

OBSERVATION TOOLS
CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND PRACTICES
RELATED TO EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AND EQUITY

Developed by the Center for Assessment and Policy Development
For the Success Measures Project of NeighborWorks America

2005-2006

TEACHER NAME: _____ TEACHER GENDER: _____ RACE OF TEACHER: _____ CLASSROOM NUMBER: _____

DATE: _____ DAY OF WEEK: _____ CLASS PERIOD: _____ GRADE: _____

TIME STARTED OBSERVATION: _____ TIME ENDED OBSERVATION: _____

MAJOR ACTIVITY/SUBJECT DURING OBSERVATION PERIOD: _____

NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN ATTENDANCE DURING OBSERVATION:

	<i>SPECIFY GROUP</i>	<i>SPECIFY GROUP</i>	<i>SPECIFY GROUP</i>
MALE			
FEMALE			

Observing Classroom Routines and Instructional Practices—Clarity of Expectations

Description

This tool is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of classroom routines and instructional activities, paying specific attention to those demonstrated to improve student learning and performance among students of color.

Instructions to Data Collector

In order to identify patterns in a given classroom, it will be important to conduct the observations at different times of day, on different days of the week, and at different times of the year for each teacher/classroom. It is especially important to observe the classroom routine at the beginning of the school day (and/or class period in middle and high school settings where students rotate among classrooms). In addition, to identify patterns across the school, it will be important to conduct observations in as many classrooms as possible. Also, in schools where there are subject teachers/classrooms (science, math, English, etc.), it will be useful to conduct observations in several classrooms for each subject.

Instructions for Coding and Analysis

Instructional practices that promote equity in academic achievement provide students with clear information about learning goals and standards and clear guidance about the learning process.

The classroom can be scored from 5 (five) to 0 (zero), depending on how many of the specific practices were observed.

- A score of 5 indicates a classroom in which there is a productive learning environment in which the teacher and students share an understanding of the learning goals, standards, and activities.
- A score of 0 indicates a classroom in which learning may be more difficult because the teacher, the students, or both are not clear about what is to be learned, how learning will be demonstrated, and what the learning process will be like.
- A score of 1 or 2 indicates a classroom in which the learning environment is relatively weak in this area.
- A score of 3 or 4 indicates a classroom in which the learning environment is relatively strong in this area.

Remember that a single observation does not give a reliable or complete picture of instructional practice in that classroom. Make several observations and compute an average score by adding up the scores for each observation session and dividing by the total number of observation sessions.

For example, suppose the same classroom was observed four times within a month and the observation scores were 3, 5, 2, and 4. The average score for the classroom would be the sum of 3 plus 5 plus 2 plus 4, divided by 4, or 3.5, indicating a learning environment that is somewhat clear in terms of clarity of expectations but with room for improvement.

It would be valuable to repeat a set of observations at some point later in the school year, particularly if there has been some attempt to improve the learning environment. Then the average scores could be compared to see if the desired change had taken place.

During the observation period, the following activities were observed:	CHECK IF OBSERVED	DESCRIPTION
CLARITY OF EXPECTATIONS		
Teacher introduces lesson or activity with clear statement of learning goal (+)		
Teacher introduces lesson or activity with clear description of learning process (lecture, question/answer, small group work, etc.) (+)		
Teacher indicates the amount of movement and level of noise that will be permitted during the learning activity (+)		
Teacher describes specific requirements and standards (rubric) for learning product (+)		
Teacher models skill being taught (such as using headings and illustrations as well as text to understand non-fiction material) (+)		

Classroom Routines and Instructional Practices—Flexibility and Choice

Description

This tool is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of classroom routines and instructional activities, paying specific attention to those demonstrated to improve student learning and performance among students of color.

Instructions to Data Collector

In order to identify patterns in a given classroom, it will be important to conduct the observations at different times of day, on different days of the week, and at different times of the year for each teacher/classroom. It is especially important to observe the classroom routine at the beginning of the school day (and/or class period in middle and high school settings where students rotate among classrooms). In addition, to identify patterns across the school, it will be important to conduct observations in as many classrooms as possible. Also, in schools where there are subject teachers/classrooms (science, math, English, etc.), it will be useful to conduct observations in several classrooms for each subject.

