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Principal Evaluator's Toolkit for the Instructional Feedback Observation



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for the Instructional Feedback Observation

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Matthew Clifford, Ph.D.

Nick Yoder, Ph.D.

Jenni Feters

Jim Kurtessis

Kim Bobola, Ph.D.



20 North Wacker Drive, Suite 1231
Chicago, IL 60606-2901
800-356-2735 • 312-288-7600
www.air.org

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Introduction

School principals are critical agents in improving schools and raising student achievement. Accurate and fair performance evaluations of principals give them feedback that can improve their effectiveness. Observations of their work can be an effective tool for documenting and evaluating principals' impact on the quality of their schools' learning environments.

The *Principal Evaluators' Toolkit for the Instructional Feedback Observation* consists of tools that allow superintendents and assistant superintendents to record information about a principal's performance during an instructional feedback conference, assess the principal's performance level rating on five behavioral indicators, and determine a final summative score. Principals provide instructional feedback in multiple settings; however, this tool is designed specifically for use when a principal is providing instructional feedback in a post-observation conference setting. It should be used only by trained observers and for the specific process described in the *Principal Evaluator's Manual for the Instructional Feedback Observation*.

The U.S. Virgin Islands utilizes TalentEd to manage all evaluation processes. Although this toolkit contains tools, the required forms for the principal observation process are in TalentEd.

Tool 1: Behavioral Indicators Quick Reference

Instructions: The following graphic summarizes the core “look-fors” for each behavioral indicator in **Tool 3: Performance Level Rubric and Rating Form**. Use this “Quick Reference” in coding and analyzing data captured in **Tool 2: Information Collection Form**.

1. Evidence Use

- Centers the conversation on observation evidence
- Accurately aligns data to the framework and uses framework vocabulary
- Encourages teachers to bring additional evidence
- Integrates and considers teacher-provided evidence

2. Professional Interactions

- Provides focused attention (e.g., eye contact, minimizes disruptions)
- Uses appropriate communication skills (e.g., respectful language, listening, checks for understanding) to create a balanced conversation
- Encourages teacher voice and instructional risk-taking

3. Differentiated Questioning

- Asks factual questions (name or describe practice)
- Asks reflective questions that prompt explanation of thinking
- Asks questions that help create connections or brainstorm new strategies
- Asks reflective questions that examine the feasibility of new strategies

4. Leading Conversations

- Sets goals and outlines a plan for the conference
- Paces the conversation intentionally to focus on high priority feedback
- Ends conversation with concrete action steps and suggested resources
- Identifies school leadership actions to support the teacher’s growth

5. Written Feedback

- Completes observation forms and references evidence in scoring
- Uses instructional framework vocabulary and identifies areas for growth and areas of strength with concrete action steps for further improvement
- Identifies school leadership actions to support the teacher’s growth

Tool 2: Information Collection Form

Use Tool 2 to collect and record observation evidence during the instructional feedback conference (or “post-observation” conference). The multiple forms in Tool 2 provide a minimum level of observation documentation. In addition, you may choose to video record the conference as an additional method for capturing evidence.

2.1 Notes About the Observation Context

Instructions: Please provide a brief description of the observation context. Respond to the “Questions for Consideration” if relevant. Enter your comments in the box on the right.

Principal name:			
School name:			
Observer name:			
Date:		Observation #:	
Start time:		End time:	

Questions for Consideration

- *Who attended the instructional feedback conference you observed?*
- *Why was the observation conducted (e.g., principal’s formal or informal assessment)?*
- *Describe any environmental characteristics that influenced the observation session and/or the principal’s performance.*

Notes About the Observation Context

2.2 Running Record of the Post-observation Conference

Instructions: Record the principal and teacher's words and actions and any artifacts or materials used during the observation session. Recording the teacher's responses helps to document the principal's responsiveness, the pacing and balance of the conversation, and any evidence and interpretations the teacher shares. Note how the teacher and principal interact with the materials (e.g., observation notes, feedback forms, teacher-provided evidence).

Running Record (p. 1)

Evidence Use

Professional Interactions

Differentiated Questioning

Leading Conversations

Written Feedback

Principal says...	Teacher says...

Running Record (p. 2)

Principal says...

Teacher says...

Evidence Use

Professional
Interactions

Differentiated
Questioning

Leading
Conversations

Written
Feedback

Running Record (p. 3)

Principal says...

Teacher says...

Evidence Use

Professional
Interactions

Differentiated
Questioning

Leading
Conversations

Written
Feedback

Running Record (p. 4)

Principal says...

