Teacher Observation Training

NYSED
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Teaching & Learning Solutions
teachinglearningsolutions.com

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DAY 1 AGENDA

- Introductions
- Objectives and Agenda Review
- The Wisdom of Practice
  - Considerations for facilitators
- Priorities of the framework criteria
  - Considerations for facilitators
- Teacher Evaluation
  - Considerations for facilitators
- Closure

Working Agreement

- Be present: minds and hands on all day
- Respect time boundaries
- Recognize the need for quiet while working
- Use electronics respectfully and appropriately when prompted
- Return to large group attention when signaled

Workshop Objectives
Days 1 & 2

- Understand the nature of learning for students and educators
- Understand how a common language creates and supports professionalism and a culture for learning
- Understanding the relationship between research and the rubric criteria
- Understand the relationship between the NYSED Teaching Standards and the rubrics by which the teaching standards are assessed
- Hone observation skills to focus
  - Evidence Collection
  - Alignment of evidence with Standards
- Collaboration with colleagues

Unpacking the Objectives

- What questions or ideas do the objectives bring to mind?

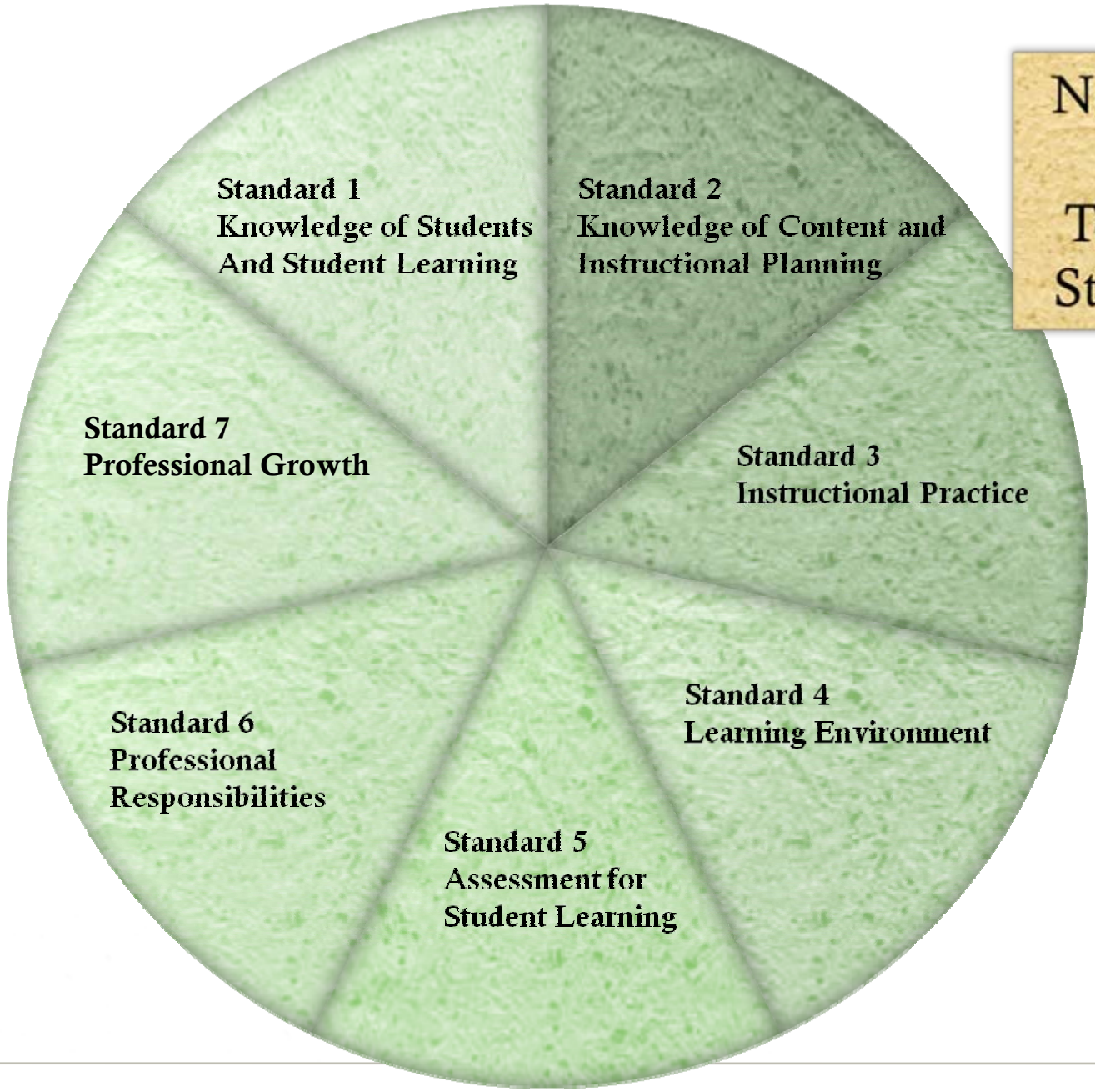
- How will the objectives help you in your work?

