Rethinking Teacher Supervision and Evaluation

Overview

• Why conventional supervision/evaluation isn’t working
• A four-part plan
• Broader definition
• Each part necessary but not sufficient
• Each part interdependent!
• Clickers to get your theories and reactions…
What is your role?

1. Principal
2. Assistant principal
3. Teacher
4. Union official
5. Instructional coach
6. Central office
7. Consultant
8. Graduate student
9. Professor
10. Other
Brazosport (Texas) Independent School District Closes the Achievement Gap

Source: Brazosport Independent School District.
New York Schools 7th-grade ELA Percent Proficient & Above, SES
What do you think accounts for the wide variance in lower-SES schools?

1. Differences in class size
2. Tough discipline
3. Quality of teaching
4. Quality of principals
5. Sense of mission
6. Curriculum content
7. Parent involvement
8. Upkeep of building
9. Teachers’ credentials
10. Staff morale
FIFTH GRADE MATH SCORES ON TENNESSEE STATEWIDE TEST
BASED ON TEACHER SEQUENCE IN GRADES 3, 4, 5
(Second Grade Scores Equalized)

Test Scores by

- Students with 3 Least Effective Teachers: 44
- Students with 3 Average Effective Teachers: 79
- Students with 3 Most Effective Teachers: 96
The Effect of Teachers Accumulates

Fourth-graders of all abilities who have three effective teachers in a row will pass seventh-grade math test.
• Five consecutive years of good teaching closes the achievement gap (Hanuschek et al, 2005)

• The chances of a student getting five consecutive years of good teaching:
  1 in 17,000 (Walsh, 2007)
Conclusions

• There’s a strong tendency for the gap to widen.
• A few schools and districts are closing the gap.
• Teaching is the key variable.
• Effective teaching narrows the achievement gap.
• Especially when students have it year after year.
• Ineffective teaching widens the gap.
• So the moral and pedagogical challenge is to get effective teaching in every classroom every day!
• **Hiring** effective teachers really matters

• **Dismissing** ineffective teachers, with due process
Top 2 ways to improve teaching?

1. Hire superstars, leave them alone
2. During-the-year supervision
3. End-of-year evaluation
4. Professional development
5. Help from colleagues
6. Observing model classrooms
7. Expert content coaching
8. Backwards curriculum planning
9. Data-driven instruction
10. Merit pay for test-score gains
Evaluation has become a polite, if near-meaningless matter between a beleaguered principal and a nervous teacher. Research has finally told us what many of us suspected all along: that conventional evaluation, the kind the overwhelming majority of American teachers undergo, does not have any measurable impact on the quality of student learning. In most cases, it is a waste of time.

Mike Schmoker, 1992

Except for a few instances, the traditional evaluation process is exhausting and fruitless.

Kathleen Elvin, Brooklyn principal, 2008

Principal evaluation of teachers is a low-leverage strategy for improving schools, particularly in terms of the time it requires of principals.

Richard DuFour & Robert Marzano, 2009
Your reaction to these statements?

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree
The principal’s challenge – how to supervise and evaluate 900 lessons
What is a principal to do?

- Pray
- Rely on professionalism and skill of teachers

**Not enough!** To run effective schools, principals must:

- Sample accurately with limited administrative time
- Positively influence teaching and learning
- Use evaluations to assure quality

But how?
Saints, cynics, and sinners

- **Saints** spend 8+ hours per teacher.
  - Pre-observation conference, observation, write-up, post-conference

- **Cynics** bang out observations/evaluations.
  - Tedious, won’t make much difference, but…

- **Sinners** *don’t do them* (except when the heat is on).
  - Usually get away with it. The evidence…
Sample of a Third-Year Teacher:  

Teacher: Francine Fourth  
School: Sample  
Grade/Subject: 4  

STANDARDS  
I. Currency of Curriculum  
II. Effective Planning and Assessment of Curriculum and Instruction  
III. Effective Management of Classroom Environment  
IV. Effective Instruction  
V. Promotion of High Standards and Expectations for Student Achievement  
VI. Promotion of Equity and Appreciation of Diversity  
VII. Fulfillment of Professional Responsibilities  

Narrative  
Francine is in her third year at Sample School, moving to the 4th grade this year after one year in the Learning Center. Francine agreed to teach 4th grade when there was uncertainty about the availability of the Learning Center position. Although the Learning Center position eventually became available, Francine honored her commitment to 4th grade. She did so with high spirits and a great deal of work and preparation, and she has met with significant success. Children in her class are consistently productive, engaged and thoughtful with one another. All of Francine’s colleagues find her a team player. When Francine is asked to do something, her response is thoughtful and framed in terms of what is most helpful to the children. Not surprisingly, I have received numerous comments from parents such as, “Caroline adores Ms. Fourth—this is her best year in school” and “We just had our parent conference, and I was impressed with how well Francine knows Max as a person and as a student.”  

I. Currency of Curriculum  
Francine takes initiative around learning curriculum (claim and judgment). Last summer, she took a week long class at Northeastern University in order to prepare for the Math Investigations curriculum (which she was teaching for the first time this year). Francine calls on her experience teaching 4th grade at Lincoln School two years ago, and in fact met with her teaching partner from Lincoln in preparation for this assignment. Francine also works constructively with the other 4th grade teacher at Sample and has accessed the resources and expertise of the 4th grade teacher she is replacing this year. Francine also makes effective use of the Curriculum Coordinators. For example, she worked closely with the Science Coordinator in planning for the botany unit she taught at the start of this year. She met with the Language Arts Coordinator to plan both writing and spelling programs. She is likewise meeting with the Social Studies Coordinator (evidence of the claim above). As a result of Francine’s knowledge about current curriculum expectations, students learn all the required competencies (impact statement).  

Francine has been thoughtful about the state comprehensive assessment test as well, seeking to integrate strategies that are called for throughout the year. (See observation write-ups of 11/5/00, 11/24/00 and 12/21/00.)
II. Effective Planning and Assessment of Curriculum and Instruction

Francine has the ability to plan for a wide range of students within the confines of each lesson (claim and judgment). For example, during the human body unit, some students were expected to learn all of the parts of the cell, as well as the function of various types of cells. Other students were required to read material with a partner and draw and label a cell. If there are twenty math problems, some students are expected to do all of them; others a limited number. There are spelling programs for children learning ten words a week, children learning fifteen words and children who are working on challenge words (evidence).

Within each unit, each lesson meshes with the next in a seamless manner (claim/judgment). Because of the level of organization that Francine builds into each lesson, children are able to function quite independently (claim/judgment/impact statement). All of these characteristics were observed during a math lesson on November 5th.

Although the class just described utilized mixed-ability groups, Francine also utilizes performance-level groups as appropriate. The next step in Francine's development is the use of rubrics for student assessment. I recommend Francine focus next year's work with the curriculum coordinators on the development of assessment rubrics.

