Conducting Observations and Providing Meaningful Feedback

Online Calibration Training Workshop for Evaluators/Observers

Facilitator’s Guide

VIDEO: 9th Grade Biology

Focus Elements:
- I.A.4: Well-Structured Lessons
- II.A.3: Meeting Diverse Needs
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Online Calibration Tool: Focus Element Descriptors .................................................................... A1
Workshop Overview

This workshop is designed to provide evaluators and observers with opportunities to calibrate their perceptions of (1) effective instructional practice related to elements from the MA Model Teacher Rubric, and (2) high quality written feedback. The goal of this workshop is to build a common understanding of high quality practice and feedback grounded in evidence collected during observations.

This facilitator’s guide will assist facilitators in delivering a rich and engaging training experience for evaluators and/or observers of classroom teachers. The content of this workshop draws from the Calibration Video Library, elements from the MA Model Classroom Teacher Rubric (including CAP’s Six Essential Elements), the Subject Administrator Calibration Protocol from Revere Public Schools, and the Video-Based Calibration Protocol from Amherst-Pelham Regional Public Schools.

The workshop is for optional use – districts and educator preparation programs may use the workshop as is, adapt it to best meet their needs, or develop a similar professional developing experience that utilizes the online calibration tool.

Who is this workshop for?

This workshop supports evaluators and observers in both districts and educator preparation organizations, acknowledging the shared work and common objectives in delivering high quality feedback to promote effective practice, growth and development of MA educators.

Participants may include (but shouldn’t be limited to):

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Districts</th>
<th>Educator Preparation Organizations</th>
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<tr>
<td>▪ primary and secondary evaluators</td>
<td>▪ Program supervisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ peer observers</td>
<td>▪ Supervising practitioners/cooperating teachers</td>
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<td>▪ teacher mentors</td>
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Delivery

This workshop may be delivered in a whole group setting in its entirety, or through a combination of independent and whole group work. This facilitator’s guide includes guidance to support both delivery methods.

Intended Outcomes

At the end of this workshop:

▪ Participants will have practiced conducting a short observation via video and constructing written feedback.
▪ Participants will gain insight into the degree to which they are calibrated within their district or organization, as well as across the state.
▪ Participants will begin to develop a shared understanding of effective practice aligned to specific elements from the MA Model Classroom Teacher Rubric
▪ Participants will begin to develop a shared understanding of high quality written feedback

*Note: in order to achieve the best results and improve the calibration of observers over time, it is recommended to embed this workshop into professional development or training programs multiple times. This allows groups of observers to identify, study, and refine a shared understanding of effective practice and high quality feedback.
Facilitator Preparation

Prior to the workshop:

- Select a video of classroom practice from 19 videos associated with the Online Calibration Training Tool.
  
  - TIP: Be strategic! Select a video tagged to elements of particular importance or priority to your organization, or select a video based on content area or grade level.

- Select a calibration activity for written feedback (see Option I and Option II provided in Part IV of the Workshop)

- Select delivery mechanism (whole group or individual/whole group combination)

- Distribute pre-work

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<tr>
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<th>Whole Group Workshop</th>
<th>Individual/Whole Group Combination</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time Required</td>
<td>120 mins (whole group)</td>
<td>30-45 mins (individual pre-work) + 60-75 mins (whole group)</td>
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<td>Pre-Work</td>
<td>Direct all participants to bring a laptop or tablet to the workshop. (Note that participants will view the video and complete the online tool during the meeting.)</td>
<td>Direct all participants to complete 30-45 minutes of pre-work, which includes viewing the selected video and completing the online form associated with that video. See sample email language below:</td>
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</table>

Dear educators,

In preparation for our Calibration Workshop activity, please complete the following activity on your own in advance of our meeting:

1. Pretend you are conducting a brief, unannounced classroom observation and watch the following video: **9th Grade Biology** (13 mins) [http://tinyurl.com/9thGradeBiologyVideo](http://tinyurl.com/9thGradeBiologyVideo)
   - Focus your observation on practice related to these two elements: **I.A.4: Well-Structured Lessons** and **II.A.3: Meeting Diverse Needs** (available here: [http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/model/PartIII_AppxC.pdf](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/model/PartIII_AppxC.pdf))
   - Remember, the teacher’s practice in this video may or may not be strong. Maintain and open mind and take notes as you normally would during an observation.