Instructions for Coding and Analysis

Instructional practices that promote equity in academic achievement provide students with flexibility and choice in learning activities.

The classroom can be scored by adding one (1) for each positive practice (indicated by a +) and zero points for non-marked practices. A classroom could have a score between 0 (zero) to +2 (positive two).

- A score of +2 indicates a classroom in which there is considerable flexibility in the time allowed for a learning activity and student choice among relevant learning activities.
- A score of zero indicates a classroom in which learning may be more difficult because there is a strict time schedule regardless of whether the learning activities have been completed. Students are less likely to be personally committed to the learning activities because they have no choice among possible activities.
- A score of +1 indicates a classroom in which the learning environment is relatively strong in this area.

Remember that a single observation does not give a reliable or complete picture of instructional practice in that classroom. Make several observations and compute an average score by adding up the scores for each observation session and dividing by the total number of observation sessions.

For example, suppose the same classroom was observed four times within a month and the observation scores were 0, +1, +2, and 0. The average score for the classroom would be the sum of 0 plus 1 plus 2 plus 0, divided by 4, or 0.75, indicating a learning environment that provides some flexibility and choice but with room for improvement.

It would be valuable to repeat a set of observations at some point later in the school year, particularly if there has been some attempt to improve the learning environment. Then the average scores could be compared to see if the desired change had taken place.

RECORD OBSERVATIONS IN APPROPRIATE COLUMN -- ADD NOTES TO DETAIL SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

During the observation period, the following activities were observed:	CHECK IF OBSERVED	DESCRIPTION
FLEXIBILITY/CHOICE		
Teacher stays strictly to time allotted to activity, reminding students about time constraints		
Students select learning activities from several provided (via centers, take-to-desk materials, computers, etc.) (+)		
Students engage in discussions among themselves and/or move about the classroom while engaged in learning tasks (+)		

Observing Classroom Routines and Instructional Practices—Learning Arrangements

Description

This tool is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of classroom routines and instructional activities, paying specific attention to those demonstrated to improve student learning and performance among students of color.

Instructions to Data Collector

In order to identify patterns in a given classroom, it will be important to conduct the observations at different times of day, on different days of the week, and at different times of the year for each teacher/classroom. It is especially important to observe the classroom routine at the beginning of the school day (and/or class period in middle and high school settings where students rotate among classrooms). In addition, to identify patterns across the school, it will be important to conduct observations in as many classrooms as possible. Also, in schools where there are subject teachers/classrooms (science, math, English, etc.), it will be useful to conduct observations in several classrooms for each subject.

Instructions for Coding and Analysis

Instructional practices that promote equity in academic achievement provide students with opportunities to work in small groups and to get individual attention from the teacher. The classroom can be rated based on the percent of class time during which positive practices are observed – computed by adding the number of minutes during which a positive practice (indicated by a + or plus sign) was observed and dividing by the total number of minutes during which observations were made, and then multiplying by 100 to get a percentage.

- A score of 40 percent or less indicates a classroom in which learning may be more difficult because a large portion of the learning time is spent in lecture-style instruction by the teacher and/or completion of worksheets or practice books by individual students.
- A score of 60 percent or more indicates a classroom in which learning may be easier because a large portion of the learning time is spent in small group work, with or without direct teacher involvement, and/or individual student work with the teacher.

Remember that a single observation does not give a reliable or complete picture of instructional practice in that classroom. Make several observations and compute an average score by adding up the scores for each observation session and dividing by the total number of observation sessions.

For example, suppose the same classroom was observed four times within a month and the observation scores were 35, 65, 70, and 20. The average score for the classroom would be the sum of 35 plus 65 plus 70 plus 20, divided by 4, or 47.5, indicating a learning environment that provides some opportunities for students to work in small groups or receive individual help from the teacher, but with considerable room for improvement.