[The text in Box A at the end of this evaluation contains an excerpt from the November 5th observation report that supports the claims, judgments and impact statements in this part of the evaluation. See the section in this chapter titled “Time-Saving Tips for Supervisors and Evaluators” (page 98) for additional time-saving ideas.—William Ribas]

III. Effective Management of Classroom Environment

Francine is a successful manager in the classroom. So much of what happens looks like it is happening “by magic,” but every moment is the result of careful planning (claim and judgment). The class is structured in “teams” that rotate monthly. Teams have a variety of ways to earn points for working cooperatively and productively together. Francine uses a range of mechanisms, including homework charts on which students mark off their assignments with small stickers. There are rewards such as lunch with the teacher given for a certain number of days of handing in homework on time. One of the funniest encounters I had with a child this year was with a girl from Francine's class who had left her backpack on the bus. She was unconcerned about her lunch, money and other personal possessions, but she was driven to tracking the backpack down because her homework was in it and this child was determined to maintain her perfect record (impact statement and evidence). Of course, all of this works because Francine's expectations are both challenging and doable at the same time (claim and judgment); because Francine checks with students to make sure that they understand what to do in numerous ways (claim and judgment); because all of the routines are predictable; because Francine speaks to her class with the utmost respect (claim and judgment). An observation of a science class demonstrated Francine's ability to manage a class most effectively.

Once again, this was a well organized, thoughtful class. Francine built on previous assignments—i.e., information gathering and making posters—and was moving the children to the next level of...
application—how you would teach this information to somebody else. The posters and cards (from previous classes) were well prepared, so the kids all pretty much had the tools at hand to complete today's assignment. Each step of the research project built beautifully on the steps that preceded it. Francine is excellent at anticipating breaks to momentum and because of this, things that could become problems (i.e., who is going to be the recorder in a group, what to do about missing information, what to do about absent students) are avoided. As a result, this class was very productive; children talked in their groups in an animated, yet productive, way.

[Box B at the end of this evaluation, contains an excerpt from the December 21st evaluation report that supports this part of the evaluation.]

IV. Effective Instruction
Francine sets clear goals, and uses these as a basis to assess instruction on a daily, weekly and monthly basis (claim and judgment). For example, Francine gives a weekly math assessment to review concepts taught that week. She corrects the assessment over the weekend and then on Monday divides the class into two groups; students who need to review concepts work with the special education teacher, while Francine does a supplementary lesson with the rest of the class. Francine uses the idea of pre- and post-assessments in other areas of the curriculum as well. Students are asked to draw or write on what they think about a topic (i.e., the parts of a plant or bee, what a Native American looks like) before a unit begins. As illustrated above in the description of the science class, Francine concludes units by frequently having children teach what they have learned to someone else. Francine is also skilled at using a range of instructional strategies. For example, Francine uses whole-class books, book groups, independent reading and reading aloud in her reading program. She incorporates teacher-directed lessons, hands-on activities and practice and application, as appropriate. This range of instructional approaches was evident in a math class noted in an observation on November 24th.

[Box C at the end of this evaluation, contains an excerpt from the November 24th evaluation report that supports this part of the evaluation.]

V. Promotion of High Standards and Expectations for Students' Achievement
Francine has an academically and racially diverse group of students in her classroom (claim), due in part to the fact that it was not possible to accommodate a developmentally delayed child in her class at another school; Francine has thus worked effectively (judgment) with staff at our school to develop an interim program for the student. At the other end of the spectrum, Francine has two children in her class who are the most intellectually gifted children in 4th grade and among the highest-ability children in the school. To accommodate this range, Francine works with teachers in two learning centers, the remedial reading teacher and the E.S.L. teacher. These specialists work both on a pull-out basis and in Francine's classroom. In addition, Francine has set up a special reading group with the librarian for the highest-level children and participated in a special math pilot with the town-wide gifted and talented coordinator. Francine effectively promotes the concept of "personal best." She insists that a child put forth his or her best work, and children are required to redo work that was rushed through or incomplete. Francine works in tandem with parents around this concept, so
I. Promotion of Equity and Appreciation of Diversity

Francine has respect and appreciation for each child in her class (claim and judgment). She honors each student for his or her strengths (claim and judgment). Francine takes an interest in the lives of her students outside of the classroom—be it sports, music, scouting, drama or family events (claim and judgment). Francine uses the curriculum as a basis for teaching about diversity (claim and judgment). For example, in teaching about Native Americans, Francine used this study as a sequel to previous teaching about stereotypes (evidence). Francine frequently uses class discussions and meetings to address issues of diversity and equity (claim and judgment).

VII. Fulfillment of Professional Responsibilities

Francine works effectively with everyone on our staff—the librarian, SPED staff, ESL-Bilingual staff and regular education teachers all find Francine easy to work with (claim and judgment). As a result of her flexibility and adaptability, two of the specialists I am evaluating this year asked me to do their observations in Francine’s classrooms because it is a comfortable and positive place for other professionals as well as for children (evidence and impact statement).

Francine makes herself available to parents on a daily basis, yet her contacts with parents are always appropriate and professional. Like her colleagues on the faculty, parents also find Francine easy to talk to and helpful (claim and judgment).

Francine's enthusiasm, positive attitude, ability to forge strong and positive relationships with children, colleagues and parents, her strong work ethic and the intelligence and common sense she brings to her work, make her a valuable colleague to have on the Sample faculty.

This evaluation indicates performance with no areas of concern.

This evaluation indicates performance with need for improvement in one or two areas (see recommendations).

This evaluation indicates performance with need for improvement in several areas (see recommendations).

This evaluation indicates performance which is below the standard expected of staff in the Sample Public Schools (see recommendations).

Overall Evaluation: Satisfactory Unsatisfactory

Signature of evaluator date

Signature of teacher date

Signature signifies receipt of, not concurrence with, this evaluation. Teachers are encouraged to submit comments. Please make comments on the back of this form or on an attached sheet.
Which category describes the principal you know best?

1. Saint
2. Cynic
3. Sinner

Answer Now!
The $64,000 Question

• Could a saint’s school have low student achievement?

• Could a sinner’s school have high student achievement?

• How could that happen?
  – Good teachers being professional
  – Brilliant, intuitive leadership in other areas
  – Cheating?
Principal time, school with 35 teachers (work year = 1,620 hours)

- Full-dress evaluation - 300 hours (50 observations, 6 hrs each)
- Mini-observations - 115 hours (4 a day, follow-up talk)
- Showing the flag - 80 hours (1/2 hour a day most days)
- Lesson plan inspection - 70 hours (2 hours a week)
- Rubrics, conferences - 55 hours (1 hour each, 1/2 hr. conference)
- Interim assessments - 50 hours (5 a year, 10 hours each)
- Curriculum planning - 40 hours (six hours 6 times a year)
- Learning walks/rounds - 12 hours a year (4 hours x 2 + 1 processing)
Time for Different Strategies

- Full-dress evaluations: 300 minutes
- Mini-observations: 115 minutes
- Showing the flag: 80 minutes
- Lesson plan inspection: 70 minutes
- Rubrics, conferences: 55 minutes
- Interim assessments: 50 minutes
- Curriculum planning: 40 minutes
- Learning walks: 12 minutes
The logic model

A. There is a shared definition of good teaching.
B. Principals see everyday teaching in action.
C. Principals give teachers thoughtful feedback.
D. Principals criticize mediocre, ineffective teaching.
E. Teachers hear and accept the feedback.
F. Teachers improve their classroom practice.
G. Teachers take ownership for continuously improving teaching and learning.

