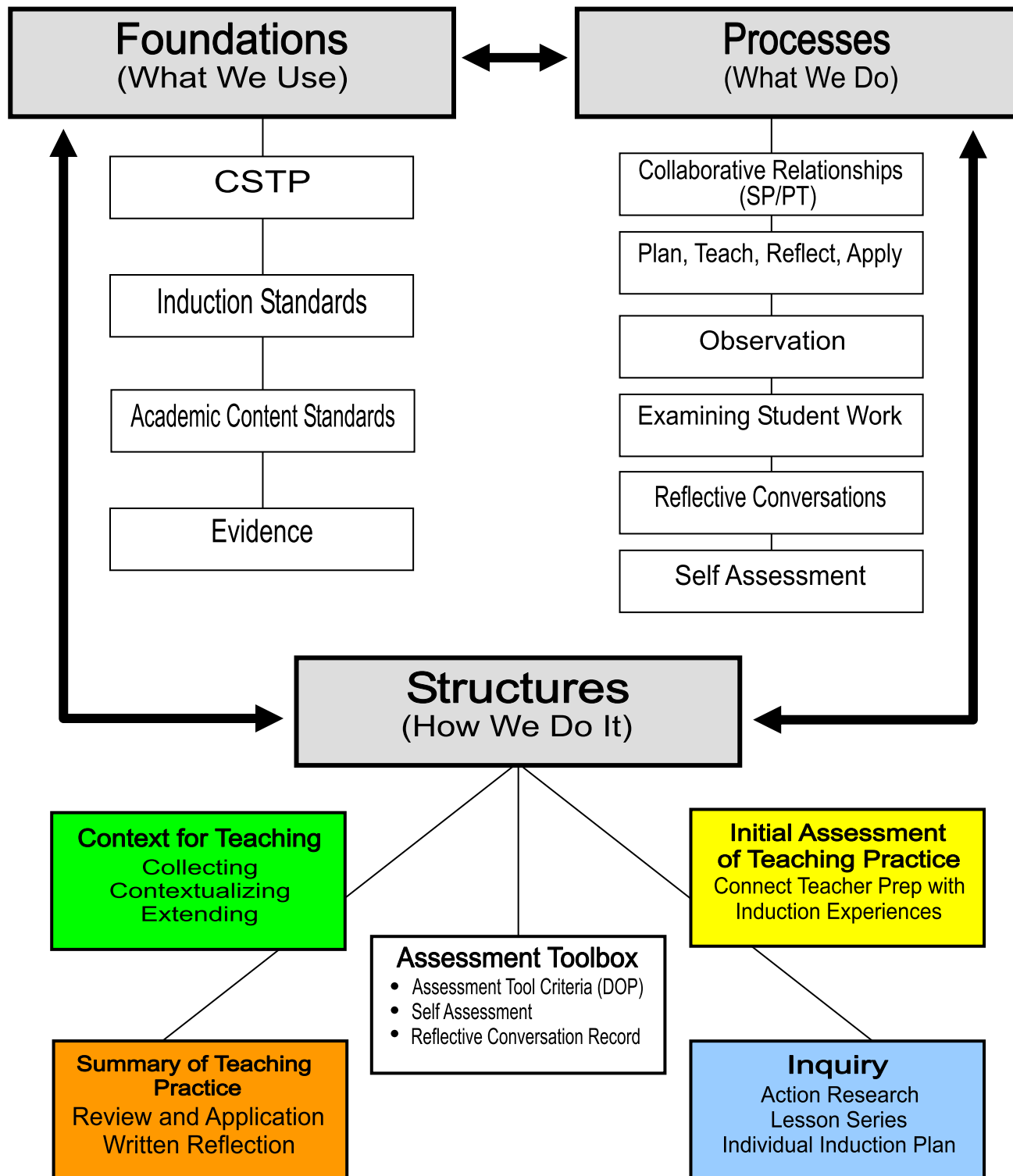
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The **F** **A** **C** **T** System



FACT Conceptual Framework





What is Action Research?

Action research specifically refers to a disciplined inquiry done by educators with the intent that the research will inform and change their practice in the future. This research is carried out within the context of the teachers' environment—that is, with the students and at the school in which the teachers work—focusing on questions that deal with educational matters at hand.