Teacher says...

Evidence Use

Professional
Interactions

Differentiated
Questioning

Leading
Conversations

Written
Feedback

2.3 Notes About the Outcomes of the Post-observation Conference

Instructions: Please describe the outcomes of this post-observation conference and the principal's performance. Respond to the "Questions for Consideration" if relevant.

Notes About the Outcomes of the Observation Session

Tool 3: Performance Level Rubric and Rating Form

Instructions: Please complete the following steps:

1. In the Narrative Summary box, summarize the observation, including the context and outcomes of the post-observation conference, as well as your initial thoughts on the principal's performance during the observation. Complete this summary shortly after the observation to capture your immediate reflections and comments while they are still fresh in your memory.
2. In the Performance Level Rubric, for each behavioral indicator, review the observation notes in **Tool 2: Information Collection Form** that are coded as relevant to that particular indicator; compare the observation evidence with the performance level descriptions for each indicator; (For behavioral indicator 5, review the teacher observation files that you collected against the descriptors).
3. For each indicator, select a performance level (Unsatisfactory, Basic, Proficient, or Distinguished) that best reflects the evidence you collected; check the box for the appropriate performance level. In the "Evaluator's Notes" section after each indicator, record evidence about the principal's specific practices and behaviors, and write feedback to share with the principal later during the post-observation meeting.

! Review the "Step C: Analyze" section of the manual before using this tool.

Narrative Summary of the Observation Session


Rating Tips

In making rating decisions, evaluators should pay careful attention to the following qualities of observation evidence they recorded:

- **Depth:** to what extent was the interaction limited, perfunctory, or superficial versus sustained, in-depth, and meaningful?
- **Frequency:** are the majority of the interactions at one performance level, or is there a mixture? Use counts taken from your notes to help guide your performance level selection. This is particularly important for Indicator 3: Differentiated Questioning.
- **Duration:** is the interaction or practice you observed relatively short or long in proportion to the total amount of time you observed?

Evaluators can gather evidence for this indicator during their pre-observation meetings with the principal or by reviewing the principal and teacher's pre-observation meeting forms.

Behavioral Indicator 2: Professional Interactions				
Indicator	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory	2 <input type="checkbox"/> Basic	3 <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient	4 <input type="checkbox"/> Distinguished
<div>2</div> <p>The principal shows he/she is listening by making eye contact with the teacher throughout the meeting.</p> <p>The meeting environment allows the teacher and principal to view and edit documents.</p> <p>The principal provides undivided attention and minimizes disruptions.</p> <p>Not Observed <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>The principal and teacher use respectful language, listen to each other when speaking, and respond to each other's viewpoints.</p> <p>The principal checks in with the teacher to ensure understanding and responds to the teacher's perspectives and needs.</p>	<p>The meeting is conversational and balanced, with the principal providing multiple opportunities for both the teacher and principal to discuss observed instructional practices.</p> <p>The principal engages with the teacher's responses by paraphrasing the teacher's statements to acknowledge, clarify, summarize, or help organize the teacher's thoughts.</p>	<p>The principal encourages and responds positively when the teacher pushes back on the principal's suggestions or interpretations.</p> <p>The principal engages the teacher in conversation about taking instructional risks, and provides assurances that risk will be supported.</p>	
<p><i>Evaluator's Notes:</i></p>				

Behavioral Indicator 3: Differentiated Questioning				
Indicator	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory	2 <input type="checkbox"/> Basic	3 <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient	4 <input type="checkbox"/> Distinguished
<div>  </div> <div> <p>The principal asks factual questions that require the teacher to describe or name aspects of practice, but moves on without expanding on the teacher's comments.</p> </div> <div> <p>Not Observed <input type="checkbox"/></p> </div>	<p>The principal asks reflective questions that prompt the teacher to reflect on evidence and the rubric, and to explain his or her thinking.</p>	<p>The principal asks questions that help the teacher connect the observation feedback to student learning and prompt the teacher to brainstorm potential improvements or alternative strategies.</p>	<p>The principal asks questions that prompt the teacher to reflect on the feasibility of potential improvements or alternative strategies and their implementation in the classroom.</p>	
<p><i>Evaluator's Notes:</i></p>				

