Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM)

TEAM Evaluation Supplemental Materials

2014

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Core Beliefs

- We all have room to improve. Because the stakes of our work are significant, we must honestly reflect on our practice and work to continuously get better.

- The rubric is designed to present a rigorous vision of excellent instruction. The expectation is not perfection. The scaling is built to allow for honest conversations about areas for growth.

- We score lessons, not people. Every lesson will have strengths and areas for improvement. The rubric is not a checklist of teacher actions. Instead, observers should look for the effectiveness of teacher actions based on evidence of student actions and learning.

- We support improvement best when we link feedback with ongoing learning. We all need to own our development and look for ways to learn from each other's strengths.

- As evaluators, we too must improve. In particular, we should look to continuously strengthen our vision of instructional excellence and our practice giving feedback.

Scoring and Evidence Template: Planning

Evidence Notes	Planning	Score
	Instructional Plans	
	Students' Work	
	Assessments	

Scoring and Evidence Template: Instruction

Evidence Notes	Instruction	Score
	Standards and Objectives	
	Motivating Students	
	Presenting Instructional Content	
	Lesson Structure and Pacing	

Scoring and Evidence Template: Instruction

Evidence Notes	Instruction	Score
	Activities and Materials	
	Questioning	
	Academic Feedback	
	Grouping Students	

Scoring and Evidence Template: Instruction

Evidence Notes	Instruction	Score
	Teacher Content Knowledge	
	Teacher Knowledge of Students	
	Thinking	
	Problem Solving	

Scoring and Evidence Template: Environment

Evidence Notes	Environment	Score
	Expectations	
	Managing Student Behavior	
	Environment	
	Respectful Culture	

Pre-Conference Plan

Prior to announced observations, observers conduct a pre-conference meeting to obtain pertinent background information about the lesson plan and students involved for additional context, and to address any potential areas of concern before the lesson. During the pre-conference, the teacher being observed engages in a coaching conversation with the observer. As part of this conversation, the observer asks questions about the lesson plan, grouping structures, classroom configuration, specific students, etc. The teacher provides background information, including the makeup of the students in the class; the context of this lesson in the larger unit plan; assessment information; extenuating circumstances; and evidence of planning with the rubrics. In the pre-conference meeting, teachers are provided with specific support for improvement when possible.

General Tips

- Sit next to the teacher with whom you are conferencing and maintain eye contact
- Nod and show signs of active listening, including writing down some of the responses that the teacher gives
- Paraphrase what the teacher is saying in order to demonstrate active listening; provide a summary at the end
- It is the observer's responsibility to redirect a teacher during the pre-conference if their instructional plan is inappropriate
- Adjust your questioning and use the teacher's responses to develop probing follow-up questions

Sample Pre-Conference Questions

- What is the objective of your lesson?
- What do you expect the students to know and be able to do after the lesson?
- Where is this lesson in the context of your unit plan?
- What are the prerequisite skills that the students have to know in order to be successful in this lesson?
- What changes or adjustments to the lesson will you need to make if students do not show evidence that they have mastered the sub-objectives?
- How will you know that students have mastered the objectives in this lesson?
- Is there anything else you want me to be aware of before going to look at the lesson tomorrow?

- Are there any other special circumstances that I should be aware of before the announced observation?
- How will you differentiate your instruction in order to address a variety of learning styles?
- Are there any particular grouping structures in place? If so, how will you hold students accountable for group work?
- Is there anything in particular you want me to be observing with regard to your areas of reinforcement and refinement?
- What are your plans for lesson closure and reflection?

Post-Conference Plan

While the TEAM rubric is used to evaluate teachers' lesson planning and instruction, its primary purpose is to provide the basis of support teachers receive for their own professional growth. This support should be provided in numerous ways from administrators and/or teacher leaders, including the modeling of specific indicators in professional development meetings, in teachers' classrooms, and in the post-conference.

The purpose of the post-conference is to provide teachers with opportunities to self-reflect on their lessons with guidance and support from the administrator or teacher leader who conducted the observation. This guidance should be provided through the use of leading questions by the observer, along with the identification of an area of reinforcement (relative strength of the lesson) and an area of refinement (area in which the observer needs to help the teacher improve). Therefore, the focus of the post-conference is on two indicators or descriptors from the rubric as opposed to multiple areas. By focusing on just two areas, teachers have the opportunity to segment their own learning with support from an administrator or teacher leader.

When choosing an area of reinforcement and refinement from the rubric, observers should ask themselves several guiding questions to ensure that a teacher's professional growth will have the maximum impact on the achievement of his/her own students.