Participants examine their own educational practice systematically and carefully, using the techniques of research. Action Research is based on the following assumptions:

- Teachers work best on problems they have identified for themselves;
- Teachers become more effective when encouraged to examine and assess their own work and then consider ways of working differently;
- Teachers help each other by working collaboratively in search of solutions to everyday real problems;
- Teachers look for ways to improve instruction and increase student achievement; and
- Teachers work with colleagues to improve their professional practice.

The process of action research assists educators in assessing their needs, documenting the steps of inquiry, analyzing data, and making informed decisions that can lead to desired outcomes. Rather than dealing with the theoretical, action research allows practitioners to address those concerns that are closest to them, ones which they can influence and change.

What does it mean to be a reflective learner?

Reflection is the key to growth, the means of reliving or recapturing experiences in order to make sense of them, to learn from them, and to develop new understandings and appreciation. The word “reflection” comes from the Latin “*reflectere*,” meaning to bend back. In teaching, reflection is the act of stepping back and examining what teachers are doing in the classroom and how their actions affect student learning. This means asking the difficult questions:

- “Are the students engaged?”
- “Are they understanding the concepts?”
- “Are they able to apply the knowledge learned?”

Reflective practitioners seek answers to such questions. The answers provide a window into an understanding of teaching.

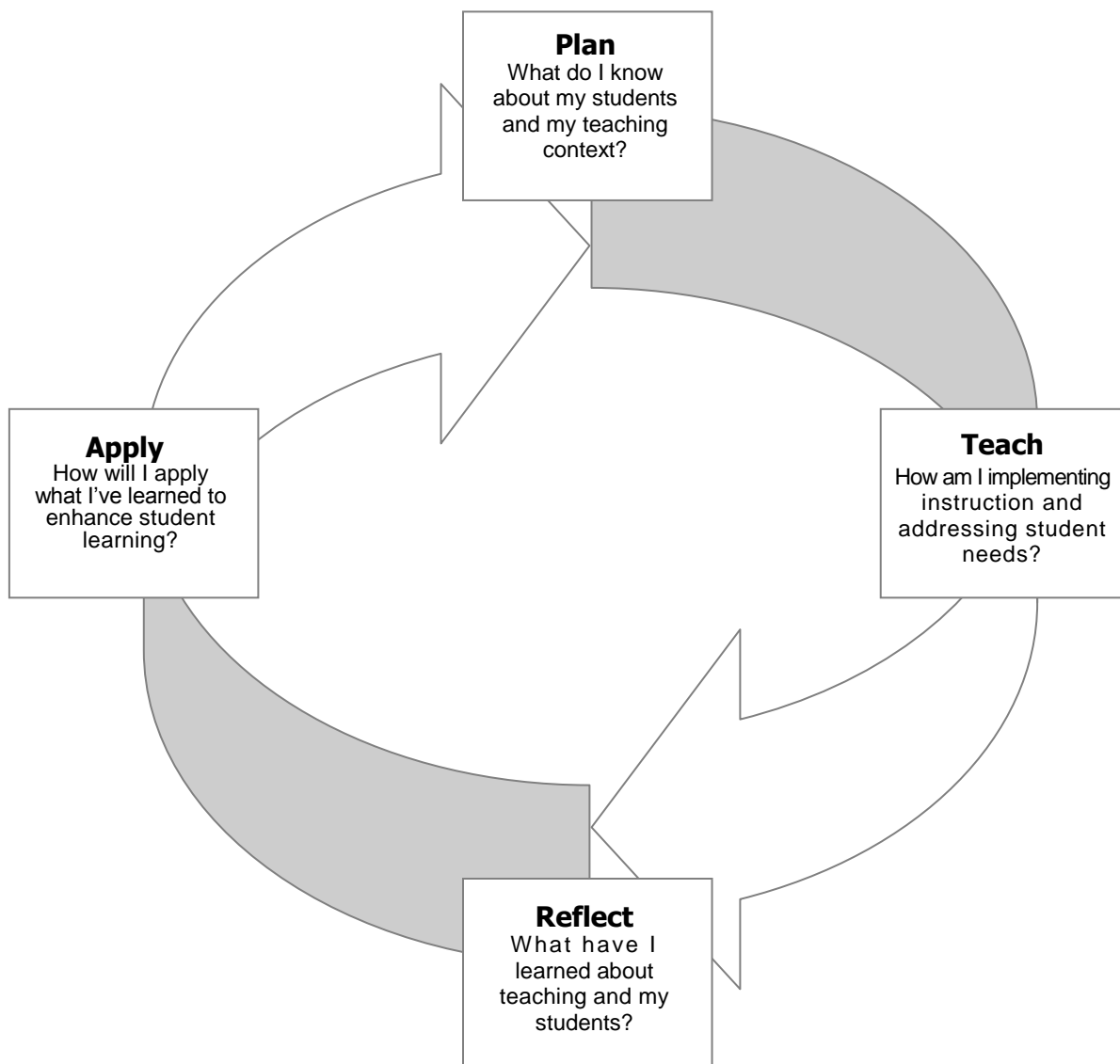
Thoughtful examination requires honest self-analysis and open communication with colleagues. Therefore, the formative assessment process also includes reflective writing and conversation. FACT reflection is aimed at action, using the information that teachers gather through the formative assessment process to identify areas of strength and growth, and ultimately improve teaching.