It would be valuable to repeat a set of observations at some point later in the school year, particularly if there has been some attempt to improve the learning environment. Then the average scores could be compared to see if the desired change had taken place.

RECORD OBSERVATIONS IN APPROPRIATE COLUMN -- ADD NOTES TO DETAIL SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

During the observation period, the following activities were observed:	CHECK IF OBSERVED	NUMBER OF MINUTES	DESCRIPTION
LEARNING ARRANGEMENTS			
Teacher provides direct instruction to whole class via lecture or demonstration		Number of minutes	
Teacher works with small group of students while others work together or individually (+)		Number of minutes	
Students work together in small groups on projects or learning activities (+)		Number of minutes	
Students work individually in practice books or worksheets		Number of minutes	
Teacher meets with individual students one-on-one to provide feedback or supplemental instructional support (+)		Number of minutes	

Observing Classroom Routines and Instructional Practices—Other Activities

Description

This tool is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of classroom routines and instructional activities, paying specific attention to those demonstrated to improve student learning and performance among students of color.

Instructions to Data Collector

In order to identify patterns in a given classroom, it will be important to conduct the observations at different times of day, on different days of the week, and at different times of the year for each teacher/classroom. It is especially important to observe the classroom routine at the beginning of the school day (and/or class period in middle and high school settings where students rotate among classrooms). In addition, to identify patterns across the school, it will be important to conduct observations in as many classrooms as possible. Also, in schools where there are subject teachers/classrooms (science, math, English, etc.), it will be useful to conduct observations in several classrooms for each subject.

Instructions for Coding and Analysis

Instructional practices that promote equity in academic achievement use instructional time efficiently, with little time spent on administrative or disciplinary activities.

The classroom can be rated based on the percent of class time during which the other activities described above are observed – computed by adding the number of minutes during which each activity was observed and dividing by the total number of minutes during which observations were made, and then multiplying by 100 to get a percentage.

- A score of 15 percent or more indicates a classroom in which learning may be more difficult because a large portion of the learning time is spent in non-instructional activities.
- A score of 25 percent or more indicates a classroom in which learning may be substantially more difficult because a very large portion of the learning time is spent in non-instructional activities.

Remember that a single observation does not give a reliable or complete picture of instructional practice in that classroom. Make several observations and compute an average score by adding up the scores for each observation session and dividing by the total number of observation sessions.

For example, suppose the same classroom was observed four times within a month and the observation scores were 5, 15, 10, and 0. The average score for the classroom would be the sum of 5 plus 15 plus 10 plus 0, divided by 4, or 7.5, indicating a learning environment where most of the teacher's time is spent on instruction, but where there is room for improvement.

It would be valuable to repeat a set of observations at some point later in the school year, particularly if there has been some attempt to improve the learning environment. Then the average scores could be compared to see if the desired change had taken place.

RECORD OBSERVATIONS IN APPROPRIATE COLUMN -- ADD NOTES TO DETAIL SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

During the observation period, the following activities were observed:	CHECK IF OBSERVED	NUMBER OF MINUTES	DESCRIPTION
OTHER ACTIVITIES			
Teacher carries out administrative activities (taking attendance, accepting/assigning homework, getting out/putting away materials)		Number of minutes	
Teacher conducts disciplinary activities (reminding students of classroom rules of behavior, reprimanding inappropriate behavior, delivering consequences)		Number of minutes	

Observing Classroom Environment—Cover Sheet

CLASSROOM NUMBER: _____ GRADES USING THE ROOM: _____ DATE: _____

SUBJECTS TAUGHT IN ROOM: _____

APPROXIMATE SIZE IN SQUARE FEET: _____ NUMBER OF WINDOWS: _____

NUMBER OF STUDENT DESKS OR TABLES: _____

DESCRIPTION OF OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL FURNITURE OR EQUIPMENT: _____

MAJOR ACTIVITY/SUBJECT DURING OBSERVATION PERIOD: _____

AREAS OUTSIDE OF CLASSROOM INCLUDED IN OBSERVATION: _____

Observing Classroom Environment—Students Acknowledged as Individuals

Description

This tool is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of the classroom as a physical and social environment that welcomes all students and encourages learning. The classroom environment includes objects inside of the classroom as well as those on or around the door and/or on bulletin boards or displays directly outside of the classroom.