2. Complete the online form related to this video (20-30 mins): [http://tinyurl.com/9thGradeBiologyForm](http://tinyurl.com/9thGradeBiologyForm)

3. Download a PDF of your results and bring this document to the meeting.

Day of the workshop:

- Prepare support materials:
  - Chart paper & markers for small group work

- Prepare for audio, video, and wifi access
  - Cue up the following:
    - WHOLE GROUP WORKSHOP ONLY: Selected video URL or MP4 (if watching as a group) (NOTE: if streaming is unreliable, download the MP4 in advance of the meeting)
    - Final Results page for selected video: [http://tinyurl.com/9thGradeBiologyResults](http://tinyurl.com/9thGradeBiologyResults)
Workshop Guide

This workshop is divided into six sections and has a total time of 2 hours. Section III may be completed as independent work in advance.

I. Warming Up
II. Overview
III. Observing (whole group delivery only)
IV. Calibrating Practice
V. Calibrating Feedback (Option I and Option II)
VI. Recapping

I. Warming Up (10 minutes)

This workshop supports the calibration of educator practice and high quality feedback from observers to teachers about instructional practice.

- Warm-Up Video from TEEM Video Series:
  - Hear directly from teachers and school leaders about the value of observations & feedback!
    http://tinyurl.com/TEEMObservations-Feedback
  - OR
    Revisit the importance of calibration when supporting evaluator skill:
    http://tinyurl.com/TEEMCalibration

Reflecting on TEEM video:
- Pair Share: ask participants to reflect on their experiences with observations & feedback:
  - How do you know what to look for when entering a classroom?
  - How do you determine what feedback to provide after an observation?
- Participants will likely have a range of experiences and preferences conducting observations and providing feedback. Facilitators may find it helpful to surface these differences by adding a whole-group share to the warm up activity.
II. Overview (5 minutes)

Why Calibrate?

- Review the purpose of calibrating observers around practice and feedback to ground the workshop.
  - Cultivate a shared understanding of instructional practice
  - Develop a shared understanding of high quality feedback that promotes an educator’s growth and development

Note the responsibility of evaluators and other observers to support educators’ practice through high quality feedback. Calibrating perceptions of practice and high quality feedback ensures that everyone has the tools to provide meaningful, actionable feedback to educators in support of their continuous growth and development.

Review the activities of the workshop.

- Introduce the video and the two elements associated with this video. Explain why this video was selected (e.g. aligned to “priority” elements, represents specific grade band and/or content area, etc.).
- Remind participants that the video does not necessarily represent “exemplary” practice. Participants should observe the teacher’s practice in relation to the two focus elements with no pre-conceived notions.

III. Observing (30 minutes)

*Optional Section: whole group delivery only

3 mins: Setting the Stage

- Prepare participants to conduct a simulated unannounced observation. Participants should take notes as they would in a typical observation, capturing teacher and student actions and behaviors without judgment.
  - Revisit the focus elements tagged to this video:
    - I.A.4: Well-Structured Lessons
    - II.A.3: Meeting Diverse Needs

12 mins: Simulated Classroom Observation

- Play the video: http://tinyurl.com/9thGradeBiologyVideo. Instruct participants take notes as they would in a typical observation.

15 mins: Completing Online Form

- Direct participants to open and complete the online form associated with 9th Grade Biology. (Project or provide in advance the following URL: http://tinyurl.com/9thGradeBiologyForm.)
- Participants work independently and rate the teacher’s practice in the two tagged elements, cite evidence to support their ratings, and provide written feedback to the teacher in their own words.
- Participants click “Submit” when they are done. They will be directed to an individual page with their own results.
IV. Calibrating Practice (40 minutes)

Whole Group Preliminary Analysis: Project and Review Data from the Final Results page: http://tinyurl.com/9thGradeBioResults.

- Bar Graphs and Intra-Organization Calibration: how calibrated are you as a team?
- State Map and Inter-Organization Calibration: how do your results compare to statewide results?

Small Group Analysis:
Participants break into teams of 3-4 and reflect on the data associated with each element. Suggested prompts include:

- What evidence did you use to arrive at your score for Well-Structured Lessons? What do you think might explain differences in judgments?
  - Chart 2-3 fundamental principles of practice related to this element that you’d expect to see in any classroom, regardless of grade or content area

- What evidence did you use to arrive at your score for Meeting Diverse Needs? What do you think might explain differences in judgments?
  - Chart 2-3 fundamental principles of practice related to this element that you’d expect to see in any classroom, regardless of grade or content area

Whole Group Debrief:
- Facilitator charts “fundamental principles of practice” identified for each element from each group. Is there general agreement?
- Push participants to explore the variation in scores for a given element and hypothesize a rationale for the lowest and highest scores.

