



NCTE Webinar Synthesis: Evaluator Training

Observation and evaluation systems have transformed the way educators are reviewed by their peers and administrators. To be effective, the evaluators need training to make sure their ratings accurately reflect what they have observed.

Teacher careers can depend on the results, which can affect tenure decisions, performance pay, and promotions.

The investment can be significant, as districts must train evaluators in the instructional framework and the rating methodology. Then they should provide continuous follow-up, and coaching. There is a technological component as well, with evaluators needing to master the use of mobile devices many use to record their ratings and comments.

The New Teacher Project (TNTP) warns that relying solely on initial training with video examples of good and bad teaching will not be enough. Districts also need to invest in ongoing support as evaluators bring their new observation tools to the classroom.

These webinars detail evaluator-training carried out by several vendors, which typically feature a combination of face-to-face and online presentations. Videos play a major role in the trainings, with evaluators learning to gather evidence of teaching practice, and applying that evidence to the rubric under which the teachers are rated.

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Tim Daly's
recommendations
for sustainable
appraiser training](#)

In Tennessee, the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) trained more than 5,000 evaluators in more than 100 training sessions. Participants included principals as well as administrators from the central offices.

Evaluators learn the multi-faceted frameworks that divide teaching practice into various domains, with each domain further broken down into indicators of teaching proficiency. The evaluators must then find evidence for teacher proficiency—or lack thereof—on each of the indicators. Some frameworks have as many as sixty indicators.

In the training workshop, evaluators learn how to categorize evidence of teaching practice. They work in groups to capture the evidence when observing a teacher in action, and come to a consensus how they would be rated. They learn what a “4” looks like—on a scale of 1 to 4—for an indicator, such as asking questions that engage students in higher-level thinking. Then they try it out independently with videos of teachers in a classroom, making sure their observations are tied to the rubric.



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more from Roger Fry
about Cambridge
Education's evaluator
training](#)

Cambridge Education over three months in 2010 prepared 900 Florida administrators in a process that stretched over six days for each educator. It featured two days of face-to-face workshops, with teachers watching DVDs to view master teachers, and learning how to rate various components. The face-to-face workshops, with one trainer for 20 educators, were followed up with three days of training in the classroom, with one trainer for every four teachers on two days, and a one-to-one session on the third day.

After three months of observations, the evaluators return for a day of computer training and exercises to refine their ratings.

In addition to training on how to make ratings within the instructional framework, Cambridge Education also teaches evaluators how to conduct pre-observation and post-observation conferences. These sessions are critical piece of the observation/evaluation system. In the pre-conference meeting of five to 10 minutes, the evaluator learns what the teacher intends to do in the classroom, what that teacher intends their students to know at its completion, and how the lesson fits into that day's class.

In the post-observation conference, which is lengthier, the evaluator shares the results of the observation, and discusses next steps for improvement.

Teachscape prepares evaluators with 21 hours of training on a dozen online teaching modules, which include more than 100 master-scored videos. The videos provide insight into how evaluators can make distinctions on performance levels on each teaching indicator.

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learn more from
Teachscape about
its rater training](#)

The first three modules show evaluators how to use the video scoring tools, minimize bias in their ratings, and to separate evidence from personal preference.

Then evaluators view eight modules, with detailed rater training on each component and performance level within each component. The practice videos, so evaluators can become comfortable identifying and recording instruction evidence, and aligning that evidence to the rubric.

Summary prepared by David McKay Wilson.

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