What is the Plan-Teach-Reflect-Apply Cycle?

The Plan-Teach-Reflect-Apply cycle is the structure that underlies all the activities of the FACT system. As participating teachers progress through each FACT module, they will be following a delineated cycle of: planning for instructional activities; teaching a specific lesson, series of lessons, and/or groups of students; reflecting upon that teaching experience; and applying new knowledge to future practice.

The process provides a way for participating teachers and support providers to identify teaching strengths and areas for growth based on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession, the K-12 Academic Content Standards for Students, and the Descriptions of Practice.



* Adapted from W.E. Deming, *Out of the Crisis*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Center for Advanced Engineering, (1986).



What are the foundations of FACT?

A conceptual chart of the framework of the FACT formative assessment system and the interrelation of its components can be found in the Resources section.

1—California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP)

The California Standards for the Teaching Profession is a set of six standards that represent, in a comprehensive manner, the knowledge, skills, and abilities possessed by an accomplished teacher. (See Resources).

Not in any priority, the six teaching standards are:

1. Engaging and Supporting All Students in Learning
2. Creating and Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning
3. Understanding and Organizing Subject Matter for Student Learning
4. Planning Instruction and Designing Learning Experiences for All Students
5. Assessing Student Learning
6. Developing as a Professional Educator

2—Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Professional Teacher Induction Programs in California (Induction Standards)

Adopted by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing and supported by the State Superintendent of Education, the standards establish the expectations for new teacher induction. The Induction Program Standards (IS) within Category B: Teaching All Students, identifies what teachers should know and be able to do. (See Resources).

3—K-12 Academic Content Standards for Students and California Frameworks

The California State Board of Education has adopted rigorous standards that describe the content students must master by the end of each grade level. These standards are supported by the frameworks that describe curriculum and instructional practices, guide the development of assessment tools and methods to ensure that each student's progress is measured, and suggest specific strategies to promote access to appropriately challenging curriculum for students with special needs. Participating teachers should check with their program directors regarding procurement of appropriate content standards and frameworks.

4—Evidence

Data, collected during FACT modules, includes observation, student work, lesson plans, and recorded reflections. Evidence of the CSTP and induction standards is generated as FACT modules are completed. These evidence pieces provide the focus for reflective conversations between support providers and participating teachers and may be used to demonstrate Induction Standards work.



What processes will be used in FACT?

Collaborative Relationships (SP/PT)

Participating teachers will be partnered with veteran educators who have been trained to support novice teachers. Support providers will use the skills of cognitive coaching, mentoring, and modeling to support participating teachers' growth.

Plan, Teach, Reflect, Apply (PTRA)

The PTRA cycle is used in each module to help participating teachers grow as professionals and meet the needs of students. Practicing the PTRA cycle with their support providers will promote growth in daily practice and will lead to increased student achievement. See the graphic on page 8.

