Keeping Learning on Track®
Frequently Asked Questions

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What is Keeping Learning on Track (KLT)?
Keeping Learning on Track (KLT™) is a sustained, multi-year professional development offering that builds teacher expertise in formative assessment practice. It is unified by one big idea:

Teachers and students using evidence of learning to adapt classroom behavior to meet immediate learning needs minute-to-minute and day-by-day.

KLT supports teachers to adopt classroom formative assessment strategies that research has proven will powerfully increase student learning. It’s based on an extensive body of research regarding what truly makes a difference in teacher practices, and ultimately, in student learning.

KLT is built on five key strategies:

1. **Sharing Learning Expectation**: Clarifying and sharing intentions and criteria for success
2. **Questioning**: Engineering effective classroom discussion, questions and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning
3. **Feedback**: Providing feedback that moves learners forward
4. **Activating Self**: Activating students as the owners of their learning
5. **Activating Peers**: Activating students as instructional resources for one another

Three professional development workshops, which present the initial learnings regarding KLT content and processes, are followed by regular, sustained, job-embedded engagement in school-based Teacher Learning Communities. KLT provides two years of curriculum for every teacher.
Why is KLT unique?

KLT curriculum is based on Black & Wiliam's *Inside the Black Box*, and an extensive body of research on formative assessment practice that is proven to accelerate student learning.

KLT is a mature, ready-to-go offering with multiple years of content for teachers and teacher leaders at a reasonable per teacher price.

KLT will enable your district to jump start your teachers’ formative assessment practice after just three days of professional development.

Development of KLT was led by international formative assessment expert Dylan Wiliam while he was at the Educational Testing Service (ETS). Wiliam is Emeritus Professor of Educational Assessment at Institute of Education, University of London, and was the co-author, with Paul Black, of a major review of the research evidence on formative assessment published in 1998. He has subsequently worked with many groups, in both the UK and the USA, on developing formative assessment practices.

Is there evidence that the KLT approach is valid and effective?

The foundations of the KLT program are based on what research studies have determined are the most effective strategies to drive student learning.

**Twenty-two studies over the past 28 years** have shown conclusively that formative assessment strategies improve student learning in the classroom (see Research Summary below). Among the key findings:

- Collecting evidence of student understanding enables teachers to plan, evaluate and adapt their instruction to meet their student’s learning needs.
- When teachers provide quality feedback and students act on that feedback learning improves.
- Ongoing, collaborative professional development can have a sustained impact on teaching practices.

Where else is KLT being used?

NWEA acquired KLT from Educational Testing Service (ETS) in July 2011. Current users include the following school districts:

- Colorado - Pueblo City District 60
- Kansas - Lawrence Public Schools
- New Jersey - Mercer County, Morris, and Alexander Hamilton School Districts
- New York - New York City Public Schools
- North Carolina - Winston-Salem Forsythe County Schools
- Vermont - statewide RFP in 2009

NWEA will launch KLT in the United States in January 2012.
What if we are already doing PLCs?

PLCs and TLCs have a complementary relationship, with TLCs occurring before learning strategies are implemented, and PLCs occurring after.

For educational communities that are already utilizing a PLC, the addition of a TLC practice is highly beneficial.

**Teacher Learning Communities (TLCs)** help teachers learn to incorporate formative assessment practices in the classroom and build student empowerment. Central to TLCs are regular teacher-led, teacher-managed meetings designed to help teachers increase their teaching expertise in formative assessment practice. The dynamic is one of mutual support, where teachers coming together become accountable to each other, offering help and exchanging information.

**Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)** involve teacher groups gathering on a regular to review assessment results and discuss ways to act on the data. The primary goal in this process is interpreting data; by considering their students’ performances on assessments, teachers hope to understand what they can do to improve student performance in the future.

How is KLT Implemented?
What are the components of the KLT program?

KLT starts with Professional Development for teacher leaders:

- **Day One – Foundations of Formative Assessment**
  *Options:*
  - Delivery by Dylan Wiliam (the entire district can attend)
  - Delivery by KLT Facilitators (up to 40 teacher leaders per facilitator)

- **Days Two and Three - Preparing Teacher Leaders to lead TLCs**
  *Options:*
  - Coaching and Observation Days
  - Leadership Preparation Day

KLT continues with two years of curriculum and TLCs.

- **KLT Materials Components**
  - Teacher Materials: Two years of curriculum and resources
  - Teacher Leader Materials: Presentations, two years of curriculum, TLC Agendas, more

Does KLT have to start at the beginning of a school year?