Wisdom of Practice

- Imagine you are in the classroom of a highly effective teacher:
  - What would you see?
  - What would you hear?
  - What would the students be doing or saying?

- Individually, write one idea per post-it note.

New York State Teaching Standards



Planning and Preparation
(Pre-observation)

- Standard 1: Knowledge of Students & Student Learning
  - Knowledge of child development
  - Knowledge of research…
  - Knowledge of diverse learning needs
  - Knowledge of individual students
  - Knowledge of economic, social
  - Knowledge of technological literacy…
- Standard 2: Knowledge of Content & Instructional Planning
  - Knowledge of content…
  - Connect concepts across disciplines…
  - Uses a broad range of instructional strategies
  - Establishes goals & expectations
  - Designs instruction
  - Evaluate / utilize resources

Instruction
(Observation)

- Standard 3: Instructional Practice
  - Research-based practices
  - Communicates clearly…
  - High expectations…
  - Variety of instructional… to engage student
  - Engage students in multi-disciplinary skills
  - Monitor and assess progress

Classroom Environment (Observation)

- Standard 4: The Learning Environment
  - Creates a respectful, safe and supportive environment
  - Creates an intellectually stimulating environment
  - Manages the learning environment
  - Organize and utilize available resources (e.g. physical space, time, technology…)
- Standard 5: Assessment for Student Learning
  - Range of assessment tools
  - Understand, analyze, use data for differentiation*
  - Communicates assessment system*
  - Reflect upon assessment system and adjust*
  - Prepare students for assessments

* - *assessed through "multiple measures"*

Professional Responsibilities
(Post-observation)

- Standard 6: Professional Responsibilities
  - Upholds standards and policies
  - Collaborate with colleagues
  - Communicate & collaborate with families
  - Perform non-instructional duties
  - Complies with laws and polices

Professional Growth
(Post-observation & ongoing)

- Standard 7: Professional Growth
  - Reflect on practice
  - Set goals for professional development
  - Communicate and collaborate to improve practice
  - Remain current in knowledge of content and pedagogy

Aligning Evidence to the NYSED Teaching Framework

- Using the placemat for the NYSED Teaching Framework, *re-sort* your table's post-it notes as appropriate to the standard, element and indicator

NY State Standards Vocabulary

Standards

Summary statements

Elements

Indicators

With rubrics

Knowledge of Students & Student Learning

Element 1.1 Demonstrate knowledge of child and adolescent development including cognitive, language, social, emotional, and physical developmental levels.

A) Describes developmental characteristics of students

Common Themes

- Equity
- Cultural competence
- High expectations
- Developmental appropriateness
- A focus on individuals, including those with special needs
- Appropriate use of technology
- Student assumption of responsibility

Turning it Around

- In your table groups discuss the following
  - What are the crucial concepts that need to be understood and conveyed to your audience?
  - What do you need to know and be able to address in order to deliver this activity?
  - What questions might arise and how might you answer them?
  - What logistical considerations are there for this activity?
  - What questions do you have about delivering this activity?
- Be prepared to share your thoughts

Exploring the Priorities of the Rubrics
Observing with a Focus on the Priorities

Cognitive Engagement, Constructivist Learning & 21st Century Skills

- Discuss what these concepts look like in the classroom and how you would know if students are cognitively engaged.
- In table groups
  - Develop a group description and list of evidence
  - Be prepared to share your work with the whole group