What goes wrong?
A. Is there a shared definition of good teaching?

• Every district has criteria in its evaluation form.
• Required presentation at the beginning of the year
• Lots of research on effective teaching
• But does everyone pay attention, agree, buy in?
• Problem: defining just one level.
Is there a shared definition of good teaching in your school?

1. We all agree on what excellent, good, mediocre, poor teaching looks like.

2. We agree on what good teaching looks like.

3. There are some disparities within the school.

4. There are many different opinions on what good teaching is.
Teachers are immune to feedback from a coach or administrator when they have different definitions of quality.

The single most important thing that a school leader can do is reach agreement with the staff about quality.

Fisher and Frey, 2010
B. Principals rarely see everyday reality

- Four reasons many leaders get an inaccurate picture:
  - H.S.P.S. – evaluation is avoided, procrastinated
  - Observe very little: see only 0.1% of teaching
  - Announced observations, dog-and-pony show
  - The principal’s presence changes things.

Restaurant (mediocre eatery vs. mediocre teaching)

- A “collusive deal” – utterly bogus

- It’s what teachers do *day after day* is what counts.


It has been said that when a principal walks into a room, it has the same effect as seeing a state trooper pull out onto the highway – the students straighten up and “take their foot off the gas”, even if they weren’t speeding (er, misbehaving).

Peter Hall, Nevada principal (2005)
Push-back

• “I want to see teachers at their best.”

• “It is my firm belief that a mediocre teacher will hang him- or herself whether announced or unannounced.”

• “I have never met a bad teacher who didn’t look horrible despite an announced visit.”
C. Teachers rarely get thoughtful feedback

- Perfunctory annual or bi-annual process
- Teacher often signs, files away – little impact
- Some principals have teachers fill out the form!
- High skill level needed to do good lesson write-ups.
  - Lots of words without clear judgment, feedback.
- Cutting corners – pasting in boilerplate
- Or using mediocre checklists
ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND REPORT ON PROBATIONARY SERVICE OF PEDAGOGICAL EMPLOYEE
(OFFICE OF APPEALS AND REVIEWS, BE/DIP 99558 (S/7) pers d (Replaces OP 11B)

SECTION 1 - REPORT BY PRINCIPAL OR OTHER APPOPROPRIATE SUPERVISOR:

COMMENTS (as checked. "NA" indicates "Not Applicable.")

A. PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES
   1. Attendance and punctuality
   2. Personal appearance
   3. Voice, speech and use of English
   4. Professional attitude and professional growth
   5. Resourcefulness and initiative

B. PUPIL GUIDANCE AND INSTRUCTION
   1. Effect on character and personality growth of pupils
   2. Control of class
   3. Maintenance of wholesome classroom atmosphere
   4. Planning and preparation of work
   5. Skill in adapting instruction to individual needs and capacities
   6. Effective use of appropriate methods and techniques
   7. Skill in making class lessons interesting to pupils
   8. Extent of pupil participation in the class and school program
   9. Evidence of pupil growth in knowledge, skills, appreciations and attitude
   10. Attention to pupil health, safety and general welfare

C. CLASSROOM OR SHOP MANAGEMENT
   1. Attention to physical conditions
   2. Housekeeping and appearance of room
   3. Care of equipment by teacher and children
   4. Attention to records and reports
   5. Attention to routine matters

D. PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES
   1. Maintenance of good relations with other teachers and with supervisors
   2. Effort to establish and maintain good relationships with parents
   3. Willingness to accept special assignments in connection with the school program

E. ADDITIONAL REMARKS (additional sheets, signed and acknowledged may be attached):
What do you think of your district’s teacher evaluation form?

1. Excellent tool that improves teaching
2. Good feedback tool
3. Not bad but doesn’t affect teaching much
4. Poor tool that doesn’t capture good teaching or help teachers improve
Ineffective models

- Narrative evaluations – verbiage without impact
- Checklists
- Quality descriptions with ratings but no rubric
- Binary ratings – Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
- Three-point scales:
  - Excellent
  - Satisfactory
  - Unsatisfactory
- Five-point scales: “Gentleman’s C”
- Teacher goal-setting, ineffective follow-up
Name ___________________________ Date __________________

School __________________________ Subject __________________________

Day _______________ Time ___________ Period ___________ Observer ___________

Length of Observation __________________________________________________________________

Extenuating Circumstances __________________________________________________________________

Lesson Observed (Topic and/or Activity) __________________________________________________________________

Comments are desired for each criteria, but recommendations are required for each “Focus for Growth” and an Improvement Plan is required if any “Unfavorable” ratings are noted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria:</th>
<th>Favorable</th>
<th>Focus for Growth</th>
<th>Unfavorable</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Currency in the Curriculum</td>
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<td>• The teacher is up to date regarding curriculum content</td>
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<td>II. Effective Planning and Assessment of Curriculum Instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The teacher plans instruction effectively</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The teacher plans assessment of student learning effectively</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The teacher monitors students’ understanding of the curriculum effectively and adjusts instructions, materials or assessments when appropriate</td>
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<td>III. Effective Management of Classroom Environment</td>
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<td>• The teacher creates an environment that is positive for student learning and involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The teacher maintains appropriate standards of behavior, mutual respect and safety</td>
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D. Principals not criticizing mediocre and ineffective teaching

• Not pushing teachers to be better.

• Want to keep the peace, avoid conflict, be *liked*.

• Afraid of jeopardizing other initiatives.

• Wait for them to retire.

• Plus, some teachers are downright scary…
E. Teachers not hearing and accepting the feedback

• A ritual - shrug it off

• Lots of reasons to ignore criticism from principals:
  – You’re hardly ever in my room.
  – You haven’t taught in years.
  – You never taught my grade level/subject.
  – You don’t have children of your own.
  – I was having a bad day.

• Evaluations can stir up jealousy, increase isolation.

• Criticism makes some teachers shut down.
What are teachers’ top 2 thoughts when a principal walks in?