KLT can start any time of the year, and at any level the school deems appropriate. For example, some schools have started with a KLT volunteer pilot in January, and then rolled out the program to every teacher in the following fall. Some districts start in the middle school, then roll out the program over time to the high schools and elementary schools.

Are KLT professional development modules in a required sequence?

Yes. To engage in the KLT program effectively, participants need to start with the foundational training, closely followed by two teacher leader training days.

Where do NWEA assessments fit in with KLT?

The Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) suite of products and programs enable educators to adjust instruction using assessments that can work together:

- Through KLT training and practice teachers learn formative assessment practices that synch with instruction to provide in-the-moment information.
- Measures of Academic Progress® (MAP®) and Measures of Academic Progress for Primary Grades (MPG) provide interim data on student learning and measure growth.
- Instructional resources help turn data into insight, and inform KLT-based action in the classroom.

When used in conjunction with MAP, KLT complements the assessment package for a district. MAP provides three useful benchmarks and KLT helps teachers maximize learning between those assessments.
About Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)

Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) is a global not-for-profit educational services organization headquartered in Portland, Oregon. NWEA partners with educational organizations worldwide to provide computer-based assessment suites, professional development and research services. NWEA’s Measures of Academic Progress® (MAP®) computer adaptive assessments leverage more than 30 years of research into student growth that informs decision-making at every level, from classrooms to boardrooms. NWEA’s research center, The Kingsbury Center at NWEA, uses the Growth Research Database to drive original research with universities, foundations and policymakers.

The NWEA mission is *Partnering to help all kids learn*. The organization was created by educators, for educators, and is mission-driven to provide reliable, instructionally useful data to help position kids on their optimal learning path. Learn more at [nwea.org](http://nwea.org).

About Measures of Academic Progress® (MAP®)

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) is a computer adaptive assessment, backed by decades of research, that provides rich, scalable data you can trust to measure growth, inform instruction, project proficiency and help you make challenging decisions on a systemic level. NWEA also provides a K-2 assessment, MAP for Primary Grades (MPG).

MAP’s validity and reliability rest on the firm foundation of the RIT scales – short for Rausch unit. The scale provides an equal unit of measurement, much like inches on a ruler, and provides the core instrument for correlating student achievement levels to actual test items. The RIT scale also enables NWEA to develop tests with deep item pools that measure student achievement independent of grade level.

NWEA researchers were among the original architects of the scale, and continue to provide a depth of knowledge, experience and empirical research that helps ensure consistent data, year in, year out.

Research Summary

- Research has shown that ongoing, collaborative professional development can have a sustained impact on teaching practices (Butler, Novak, Jarvis-Selinger, & Beckingham, 2004; Franke, Carpenter, Levi, & Fennema, 2001). Research on assessment for learning (AFL) supports these findings indicating that teachers can incorporate these ideas into their practice when provided with an introduction to a research-based framework followed by ongoing collaborative professional development (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, & Wiliam, 2003). Additionally, preliminary research on KLT shows promising results (Wylie et al., 2007).

- Research shows that collecting evidence of student understanding enables teachers to plan, evaluate, and adapt their instruction to meet their students’ learning needs (Carpenter, Fennema, Peterson, Chiang, & Loef, 1989; Fuchs, Fuchs, Hamlett, & Stecker, 1991; Jones & Krouse, 1988; Peterson, Carpenter, & Fennema, 1989).

- As teachers begin to implement AFL by identifying and sharing learning expectations, structuring opportunities for students to take ownership of their own learning, and helping students become instructional resources for one another, students will support one another and take responsibility for their own learning (Brookhart, Andolina, Zusa, & Furman, 2004; Fernandes & Fontana, 1996; King, 1992; Mercer, Dawes, Wegerif, & Sams, 2004; Mercer,
When teachers provide quality feedback, and students act on that feedback, learning improves (Bangert-Drowns, Kulik, Kulik, & Morgan, 1991; Black & Wiliam, 1998; Nyquist, 2003; Ramaprasad, 1983; Sadler, 1989).

As teachers use evidence of learning to adapt instruction, research shows that student engagement improves as well as their overall achievement (Bergan, Sladeczek, Schwartz, & Smith, 1991; Fuchs et al., 1991; Fuchs & Fuchs; 1986). In addition, studies on peer- and self-assessment show improvements in student learning (Fontana & Fernandes, 1994; Fuchs et al., 2000; Mercer et al., 2004; White & Frederiksen, 1998) as do studies examining the use of provision and feedback (Bangert-Drowns et al., 1991; Elawar & Corno, 1985; Nyquist, 2003).