Priorities of the FfT-Based Rubrics

- Cognitive Engagement
- Constructivist Learning
- 21st Century Skills

*The **LEARNING** is done by the **LEARNER**!*

Building Understanding of the Priorities – Text jigsaw

- Discuss the Reading with your colleagues
  1. Conley, D. (2011). "Building on the Common Core." *Educational Leadership*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD. (pages 16-20)
  2. An excerpt from: Tharp, R. G., P. Estrada, S. S. Dalton, and L. A. Yamauchi. (2000). *Teaching Transformed. Achieving Excellence, Fairness, Inclusion, and Harmony*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press (Pages 30-31)
  3. Excerpts from: Donald G. Hackmann. 2004. "Constructivism and Block Scheduling. Making the Connection." *Phi Delta Kappan*: 697-702, May ; and "Constructivist Processes and Education" From William F. Brewer, on-line at **Education Encyclopedia**, Learning Theory: Constructivist Approaches.
- Discussion question: How do these texts inform your understanding of the priorities?
- Whole group debrief

Priorities of the Frameworks

- Cognitive Engagement
  - "Effective" = students must be ***cognitively*** engaged
  - "Highly Effective" = cognition, meta-cognition, and student ownership of their learning
- Constructivist Learning
  - Effective and Highly Effective practice must have evidence of learning experiences designed to facilitate students' construction of knowledge.
- 21st Century Skills
  - Effective and Highly Effective practice must plan for and have evidence of application of college career-readiness skills and dispositions

Levels of Performance

Unsatisfactory / Ineffective – Teaching shows evidence of not understanding the concepts underlying the component - may represent practice that is harmful - requires intervention

Basic / Developing– Teaching shows evidence of knowledge and skills related to teaching - but inconsistent performance

Levels of Performance

- **Proficient / Effective**- Teaching shows evidence of thorough knowledge of all aspects of the profession. Students are engaged in learning. This is successful, accomplished, professional, and effective teaching.
- **Distinguished / Highly Effective**– Classroom functions as a community of learners with student assumption of responsibility for learning.

Levels of Performance and Student Achievement – Research

Research Findings from Cincinnati
(National Bureau of Economic Research, 2010)

- Teachers have substantial effect on student achievement
- Correlation between FFT based evaluation and student achievement
- Evaluation using the FFT found:
  - Unsatisfactory and Basic: students had lower gains than expected
  - Proficient: students made expected gains
  - Distinguished: students made positive, and greater than expected gains

http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id= 1565963

Reviewing the Levels of Performance

- Read the descriptors for Element III.4 of the rubric
- Highlight the verbs / phrases that distinguish the differences among the levels of performance

Exploring Instruction

Instructional Practice

- Research-based practices
- Communicates clearly…
- High expectations…
- Variety of instructional… to engage student
- Engage students in multi-disciplinary skills
- Monitor and assess progress

Assessment for Student Learning

- Range of assessment tools
- Prepare students for assessments

Instruction- Activity

- Read the Element that has been assigned to your group.
- Complete the handout in the following manner:
  - Summarize the concepts within your rubric and how it supports cognitive engagement and constructivist learning.
  - Determine what students would be doing that demonstrates evidence of cognitive engagement and constructivist learning and how teachers would be supporting them.
- Regroup and share your response with the new group.

Engagement in Action

Video observation:

- Observe what students are doing that shows evidence of cognitive engagement, constructing meaning, or college-readiness.
- Collect evidence from the video, be prepared to share your evidence later.

Turning it Around: Part I

- The priorities of the framework are critically important to understanding the rubrics and the assessment of teaching practice. How might you respond to the following questions/statements:
  - We don't have a lot of technology in our district so I don't think we can hold teachers responsible for 21st Century skills.
  - We have embraced direct instruction in our district so we can't expect teachers to be highly effective because direct instruction doesn't allow for students to take control of the classroom.
  - How can students be cognitively engaged in something like PE? I don't think these rubrics will work for all teachers.

Turning it Around: Part II

- In your role as a facilitator of this work you will be expected to be an instructional expert and to be able to recognize the priorities of the framework in the classroom.
- With a partner, respond to the classroom contexts on the worksheet citing specific examples of what you would actually see and hear in the classrooms described.
- Be prepared to share your work

Observing and Evaluating Practice

The dos and don’ts…

Teacher Evaluation - Purposes

- Quality Assurance

- Professional Learning – Improving teacher quality

Teacher Evaluation

- What's wrong with teacher evaluation?
- Why hasn't it traditionally resulted in professional growth?
- What conditions support professional growth?