1. #!?, I’m not teaching what I’m supposed to be teaching.
2. Thank goodness, a chance to show the boss my good stuff
3. I’ll probably get criticized for doing something wrong.
4. I’m hungry for feedback that will help me improve.
5. The principal probably won’t have anything useful to say.
6. I wish this happened more often.
F. Teachers not taking ownership for continuous improvement

• For many, it’s a paternalistic process.
• Impressing, charming, satisfying, getting over on boss
• No focus on student learning
• Little ownership for the school’s mission
• Key reason not to text-message in class?
  – Principal might catch me
  – Poor model for students
  – Waste of precious learning time
Dependency ↔ Ownership

- Paternalistic
- Glamorized lessons
- Winning the boss’s approval
- “I liked when you…”
- Lesson plans turned in
- Data analysis because we have to
- CYA
- Working in isolation

- Shared vision, mission
- Team unit planning
- On-the-spot assessments
- Common interim assessments
- Immediate team analysis, action plans
- Supervisory voice in head all the time
- Continuously improving
For all these reasons, the logic model is breaking down

• No school effectiveness lists include it.
• Saphier, Marzano, DuFour: a weak lever for change.
• Not respected by most educators
• Did supervision and evaluation ever improve you?

• But we have to do it! Legal and moral responsibility.
• I believe it can work! Here’s how…
I. MINI-OBSERVATIONS

• Principals need a system for:
  – Getting into classrooms
  – Seeing everyday reality
  – Giving teachers meaningful feedback
  – Authentic talks about teaching and learning
  – Gathering data for year-end evaluations

• Many are racked with guilt about not doing this.
Mini-observations: systematic, frequent **sampling** of teaching

- *Short* visits to fit them in to very busy days
- *Unannounced* to see what kids are experiencing daily
- *Lots* of them to learn more, blend in (Kareem’s question)
- Prompt, thoughtful *feedback* to each teacher
- *Informal* and low-stakes for maximum adult learning
- *Systematic* cycling through the whole staff
- *Integrated* with team unit planning and results analysis
Like a Gallup Poll
Are mini-observations being used in your school?

1. Yes, systematically with all teachers
2. Quite a lot, but not systematic
3. On a limited basis
4. Almost never
Why not call them “walk-throughs”?  

- Confusion with *learning walks* - a team touring the whole building, general feedback (Resnick, Elmore) (these, too, can be dog-and-pony shows)  
- The *wrong term* for a focused, thoughtful observation with feedback – sounds to teachers like a *drive-by*.  
- Video clip
What might worry teachers about mini-observations?

• If you were introducing this idea…
• What concerns would you predict?
• What might students worry about?
• Brainstorm in groups of 2-3
Nine ways mini-observations can fail

- Not staying *long enough* to gather helpful information
- Making *too few* to get a balanced picture
- Not having a clear sense of what to *look for*
- Not *capturing* and remembering key insights
- Not giving *feedback* in a way teachers can hear, accept
- Not stepping up with *criticism*; accepting mediocrity
- Not *shifting gears* with unsatisfactory teaching
- Mishandling the link to end-of-year *evaluations*
- Not *explaining* the rationale to teachers
How long depends on your purpose

• Showing the flag: 5 seconds
• Checking on a substitute: 6 seconds
• In-depth professional development: 45 min. +
• Making the case for dismissal: multiple 45 min.
• But what about a dialogue about instruction?
How long does a principal need to stay to form a meaningful impression?

1. 1 minute
2. 3 minutes
3. 5 minutes
4. 10 minutes
5. 15 minutes
6. 20 minutes
7. 25 minutes
8. 35 minutes
9. 45 minutes
10. 1 hour or more
Videotape and role-play - preferred grade level?

1. Kindergarten literacy
2. Grade 4-5 discussion
3. Grade 6 math
4. High-school writing
5. High-school science
Was that enough time to get a sense of what was going on in the classroom?

1. Yes
2. No
Was it possible to give meaningful feedback to the teacher afterward?

1. Yes
2. No
Best range: 5-15 minutes

• The variables:
  – How many teachers
  – How much administrative support
  – Discipline issues

• 5 minutes worked for me in a large, busy school

• I could fit them into the nooks and crannies

• Brevity is essential to keeping up the pace!

• But not too short! Principal who sees all classes 2nd per.
What about full-lesson observations?

• All teachers should have one periodically.
• But principal only does unsatisfactory teachers
• Other ways to get full-lesson feedback:
  – Instructional coaches (also co-observe with principal)
  – Peer observers
  – Lesson study colleagues
  – Videotaping lesson, watching with a critical friend
2. Doing lots

• A good annual target: 10-12/teacher/year
  – Seeing each teacher every 2-3 weeks

• Like time-lapse photography, trends over time

• Frequent visits build dialogue, candor, and trust.

• How? Set a target per day and keep it up!

• My track record: 11, 12, 12, 14, 12, 7, 12, 11, 11+
### Doing the math for different staff sizes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of teachers</th>
<th>Minis for year</th>
<th># per day</th>
<th>Stretch goal</th>
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<td>60</td>
<td>720</td>
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<td>50</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>0.7</td>
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</table>
Which strategy would be best to help you keep up the pace of mini-observations?

1. Will power
2. My boss being on my case
3. A daily target number of visits
4. A weekly target
5. Rewarding myself
6. A bare office
7. Two full days

Answer Now!
The boss’s support really helps

- Regularly asking substantive questions
- How’s it going? Hitting target? What noticing?
- More likely if it’s a district policy
- Seen as a best practice
- Training and support, watching videotapes
- Also, taking something off the table!
Refinements and variations

- Mixing up morning, mid-day, and afternoon visits
- Arriving at beginning, middle, or end of lessons
- Doing a grade-level team in a single day
- Deciding to stay longer
- “Intensives” – Herb Daughtry
- Following one class through an entire day – Khalek Kirkland
- Others?
3. Knowing what to look for

- Can’t use the whole evaluation checklist
  - Too much to look for
  - Not fair or practical; only seeing a lesson fragment
- Many mini-observation checklists are being developed
- Some examples: problems with these?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instruction</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students are engaged in academics for every minute of observation.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson plan is tight, moving at a challenging pace, with neither time nor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>space for students to be off-task.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rigor of lesson is age-appropriate and indicative of high expectations for</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student achievement.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher follows the Workshop Model (I do, We do, You do), varying the</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>method of instruction (direct instruction, group work, independent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practice).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher formally and/or informally checks for student understanding.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Q&amp;A, whole class response, pop quiz, extended student's response,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>connecting to guiding questions)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher provides students with clear, meaningful feedback to encourage</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>continued work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher uses the board/visuals to effectively support and clarify</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instruction.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher is differentiating instruction by accommodating students IEP's</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher conducts smooth transitions between activities or parts of lesson.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students appear interested and thoughtfully engaged in what they are</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>There is evidence of Collins Writing happening in the classroom (learning</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>activities, student work)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is evidence of Key 3 Reading Strategies happening in the classroom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(learning activities, student work)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students are working with clear directions and expectations.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom procedures are clearly in place.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruptions to learning are not permitted. If a student is disrupting,</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they receive a consequence (redirection, private conversation, office</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>referral if necessary).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are participating respectfully and following speaker with eyes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and attention.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Planning</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning objective is clearly posted and is clear, measurable and</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>achievable.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher's resources and materials are organized and prepared.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom is neat and walls reflect current curricular topics and</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outstanding student work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Priority Area*
# WALK-THROUGH OBSERVATION REPORT

**Teacher:**

**Class:**

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Unit Focus:**
- Clearly indicated
- Unclear but discernable
- Nonexistent

**Aim/Learning Objective:**
- Clearly indicated
- Unclear but discernable
- Nonexistent

## ENVIRONMENT OBSERVED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Do now, and Homework clear for students
2. Room is Orderly, and organized for effort
3. Thoughtful, effective class, seating arrangement
4. Print rich environment/Evidence of current student work in content areas (bulletin boards).
5. Emotionally and physically safe, respectful classroom

## LESSON ACTIVITY

6. Activity geared toward attaining L.O.
7. Students Engaged in Lesson.
8. Differentiation in evidence
9. Well thought out, executed pacing
10. Effective transitions
11. Use of technological applications in evidence.