Instructions to Data Collector

In order to identify patterns in a given classroom, it will be important to conduct the observations at different times during the year. However, it is especially important to observe the classroom environment at the beginning of the school year. In addition, to identify patterns across the school, it will be important to conduct observations in as many classrooms as possible. Also, in schools where there are subject teachers/classrooms (science, math, English, etc.), it will be useful to conduct observations in several classrooms for each subject.

Instructions for Coding and Analysis

Classroom environments can promote equity in academic achievement by creating a positive learning atmosphere that acknowledges individual students and their families and cultures as being of unique value.

The classroom environment can be coded by summing the number of items observed across the three types of observations. A classroom environment that acknowledges students as individuals should have at least several items observed. Elementary classrooms generally should have more items observed than middle school or high school classrooms, where students may move among classrooms.

Remember that a single observation at one point in time may not give a reliable or complete picture of that classroom's environment. Make several observations and compute an average score by adding up the scores for each observation session and dividing by the total number of observation sessions. Classroom environments generally do not change that often, so observations should probably not be made more frequently than once a month.

RECORD OBSERVATIONS AS CHECKS OR TALLY MARKS IN APPROPRIATE COLUMN ADD NOTES TO DESCRIBE SPECIFIC ITEMS OBSERVED

	CHECK IF OBSERVED	TALLY NUMBER OBSERVED	DESCRIPTION
STUDENTS ACKNOWLEDGED AS INDIVIDUALS			
Motivational messages are posted (+)			
Student school work and/or awards are displayed (+)			
Family news or news about students' activities outside of school are displayed (+)			

AS APPROPRIATE AND IF POSSIBLE, INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT HAS CHANGED SINCE THE LAST OBSERVATION:

___ A GREAT DEAL ___ SOME ___ A LITTLE ___ NOT AT ALL ___ UNKNOWN

DESCRIBE THE MAJOR CHANGES:

Observing Classroom Environment—Diverse Cultures and People Represented

Description

This tool is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of the classroom as a physical and social environment that welcomes all students and encourages learning. The classroom environment includes objects inside of the classroom as well as those on or around the door and/or on bulletin boards or displays directly outside of the classroom.

Instructions to Data Collector

In order to identify patterns in a given classroom, it will be important to conduct the observations at different times during the year. However, it is especially important to observe the classroom environment at the beginning of the school year. In addition, to identify patterns across the school, it will be important to conduct observations in as many classrooms as possible. Also, in schools where there are subject teachers/classrooms (science, math, English, etc.), it will be useful to conduct observations in several classrooms for each subject.

Instructions for Coding and Analysis

Classroom environments can promote equity in academic achievement by creating a positive learning atmosphere that acknowledges the contributions of people from diverse cultures to the United States and to the world.

The classroom environment can be coded by summing the number of items observed across the five types of observations. A classroom environment that acknowledges the contribution of diverse cultures and peoples should have at least several items observed.

Remember that a single observation at one point in time may not give a reliable or complete picture of that classroom's environment. Make several observations and compute an average score by adding up the scores for each observation session and dividing by the total number of observation sessions. Classroom environments generally do not change that often, so observations should probably not be made more frequently than once a month.