Behavioral Indicator 4: Leading Conversations				
Indicator	1 Unsatisfactory <input type="checkbox"/>	2 Basic <input type="checkbox"/>	3 Proficient <input type="checkbox"/>	4 Distinguished <input type="checkbox"/>
<div> <div>4</div> <div>Not Observed <input type="checkbox"/></div> </div>	<p>The principal prepares for the conversation by identifying meeting goals and developing a short outline for the meeting.</p>	<p>The principal paces the conversation to focus primarily on no more than two areas of growth and two areas of strength based on observation evidence and framework indicators.</p>	<p>The conversation culminates in concrete action steps to improve practice immediately.</p> <p>The principal identifies resources that the teacher can access to improve in identified areas for growth and strength (e.g., colleagues, professional development, communities of practice, print and online resources).</p>	<p>The principal discusses the actions that school leadership (e.g., principal, other administrators, teacher leaders, instructional coach) will take to support the teacher in improving performance.</p>
<p><i>Evaluator's Notes:</i></p>				

Behavioral Indicator 5: Written Feedback				
Indicator	1 Unsatisfactory <input type="checkbox"/>	2 Basic <input type="checkbox"/>	3 Proficient <input type="checkbox"/>	4 Distinguished <input type="checkbox"/>
<div>5</div> <p>The observation summary and scoring forms are complete and reference evidence collected through the observation process.</p> <p>The written feedback references practices, evidence, or other information collected during the observation process as a rationale for ratings on each standard.</p> <p>The written feedback includes positive comments about the teacher's instructional performance.</p> <p>The written feedback uses vocabulary from the instructional framework.</p> <p>Not Observed <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>The observation summary and scoring forms are complete and reference evidence collected through the observation process.</p>	<p>The written feedback references practices, evidence, or other information collected during the observation process as a rationale for ratings on each standard.</p> <p>The written feedback includes positive comments about the teacher's instructional performance.</p> <p>The written feedback uses vocabulary from the instructional framework.</p>	<p>The written feedback identifies at least one area of growth and one area of strength for instructional improvement.</p> <p>The written feedback clearly states actions that the teacher can take for instructional improvement and identifies timelines and evidence (in the professional growth plan).</p>	<p>The written feedback clearly states the actions that school leadership (e.g., principal, other administrators, teacher leaders, instructional coach) will take to support the teacher in improving performance.</p>
<p><i>Evaluator's Notes:</i></p>				

! Review the “Step D: Discuss” and “Step E: Plan” sections of the manual before using this tool.

Tool 4: Instructional Feedback Rating Summary

Instructions: The Principal Observation Scoring Form in TalentEd is used to score the observation. Tool 4 is provided as a resource. If you are unable to rate a principal on a particular behavioral indicator, please mark the “Not Observed” option on the rating.

	Indicator	1 Unsatisfactory	2 Basic	3 Proficient	4 Distinguished	Not Observed
1	Evidence Use					
2	Professional Interactions					
3	Differentiated Questioning					
4	Leading Conversations					
5	Written Feedback					
Final Rating						

Principal's Comments (Optional):

Principal's
Signature:

Date:

Evaluator's Comments (Optional):

Evaluator's
Signature:

Date:

Tool 5: Sample Pre-Observation Conference Protocol

Instructions

The pre-observation conference is convened 5 days prior to each principal observation, and typically requires 30 minutes to complete. The pre-observation conversation (a) ensures all final preparations for the observation are complete and (b) aims to identify areas of focus for the observation. The principal supervisor may opt for a formal, in-person meeting with the principal, but some superintendents may find a telephone call more convenient.

This protocol is intended to help superintendents prepare for the pre-observation meeting with principals. The questions included in the protocol are intended to support conversation and are not required.

Materials

- 5 Essential Practices framework
- Instructional feedback observation toolkit
- Instructional feedback observation guidebook
- Principal observation preparation checklist
- Signed principal observation teacher consent forms

Questions

The purpose of this meeting is to ensure that we are ready to conduct the observation. I want to check in with you about your expectations for the observation and make sure that all parties are prepared for the observation.

- Based upon the criteria in the 5 Essential Practices framework and the Instructional Feedback Observation toolkit, what do you think are your strengths and growing points, with respect to providing instructional feedback to teachers? Explain your answer.
- Are there particular things that you would like me to pay close attention to, for the purposes of feedback, during this observation? Why are these things important to you?
- What are your goals for this observation with this teacher? Why are these goals important to teacher growth and to your schoolwide efforts to improve instructional leadership?
- What questions, if any, do you have about the Instructional Feedback Observation criteria or the process at this point?

I also want to make sure that we are fully prepared for the observation process.