## ASSESSMENT

12. Learning objective(s) were met
13. Assessment activity to gauge understanding
14. Appropriate homework assigned

## MANAGEMENT

15. Sense of routines evident in class
16. Unwanted behaviors addressed effectively
17. Clear accountable consequences
18. Teacher has control over the classroom

---

**EDUCATION LEADS TO ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES**
“You can observe a lot by watching”

• Slow down, *breathe*, listen, observe.
• Don’t impose a checklist on the situation.
• That teacher in that classroom at that moment.
• Watching the line, not the quarterback
• Walk out with one or two thoughtful teaching points.
• But what’s a short, memorable mental checklist: *the irreducible elements of good teaching*
S - Safety
O - Objectives
T - Teaching
E - Engagement
L - Learning
Key questions with SOTEL

- **Safety** – Can these kids focus on learning?
- **Objectives** – Where is this lesson headed?
- **Teaching** – Is learning being skillfully orchestrated?
- **Engagement** – Who’s doing the work here?
- **Learning** – Are all the kids getting it?
How can you tell if kids are learning?

• Looking at the learning task (Elmore et al.)
• Teachers’ on-the-spot assessments
• Asking a student “What are you working on?”
• Principal subbing in the class and asking questions
• Teacher teams looking at student work
• Teacher teams looking at interim assessments
• One-on-one principal/teacher conferences with student work, test results
• Principal conferencing with students in office
• Year-end state tests!
4. Capturing insights

- Want to remember important stuff, but…
- Clipboards, checklists, iPhones, laptops…
- Plus, do you miss the forest for the trees?
- The key: *Be a good observer!*
- Don’t miss the big picture! One or two key points only.
- Jot notes later?
Mini-Observations 2009-2010

From: November 10th
To: November

- Sylvia Alcock
- Kwame Amoah
- Sonia Astrid
- Monica Avila
- Angela Bailey
- Constance Bartlett
- Mark Bonner
- Alice Buchner
- Natalie Chan
- Denise Colombo
- Henry Cueva
- Frank Cupido
- Raymond Garcia
- Jeff Gold
- Brian Gottlieb
- Sartreina Harvey
- Kathleen Hennessy
- Lada Jaworski
- Kelly Jones
- Andrew Kelsey
- Adrienne Kinsey
- Joshua Koren
- Marc Leopoldo
- Lynn Liu
- Tyson Matsumoto
- Katherine May
- Jacqueline Maynard
- Matthew Ong
- Agnes O'Nias
- Jo Phan
- Michael Priest
- Sebastien Renard
- Glea Riss
- Misha Roth
- Deepak Shah
- Naomi Simon
- Ginger Sims
- Robert Singleton
- Katarina Smirnova
- Jessica Wolk
- Kathy Zimmer

- Tues. Nov. 10 - Going over worksheet, low participation, doing too much for them.

- Tues. Nov. 10 - Worksheet on African culture and natural resources, rigor level?

- Tues. Nov. 10 - Cooperative groups doing science experiments, clear roles, great!

- Tues. Nov. 10 - Spelling words copied from board, dictionary, more individualization?

- Tues. Nov. 10 - Circle discussion of HB1 story, lots of eagerness, participation, probes.

- Tues. Nov. 10 - Read aloud of Shogun, Pontiac animated kids too passive, need more?

- Tues. Nov. 11 - Social studies book look at weather, lots of participation, good question.

- Tues. Nov. 11 - Hands-on money lesson (students sense, making change - real-world!)

- Mon. Nov. 10 - Prompt-robot reading, humdrum, gotto develop alternatives.
Which would you **as a teacher** prefer your principal to use?

1. Checklist on a clipboard
2. Notepad
3. Laptop
4. BlackBerry
5. iPad
6. Recording device
7. No writing in class
5. Giving feedback that will make a difference

• After a mini-observation, there’s lots to say!

• Specific praise, on-the-edge, reinforcement, suggestions

• Questions, redirection, criticism, reprimand

• What’s the best way to deliver the feedback?

• How soon (within 24 hours)

• Where?
Some possible approaches

- No feedback to the teacher; *supervisus interruptus*
- Memo to whole staff showcasing best practices
- Post-It note on teacher’s desk on the way out
- Hand-written feedback in mailbox
- Checklist filled out, in teacher’s mailbox
- Palm Pilot electronic checklist sent to teacher
- E-mail later that day
- Face-to-face conversation soon afterward
The trouble with e-mail feedback

In e-mail, people talk at you; in conversation I can talk with [people], and a casual remark can lead to a level of discussion that neither party anticipated from the beginning. I am more likely to learn from someone in a conversation than in an e-mail exchange, which simply does not allow for the serendipity, intensity and give-and-take of real-time interaction.

8 advantages of face-to-face

• Can quickly and efficiently cover a lot of ground
• Less threatening than written, teacher more open
• Focus on one key point, teacher not overwhelmed
• Can be tentative, check on something (girl’s card)
• Can judge if the teacher can accept criticism.
• The teacher can push back, informal dialogue.
• Segue into general talks about instruction, status.
• Less paperwork!
Four-squares feedback

- What’s going well
- Any concerns
- Next steps
- What I can do
Should the teacher get something in writing, sign it?

• What’s the point?
  – Feels bureaucratic, CYA
  – Less nuanced, detailed than face-to-face
  – Teacher not invited into the conversation

• Only if there’s a red flag
  – Paper trail for the file, follow-up, evaluation

• Face-to-face is more direct, powerful, and quick.

• But you should keep a record of your main points
Informal, somewhat humble feedback

• Stand-up chats keep it light, non-threatening.
• Brief – 30 seconds to 5 minutes; don’t overdo it!
• Not the all-seeing, all-knowing, judgmental evaluator
• “I was only there for ten minutes; here’s what I saw.”
• “I’m curious about what happened after I left…”
• Really listening to how the teacher responds
• Give-and-take, suggestions, commendations
9 Ineffective practices

- Intervening during the class – “Excuse me, …”
- Giving the teacher “private” feedback on the spot
- Arizona district: trio visit, pullout, demo
- Several-day delay before giving feedback
- Written feedback that “ends there”
- Bureaucratic checklists
- Robotic use of technology devices
- Perfunctory tone – I’m checking you off my list.
- Not giving feedback to all teachers all the time
Which is most likely to improve teaching and teachers’ investment in improving?