Hints and Questions for Choosing Areas of Reinforcement and Refinement

- Which areas on the rubric received the highest scores (reinforcements) and the lowest scores (refinements)?
- Which of these areas would have the greatest impact on student achievement?
- Which of these areas would have the greatest impact on other areas of the rubric?
- In which area will the teacher have the most potential for growth? *For example, with new teachers it might be better to focus on developing objectives and sub-objectives instead of improving a teacher's ability in problem-solving.*
- Make sure that the reinforcement is not directly related to the refinement.
- Choose a refinement area for which you have sufficient and specific evidence from the lesson to support why the teacher needs to work on this area.
- Choose an area of refinement for which you can provide concrete next steps for improvement. If you do not have the personal knowledge or experience to recommend next steps, seek out someone who can provide you with more information. You could also connect the teacher with a person who is able to provide specific examples for improvement and model these examples for the teacher.

Once the areas of reinforcement and refinement have been selected, then the post-conference can be developed. Below is a format for developing an effective post-conference. It is important to note that **a post-conference does not begin with a presentation of the scores**, but with coaching questions that, through reflection, lead to the identification of the areas of reinforcement and refinement.

Post-Conference Introduction

1. **Greeting/Set the tone.** This time should be used to put the teacher at ease.
2. **Establish the length of the conference.** Assure the teacher that you respect his/her time and have set a time limit for the conference.
3. **Review the conference process.** Review the conference format with the teacher so he/she knows what to expect.
   Ex. "Good afternoon, it was great for me to get to visit your classroom and observe your lesson. Our purpose in meeting today is for professional growth. We will spend time discussing your lesson with a focus on your instruction and how the students were involved with the lesson. The ultimate goal will be to develop ideas on how to enhance student achievement."
4. **Ask a general impression question.** This allows the teacher to begin the post-conference by self-reflecting on his/her lesson.
   Ex. "How do you think the lesson went?"

Reinforcement Plan

1. **Reinforcement objective.** Use specific language from the rubric to develop the objective.
   Ex. "By the end of the conference, the teacher will be able to explain how she plans for the types and frequency of questions that she asks during a lesson." This objective includes specific language from the 'Questioning' indicator.
2. **Self-analysis question.** Prompt teacher to talk about what you want to reinforce. Utilize a question that includes specific language from the rubric. This can lead the teacher to reflect on the indicator you have identified as his/her area of reinforcement as it relates to the lesson.
   Ex. "When you plan a lesson, how do you decide on the type and frequency of questions that you will ask?"
3. **Identify specific examples from the evidence about what the teacher did relatively well.** It is critical that the observer leading the post-conference provides specific examples for the lesson of when the teacher incorporated descriptors from the indicator being reinforced.

Ex. "You asked a variety of questions throughout the lesson to check for student understanding. You asked numerous questions on the knowledge and comprehension level that led students to review previous learning as they identified the elements of a pictograph and defined mean, mode, median, and range. You also asked them to define vocabulary within the lesson's objective, which allowed you to restate the objective, using their response. As you progressed through the lesson, you continually asked students to explain how they arrived at their answers and to explain their classmates' responses. This type of questioning moves students to a deeper understanding of the content being taught as they must justify their thinking. You also asked questions that required students to evaluate the purpose and advantages of using a pictograph."

Refinement Plan

1. **Refinement objective.** Use specific language from the rubric to develop the objective.
   Ex. "By the end of the conference, the teacher will be able to explain how she plans for the pacing of a lesson that provides sufficient time for each segment and provides for a clear closure." This objective includes specific language from the 'Lesson Structure and Pacing' indicator.

2. **Self-analysis.** Ask a specific question to prompt the teacher to talk about what you want him/her to improve upon. Utilize a question that includes specific language from the rubric. This can lead the teacher to reflect on the indicator you have identified as his/her area of refinement as it relates to the lesson.
   Ex. "When developing lessons, how do you decide on the pacing of the lesson so sufficient time is allocated for each segment?"

3. **Identify specific examples from the evidence about what to refine.** It is critical that the observer leading the post-conference provides specific examples from the lesson to support the indicator being refined. This is the most important element of the plan because it models a strong example and labels why it is a strong example. This provides support for the teacher as they apply the model to future lessons.
   Ex. "You began the lesson with an explanation of the lesson's objective and an overview of the lesson. Modeling for students how to analyze a pictograph followed, and then students were to work in groups to read a pictograph and complete questions on a worksheet. You mentioned earlier that you wanted students to be able to work in groups and then report their findings. However, there was not sufficient time for this to occur during the lesson."

4. **Recommendations.** Provide specific examples of what to refine with suggestions that are concrete. Also indicate the example is strong and how it will improve student learning. Ideally, the teacher should leave with next steps, a resource to support those next steps, and a date by which you will follow-up to monitor progress.