RECORD OBSERVATIONS AS CHECKS OR TALLY MARKS IN APPROPRIATE COLUMN ADD NOTES TO DESCRIBE SPECIFIC ITEMS OBSERVED

	CHECK IF OBSERVED	TALLY NUMBER OBSERVED	DESCRIPTION
DIVERSE CULTURES AND PEOPLES REPRESENTED			
Motivational messages or posters displayed in the classroom are drawn from cultures represented by students in the class (+)			
Books and other instructional materials include persons of color as primary subjects and in positive roles (+)			
Other types of multi-cultural objects and materials are available (+)			
Books, instructional materials, and other objects and materials include persons and things specific to the cultures represented by students in the class (+)			
Recognition of the contribution of persons of color and from different regions of the world is displayed (+)			

AS APPROPRIATE AND IF POSSIBLE, INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT HAS CHANGED SINCE THE LAST OBSERVATION:

___ A GREAT DEAL ___ SOME ___ A LITTLE ___ NOT AT ALL ___ UNKNOWN

DESCRIBE THE MAJOR CHANGES:

Observing Classroom Environment—Arrangement of Space

Description

This tool is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of the classroom as a physical and social environment that welcomes all students and encourages learning. The classroom environment includes objects inside of the classroom as well as those on or around the door and/or on bulletin boards or displays directly outside of the classroom.

Instructions to Data Collector

In order to identify patterns in a given classroom, it will be important to conduct the observations at different times during the year. However, it is especially important to observe the classroom environment at the beginning of the school year. In addition, to identify patterns across the school, it will be important to conduct observations in as many classrooms as possible. Also, in schools where there are subject teachers/classrooms (science, math, English, etc.), it will be useful to conduct observations in several classrooms for each subject.

Instructions for Coding and Analysis

Classroom environments can promote equity in academic achievement by arranging space and furniture to promote cooperative learning in small groups rather than promoting isolated learning or learning directed at and by the teacher.

The classroom environment can be coded by summing the number of positive items observed (indicated by a plus (+) sign). A classroom environment that promotes cooperative learning should have at least one positive observation.

Remember that a single observation at one point in time may not give a reliable or complete picture of that classroom's environment. Make several observations and compute an average score by adding up the scores for each observation session and dividing by the total number of observation sessions. Classroom environments generally do not change that often, so observations should probably not be made more frequently than once a month.

RECORD OBSERVATIONS AS CHECKS OR TALLY MARKS IN APPROPRIATE COLUMN ADD NOTES TO DESCRIBE SPECIFIC ITEMS OBSERVED

	CHECK IF OBSERVED	DESCRIPTION
ARRANGEMENT OF SPACE		
Student work areas (desks, tables) are arranged in groups rather than rows or individually (+)		
Student work areas (desks, tables) are arranged in rows		
Student work areas (desks, tables) are arranged so that each is physically separate from the other		
Classroom space organized so that there is space for small group work at regular student work areas or in other parts of the room (+)		

AS APPROPRIATE AND IF POSSIBLE, INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT HAS CHANGED SINCE THE LAST OBSERVATION:

___ A GREAT DEAL ___ SOME ___ A LITTLE ___ NOT AT ALL ___ UNKNOWN

DESCRIBE THE MAJOR CHANGES:

Observing Teacher Communication in the Classroom—Cover Sheet

OBSERVER NAME OR ID: _____ OBSERVER ROLE: _____

TEACHER NAME: _____ TEACHER GENDER: ____ RACE OF TEACHER: _____ CLASSROOM NUMBER: _____

DATE: _____ DAY OF WEEK: _____ CLASS PERIOD: _____ GRADE: _____

TIME STARTED OBSERVATION: _____ TIME ENDED OBSERVATION: _____

MAJOR ACTIVITY/SUBJECT DURING OBSERVATION PERIOD: _____

NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN ATTENDANCE DURING OBSERVATION*¹: [*Possible groups: White, Black, Hispanic*]

	<i>SPECIFY GROUP</i>	<i>SPECIFY GROUP</i>	<i>SPECIFY GROUP</i>
MALE			
FEMALE			

¹ Since it is not always possible to determine a person’s race based on appearance, the demographics for students and the instructor should be collected during an interview based on classroom records, with the teacher or principal prior to the observation.

Observing Teacher Communication in the Classroom—Welcoming

Description

This tool is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of teacher communication in the classroom setting. Some of the observations are of teacher communication to the class as a whole, others are of communication with individual students. (In addition to the student categories in the chart below (gender, and student of color/white student), you may want to code in more specific categories of race or ethnicity.