Observations

Support providers will observe participating teachers as they teach, gathering evidence during an instructional session. Following each observation, they will conference together, sharing observation evidence and other classroom data (e.g. student work samples, lesson plans) to inform future practice. Participating teachers will have the opportunity to observe skilled veterans at work in the classroom as well.

Examining Student Work

Participating teachers will focus on student achievement by examining students' work. They will analyze student assessments to guide their planning and instruction. Participating teachers will better understand how to differentiate instruction by focusing on specific students, and carefully analyzing their work and the modifications made in instruction. A close examination of student work will help participating teachers become more astute observers.

Reflective Conversations

In each module, participating teachers will be asked to pause and step back from their practice, to thoughtfully examine what they do, how they do it, and how it affects student learning. The system provides frequent opportunity for participating teachers to reflect on FACT activities, capture current thinking, and note possible changes in their future practice.

Self-Assessment (Descriptions of Practice)

Periodically, participating teachers will reflect upon and assess their current level of practice. The Descriptions of Practice (DOP) are intended to provide a road map for professional growth, indicating the level of current practice and describing what experienced practice can be. Using evidence collected throughout the FACT process, participating teachers and their support provider will complete the DOP. Reflections and conversations regarding the marking and placements on the DOP will influence decisions regarding changes in instructional practices and student achievement in their classroom.



Glossary And Acronyms



Academic Content Standards- standards designed to encourage the highest achievement of every student, by defining the knowledge, concepts, and skills that students should acquire at each grade level.

Action Research- A systematic form of inquiry that is collective, collaborative, self-reflective, critical, and undertaken by the participants of the inquiry [McCutcheon, G. & Jung, B. (1990)]; a process in which participating teachers examine their teaching practice using the techniques of research. By using research procedures, teachers learn to resolve teaching challenges.

Academic Performance Index (API) - A numeric index (or scale) that ranges from a low of 200 to a high of 1000; measures the academic performance and growth of schools; a school's score on the API is an indicator of a school's performance level. The statewide API performance target for all schools is 800. A school's growth is measured by how well it is moving toward or past that goal. A school's API Base is subtracted from its API Growth to determine how much the school improved in a year.

Adequate Yearly Performance (AYP)- A statewide accountability system mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 that requires each state to ensure that all schools and districts make Adequate Yearly Progress.

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)- A college preparatory program for students who are often economically disadvantaged and underachieving; AVID places academically average students in advanced classes; levels the playing field for minority, rural, low-income, and other students without a college-going tradition in their families; and targets students in the academic middle — B, C, and even D students — who have the desire to go to college and the willingness to work hard.

Beginning Teacher Support & Assessment (BTSA)- A state-funded induction program, co-sponsored by the California Department of Education (CDE) and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) designed to support the professional development of newly-credentialed, beginning teachers and help them fulfill the requirements for the California Clear Multiple and Single Subjects Credentials

California Department of Education (CDE)- The state agency that coordinates the work of public schools in California; The Core Purpose of the California Department of Education is to lead and support the continuous improvement of student achievement, with a specific focus on closing achievement gaps. The CDE jointly administers the BTSA program with the CTC

California English Language Development Test (CELDT)- A test that measures the English language development of English language learners in listening, speaking, reading, and writing; Any pupil whose primary language is other than English as determined by the home language survey and who has not previously been identified as an English learner by a California public school or for whom there is no record of results from an administration of an English language proficiency test, shall be assessed for English language proficiency with the test within 30 calendar days after the date of first enrollment in a California public school, or within 60 calendar days before the date of first enrollment, but not before July 1 of that school year.

California Formative Assessment & Support System for Teachers (CFASST)- The formative assessment system used in California since 1996; CFASST will be phased out by 2010 and replaced with FACT.

Context for Teaching- A module of FACT in which participating teachers learn about their teaching environment and the resources and challenges it offers them and their students. With a support provider, participating teachers will discuss prompts focused on their classroom, school, district, and community. The information gathered will guide classroom decision-making and help identify areas for professional growth.

Closure Conference – An evidence-based dialogue between participating teachers and support providers at the conclusion of each FACT Inquiry.

Colloquium – An event during which people come together to share and learn.

