

The Observation Process



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DO NOW ACTIVITY



Imagine the following:

A New York State Public School of 1800 students in grades 7 – 12 with the following demographics:

79% African American

13% Hispanic

7% Asian

1% White



You walk into the school described above. Describe the school culture that you might find. Also, explain how you think this school performs academically.

Elmont Memorial High School Graduation Statistics



	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014
Graduation Rate	97%	94%	97%	94%
Regents Diplomas	95%	95%	98%	94%
Advanced Regents Diploma	47%	47%	42%	45%

How do we create this culture of success at Elmont Memorial?



- ❧ *Articulate a clear vision.*
- ❧ *Set high expectations for teachers and students.*
- ❧ *Hire caring and dedicated professionals.*
- ❧ *Provide continuous professional development.*
- ❧ *Remove the barriers that prevent students from learning.*

But most importantly.....



***WE UNDERSTAND AND
EMBRACE THE IMPORTANCE OF
TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS IN
THE CLASSROOM !***

What does the research show on teacher effectiveness and student achievement?



☞ “The most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher.”

- Wright, Sanders, and Horn, 1997

☞ “The teacher effect makes all other differences pale in comparison.”

- Sanders, 1997



☞ “Effective teachers are generally effective with all their students.”

- Sanders and Rivers, 1996

☞ “The effect of teacher ability on student achievement varies depending on the context of the ability. Highly talented and motivated teachers have the greatest effect on student achievement.”

- Rowan, Chiang, & Miller, 1997



☞ “Having an above average teacher for five years running can completely close the gap between low - income students and others.”

- Marzano, 2003

☞ “Simply put, teacher success equals student success. The one clear abiding hallmark of effective teaching is student learning.”

- Stronge, 2002

How do you determine effective
teaching ?



What methods do we use to improve
teacher effectiveness?





What role does the observation process play in improving teacher effectiveness and ultimately student achievement?

What does the observation process look like in your school?



Faculty Lunch Room Comments

What is the real purpose of the observation process?

The Observation Process at Elmont Memorial High School



UNTENURED TEACHER

- 7 observations per year (unannounced)
- 4 by chairperson
- 1 by district coordinator
- 1 by assistant principal
- 1 by principal

TENURED TEACHERS

- 2 observations per year by chairperson / administrator
- 1 announced / 1 unannounced

BEFORE THE OBSERVATION



- ❧ Familiarize teachers with the purpose of the process.
- ❧ Review previous end of the year evaluation and prior observations identifying instructional focus.

THE CLASSROOM OBSERVATION



- ❧ Observations are conducted early in the year.
- ❧ A clear supervisory plan should be formulated based on the needs of the teacher.
- ❧ The observer minimizes tension by actively listening, smiling, and encouraging the teacher during the lesson.
- ❧ Observations are a full period.
- ❧ Observers enter before the bell and take a seat in the back of the room.
- ❧ Observers never take over the class or show displeasure.
- ❧ Observers note elements of effective and ineffective instruction.
- ❧ Observers make note of the quality and quantity of student participation.

THE POST OBSERVATION CONFERENCE



- ☞ Demonstrate clearly to the teacher that instructional improvement is of the highest priority of the supervisor.
- ☞ Observers have a lesson plan for conference.
- ☞ Primary purpose is to build teacher's ability for constant self - evaluation.

CONDUCTING THE CONFERENCE



- ❧ Evaluation of the lesson is a cooperative undertaking.
- ❧ Seek as many commendations and recommendations as possible from the teacher.
- ❧ Recommendations should be limited to two or three.
- ❧ As instructional leader of a department or a school, **the supervisor is always a teacher!**

COMMENDATIONS



- Effective instructional strategies used in lesson.
- Specific evidence and outcomes from lesson.
- Why strategies are effective.

Examples of Commendations



- ❧ **Your students demonstrated a substantial amount of prior knowledge.** This was evident throughout the lesson. Students were required to recall and analyze different scenes and literary terms as they read Romeo and Juliet. For example, students were able to identify and explain literary terms such as dramatic irony and foreshadowing as it appeared in earlier scenes. Their explanations and discussions of these terms indicated a genuine understanding of these concepts. Demonstrating prior learning such as this is important for two reasons. First, it enables you to build your lessons progressively upon previously taught material. Second, it provides a clear indication that you are meeting your instructional aims.
- ❧ **You are to be commended for responding to previous recommendations.** You have clearly responded to past recommendations such as redirecting your questions and developing aims that are more challenging for your students. In doing so you have created a classroom where your students are actively engaged and have to think a higher level. This is encouraging for two reasons. First, they enabled you markedly improve the quality of your classroom instruction. Second, it demonstrated your genuine willingness to accept supervision and grow as a professional.

RECOMMENDATIONS



- ☞ Areas in need of improvement.
- ☞ Specific examples from lesson; why ineffective practice.
- ☞ Examples of effective practice.
- ☞ Hierarchy of skills:
 - ☞ Knowledge of classroom management and routines
 - ☞ Exhibiting a good rapport
 - ☞ Constructing a worthwhile AIM / Objective
 - ☞ Developing effective, relevant activities related to aim
 - ☞ Creating pivotal devices (motivation, questioning, etc.
 - ☞ Assessing students
 - ☞ Level of differentiation of instruction
 - ☞ Extent and quality of student engagement
 - ☞ Integrating reading and writing skills, assessment questions
 - ☞ Utilization of various instructional methods
 - ☞ Integration of technology

Examples of Recommendations



- ☞ At our post observation conference we discussed that the aim of your lesson could have been improved. For example, based on your aim, the students were required to merely explain how John Steinbeck juxtaposed Lennie and Curley's wife. A response of, "He showed the similarities and differences of the characters." would have been sufficient in answering the aim. Instead of asking "how", you could have asked "Why does Steinbeck juxtapose Lennie and Curley's wife?" as you did in your summary activity. This would have raised the level of your student's critical thinking and tied your summary activity directly to your aim.
- ☞ We discussed that it was difficult to make an assessment of student learning at the end of your lesson. We agreed that the questions you planned for the activity were adequate, however only two students were called upon to give their responses. This is a problem because an effective summary activity provides students with an opportunity to synthesize and apply what they have learned. Additionally, it also is an excellent method of assessing student understanding and the effectiveness of your instructional methodology.

SUMMARY AND ACTION PLAN



- ☞ Rating of the lesson.
- ☞ Suggestions for implementing recommendations.
(Focused peer observations, specific workshops,
research articles, etc.)
- ☞ Timeline for completion.
- ☞ Supervisory support.

Example of Summary and Action Plan



- ☞ We met on Wednesday December 1, 2013 to discuss the above commendations and recommendation. This lesson contained all the elements of an effective lesson. You planned a well-developed aim, a quality do now activity, a motivational activity, an activity reflective of the aim, and an effective summary activity. Your students love being in class with you because you have created an environment where they continuously experience success. It is also evident that you have a sincere dedication to the success of the students of Elmont Memorial and a love of teaching. To help you continue your professional growth, please plan to observe your chairperson, Ms. Smith within the next four weeks, focusing on her questioning technique and how she assists students in becoming independent problem solvers. Please report back to me after you observe Ms. Smith to discuss your observation.



Thank you