

How to Choose a Formative Assessment System



To create enduring formative assessment practices, administrators, teachers, and students require the necessary tools to easily access information for student learning. Systems should provide timely and specific feedback to students, schools, and districts. The core features to evaluate when selecting a formative assessment software system are:

Content

Environment

Analysis & Reporting

Support

#1 Most important factor:

do your peers say the system was responsible for improved student performance, or not?

Content

- ✓ Ability to quickly align to state and/or common core standards
- ✓ Ability to import existing tests and items from MS Word or PDF into the new system
- ✓ Flexible subject tagging
- ✓ Ability to tag items by Bloom's Taxonomy and Webb's Depth of Knowledge
- ✓ Ability to create Multiple-Choice, Multi-Answer, Open Response, and Gridded Response Questions
- ✓ An easy way to get existing assessment content into the new system (without manual typing or copy/paste)
- ✓ Access to a district custom Item Bank that is private to the district and doesn't get usurped by corporate interests



Rapid Formative Assessment

Environment

- ✓ Seamless functionality across PC/Mac, Chromebook, iOS, Android, and Paper
- ✓ 24/7 Cloud-based platform independent of school network downtime
- ✓ Ability for teachers to securely work on their own mobile devices

Analysis & Reporting

- ✓ Easy access to reports that teachers need for PLC collaboration
- ✓ Common assessment and roll-up reporting
- ✓ Instant in-class access to exit ticket reports and other reports in real-time, whether students use digital or paper

Support & Infrastructure

- ✓ Support from a single dedicated account manager who can be reached on a direct phone line... not frustrating automated systems
- ✓ Vendor's willingness to respond to feature requests in a reasonable amount of time
- ✓ No requirement for additional spending on implementation partners
- ✓ Roll-out plans that are short and account for changing needs across semesters and years

“An assessment is really only a formative assessment when teachers glean evidence about student performance, interpret that evidence, and use it to provide teaching that is more likely to benefit student learning than the instruction those teachers would have delivered if they had continued forward without using what they learned through the assessment.”

–Dylan Wiliam¹

About Design by Educators

Since being founded in 2013 Design by Educators has grown into a medium-sized education technology company focused on mobile-centric solutions for using data from rapid formative assessments to drive personalized instruction.

Its core product - **Quick Key Mobile** - is used by more than 60,000 educators and 2 million students in 50 countries.

Quick Key has produced measurable results for its customers, improving outcomes on state exams by up to 100% and measurably improving teacher moral and student engagement with instant real-time feedback in the classroom, and district-level mastery tracking.

¹Wiliam, Dylan. "What is assessment for learning?", *Studies in Educational Evaluation* 37, (2011): 3-14.