California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP)- Standards based on current research and expert advice pertaining to best teaching practice; The CSTP are organized around six interrelated categories of teaching practice and represent a holistic, developmental view of teaching. They are intended to meet the needs of diverse teachers and students in California. The CSTP are defined and explicated in the Standards Booklet and the Resources for Professional Practice.

Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) – The state agency that establishes policy and regulations for teacher education and credentialing in California; CTC jointly administers the BTSA program with the California Department of Education. The purpose of the Commission is to ensure integrity and high quality in the preparation, conduct and professional growth of the educators who serve California's public schools.



DAIT (District Assistance Intervention Team) – A team whose focus is at the district level; providers both investigate and recommend corrective actions for improving teaching and learning.

DOP (Descriptions of Practice)- One of the state's assessment tools for FACT, the DOP defines four levels of teaching performance on each of the six Standards of the CSTP. There is one set of DOP for use within each year of FACT. As participating teachers use the DOP, they will indicate the date of assessment of current practice.

English Learner (EL)- "a child who does not speak English or whose native language is not English and who is not currently able to perform ordinary classroom work in English..." *Education Code* Section 306

Evidence- Data produced by participating teachers, support providers, or students that documents a teacher's performance and can be linked directly to one or more of the elements of the CSTP and/or Induction Standards and demonstrates teaching to the CSTP, Content and Induction Standards.

Formative Assessment for California Teachers (FACT)- a reflective assessment and

support system designed to help participating teachers develop their practice; The purpose of formative assessment is to improve teaching as measured by each standard of the *California Standards of the Teaching Profession (CSTP)* and in relation to the state adopted academic content standards, performance levels for students and the Induction standards. Formative assessment is an ongoing learning process that follows the cycle: plan, teach, reflect and apply. FACT is designed to assist in meeting the learning needs of students while helping participating teachers grow as professionals and feel greater confidence as teachers. Year one was field tested in 07-08 and piloted 08-09.

Formative Assessment-1. A process of professional judgment used to determine an individual's level of performance in a particular area based on evidence, standards, and criteria; 2. Is characterized by multiple measures of teaching, collaboration with colleagues, focus on classroom practice, reflection together with a trained support provider about evidence, using specific criteria, and may be presented as evidence for clear credential completion.

Foundations- Components that FACT is built upon: California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP), Academic Content Standards, Induction Standards, and Evidence.

Framework- Curriculum frameworks describe and define the content and instructional program teachers are expected to deliver in a subject matter at each grade level.

Gifted and Talented Education (GATE)- Provides funding for local educational agencies to develop unique education opportunities for high-achieving and underachieving pupils in California public elementary and secondary schools who have been identified as gifted and talented. Special efforts are made to ensure that pupils from economically disadvantaged and varying cultural backgrounds are provided with full participation in these unique opportunities. Authorized by *Education Code (EC)* sections 52200-52212.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP)- A detailed, structured plan of action that informs and guides the delivery of instruction and related services for the student with identified special needs; is an agreement between stakeholders that supports the academic, emotional, and behavioral growth of a student with identified special needs. Teachers are legally accountable to follow the goals and adaptations that are written in the IEP.

Individual Induction Plan (IIP)- A plan that builds upon participating teachers' assessed strengths and needs, defines goals, and outlines specific action plans for facilitating growth and development. Support providers collaborate with participating teachers in its development and implementation. IIPs are based in part on formative assessment results, and are reconsidered and revised according to participating teachers' emerging needs. IIP primarily address the unique needs of participating teachers including consideration of their prior preparation and experience, and may include common topics and activities for all participants in the program. Participating teachers experience an integrated system of support and assessment through implementation of the IIP.

Induction- A clearly specified process for making professional credential recommendations; verifies that participating teachers complete all requirements before recommending them for the credential

Induction Standards (IS)- Establish the expectations of the Commission, the State Board of Education, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction for new teacher induction. Only induction programs that meet these standards may recommend candidates for clear teaching credential.

Initial Assessment of Teaching Practice- A FACT module designed for participating teachers to compare and contrast the outcomes and processes of teacher preparation programs with those of induction programs; to help participating teachers discern strengths and areas for growth that will be used in subsequent inquiries of teaching practice; and to identify resources and types of support needed to develop and implement their Individual Induction Plan. During this module, participating teachers consider their prior knowledge and skills from teacher



preparation, their current context for teaching, and evidence gathered in a classroom observation of the participating teacher by a trained support provider.

