Dear Illinois Educator,

Fall is officially here and your performance evaluation cycle should be well on its way! You have probably finished your student growth/goal-setting meetings with teachers and are now observing professional practice.

In this issue, we will focus on the observation process and the various roles evaluators play in helping teachers develop or refine their practice. We will share reminders of PERA requirements regarding teacher observations and provide you with suggested templates and questions to use during pre- and post observation conferences.

Please take a few minutes to let us know what you think about the PERA Coach and how we can help you in the future by completing a brief survey. You can click on this survey link or use the link located near the end of this issue. Thank you in advance for taking the time to give us feedback.

Sincerely,

The Performance Evaluation Advisory Council

---

### Part 50 Rules About Observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Tenured Teachers</th>
<th>Tenured Teachers who Received a Rating of Proficient or Excellent on Last Evaluation</th>
<th>Tenured Teachers who Received a Rating of Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory on Last Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Informal Observations
Following an informal observation, the qualified evaluator shall provide feedback to the teacher either orally or in writing (electronic or paper) and if the feedback is in a written format, also provide the teacher with an opportunity to have an in-person discussion with the evaluator.

Evidence gathered during the informal observations may be considered in determining the performance evaluation rating, provided it is documented in writing.

*Note that these are the requirements of the Part 50 administrative rules; additional, specific requirements may also be included in your district’s locally developed teacher evaluation plan.

Click [here](#) to see the whole section about observations from Part 50 Administrative Rules.

The Roles of the Evaluator

Evaluators can help teachers to improve their professional practice by knowing when it is more effective to be directive and when it is better to be a facilitator/coach, especially during pre/post observation conversations.

- **Coaches** facilitate conversations to help teachers identify what they need to do in order to improve their practice and increase student achievement.
- **Mentors** share past experiences and wisdom and provide guidance.
- **Trainers** teach new skills and knowledge.
- **Consultants** give advice on their area of expertise and help with implementation.

Differentiated Feedback/Conversations
Generally, the higher skilled the teacher is (proficient/excellent), the more evaluators should serve as facilitators/coaches and ask questions that call for the teacher to be reflective about their practice. Teachers at higher levels of performance remain the expert and benefit from focused professional conversations with their evaluator.

Beginning teachers and teachers who have significant areas of deficit need more direct language and can benefit from their evaluators (or other teachers) being a Consultant, Mentor or Trainer.

---

**Pre-Observation Conferences**

The pre-conference serves as an opportunity to build rapport with the educator and to begin to collect evidence for the upcoming observation.

Ideally, the pre-conference would occur one to two days prior to the observation.

Click [here](#) to see a full-size copy of the following sample template to use to guide the conversation during a pre-observation conference.
**Post Observation Conferences**

The focus of a post observation conversation should be to help the teacher learn about his/her practice and to support the teacher’s thinking. The lesson is over so the evaluator is not going to be able to fix or change it, but he/she will be able to impact the teacher’s thinking and design of future lessons.

Post-conferences should not occur immediately after the lesson as this does not allow for sufficient time for the evaluator to synthesize evidence and feedback or for the educator to adequately reflect upon the lesson. However, these meetings should be held within a reasonable time after the observation so that the lesson is still fresh in the teacher and evaluator’s mind. Ideally, this would be within 3-5 school days.

Evaluators should spend time preparing for the meeting by reviewing the evidence collected, identifying areas of teacher strength and areas for growth, developing thoughtful questions and planning the conversation. Click [here](#) for examples of question/sentence starters that encourage reflective thinking and meaningful dialogue.

Click [here](#) to see a full-size copy of the following sample template to use to guide the conversation during a post observation conference.
The Illinois State Board of Education will be implementing new initial evaluator trainings after January 1, 2019. The last day to register for any Growth Through Learning Modules will be November 1, 2018. All modules must be completed by December 31, 2018. If all modules are not completed by this deadline, educators will be required to complete the new training in its entirety before being qualified to evaluate teachers or principals.

PEAC's Retraining Subcommittee is working on developing a face-to-face prequalification training. Once the training materials have been completed, the committee will offer a “train the trainers” session in early December. Only trainers who complete this session will be approved to deliver prequalification sessions to candidates who wish to be endorsed to evaluate teachers.

The prequalification sessions will be scheduled by providers and we plan to offer a master calendar of those sessions for the spring semester. We will report more as plans are finalized.
Take a Quick Survey to Help Us

Please take a few minutes to answer a short survey to give us feedback about the Virtual PERA Coach. We want to know if we have helped you with implementation of the Performance Evaluation Reform Act and how we might be able to assist you in the future. Click [here](#) to take the survey.

Additional Resources

[Illinois State Board of Education Webpage - Educator Evaluations - PEAC web page](#) This site contains links to guidance documents, resources, and past PERA Coach Newsletters to help teachers, administrators, PERA Joint Committees, and School Boards implement the Performance Evaluation Reform Act.

Additional Subscriptions

Would you like other members in your district/organization to receive future issues of the Virtual PERA Coach?

Questions or Topic Suggestions

Use this [link](#) to submit questions or topic suggestions for future issues

Funding Source

Publication of Your Virtual PERA Coach is made possible through a grant funded by the [Joyce Foundation](#)

PEAC Copyright © 2018