Ex. "As you plan your lessons, ask yourself which learning activities are essential for students to meet the objective, and then ask yourself how much time each segment of the lesson will need. In thinking back on this lesson, each of the segments you used were essential: the beginning hook using our high school baseball team's batting averages; the modeling of your analytical thinking with a pictograph; the students working in groups to apply their analytical thinking to their pictographs; the students reporting their findings and justifications; and the students reflecting in their math journals about their learning for the day, which is the part they didn't get to. When we think about the time spent on each segment, I know that learning happens when students are problem-solving, discussing, justifying, reflecting, and/or writing, so I want to ensure these chunks have the most time. The beginning hook that took twenty-one minutes could have been accomplished in four to six minutes; leaving you the fifteen minutes to have students share their learning, reflect on their learning, and write in their math journals. For future lessons, continue to ask yourself which learning activities are essential for students to meet the objective and then ask yourself how much time each segment of the lesson will need. These questions will help you ensure you're able to focus on the learning experiences you know will help them succeed. Mrs. Smith has worked on this in the past, and she could be a great resource to support you. For next week's lessons, take the plans that you normally submit, and jot the time blockings you want for each segment of your math lessons. This shouldn't take any extra time, and it will help me support you because I will provide feedback and send it to you. I'll pop in sometime in the next couple of weeks to see how it's helping you provide your students with the closure and reflection opportunities. Are there any other things I can do to support you? What questions do you have?"

5. **Share the performance ratings.**

Sample Post-Conference Coaching Questions

Standards and Objectives

- How do you decide on the standards/objectives you will teach?
- How do you identify the sub-objectives for a lesson?
- How do you decide on the method you will use to communicate the standards/objectives to students?
- How do you utilize a visual of the standards/objectives during a lesson?
- How do you communicate your expectations to the students?
- How will you obtain evidence that most students have demonstrated mastery of the objective?

Motivating Students

- How do you organize the content of a lesson so that it is meaningful and relevant to the students?
- How do you develop learning experiences that provide opportunities for students to ask questions and explore?
- How do you reinforce and reward the efforts of all students?
- Why is it important for students to have opportunities to develop their own questions and explore for the answers?
- How does motivation impact student achievement?

Presenting Instructional Content

- How do you decide on the types of visuals you will use during a lesson?
- Why is it important for the teacher to model his/her expectations for students?
- How do you plan for effective modeling during a lesson?
- How do students clearly know your expectations for their assignments and for what they are to learn?
- When planning a lesson, how do you decide on the sequencing of the instruction within the lesson?
- When planning a lesson, how do you decide on the manner in which the different elements of the lesson will be segmented?
- How do you maintain focus on the learning objectives in a lesson?

Lesson Structure and Pacing

- How do you decide on the manner in which you will segment the different parts of a lesson?
- How do you plan for effective closure within a lesson?
- How do you plan for the pacing of a lesson that provides opportunities for students who progress at different rates?
- How do you ensure that instructional time is used efficiently throughout a lesson so that all students remain actively engaged in learning?

Activities and Materials

- How do you decide on the types of materials you will use during a lesson?
- How do you decide on the types of activities you will use during a lesson?
- How do you develop activities that are aligned to the learning objectives?

Questioning

- How do you decide on the types and frequency of questions you ask during a lesson?
- Why is it important for teachers to ask higher-order questions during a lesson?
- How do you provide opportunities for all students to respond to your questions?
- How do you provide wait time during a lesson?
- What is the purpose of a teacher providing wait time?

Academic Feedback

- How do you decide on the type of feedback you provide to students?
- How do you use student feedback to make adjustments to your instruction?
- How do you engage students in providing quality feedback to one another?

Grouping

- How do you decide on the instructional grouping of students during a lesson?
- How do you hold groups and individuals accountable for work completed within a group?
- How do you decide on the roles individuals will have when working in groups?
- How do you communicate your expectations to students for their own work and that of the group?
- How do you assess the performance of groups and individuals when it is completed in a group setting?

Teacher Content Knowledge

- How do you prepare yourself to teach (insert a topic taught)?
- How do you develop or select instructional strategies to teach (insert the specific topic being taught)?
- How do you decide on the ways in which you will connect the content being taught to other subjects?
- What are some other ideas to which you could have connected during the lesson?

Teacher Knowledge of Students

- How do you identify the learning styles of your students and incorporate these into your lessons?
- How do you identify the interests of your students and incorporate these into your lessons?
- How do you provide differentiated instructional methods within your lessons?

Thinking and Problem-Solving

- How do you plan for activities and/or assignments that teach students different types of thinking and problem-solving?
- Ask teachers to reflect on the specific activities and/or assignments utilized within the lesson and then identify the types of thinking and/or problem-solving each taught. This type of reflection will provide a means for assessing a teacher's understanding of analytical, practical, and research-based thinking and the types of problem-solving referenced under this indicator.

Reinforcement

Reinforcement Area *(Indicator)***:**

Self-Analysis Question:

Evidence from Script:

Refinement

Refinement Area *(Indicator)***:**

Self-Analysis Question:

Evidence from Script:

Recommendation *(Next steps, resource(s) to support next steps, date for follow-up)***:**