



Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) Implementing TEAM: Observations

Overview

TEAM combines frequent observations, continuous feedback and student data to provide a holistic view of a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom. The cycle of observations and conferences make up the 50% qualitative side of the effectiveness rating. It is imperative to the success of the system that the cycle is completed in a meaningful way to allow our teachers the opportunity to self-reflect and gain constructive feedback and guidance on their practice.

How many observations will teachers have each year?

Teachers with a professional license will be observed four times annually: two 15-minute observations and two lesson-length observations. Teachers with an apprentice license will be observed six times annually: three 15-minute observations and three lesson-length observations. The observations will be equally distributed across the two semesters, and at least half will be unannounced. It is important to note here that lesson-length does not necessarily mean a full period, but a full lesson.

How many observations should be done for teachers with "interim," "alternative" or out of state licenses?

These licenses fall under the apprentice license, and require 6 observations.

If a teacher who is new to our school how many observations should be conducted?

The number of observations depends on the type of license the teacher has. If the type of license falls under the apprentice license, six observations are required. If the teacher has a Tennessee professional license, then four observations are required.

What is the difference between an announced and unannounced observation?



Announced observation: The observer will set up a time with the teacher for a pre-conference and for the observation. The observer will review the lesson plan and discuss the teacher's goals for the lesson during the pre-conference.

Unannounced observation: The observer will visit the classroom without notifying the teacher in advance, and there will be no pre-conference.

All observations are followed by a post-conference where the observer and teacher discuss the lesson.

How much warning should be given to qualify as an "announced" observation?

Though there is no required amount of advanced notice, it is important to remember that a pre-conference is required for the announced observations. Observers will need to schedule that conference and also may want to request the lesson plan. It is reasonable to give a teacher a few days notice, but the exact number of days will be a school/district decision.

If a school uses a block schedule, does the "lesson length" observation need to be the full 90 minutes?

It might be. The idea is to see a full lesson with a beginning, middle, and end. In many cases, this does not take the full 90 minutes. Teachers who are especially adept at using the block schedule make use of transitions in activity/assessment, and this may allow for a shorter observation. In some cases, however, you'll need to see the whole thing.

What if the observer doesn't get to observe the full lesson?

If this is a lesson length observation, then it is very important that the observer see the entire lesson from beginning to end. If a portion is missed, then that observation should not count. Keep in mind that a lesson is not always defined as bell-to-bell; there may be full lessons that have a beginning, middle and end that do not take the full period.

In preparation for an unannounced observation of a teacher in a classroom with flexible scheduling, is it ok to ask the teacher what time a lesson will start?

Yes. The primary goal of TEAM is to facilitate the process of educators working together to improve instruction. There are going to be logistical challenges in meeting some of the



announced/unannounced requirements. It is important to take steps to fulfill each component of the system as it is outlined, but if circumstances require that you let a teacher know about an unannounced observation, that is ok.

For which observations is a lesson plan required to be submitted?

A lesson plan is only *required* for the 15 minute observation on the Planning Domain. However, observers/evaluators may require more if they wish.

Does a teacher need to be observed by the same observer each time?

There is no requirement around who conducts the observations, as long as the observer has been trained and certified. Plans and processes around this can be made at the school and/or district level.

Will all teachers be observed using the TEAM Rubric?

Almost all teachers will be observed using the TEAM Rubric, found [here](#). However, there are a few exceptions. Alternate rubrics have been developed for library media specialists, school services personnel and teachers in alternative schools. These alternate rubrics can be found [here](#). Though there are different rubrics, many of the critical indicators apply to anyone who works with students.

Can the information on the observation template be word processed rather than hand written?

Observers can collect evidence in whatever way proves most meaningful and then use that evidence to complete the TEAM Educator Observation Form. This form is provided for observers to record their ratings, areas of reinforcement and refinement, and optional reflection on the observation. Once school begins, this template will be available as a web-based form so that observers can record that information directly into the state-level data system.

It is important to note that the Scoring and Evidence Template provided in the TEAM Workbook is simply a tool for organizing the evidence and notes. With practice, many observers will be able to collect their evidence and code within the notes. The only official document that is produced is the TEAM Educator Observation Form; everything else is a tool to get there.