NOTE: Fundamental principles of practice represent what the group believes to be core practices associated with an element, independent of grade level, content area, classroom make-up, or educator experience. These fundamental principles of effective practice serve as the foundation upon which observers can craft more customized, targeted supports to individual educators.

IV. Calibrating Feedback (30 minutes)

Whole Group Discussion: Calibrating Written Feedback—Why Is This Important? (5 minutes)

- First, evaluators must be calibrated to ensure that teachers receive consistent feedback.
- Second, calibration across all evaluators will ensure that a program or school’s rigorous expectations for teacher practice are reinforced through meaningful feedback following each observation.
Calibrating Activity Option I (based on The Subject Administrator protocol from Revere PS) (20 minutes):

- Participants break into teams of 3-4. Each team identifies a subject who is willing to read aloud (or share copies of) his/her written feedback (i.e. one positive instructional strategy, one question, and one suggested next step) to the group. (3 minutes)
- Subject reads his/her feedback aloud, OR provides copies to the group to read. (5 mins)
- Next, the remaining group members critique the subject’s feedback and make suggestions for improvement while the subject listens quietly. (5 minutes)
- Then the subject has a chance to respond to the team. (2 minutes)
- Finally, the team works together to brainstorm ways to make the subject’s feedback stronger. (5 minutes)

Depending on the time allotted for the workshop, facilitators may wish to let teams choose a second subject and repeat the process.

Whole Group Debrief (5 minutes):

- Provide each team an opportunity to share at least one example of written feedback that they felt was “exemplary,” or that they worked to strengthen. What makes this feedback strong?

Time permitting: Come to a shared understanding of at least one common practice that the team can adopt as it relates to writing feedback that is meaningful and actionable.

Calibrating Activity Option II (based on The Video-Based Calibration Protocol from Amherst-Pelham Regional SD):

- Participants break into teams of 3-4 and individually review written feedback from all observers (found on pg. 2 of Final Results page: http://tinyurl.com/9thGradeBioResults) (10 minutes)
- In small groups, chart examples from the feedback in response to the following prompts (10 minutes):
  - Do you see any exemplary feedback in terms of content?
  - Do you see any exemplary feedback in terms of communication style?
  - If you were the teacher receiving the feedback, what would be your next step given these themes?

Whole Group Debrief (5 minutes):

- Teams share their findings with the larger group.
- Facilitator leads the group to identify overall trends or findings from the observational feedback provided to this teacher. Probe for the following:
  - What themes do you see in the feedback?
- Identify one new common understanding or practice around writing meaningful, actionable feedback that the team will adopt.
V. Recapping (5 minutes)

Recapping

- Recap key takeaways and take questions.
  - How calibrated were you as a team with regard to each element? Is there one particular element you’d like to revisit and hone your collective understanding?
    **TIP:** Select another video tagged to the same element(s) to continue to refine your calibration work.
  - How calibrated were you as a team with regard to written feedback? Is there a style, tone, or specific technique you’d like to commit to as a “best practice” going forward?

- Brainstorm: how will you track your progress around calibration?
  - What do you expect to see as you develop shared perceptions of an expectations around **Well-Structured Lessons** or **Meeting Diverse Needs**? (Be specific.)
  - What do you expect to see as you establish more common practices around **high quality written feedback**? (Be specific.)
    **TIP:** Pair observers together in between meetings and encourage them to share excerpts of written feedback with one another to support and refine one another’s written feedback based on agreed upon focus areas or other criteria.
## I-A-2: Child & Adolescent Development

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
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<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unsatisfactory</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates little or no knowledge of developmental levels of students this age or differences in how students learn. Typically develops one learning experience for all students that does not enable most students to meet the intended outcomes.</td>
<td>Demonstrates knowledge of developmental levels of students this age but does not identify developmental levels and ways of learning among the students in the class and/or develops learning experiences that enable some, but not all, students to move toward meeting intended outcomes.</td>
<td>Demonstrates knowledge of the developmental levels of students in the classroom and the different ways these students learn by providing differentiated learning experiences that enable all students to progress toward meeting intended outcomes.</td>
<td>Demonstrates expert knowledge of the developmental levels of the teacher’s own students and students in this grade or subject more generally and uses this knowledge to differentiate and expand learning experiences that enable all students to make significant progress toward meeting stated outcomes. Is able to model this element.</td>
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## I-A-4: Well-Structured Lessons