Instructions to Data Collector

In order to identify patterns of communication of a given teacher, it will be important to conduct the observations at different times of day, on different days of the week, and at different times of the year for each teacher. In addition, to identify patterns of teacher communication among the teaching staff as a whole, it will be important to conduct observations in as many classrooms as possible. Also, in schools where there are subject teachers/classrooms (science, math, English, etc.), it will be useful to conduct observations in several classrooms and/or class periods for each subject.

Instructions for Coding and Analysis

The way in which teachers communicate with students affects student's level of interest and engagement in learning and their understanding of the learning activities and expectations. Communication that is warm in tone, clear in its message, and conveys expectations for student success promotes equity in academic achievement.

Teacher communication in this area can be scored in three ways – how frequently each type of communication was observed, whether the communication was observed to be directed toward all students or only some of them, and if only some, toward which groups of students.

FREQUENCY OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

- First, count the total number of times each type of communication was observed by adding up the tally marks under "DIRECTED TO ALL STUDENTS" and those under "DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS."
- Next, sum the total number of tally marks across all three types of communication.
- Then, add the number of tally marks for the two positive types of teacher communication (indicated by a + or positive sign) and divide by the total number of tally marks across all three types of communication. This is the percent of teacher communication observations that were positive or welcoming.

PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION TOWARD ALL STUDENTS

- First, count the number of times each type of communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS" and add up across all three types.
- Next, add up the total number of times the two positive types of teacher communication were directed at all students.

- Then, divide the number of times positive communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS” by the total number of times all three types of communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS.” This is the percent of teacher communication observations directed toward all students that were positive or welcoming.

PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION DIRECTED TOWARD WHITE STUDENTS

- First, count the number of times the two types of positive communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS.”
- Next, add up the number of times the two positive types of teacher communication was directed toward white students (male or female).
- Then, divide the number of times positive communication was observed directed at white students by the total number of times any positive communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS.” This is the percent of positive or welcoming teacher communications directed at only some students that were directed toward white students.
- The same coding procedures as above “PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION DIRECTED TOWARD WHITE STUDENTS” can be used to measure the percent of positive communication directed toward other groups, such as male or female students regardless of race.

Remember that a single observation does not give a reliable or complete picture of instructional practice in that classroom. Make several observations and compute an average score by adding up the scores for each observation session and dividing by the total number of observation sessions.

It would be valuable to repeat a set of observations at some point later in the school year, particularly if there has been some attempt to improve the learning environment. Then the average scores could be compared to see if the desired change had taken place.

Record each communication behavior observed by putting tally marks in the appropriate column.

COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOR	DIRECTED TO ALL STUDENTS	DIRECTED TO ONLY SOME STUDENTS	DIRECTED TO FEMALE STUDENT		DIRECTED TO MALE STUDENT	
			Student of Color	White Student	Student of Color	White Student
WELCOMING						
Teacher warmly greets students individually by name (+)						
Teacher gives directives/commands as greeting, focuses on managing student behavior						
Teacher verbalizes positive expectations for learning at beginning of class period (+)						

Observing Teacher Communication in the Classroom—Questioning Style

Description

This tool is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of teacher communication in the classroom setting. Some of the observations are of teacher communication to the class as a whole, others are of communication with individual students. (In addition to the student categories in the chart below (gender, and student of color/white student), you may want to code in more specific categories of race or ethnicity.

Instructions to Data Collector

In order to identify patterns of communication of a given teacher, it will be important to conduct the observations at different times of day, on different days of the week, and at different times of the year for each teacher. In addition, to identify patterns of teacher communication among the teaching staff as a whole, it will be important to conduct observations in as many classrooms as possible. Also, in schools where there are subject teachers/classrooms (science, math, English, etc.), it will be useful to conduct observations in several classrooms and/or class periods for each subject.