Three "Gates" for Effective Teacher Evaluation

- Fairness
- Reliability
- Validity

Best Practices in Evaluation

Basis for evaluation

- Quality of work – FfT based criteria
- Student progress
  - State Assessment
  - Benchmark assessments
  - Common assessments
  - Teacher-made assessments

Plan for gathering data

- Processes and procedures for gathering information about quality of work
- Procedures for gathering information about student progress

End result

- Student learning
- Teacher rating
- Direction for professional growth
- Determination of employment
- Compensation
- Career ladder

Best Practices in Observing

Basis for observation– Knowledge of the criteria

- Observers must understand the Criteria
- Observers must have a focus on constructing meaning through cognitive engagement
- Observers must be able to identify appropriate data (evidence) to paint an accurate picture of educators' work

Plan for gathering data – Fidelity to process and procedures

- Observer must understand the process including it's intent or purpose.
- Observer must follow process with fidelity, engaging the educator in discussion along the way
- Observer must maintain consistency and fairness from educator to educator

End result – Quality of the product

- Observer must align evidence to appropriate component
- Observer must level evidence accurately
- Observer must have sufficient evidence to support rating
- Observer must have skill in engaging educator in conversation around level and direction for future

Effective Teacher Evaluation - Research

Six Best Practices

- 1) Annual Processes, 2) Clear, rigorous expectations, 3) Multiple measures. 4) Multiple ratings, 5) Regular feedback, 6) Significance

http://www.tntp.org/index.php/publications/issue-analysis/teacher-evaluation-2.0/

- I3 Innovation Consortium processes are aligned with the best practices in the TNTP research.

Turning it Around

- Discuss the following:
  - Why is it important to understand the 3 “gates” and best practices in educator evaluation?
  - How will you present this information to districts who may have very different evaluation models?

Closure

- Questions?

- Post-it Note Reflection
  - Something I learned today…
  - I wonder…

Day 2 Agenda

- Introductions
- Objectives and Agenda Review
- Observation Skills
  - Considerations for facilitators
- Observing Practice – Baseline
  - Considerations for facilitators
- Debrief the Day

Evidence

- Evidence is a factual reporting of events.
  - It may include teacher and student actions and/or behaviors.
  - It may also include artifacts prepared by the teacher, students, or others.
  - It is not clouded with personal opinion or biases.
  - It is selected using professional judgment by the observer and / or the teacher.

Types of Observation Evidence

- **Verbatim scripting of teacher or student comments:**

  "Bring your white boards, markers and erasers to the carpet and sit on your square."

- **Non-evaluative statements of observed teacher or student behavior**:
  Teacher presented the content from the front of room.

- **Numeric information about time, student participation, resource use, etc.:**

  [9:14 – 9:29] Warm-up. 8 of 22 Ss finished at 9:20, sat still until 9:29

- **An observed aspect of the environment:**
  Desks were arranged in groups of four with room to walk between each group.

Evidence vs. Opinion…

- Read each statement. Decide – is it evidence or opinion?
- Discuss your answer with your elbow partner.
- If you agree that the statement is an opinion, reword the statement so that it is an evidence statement.
- When finished, determine the domain and standard for each statement.
- Be prepared to discuss some of the statements, or statements about which you have questions.

What is Evidence? - Review

- Actions, by teacher or students
- Statements or questions, by teacher or students
- Observable features of the classroom
- Review the evidence collected previously – is it evidence? Or opinion?

Bias

Definition:

Attaching positive or negative meaning to elements in our environment based on personal or societal influences that shape our thinking.

A biased judgment is based on outside influences and is not necessarily related to a teacher's effectiveness.

- Example: "Mrs. T does so much for the school, she is an excellent teacher. "
- The actual classroom evidence may not support the rating of the teacher as "excellent."

Bias in an Educational Setting

- Imagine that you are the parent of a school age child. You are walking down the hall of your child's school while classes are in session. The doors to several rooms are open and you have the opportunity to look in on teachers.
- What would cause you to think favorably about what you saw and what would cause you to think negatively? Use the space provided in your materials to write your response.