- How complete is the instructional feedback observation checklist? What additional steps do we need to take?
- Can you now provide me a copy of the completed post-observation feedback form, which you will distribute to the teacher?
- Can you now provide me a copy of the signed teacher observation consent form, which will allow me to observe the post-observation feedback session that you will deliver?
- To what degree do you think that the post-observation feedback session will allow me to observe all four aspects of the instructional feedback observation rubric?
- To what degree do you feel familiar and prepare to provide post-observation feedback to the teacher by using the teacher evaluation framework?
- Should a scheduling issue arise, what is the alternative date and time for the post-observation conference with the teacher?
- What questions, if any, do you have about my observation process at this point?

Tool 6: Principal observation preparation checklist

Done?	Task	Led by	Due date
	Review the Instructional Feedback Observation guidebook and toolkit		
	Answer questions about the Instructional Feedback Observation process		
	A date and time is set for the principal observation pre-observation conference, observation, dissemination of results, and post-observation conference.		
	The pre-observation meeting occurs.		
	The observation occurs. The principal has the responsibility of notifying the teacher and obtaining consent for the superintendent to observe the post-conference and review a copy of the teacher's evaluation documents.		
	Written observation feedback is provided to the principal.		
	The post-observation meeting occurs.		

Tool 7: Principal Observation Teacher Consent Form

You are receiving this request because the superintendent or other observer would like to observe your principal's instructional feedback during your post-observation conference. We are requesting that you review the material, ask clarifying questions, and provide your signed, voluntary consent to allow the superintendent to observe your post-observation conference with the principal. The following information will help you to make an informed decision:

1. The purpose of the observation is to assess principals' practices as instructional feedback providers only. Your actions are not being evaluated in any way.
2. The observation will occur during the entire post-observation conference.
3. We ask that you act normally during the principal's observation.
4. All observation notes will be kept confidential, and are intended to support principal growth only.
5. Your participation in the observation is your voluntary choice. We do not want you to feel uncomfortable with this request. If you choose not to participate, you will not be penalized in any way.

If you have additional questions about this request, please contact your principal, union representative, or superintendent office.

Please select one of the following choices and return the signed form to your principal.

☐ **Yes!** I am willing to participate in the principal observation, which occurs during my post-observation conference.

Date and time of my post-observation conference _____

Preferred *alternative* date and time of my post-observation conference _____

☐ **No.** I am not willing to participate in the principal observation.

Signature

Date

Print Name

Tool 8: Sample Post-Observation Conference Protocol

Instructions

The post-observation conference is convened 5 days after each principal observation, and typically requires 30 minutes to complete. The post-observation conversation (a) encourages principal reflection on instructional feedback practice in light of performance evidence, (b) provides principals performance feedback from his/her superintendent, and (c) explains how observation results will be used to support continued growth. The post-observation conference is convened in-person with the principal.

This protocol is intended to help superintendents prepare for the post-observation conference with principals. The questions included in the protocol are intended to support conversation and are not required.

Preparation

- Superintendents will analyze observational evidence and written information. Then, the superintendent will score the principal by using the instructional feedback observation rubric. The superintendent will then complete instructional feedback observation scoring form and add comments about practice.
- The principal will reflect on his/her instructional feedback practice by completing the Principal Post-Observation Reflection Form.

Materials

- Instructional feedback observation toolkit
- Instructional feedback observation guidebook
- Observation evidence
- Completed instructional feedback observation scoring form with comments

Questions

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the observation(s) of instructional feedback and identify areas of strength and growth. During the meeting, we will discuss our reflections on the observed practices and the scores on the instructional feedback observation rubric.

- To what degree was the observed feedback session typical of your practice? What, if anything, was not typical?
- What preparations did you make with the teacher to ensure that their post-observation conference went well?
- To what extent do you think you met your goals for this feedback session, both in terms of your work to support this teacher's growth and your efforts to improve instructional leadership?

- What do you consider your strengths, in terms of your instructional feedback practice and according to the instructional feedback rubric? [After the principal's response, highlight strengths from your perspective and reference video- or script-based evidence.]
- What do you consider your growing points or areas for improvement, in terms of your feedback practice and according to the instructional feedback rubric? [After the principal's response, highlight areas of improvement from your perspective and reference evidence.]
- What supports do you think we can provide in order to improve your instructional leadership in the area of performance feedback? [Discuss plans and goals, and note the plan in the principal growth plan.]
- What questions do you have about the instructional feedback observation scores or how the scores will be used?