Instructions for Coding and Analysis

The way in which teachers communicate with students affects student's level of interest and engagement in learning. Asking questions in ways that encourage students to give more detailed answers, integrate information and think critically, and giving students time to reflect before they respond promote equity in academic achievement.

Teacher communication in this area can be scored in three ways – how frequently each type of communication was observed, whether the communication was observed to be directed toward all students or only some of them, and if only some, toward which groups of students.

FREQUENCY OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

- First, count the total number of times each type of communication was observed by adding up the tally marks under "DIRECTED TO ALL STUDENTS" and those under "DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS."
- Next, sum the total number of tally marks across all four types of communication.
- Then, add the number of tally marks for the two positive types of teacher communication (indicated by a + or plus sign) and divide by the total number of tally marks across all four types of communication. This is the percent of teacher questioning style that encourages fuller, more reflective student response.

PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION TOWARD ALL STUDENTS

- First, count the number of times each type of communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS" and add up across all four types.
- Next, add up the total number of times the two positive types of teacher communication were directed at all students.

- Then, divide the number of times positive communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS” by the total number of times all four types of communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS.” This is the percent of teacher communication observations directed toward all students that were positive.

PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION DIRECTED TOWARD WHITE STUDENTS

- First, count the number of times the two types of positive communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS.”
- Next, add up the number of times the two positive types of teacher communication was directed toward white students (male or female).
- Then, divide the number of times positive communication was observed directed at white students by the total number of times any positive communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS.” This is the percent of positive teacher communications directed at only some students that were directed toward white students.
- The same coding procedures as above “PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION DIRECTED TOWARD WHITE STUDENTS” can be used to measure the percent of positive communication directed toward other groups, such as male or female students regardless of race.

Remember that a single observation does not give a reliable or complete picture of instructional practice in that classroom. Make several observations and compute an average score by adding up the scores for each observation session and dividing by the total number of observation sessions.

It would be valuable to repeat a set of observations at some point later in the school year, particularly if there has been some attempt to improve the learning environment. Then the average scores could be compared to see if the desired change had taken place.

Record each communication behavior observed by putting tally marks in the appropriate column.

COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOR	DIRECTED TO ALL STUDENTS	DIRECTED TO ONLY SOME STUDENTS	DIRECTED TO FEMALE STUDENT		DIRECTED TO MALE STUDENT	
			Student of Color	White Student	Student of Color	White Student
QUESTIONING STYLE						
Teacher asks "test-type" questions during instruction (question requires single word or short phrase, usually factual, response)						
Teacher asks open-ended question during instruction (question requires longer response with more details, relates information or ideas to each other, and/or calls for student's analysis or opinion) (+)						
Teacher waits and provides ample time for student response (+)						
Teacher quickly calls on another student or asks another question						

Observing Teacher Communication in the Classroom—Handling Student Responses

Description

This tool is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of teacher communication in the classroom setting. Some of the observations are of teacher communication to the class as a whole, others are of communication with individual students. (In addition to the student categories in the chart below (gender, and student of color/white student), you may want to code in more specific categories of race or ethnicity.

Instructions to Data Collector

In order to identify patterns of communication of a given teacher, it will be important to conduct the observations at different times of day, on different days of the week, and at different times of the year for each teacher. In addition, to identify patterns of teacher communication among the teaching staff as a whole, it will be important to conduct observations in as many classrooms as possible. Also, in schools where there are subject teachers/classrooms (science, math, English, etc.), it will be useful to conduct observations in several classrooms and/or class periods for each subject.

Instructions for Coding and Analysis

The way in which teachers communicate with students affects student's level of interest and engagement in learning. Providing every student with equal opportunities to respond to questions – including making sure that responding is seen as part of a respectful discussion and that no students are allowed to dominate that discussion while others are allowed to “opt out” -- promotes equity in academic achievement.

Teacher communication in this area can be scored in three ways – how frequently each type of communication was observed, whether the communication was observed to be directed toward all students or only some of them, and if only some, toward which groups of students.

