The Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation

Training Module 6: Observations and Feedback

2012

Massachusetts Department of ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION
Module 6: Observations and Feedback

- Module 1: Overview
- Module 2: Unpacking the Rubric
- Module 3: Self-Assessment
- Module 4: SMART Goals and Educator Plan Development
- Module 5: Gathering Evidence

**Module 6: Observations and Feedback**

This module describes expectations for observations (inside and outside the classroom), the collection and organization of observation evidence, as well as the sharing of timely, constructive feedback to educators.

- Module 7: Rating Educator Performance
- Module 8: Rating Educator Impact on Student Learning
Agenda

★ Connecting
★ Learning
★ Learning – Part II
★ Wrap-Up
Connecting

25 minutes
Intended Outcomes

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the role of observation as a methodology for gathering evidence of educator performance;
- Delineate best practices for conducting high-quality short, frequent, unannounced observations; and
- Craft timely, targeted feedback that is evidence-based and grounded in the Standards of effective practice.
Every educator is an active participant in the evaluation process.

Collaboration and continuous learning are the focus.

Every educator and evaluator collects evidence and assesses progress.
What the Research Says . . .

⭐ Evaluators need multiple opportunities and settings to observe and assess educator practice

⭐ Multiple observations paired with timely feedback are a key part of a strong evaluation system
Voices on Observation

★ Handout 1: *Studies link classroom observations to student achievement*, by Stephen Sawchuck

★ Handout 2: *Mini-Observations – Seven Decision Points for Principals*, by Kim Marshall
Active Reading

★ Underline statements you find to be important takeaways or themes from the article

★ Circle one word or phrase that represents the key takeaway or theme
Making Connections

★ What are the key messages and ideas in the two articles with regard to observations and feedback?

★ What are some best practices for observations and feedback?
Learning

1 hour, 30 minutes
# Observing Practice: What can you see?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inside the Classroom</th>
<th>Outside the Classroom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Professional collaboration (team meetings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student engagement</td>
<td>Family and community engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom management</td>
<td>Collaborative data analysis</td>
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<td>Differentiated instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultivating a safe learning environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Family and community engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Observations</td>
<td>2-way communication</td>
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<td>Communication of school vision</td>
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<td>Safe learning environment</td>
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<td>Collaborative planning</td>
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</tbody>
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Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Principles of Brief Observations

- Frequent
- Focused
- Varied
- Useful and Timely Feedback
Guiding Questions

1. What does it mean to be [INSERT DESCRIPTOR] in your observations?

2. How does this principle of high-quality observations better support the improvement of teaching and learning?
Strategies for Collecting Evidence

★ Identify a focus ahead of time
  o Goals, specific Standards/Indicators

★ Record evidence, not judgment
  o Quotations, observed actions or movements by teacher and students, literal descriptors, etc.

★ Be an efficient note-taker
  o Establish abbreviations, paraphrase
## Evidence versus Judgment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVIDENCE</th>
<th>JUDGMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T: “Explain your answer to me. Show me what you did.”</td>
<td>Teacher does a good job getting students to explain their reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students constructed sailboats using various types of materials independently</td>
<td>Teacher wasn’t engaged enough with the students and just sat at his desk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collecting Evidence Through Observation

3rd/4th grade PE lesson

T: stated objective as “Students will develop jumping patterns using take-off and landing actions such as straddle and crossover”

- Objective is written on the dry erase board

T reminds S to read the board as they enter the classroom

00:01:11
Video I Background

★ Kelli teaches 4th grade
★ A math lesson is in progress
★ Kelli’s goals focus on:
  1. Improving students’ understanding of place value and properties of operations in order to perform multi-digit arithmetic (Standard 4.NBT.4-6); and
  2. Using instructional practices that engage all students during independent or small group work time (Indicators II-A and II-B).

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dRczDWKhwlq&feature=youtu.be
Recording Evidence From An Observation

★ Compare/discuss the notes on the completed Observation Evidence Collection Form to evidence you collected

★ Identify points of agreement as well as evidence that was not included
Observation Debrief

★ What evidence did you see related to Kelli’s second goal, on a collaborative learning environment?
★ Did you see the same things her principal saw?
★ What did her principal miss that you noticed?
★ What evidence did you see of other Standards, Indicators or goals?
Value of Feedback

Targeted, Ongoing Feedback

Improved Educator Practice

Improved Student Achievement
Characteristics of Effective Feedback

- FOCUSED: feedback should focus on what was observed
- EVIDENCE-BASED: feedback should be grounded in evidence of practice
- CONSTRUCTIVE: feedback should reinforce effective practice and identify areas for continued growth
- TIMELY: feedback should be provided shortly after the observation
Constructing Feedback

Kelli’s Goal: Using instructional practices that engage all students during independent or small group work time (II-A-2, II-B-2).

Using your observation notes and the rubric:

★ Draft two points of feedback for Kelli
★ Focus on feedback that is
  o Focused
  o Evidence-based, and
  o Constructive
Learning – Part II

55 minutes
Chuck teaches 10th grade physics
Chuck is a 3rd year, non-PTS teacher
Chuck’s goals focus on:
  - Helping students to analyze, interpret and communicate results of scientific investigations and translate numerical or technical information into words.
  - Creating a safe and collaborative learning environment (II-B-1 and II-B-2)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AxBavxlDC9s
Aligning Evidence to Standards and Indicators

★ Review your notes with a partner

★ Work together to assign each evidence statement to a Standard and Indicator, using the full Teacher Rubric in your handout packet.
Evidence of Chuck’s Goals

During the video observation, what evidence did you see of:

- Helping students to analyze, interpret and communicate results of scientific investigations and translate numerical or technical information into words.
- Creating a safe and collaborative learning environment
Draft Feedback for Chuck

★ Draft feedback for Chuck based on the evidence you recorded

★ Come to consensus with your table on two to three pieces of feedback for Chuck
Wrap-Up

5 minutes
Discuss and plan what an annual schedule of observations might look like in your school context.

- Consider the number of evaluators, number of teachers, and number of school days.
- Consider setting deadlines for completing the first observation of all teachers.
- Consider having evaluators set a goal for observation completion, like Kim Marshall did.
Suggested Homework for All School-Based Educators

- Try conducting a short observation of a colleague
- Ask your colleague to observe you as well
- Debrief/discuss the evidence that was gathered and what was challenging about the process.
Feedback and Questions

☆ Please take a moment to complete the feedback form being handed out. We appreciate your feedback!

☆ Questions?
  o About this training:
    E-mail [FACILITATOR/VENDOR EMAIL HERE]
  o About educator evaluation more generally:
    E-mail EducatorEvaluation@doe.mass.edu