Inquiry-1. A research based cycle of standards focused (CSTP, Academic Content Standards, Induction Standards) processes to explore an area of teaching practice. In collaboration with a support provider, participating teachers will assess their practice against a set of specific criteria and select a focus area. Within the cycle participating teachers gather information, collaborate with colleagues, develop a **plan**, and **implement** that action plan, **reflect** on collected evidence and **apply** new learning to future practice. 2. A FACT module that includes these cycles and processes.

Institutes of Higher Learning (IHE)- Colleges and Universities

K-W-O Chart- is designed to elicit participating teachers' input for the observation process. Participating teachers record: "What I already know about my classroom practice," "What I want to know about my classroom practice" and "What I want my support provider to observe." Support providers use this information to guide data collection during the observation.

Module- A short course of study that is combined with others to form a larger structure or system

MOU- (Memorandum of Understanding)-Lists all requirements/expectations for various stakeholder groups and is used to form partnerships for professional development experiences between BTSA programs and Institutes of Higher Learning (IHE).

Observation- 1. A process in which trained support providers observe participating teachers as they teach, collecting evidence of participating teachers' teaching practice and students' learning; support providers record what the students and teachers say and do. The observation may be formal or informal. In an informal observation, there is no shared lesson plan or even a pre-conference. In a formal observation, participating teachers share lesson plans with support providers before the lesson and meet with support providers after the lesson to reflect on it and analyze student work generated to inform future practice. 2. A process in which participating teachers observe colleagues to gain information about teaching practice. Support providers often attend with participating teachers to strengthen the process.

Participating Teacher (PT)- An educator who is new to the teaching profession, teaching on a preliminary credential; or, an educator who is teaching on a preliminary credential who was prepared out of state and has less than five years of experience; or, an educator teaching on an intern credential; an educator participating in a BTSA induction program

for the purpose of accumulating evidence of professional growth in relation to the State-adopted content standards, CSTP and induction standards; and will submit evidence of completion of individual induction plans, and documentation of completion of clear credential requirements to the BTSA Induction program in order to be recommended for the clear credential.

Plan, Teach, Reflect, Apply Cycle (PTRA)- A process that provides a way for participating teachers and support providers to identify teaching strengths and areas for growth based on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession, the K-1 2 Academic Content Standards for Students, and induction standards. This cycle was adapted from William Deming's cognitive action cycle; PTRA is embedded in the FACT system.

Processes- A series of actions directed toward a particular aim that produce change or further development of a teacher's practice.

Professional Learning Communities- 1 .Teams of professionals who collaborate around student data and work interdependently to refine instructional practices and improve student; Working interdependently in learning communities:

- Provides equal access (equity, or universal access) to quality teaching by strengthening each teacher's practice through collaboration, coaching, and shared planning Ends teacher isolation (thus reducing burnout)
- Helps teachers "work smarter" by sharing the tasks of analyzing data, creating common assessment tools, and devising other strategies for both students who struggle and those who need more challenge
- Enables teachers on grade-level (interdisciplinary) teams to devise lessons that teach reading and writing across the curriculum
- Provides teacher professional growth and job satisfaction through intellectual renewal, new learning, and cultivating leadership

Reflection- The act of stepping back and taking a fresh look at one's practice and how it is affecting student learning. Reflection is the key to growth, the means of recapturing experiences in order to learn from them. Reflection is built into each FACT module & Induction standard activity.

Response to Intervention (RtI)- a process that considers a student's response to research-based intervention as part of the evaluation procedure for eligibility for special education services.

Reflective Conversation- A structured conversation between support providers and participating teachers, focused on teaching issues, completed for the purpose of enhancing teaching practice.



Researched Based Instructional Practices-

Scientifically based instructional methods that equip teachers with tools that help them better reach children, avoid burnout, and improve their classrooms' culture of learning and achievement. These practices bring the best teaching approaches and programs to children who might fail without them. They challenge children and interest them in learning, setting them on the path to success in school and in life. They have achieved proven results in a variety of classrooms across the nation.