Other Threats to Observer Accuracy

- Assessor bias
- Leniency
- Central Tendency
- “Halo” or “Horns” Effect

Individual Professional Bias

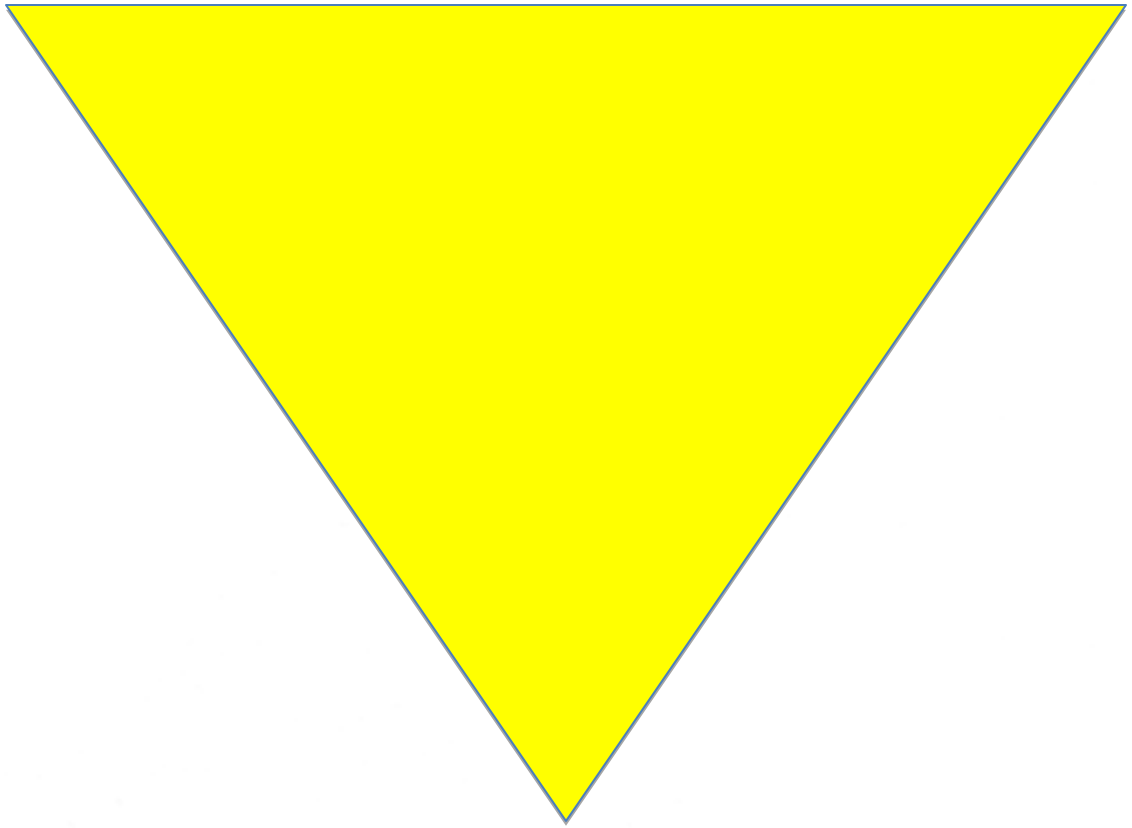
Reflection:

•As your reflect upon your individual and group responses to these activities, make your own personal list of biases to be aware of when you assess teaching performance.