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<td><strong>Unsatisfactory</strong></td>
<td>Develops lessons with inappropriate student engagement strategies, pacing, sequence, activities, materials, resources, and/or grouping for the intended outcome or for the students in the class.</td>
<td>Develops lessons with only some elements of appropriate student engagement strategies, pacing, sequence, activities, materials, resources, and grouping.</td>
<td>Develops well-structured lessons with challenging, measurable objectives and appropriate student engagement strategies, pacing, sequence, activities, materials, resources, technologies, and grouping.</td>
<td>Develops well-structured and highly engaging lessons with challenging, measurable objectives and appropriate student engagement strategies, pacing, sequence, activities, materials, resources, technologies, and grouping to attend to every student’s needs. Is able to model this element.</td>
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## I-B-1: Variety of Assessment Methods

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<td><strong>Unsatisfactory</strong></td>
<td>Administers only the assessments required by the school and/or measures only point-in-time student achievement.</td>
<td>May administer some informal and/or formal assessments to measure student learning but rarely measures student progress toward achieving state/local standards.</td>
<td>Designs and administers a variety of informal and formal methods and assessments, including common interim assessments, to measure each student’s learning, growth, and progress toward achieving state/local standards.</td>
<td>Uses an integrated, comprehensive system of informal and formal assessments, including common interim assessments, to measure student learning, growth, and progress toward achieving state/local standards. Is able to model this element.</td>
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### I-B-2: Adjustments to Practice

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<th>Exemplary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Makes few adjustments to practice based on formal and informal assessments.</td>
<td>May organize and analyze some assessment results but only occasionally adjusts practice or modifies future instruction based on the findings.</td>
<td>Organizes and analyzes results from a variety of assessments to determine progress toward intended outcomes and uses these findings to adjust practice and identify and/or implement appropriate differentiated interventions and enhancements for students.</td>
<td>Organizes and analyzes results from a comprehensive system of assessments to determine progress toward intended outcomes and frequently uses these findings to adjust practice and identify and/or implement appropriate differentiated interventions and enhancements for individuals and groups of students and appropriate modifications of lessons and units. Is able to model this element.</td>
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### II-A-3: Meeting Diverse Needs

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<th>Exemplary</th>
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<tr>
<td>Uses limited and/or inappropriate practices to accommodate differences.</td>
<td>May use some appropriate practices to accommodate differences, but fails to address an adequate range of differences.</td>
<td>Uses appropriate practices, including tiered instruction and scaffolds, to accommodate differences in learning styles, needs, interests, and levels of readiness, including those of students with disabilities and English learners.</td>
<td>Uses a varied repertoire of practices to create structured opportunities for each student to meet or exceed state standards/local curriculum and behavioral expectations. Is able to model this element.</td>
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### II-B-1: Safe Learning Environment

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<th>Exemplary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintains a physical environment that is unsafe or does not support student learning. Uses inappropriate or ineffective rituals, routines, and/or responses to reinforce positive behavior or respond to behaviors that interfere with students’ learning.</td>
<td>May create and maintain a safe physical environment but inconsistently maintains rituals, routines, and responses needed to prevent and/or stop behaviors that interfere with all students’ learning.</td>
<td>Uses rituals, routines, and appropriate responses that create and maintain a safe physical and intellectual environment where students take academic risks and most behaviors that interfere with learning are prevented.</td>
<td>Uses rituals, routines, and proactive responses that create and maintain a safe physical and intellectual environment where students take academic risks and play an active role—individually and collectively—in preventing behaviors that interfere with learning. Is able to model this element.</td>
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## II-D-2: High Expectations

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<tr>
<td>Gives up on some students or communicates that some cannot master challenging material.</td>
<td>May tell students that the subject or assignment is challenging and that they need to work hard but does little to counteract student misconceptions about innate ability.</td>
<td>Effectively models and reinforces ways that students can master challenging material through effective effort, rather than having to depend on innate ability.</td>
<td>Effectively models and reinforces ways that students can consistently master challenging material through effective effort. Successfully challenges students' misconceptions about innate ability. Is able to model this element.</td>
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## II-D-3: Access to Knowledge

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<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rarely adapts instruction, materials, and assessments to make challenging material accessible to all students.</td>
<td>Occasionally adapts instruction, materials, and assessments to make challenging material accessible to all students.</td>
<td>Consistently adapts instruction, materials, and assessments to make challenging material accessible to all students, including English learners and students with disabilities.</td>
<td>Individually and with colleagues, consistently adapts instruction, materials, and assessments to make challenging material accessible to all students, including English learners and students with disabilities. Is able to model this element.</td>
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