1. No feedback
2. Memo to staff
3. Post-it note
4. Checklist
5. Palm Pilot checklist
6. Hand-written comments
7. E-mail
8. Face-to-face only
9. Fact-to-face + written to teacher
Frequent high-quality conversations with a skillful observer who has evidence about what went on and how it is impacting students can be immensely valuable to teachers. We should focus on that.

Jon Saphier, 2008
Linking to school-wide improvement

- If only private conversations, opportunities are missed
- Be a *cross-pollinator*! Spread good ideas, correctives
- Organize PD on areas that need help.
- Put teachers in touch with each other; get coverage
- Pass along insights to teams, instructional coaches.
- Talk about units, student learning.
Best location for mini feedback?

1. Principal’s office
2. Corridor
3. Playground
4. Teacher’s classroom during free period
5. Cafeteria
6. Faculty lounge
7. Parking lot
8. A bar after hours
9. A phone call in evening
Avoidance

• I’m too busy!

• Can’t track down teachers.

• Will I have enough to say? Bite the bullet on criticism?

• I’m more comfortable with a checklist, e-mail

• Another reason: binge mini-observing
“I made it my business”

• “Face-to-face feedback is the driver of change.”
  Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, 2010

• This really affects teaching and learning.

• My pledge: feedback within 24 hours

• Strategic about tracking down teachers.

• An extension: mid-year “how’s it going” talks
6. Stepping up to the plate

• A leader who is silent on mediocrity speaks loudly.

• The danger of “going native”

• Addressing mediocre and poor teaching depends on:
  – A clear, shared vision of effective teaching
  – Urgency – a moral sense about kids’ futures
  – Courage

• Ways to keep our moral edge?
  – Co-observe classrooms with your boss
  – Regularly look at interim assessment results
Pointers from Thomas Hoerr (2004)

• Pick the time and place carefully.
• Be timely.
• Be specific.
• Watch your body language.
• Tell why this is important to you and the school.
• Say that you’ve been there too.
• Allow for a response.
• Review and reinforce at the end.
7. Shifting gears with unsatisfactory teaching

- Mini-observations won’t be sufficient.
- Full-lesson observations, ideally unannounced
- Union reps, lawyers consulted at every step
- Diagnosis and prescription, improvement plan
- 2-3 chances to improve, plenty of support
- If insufficient improvement, dismissal
9. A clear, explicit link to end-of-the-year evaluations

- It’s understood that mini-observations are evaluative.
- This requires collective bargaining or a special waiver.
- At the Mather, rapid acceptance of the idea
- People trusted I was seeing reality, feedback was honest.
- We did away with the dog and pony show!
- Which cleared time for mini-observations.
10 pluses from mini-observations

• See reality without distortion (no glamorized; blend in)
• Get to know how all teacher are doing, spot problems
• CEO visibility, listening, getting ideas, credibility
• Build trust, the lubricant of school culture
• Unspoken message: bring your “A game” all the time!
• Another: I’m your coach, let’s solve problems together.
• More humble, winning posture – teachers hear, accept
• Good time management – squeezed into busy days
• Gathering anecdotes for meetings, parents
• Lots of information for year-end evaluations
How would you personally feel about being supervised using mini-observations?

1. Strongly prefer this approach
2. Prefer it
3. No difference one way or the other
4. Uncomfortable with it
5. Very negative about it
With 10-12 mini-observations with feedback a year, would you have a pretty accurate picture of each teacher’s performance?

1. Yes
2. No
How much impact would they have on teaching and learning?

1. Very positive
2. Somewhat positive
3. Not much impact
4. No impact

Answer Now!
II. SUPERVISING CURRICULUM UNIT PLANNING

- Mini-observations
- Team curriculum unit planning
- End-of-year rubric evaluations
- Team interim assessment work
What districts must provide

Every teacher deserves a clear, manageable set of standards and learning benchmarks that make sense and allow a reasonable measure of autonomy. Anything less is frustrating, inhumane, and counterproductive.

Schmoker and Marzano, 1999
Backwards unit planning – Understanding by Design

- Starting with the end in mind
- Teacher teams (e.g., Grade 3, 7th-grade social studies)
- Planning each 4-6 week curriculum unit in advance
- Principal collaborating, reviewing drafts, dropping in
- Instructional coaches supporting teacher teams
- Building teams’ skills so they can do it on their own
Are teams doing backwards unit planning in your school?

1. Yes, with all units
2. Yes, with some units
3. A few teachers do this by themselves
4. Very little
5. Not at all
Some insights on backwards design

• It won’t happen by itself.
• It pushes teachers to plan deeper, more thoughtfully.
• It’s challenging intellectual work, best done in teams.
• It builds collaboration, investment in the mission.
• It’s the best way to integrate standards.
• It gets higher-order, college-ready ideas into lessons.
• Much easier to supervise unit plans than lesson plans
Sample standards (Mass. ELA)

• Identify and correctly use past, present, and future verb tenses

• Determine the meaning of unfamiliar words in context using definitions and examples

• Identify and describe how the main characters in a story or novel change over time.

• Organize sentences and paragraphs logically, using an organizational format that suits the topic
The principal’s key supervisory role

• Emphasizing unit plans over lesson plans
• Insisting that teacher teams collaborate on units
• Giving teacher teams the time to plan units
• Providing a simple unit planning template
• Making sure teachers start with the standards
• Reviewing unit drafts, sampling meetings, supervising
• Providing UbD training, literature, support, model units
• Subscribing to www.ubdexchange.org for good units, www.betterlesson.org for units and lesson plans
A difference in tone

• Asking for lesson plans feels officious, untrusting.

• Asking for unit plans and working with teams on them is stimulating and productive.

• It’s also much more manageable!

• Also, Essential Questions are better for classroom walls than SWBAT lesson objectives
A simplified unit planning template

1. State standards (written out verbatim, unpacked)
2. Knowledge goals - Students will know…
3. Skill goals - Students will be able to…
4. Big ideas - Students will understand that…
5. Essential Questions (3-4 in kid-friendly language)
6. End-of-unit assessments (written up front)
7. Lesson-by-lesson instructional plan

See sample fifth-grade nutrition unit in packet.
Could your teacher teams do backwards unit planning?

1. They’re doing it now.
2. I could make this happen next year.
3. Within 2-3 years we could do this.
4. There are a lot of challenges.
5. Our teachers couldn’t and wouldn’t do this.
Synergy with mini-observations

- Team curriculum unit planning
- End-of-year rubric evaluations
- Team interim assessment work
III. INTERIM ASSESSMENTS:

Shifting the conversation to results
The moment of truth

- A teacher teaches a curriculum unit, assesses learning
- Gets these results

4 -  
3 -  
2 -  
1 -  
A basic problem with even the best teaching

• After initial instruction, only half of students proficient.
  – Attention, background knowledge, learning issues…

• Better teaching can increase the percentage, but…

• It’s very difficult for a teacher to stop, analyze, fix.