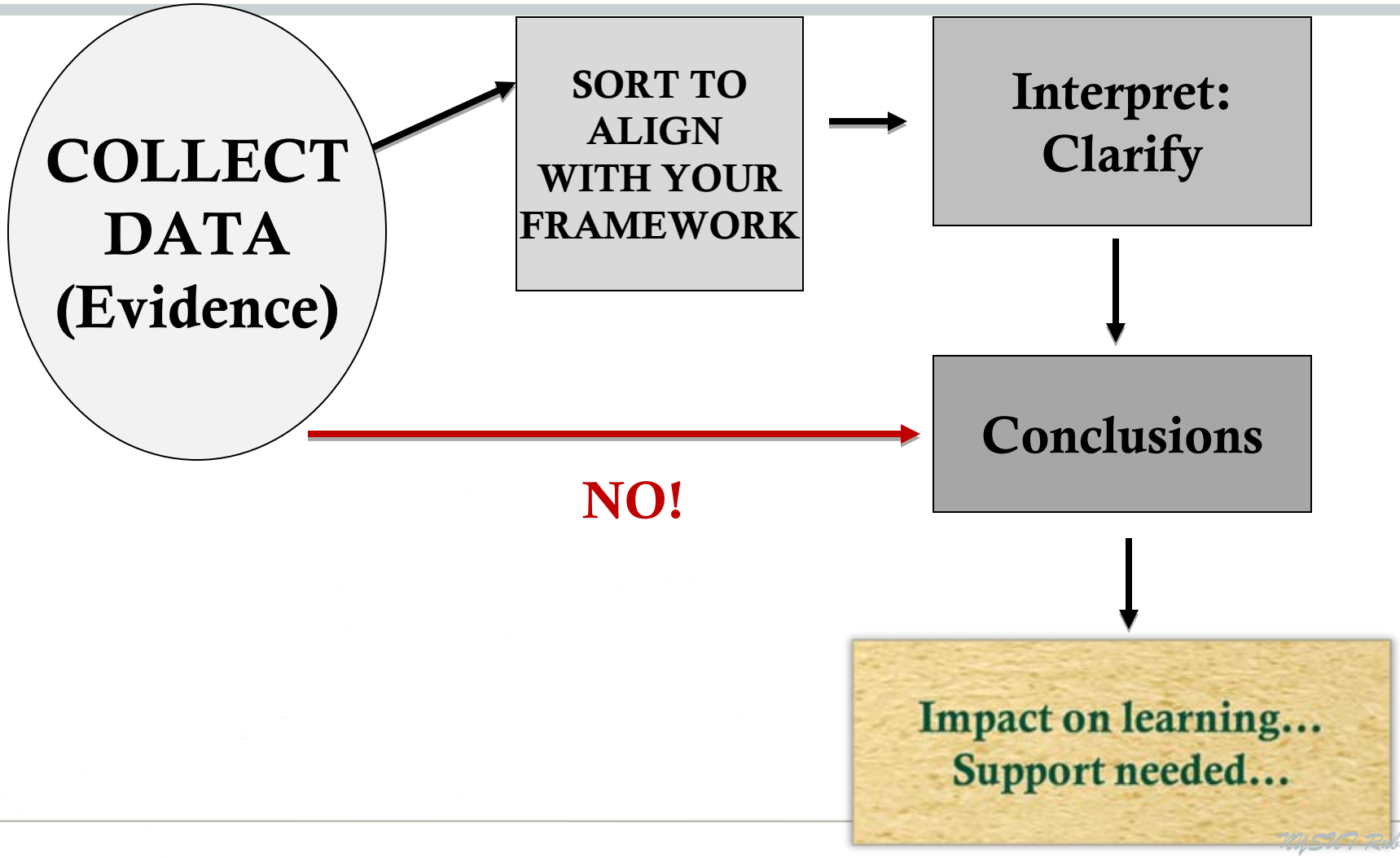
•List your biases in or around the yield sign to remind you not to yield to them when evaluating performance.

•Determine if the bias leads you to assign a higher or lower rating when evaluating teacher performance.

Understanding Your Own Bias



The Evidence Cycle



Turning it Around: Part I

- In your role as a facilitator you will be expected to coach others on their skills in collecting "pure" evidence.
- With a partner, assess the quality of the evidence presented.

Turning it Around: Part II

- Slides 41-50 pertain to evidence and bias.
- Divide the slides up among your table group and present your slides to your colleagues.
- As you listen to your colleagues presentation, create a question that a participant might ask.
  - Pose your question to the presenter
  - Presenter responds to question [all can contribute to possible responses in order to build a bank of responses].

1st Observation Practice INSTRUCTION

- Priorities of the rubrics
  - Cognitive Engagement
  - Constructivist Learning
  - 21st Century Skills
- Review:
  - What type of evidence must you collect to assess the priorities of the rubrics?