School Assistance Intervention Team (SAIT)- A team of educators with specific expertise in improving reading/language arts and mathematics achievement in low-performing schools, created to investigate and provide intensive support to state-monitored schools in improving student learning. Schools deemed as state-monitored receive federal funding to support costs of activities to implement the Corrective Actions to areas identified by the School Assistance & Intervention Team.

School Accountability Report Card (SARC)-

Information provided annually by California public schools to the community allowing the public to evaluate and compare schools for student achievement, environment, resources and demographics.

Skill Building- The continued development of teachers' pedagogical knowledge, higher level thinking skills, and classroom-based strategies to improve their instructional practice

Summary of Teaching Practice- A FACT module that is composed of a reflection on the participating teachers' teaching year; Through this process, participating teachers review the results of Inquiries, consider the collection of evidence, identify teaching practices that had the greatest effect on student learning, and assess the impact of the formative assessment process on teaching practice.

Support Provider (SP)- Has an awareness of beginning teacher development; is willing to participate in support provider training; is willing to engage in formative assessment processes; is willing to discuss assessment information and share instructional ideas and materials with participating teachers; has effective interpersonal skills and is willing to work collaboratively with participating teachers; has demonstrated a commitment to their own professional growth and learning; and is an excellent professional role model.

Special Populations- Students who have been identified with one or more of the thirteen disability categories defined by Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; students who are identified as gifted and/or talented; students who have been identified by the CELDT as English Learners. At least one focus student must be identified as a special populations student.

Special Education (SPED, Sp. Ed.)- Instruction that is specially designed to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability—at no cost to parents. Specially designed instruction means adapting the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction:

To meet the unique needs of the student with a disability

To ensure access to the general education curriculum so a student can meet educational standards that apply to all children within the jurisdiction of the public agency.

Student Study Team, Student Success Team

(SST)- A site-based, collaborative team of teachers, specialists, parents, and the student who meet to focus on the needs of the student and create a path to successful learning. The SST illustrates how teachers can work with local expertise, students, and parents to develop tactics that empower students to play an active role in their education. Thoughtful implementation of Student Success Plans can mean the difference between a student “slipping through the cracks” and successfully learning the curriculum.

Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA)-

An assessment of teaching performance designed to measure the candidate's knowledge, skills and ability with relation to California's *Teaching Performance Expectations* (TPE).

Teacher Performance Expectations (TPE)-

a set of outcomes specifically for pre-service candidates; Much like the California Standards for the Teaching Profession, Teaching Performance Expectations address multiple, overlapping knowledge and skill domains, and provide the basis for course design and assessment for candidates.

Universal Access-

is intended to ensure that all students must have equal access to high quality curriculum and instruction to comply with federal and state laws so that students may meet or exceed state content standards. Under federal regulations, states must ensure universal access to a standards-based education for special education students. The requirement stipulates that teacher and district wide assessments and classroom assignments must be universally accessible. If students have processing difficulties or if they lack specific academic vocabulary, school personnel must make reasonable accommodations.

504 Plan-

Based on a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities, Section 504 ensures that a child with a disability has equal access to an education. Students with 504 plans may have adaptations and/or modifications to their general education plan. Teachers are legally accountable to follow the requirements of 504 plans.



Acronyms

API	Annual Performance Index
AVID	Advancement Via Individual Determination
AYP	Adequate Yearly Performance
BTSA	Beginning Teacher Support & Assessment
CELDT	California English Language Development Test
CFASST	California Formative Assessment & Support System for Teachers
CSTP	California Standards for the Teaching Profession
DOP	Descriptions of Practice
EL	English Learners
FACT	Formative Assessment for California Teachers
IEP	Individualized Education Plan
IHE	Institutes of Higher Learning
IIP	Individual Induction Plan
IS	Induction Standards
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
PT	Participating Teacher
PTRA	Plan, Teach, Reflect, Apply
SARC	School Accountability Report Card
SP	Support Provider
SPED/SpEd	Special Education
SST	Student Study Team
TPA	Teaching Performance Assessment



SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Documentation Source	Code
Teaching Performance Assessments	TPA
Evidence of Prior Experience	PE
Context for Teaching	CFT
Observation	O
Lesson Plans (Essential Components for Instruction)	LP
Reflection	R
Student Work	SW