• Very few teachers do this on their own.

• It requires school-wide orchestration.

• An “andon cord” for learning issues
“Professional Learning Communities”
low-stakes conversations about results

• Common interim assessments every 6 weeks
• Clear data on whether students are learning what’s taught
• Non-evaluative so adult learning is more likely.
• Immediate sharing of what worked, what didn’t
• Grappling with student misconceptions, learning problems
• It’s the engine of improvement in high-flying schools.
• Also the best way to get teachers really invested
8 keys to success with interim assessments

- High-quality tests, well aligned, appropriate rigor
- Rapid turnaround (24 hours)
- Clear, graphic data display
- Productive team data meetings, “data without blame”
- Administrator/coach involvement, support - video clip
- Honest reflection, continuous improvement
- Immediate follow-up with students
- Students involved: knowing status, setting goals…
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student ID</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Correct Resp</th>
<th>Average Score &amp; % Correct</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>274493063</td>
<td>Student 1</td>
<td>6D1</td>
<td></td>
<td>A A B B C B D C A B A A B</td>
<td>43% 61% 70% 71% 36% 35% 55% 39% 46% 61% 44% 12% 58%</td>
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<tr>
<td>204243521</td>
<td>Student 2</td>
<td>6D1</td>
<td></td>
<td>A A A A C C B C A B A A A</td>
<td>13% 18% 22% 33% 9% 16% 70% 20% 8% 6% 12% 16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>212841035</td>
<td>Student 3</td>
<td>6D1</td>
<td></td>
<td>A D D B C A A A A A C A</td>
<td>15% 16% 46% 48% 46% 17% 51% 14% 18% 16% 14% 14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>203165022</td>
<td>Student 4</td>
<td>6D1</td>
<td></td>
<td>A A B C C D C A C C A B</td>
<td>19% 20% 40% 40% 16% 16% 16% 16% 16% 16% 16% 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205309446</td>
<td>Student 5</td>
<td>6D1</td>
<td></td>
<td>A A B A B D A C B A A A</td>
<td>27% 28% 51% 51% 24% 24% 24% 24% 24% 24% 24% 24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>207211004</td>
<td>Student 6</td>
<td>6D1</td>
<td></td>
<td>A A B A B A A B A A B A</td>
<td>31% 32% 69% 69% 20% 20% 20% 20% 20% 20% 20% 20%</td>
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<td>206010409</td>
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<td>6D1</td>
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<td>A A A A A C A A A A D B</td>
<td>40% 40% 9% 9% 71% 71% 39% 39% 39% 39% 39% 39%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Student 8</td>
<td>6D1</td>
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<td>A A A A C C C A D A B B</td>
<td>44% 44% 16% 16% 16% 16% 16% 16% 16% 16% 16% 16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>274269976</td>
<td>Student 9</td>
<td>6D1</td>
<td></td>
<td>A A A A B B A A B A A C</td>
<td>35% 35% 26% 26% 26% 26% 26% 26% 26% 26% 26% 26%</td>
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<tr>
<td>270391576</td>
<td>Student 10</td>
<td>6D1</td>
<td></td>
<td>A A A A B B A A B A A C</td>
<td>39% 39% 24% 24% 24% 24% 24% 24% 24% 24% 24% 24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>209410596</td>
<td>Student 11</td>
<td>6D1</td>
<td></td>
<td>A A A A C C C C A A A A</td>
<td>33% 33% 22% 22% 22% 22% 22% 22% 22% 22% 22% 22%</td>
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<td>36% 36% 12% 12% 12% 12% 12% 12% 12% 12% 12% 12%</td>
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</table>
Principals are the key orchestrators

• Building understanding and trust
• Insisting on common interim assessments
• Scheduling assessments, team meetings, follow-up
• Ground rules to keep focused, low-stakes
• Coaches facilitate; principals drops in, supports
• Everyone analyzes results and uses the insights.
• Everyone invested in continuous improvement.
• “Man on Fire” swimming sequence
Agile teaching, responsive to student learning minute by minute, day by day, month by month.

Dylan Wiliam and Ian Beatty, 2009
Could your teacher teams do interim assessment analysis, etc.?

1. They’re doing it now.
2. I could make this happen next year.
3. Within 2-3 years we could do this.
4. There are a lot of challenges.
5. Our teachers couldn’t and wouldn’t do this.
Three kinds of supervision interact
## IV. TEACHER EVALUATION RUBRICS

### Guide to Performance Appraisal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Degrees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Far Exceeds Job Requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Rubrics - a relatively recent idea

- Rubrics spell out four levels of teaching quality.
- Rubrics force judgment (narratives allow obfuscation).
- A road-map to help teachers improve
- Some districts, charter schools using them
- Education Sector report, *Rush to Judgment*, endorsed
- A solid alternative to write-ups, checklists, goal-setting
Kim’s rubrics (2006, 2010) Open source

- Researched rubrics, best ideas, step-by-step process:
- First, deciding on “buckets” based on many models:
  A. Planning and preparation for learning
  B. Classroom management
  C. Delivery of instruction
  D. Monitoring, assessment, and follow-up
  E. Family and community outreach
  F. Professional responsibilities
Second, deciding on the rating scale and labels

- My synthesis (recently revised):
  4 – Highly Effective
  3 – Effective (a high bar)
  2 – Improvement Necessary
  1 – Does not meet standards

- Level 2 spotlights mediocrity.
- Theory of action: Level 3/4 boost student achievement
  – Level 1 and 2 depress it, widen the achievement gap
Third, sorting the myriad criteria

- Hundreds of lists of what good teaching looks like
- Finding the most powerful from effective teachers
- Correlates of higher student achievement
- Sorting them into the “buckets”
- Important: write Effective level first
- Wordsmithing – being succinct!
B. Classroom Management [Effective level]

- Clearly communicates and consistently enforces high standards for student behavior.

- Is fair and respectful toward students and builds positive relationships.

- Commands respect and refuses to tolerate disruption.

- Fosters positive interactions among students and teaches useful social skills.

- Teaches routines and has students maintain them all year.

- Develops students’ self-discipline and teaches them to take responsibility for their own actions.

- Has a repertoire of discipline “moves” and can capture and maintain students’ attention.

- Maximizes academic learning time through coherence, lesson momentum, and smooth transitions.

- Is a confident, dynamic “presence” and nips most discipline problems in the bud.

- Uses incentives wisely to encourage and reinforce student cooperation.
Parent, student input to evaluation?