Directions for Evidence Collection

- *Follow the directions on the screen shot*

Observing Practice

- Observe the video
- Collect evidence of Standard 3: Instruction
- With a partner, sort your evidence so that it aligns with the appropriate criteria in your rubric for instruction
- Be prepared to share your evidence

Checking Evidence

- Use the self-check questions to review your evidence collection
  - ✓ Have I recorded only facts?
  - ✓ Is my evidence relevant to the criteria being examined?
  - ✓ Whenever possible, have I quantified words such as few, some, and most?
  - ✓ Have I used quotation marks when quoting a teacher or student?
  - ✓ Does my selection or documentation of evidence indicate any personal or professional preferences?
  - ✓ Have I included any opinion (in the guise of fact)?

Observing Practice

- With your partner, develop questions you have about the lesson you observed that must be answered before you rate the teacher's performance?
- Be prepared to share your questions

Talk About Teaching

- Please count off 1-4 at your table.
- 1's – "Promoting Professional Learning Through Conversation"
- 2's – "Assumptions Underlying Professional Conversation and The Demands of Teaching"
- 3's – "The Contextual Nature of Teaching"
- 4's – "The Role of Feedback"
- All – "Summary"

Danielson, C. (2009). *Talk About Teaching.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press

In Your Group…

- Individually
  - Read the assigned text
  - Be prepared to share and overview of the text you read with the whole group
- Group discussion
  - Discuss the important concepts and ideas
  - How do the concepts and ideas in the text related to teacher observation, evaluation, and professional growth?

The Complexity of Teaching

"After 30 years of doing such work, I have concluded that classroom teaching … is perhaps the most complex, most challenging, and most demanding, subtle, nuanced, and frightening activity that our species has ever invented. ..The only time a physician could possibly encounter a situation of comparable complexity would be in the emergency room of a hospital during or after a natural disaster."

Lee Shulman, *The Wisdom of Practice*

A Culture of Professional Inquiry

- Professional learning never ends.
- It is every teacher's responsibility to engage in professional development.
- Teaching is so complex that it is never done perfectly.
- Every educator can always become more skilled. Making a commitment to do so is part of the essential work of teaching.

Charlotte Danielson

The Handbook for Enhancing Professional Practice

A Culture of Professional Inquiry Should:

- Infuse a school's practices related to professional development;
- Be reflected in the school's practices surrounding mentoring and teacher evaluation; and
- Regard mentoring and evaluation as ongoing learning.

Charlotte Danielson

The Handbook for Enhancing Professional Practice

Teacher Evaluation…

"Teacher evaluation can be an opportunity for genuine professional learning. When organized around **clearly established and accepted standards** of practice, teacher evaluation offers an opportunity for educators to reflect seriously on their practice, and promote learning."

Charlotte Danielson

The Handbook for Enhancing Professional Practice

Table Talk

- Discuss the content of the previous 4 slides with your colleagues.
  - What cultural and structural conditions must be in place to create and sustain a climate of professional inquiry?
  - In what ways does the type of questions observers ask of teachers promote – or inhibit – such a climate?
- Be prepared to share your discussion.

Question Review

- Return to the questions you and your partner created after observing the Algebra I lesson
  - Reframe your questions to ensure that they are designed to promote a climate of professional inquiry
- Work with another pair and try out your questions on one another. Consider the following:
  - How does the question make you feel?
  - How might the teacher respond to the question?
- Revise your questions as necessary based on feedback.

Turning it Around: Part I

- Video observation is a key technique used in training observers. How will you determine if a video is of good quality for use in observer trainings?
  - What are the characteristics of a good training video?
  - What logistic considerations are involved in video use?

Turning it Around: Part II

- Consider the sequence of slides 55-65
  - Observing Standard 3 only
  - Aligning evidence
  - Developing questions
  - Text-based reading and discussion
  - Reviewing questions
- What is the rationale for this sequence?
- What are the skills and concepts being addressed?
- What "spin" might you put on this sequence?

Team Time

- In your teams
  - Plan how you will take this information back to your site
  - How will you keep it fresh in your mind until we meet again?
  - What questions do you have?

Workshop Objectives
Days 1 & 2

- Understand the nature of learning for students and educators
- Understand how a common language creates and supports professionalism and a culture for learning
- Understanding the relationship between research and the rubric criteria
- Understand the relationship between the NYSED Teaching Standards and the rubrics by which the teaching standards are assessed
- Hone observation skills to focus
  - Evidence Collection
  - Alignment of evidence with Standards
- Collaboration with colleagues

Debrief and Closure

- Questions?
- Complete the survey

Thank you for your participation!