



Illinois State Board of Education

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Guidance Document 13-02

Guidance on Collecting Evidence of Teacher Practice Not Observable During Classroom Observations in Teacher Evaluation Systems

This document is intended to provide non-regulatory guidance on the subject matter listed above. For specific questions, please contact the person(s) identified in the document.

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Guidance on Collecting Evidence of Teacher Practice Not Observable During Classroom Observations in Teacher Evaluation Systems

Subject

Collecting evidence of nonobservable aspects of teacher practice

Type of Guidance

This guidance document provides general recommendations for collecting evidence of teacher practice that is not observable during classroom observations. Certain aspects of teacher practice are required to be included as part of teacher evaluation but cannot be measured through the methods proscribed in the state law.

The Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA) states that the teacher evaluation plan created by a district “shall include a description of each teacher’s duties and responsibilities and of the standards to which that teacher is expected to conform” and consider “the teacher’s attendance, planning, and instructional methods, classroom management, where relevant, and competency in the subject matter taught” (PERA Sec. 24A-5).

The Illinois Administrative Code states:

In order to assess the quality of the teacher’s professional practice, the evaluation plan shall include an instructional framework developed or adopted by the school district that is based upon research regarding effective instruction; addresses at least planning, instructional delivery, and classroom management; and aligns to the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards. (23 Ill. Adm. Code 50.120[a])

PERA and the Administrative Code specify that the following measures should be used as part of a teacher’s evaluation:

- Observations (formal and informal)
- Multiple measures of student growth

However, if these were the only two sources of evidence included in teacher evaluation, there would be no way to measure nonobservable components of teacher practice, including planning, which PERA specifically requires to be included in teacher evaluations. There also would be no way to measure some of the [Illinois Professional Teaching Standards](#), including Standard 9, Collaborative Relationships; Standard 10, Reflection and Professional Growth; and Standard 11, Professional Conduct.

Table 1 identifies which Illinois Professional Teaching Standards are potentially observable during classroom observations.

Table 1. Illinois Professional Teaching Standards and Related Measures

Illinois Professional Teaching Standard	Potentially Observable During Classroom Observations	Not Observable During Classroom Observations
1. Content Knowledge	X	
2. Human Development and Learning	X	
3. Diversity	X	
4. Planning for Instruction	X	
5. Learning Environment	X	
6. Instructional Delivery	X	
7. Communication	X	
8. Assessment	X	
9. Collaborative Relationships		X
10. Reflection and Professional Growth		X
11. Professional Conduct and Leadership		X

Consequently, a district and union will need to identify other sources of evidence as part of their teacher evaluation plan to at least measure planning and Illinois Professional Teaching Standards related to parent collaboration and professional responsibilities.

In addition, there are two domains in the [Framework for Teaching](#) (the instructional framework used in the mandated state teacher evaluator training) that cannot be measured through the methods required in the state law: Domain 1, Planning and Preparation; and Domain 4, Professional Responsibilities.

Districts can choose to collect evidence of these nonobservable components through the following activities:

- Reviewing artifacts (lesson plans and other documents submitted by teachers)
- Asking questions and recording answers about these topics during required preobservation and postobservation conferences

The following explanation provides a useful starting point for making decisions that relate to collecting evidence of nonobservable aspects of teacher practice.

Explanation

Collecting evidence through review of artifacts and asking questions during preobservation and postobservation conferences are methods for evaluators to gather evidence of teacher practice. These methods:

- Are not overly burdensome to evaluators.

- Are not overly burdensome to teachers.
- Incorporate required aspects of the evaluation cycle (preobservation and postobservation conferences).

Step 1. A district and union should begin by identifying which components of the instructional framework will be supported by each source of evidence. One way to do so would be through a table (like Table 1 on page 2) that identifies which measures will be used to provide evidence of each component of the framework.

Step 2. After identifying which sources of evidence align with each component of the district instructional framework, the district and teachers union should create aligned forms and detailed processes for each source of evidence. If the district is using the *Framework for Teaching* as the instructional framework for teachers, numerous resources are available.

Example

A district and union can decrease the burden on teachers and evaluators by making thoughtful decisions about the evaluation process. The following examples can help increase the feasibility of full implementation.

- **Provide Clear Communication and Training.** Provide clear communication about the new teacher evaluation system to both teachers and evaluators. The local union may be able to help with this communication. Provide evaluators with training on the new system so that the system is implemented across the district with fidelity.
- **Leverage Existing Opportunities.** By incorporating evidence collected through preobservation and postobservation conferences, the district is taking advantage of required educator evaluation meetings, thus reducing the burden on teachers and evaluators. The district also should incorporate the review of artifacts into other teacher evaluation meetings, such as the summative conference. This approach will reduce the scheduling burden on evaluators.
- **Strategically Collect Artifacts.** Teachers should have the primary responsibility for collecting acceptable artifacts. Teachers should not create artifacts specifically for this artifact review; instead, teachers should use samples of documents that occur as part of their everyday practices. The district also should provide examples of artifacts that teachers could collect; the district could highlight examples of artifacts that provide evidence of more than one component of teacher practice.
- **Build on PERA Training.** Evaluators should build on the evidence collection skills they learned in the required PERA teacher evaluation training, applying those skills to the artifact review process.
- **Leverage Building Collaboration.** Use existing building collaboration times, such as meetings of professional learning communities and common planning times, to discuss the new teacher appraisal system. Teacher leaders and teachers can use those meetings to discuss useful and authentic artifacts. Evaluators and teacher leaders can share examples of quality artifacts with the wider school community.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Does our district have to follow these steps?

No. This is a guidance document. In their development of the teacher evaluation system, a district and union, in collaboration, can choose whether to follow these steps.