- Voluntary parent, student questionnaires?
- Commendation for seeking, using feedback
Fourth, creating the rubrics by teasing the criteria to the other three levels.
Finally, involving each teacher

- Goal: understanding, trust, investment in improvement
- Rubrics shared and discussed at beginning of the year
- Voluntary self-assessment and goal-setting up front
- Just before evaluation, each teacher fills out the rubric.
- Put them side by side, compare ratings, citing evidence
- Finalize, celebrate/resolve
- Set goals for improvement
# B. Classroom Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The teacher</th>
<th>4 Highly Effective</th>
<th>3 Effective</th>
<th>2 Improvement Necessary</th>
<th>1 Does Not Meet Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>a. Expectations</strong></td>
<td>Clearly communicates and enforces high standards for student behavior.</td>
<td>Sometimes and posts classroom rules and punishments.</td>
<td>Comes up with few rules and punishments as events unfold during the year.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>b. Relationships</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates respect and fairness for all students and builds strong relationships.</td>
<td>Is fair and respectful toward most students and builds positive relationships with some.</td>
<td>Is sometimes unfair and disrespectful to the class.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>c. Respect</strong></td>
<td>Commands respect and refuses to tolerate disruption.</td>
<td>Occasionally treats students as if they are not in the classroom.</td>
<td>Is not respected by students and the classroom is frequently chaotic and sometimes dangerous.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>d. Social-emotional</strong></td>
<td>Maintains effective discipline repertoire and can capture and hold students’ attention any time.</td>
<td>Sometimes loses teaching time due to lack of clarity, interruptions, and ragged transitions.</td>
<td>Loses a great deal of instructional time because of confusion, interruptions, and ragged transitions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>e. Routines</strong></td>
<td>Successfully develops students’ self-discipline, self-confidence, and a sense of responsibility.</td>
<td>Tries to get students to be responsible for their actions, but many lack self-discipline.</td>
<td>Is unsuccessful in fostering self-discipline in students; they are dependent on the teacher to behave.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>f. Repertoire</strong></td>
<td>Uses a highly effective discipline repertoire and can capture and hold students’ attention any time.</td>
<td>Sometimes loses teaching time due to lack of clarity, interruptions, and ragged transitions.</td>
<td>Loses a great deal of instructional time because of confusion, interruptions, and ragged transitions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>g. Efficiency</strong></td>
<td>Effectively maximizes instructional learning time through coherence, lesson momentum, and smooth transitions.</td>
<td>Sometimes loses teaching time due to lack of clarity, interruptions, and ragged transitions.</td>
<td>Loses a great deal of instructional time because of confusion, interruptions, and ragged transitions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>h. Prevention</strong></td>
<td>Has a consistent, dynamic, and self-assured approach to virtually all discipline problems.</td>
<td>Sometimes treats individual students as if they are not in the classroom.</td>
<td>Is successful at preventing and providing solutions to problems, and they think the problems.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>i. Incentives</strong></td>
<td>Sets students high, tangible goals and challenges students to achieve them.</td>
<td>Sometimes sets unrealistic goals.</td>
<td>Does not set realistic goals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall rating: ____ Comments:
Let’s try one page

• Think of a teacher you know well.

• Pick one domain (Classroom Management?)

• Ripple across each letter circling 4, 3, 2, or 1.

• Step back and look at the overall picture.

• What strikes you about using the rubrics?
Look through the other five pages

• A total of 60 criteria for good teaching
• Encompass the totality of a teacher’s work for year
• These are inputs - things teachers do
• Note that the rubrics don’t address outcomes.
What would be required to complete these rubrics for teachers?

1. Walking through all classrooms daily
2. One announced full-lesson observation per teacher
3. One unannounced full-lesson observation per teacher
4. 2-3 full-lesson observations
5. 4-5 mini-observations
6. 10-12 mini-observations
7. 10-12 mini-observations plus supervision of teacher teams
Key points with rubrics

• A common definition of four levels of teaching
• Negotiated in advance, shared with teachers up front
• Self-assessment by teacher, goal-setting up front
• Data gathering from 10-12 mini-observations
• SOTEL, not rubrics, during mini-observations!
• One-on-one evaluation conferences in May, compare
• Principal decides on final ratings, teacher signs
• Great source of data for PD, school improvement
At the end of a year, you can create a chart to analyze the status on the six domains.
Policy questions with rubrics

• A different rubric for new teachers?
• More weight for some domains?
  – Classroom management
  – Delivery of instruction
  – Monitoring, assessment, and follow-up
• Involving teachers, others in tweaking the rubrics?
• Rubrics for other job categories?
If the rubrics have the right criteria...
Would it be okay for your own child or beloved niece or nephew to be in the classroom of a teacher at Level 2?

1. Yes
2. No
A sunset strategy for Level 2 teachers?

• For teachers with an overall Level 2 rating…
• Denied the normal $ salary step raise
• A chance to improve to Level 3
• Lots of support
• If insufficient improvement, good-bye
Suggested performance pay scenario

4 - Highly effective – career step options, extra pay

3 - Effective – Regular step increase

2 - Improvement Necessary – No step increase, one year to improve

1 - Does Not Meet Standards – Improvement plan, dismissal that year if insufficient improvement
Merit rewards choices

• Who gets rewarded?
  – Individual teachers
  – Teacher teams
  – Entire school staff

• What’s measured?
  – End-of-year standardized test scores
  – Value-added standardized test scores
  – Student gains on in-school assessments
  – Classroom performance (frequent mini-observations)

• What’s the reward?
  – Pay bonus
  – Positive year-end evaluation
  – Praise from the principal
How would you personally feel about being evaluated with these rubrics?

1. Very positive
2. Quite good
3. Doesn’t matter either way
4. Quite worried
5. Very concerned, negative

Answer Now!
How much impact do you think using these rubrics would have on teaching and learning?

1. Very positive impact
2. Somewhat positive impact
3. Not much difference
4. Very little impact
5. Negative impact

Answer Now!
Okay, will the logic model work now?

A. There is a shared definition of good teaching.
B. Principals see everyday teaching in action.
C. Principals give teachers thoughtful feedback.
D. Principals criticize mediocre, ineffective teaching.
E. Teachers hear and accept the feedback.
F. Teachers improve their classroom practice.
G. Teachers take ownership for continuously improving teaching and learning.
Instructional leadership on the hoof

• Early-morning e-mailing, paperwork, calls
• Out front greeting colleagues, students, parents
• Quick meeting with leadership team, secretary
• 3-4 mini-observations; face-to-face feedback to 3-4
• Keeping an eye on “big rock” projects for the year
• Dropping in on a teacher team doing unit planning
• Dropping in on a team looking at data, student work
• Cafeteria time and other interaction with students
• Private conversations with students, teachers, parents
• Out front at dismissal, informal chats, unwinding
• Late afternoon e-mailing and paperwork
The most powerful activities - 260 hours

Time for Different Strategies

- Full-dress evaluations: 300 hours
- Mini-observations: 115 hours
- Showing the flag: 80 hours
- Lesson plan inspection: 70 hours
- Rubrics, conferences: 55 hours
- Interim assessments: 50 hours
- Curriculum planning: 40 hours
- Learning walks: 12 hours
Working smart, building collaboration, and closing the achievement gap!

Next steps for you, your school, your district?

Diagram:
- Mini-observations
- Team
  - Curriculum unit planning
- End-of-year rubric evaluations
- Team interim assessment work