FREQUENCY OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

- First, count the total number of times each type of communication was observed by adding up the tally marks under “DIRECTED TO ALL STUDENTS” and those under “DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS.”
- Next, sum the total number of tally marks across all three types of communication.
- Then, add the number of tally marks for the positive type of teacher communication (indicated by a + or plus sign) and divide by the total number of tally marks across all three types of communication. This is the percent of teacher communication that encourages participation by all students in class discussions.

PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION TOWARD ALL STUDENTS

- First, count the number of times each type of communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS” and add up across all four types.
- Next, add up the total number of times the two positive types of teacher communication were directed at all students.

- Then, divide the number of times positive communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS” by the total number of times all four types of communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS.” This is the percent of teacher communication observations directed toward all students that were positive.

PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION DIRECTED TOWARD WHITE STUDENTS

- First, count the number of times the two types of positive communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS.”
- Next, add up the number of times the positive type of teacher communication was directed toward white students (male or female).
- Then, divide the number of times positive communication was observed directed at white students by the total number of times any positive communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS.” This is the percent of positive teacher communications directed at only some students that were directed toward white students.
- The same coding procedures as above “PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION DIRECTED TOWARD WHITE STUDENTS” can be used to measure the percent of positive communication directed toward other groups, such as male or female students regardless of race.

Remember that a single observation does not give a reliable or complete picture of instructional practice in that classroom. Make several observations and compute an average score by adding up the scores for each observation session and dividing by the total number of observation sessions.

It would be valuable to repeat a set of observations at some point later in the school year, particularly if there has been some attempt to improve the learning environment. Then the average scores could be compared to see if the desired change had taken place.

Record each communication behavior observed by putting tally marks in the appropriate column.

COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOR	DIRECTED TO ALL STUDENTS	DIRECTED TO ONLY SOME STUDENTS	DIRECTED TO FEMALE STUDENT		DIRECTED TO MALE STUDENT	
			Student of Color	White Student	Student of Color	White Student
HANDLING STUDENT RESPONSES						
Teacher calls on students in turn (regardless of whether they are offering to respond) (+)						
Teacher calls on students regardless of whether they are following procedure for responding (such as raising hand)						
Teacher encourages students to "compete" for attention by calling on only students indicating readiness to respond						

Observing Teacher Communication in the Classroom—Responding to Student Answers

Description

This tool is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of teacher communication in the classroom setting. Some of the observations are of teacher communication to the class as a whole, others are of communication with individual students. (In addition to the student categories in the chart below (gender, and student of color/white student), you may want to code in more specific categories of race or ethnicity.

Instructions to Data Collector

In order to identify patterns of communication of a given teacher, it will be important to conduct the observations at different times of day, on different days of the week, and at different times of the year for each teacher. In addition, to identify patterns of teacher communication among the teaching staff as a whole, it will be important to conduct observations in as many classrooms as possible. Also, in schools where there are subject teachers/classrooms (science, math, English, etc.), it will be useful to conduct observations in several classrooms and/or class periods for each subject.

Instructions for Coding and Analysis

The way in which teachers communicate with students affects student's level of interest and engagement in learning. Rewarding students for asking questions and providing responses, even if not totally correct, and encouraging class discussion rather than just individual teacher-student exchanges promote equity in academic achievement.

Teacher communication in this area can be scored in three ways – how frequently each type of communication was observed, whether the communication was observed to be directed toward all students or only some of them, and if only some, toward which groups of students.

FREQUENCY OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

- First, count the total number of times each type of communication was observed by adding up the tally marks under “DIRECTED TO ALL STUDENTS” and those under “DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS.”
- Next, sum the total number of tally marks across all six types of communication.
- Then, add the number of tally marks for the three positive types of teacher communication (indicated by a + or plus sign) and divide by the total number of tally marks across all six types of communication. This is the percent of teacher communication that encourages student participation.

PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION TOWARD ALL STUDENTS

- First, count the number of times each type of communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS” and add up across all six types.
- Next, add up the total number of times the three positive types of teacher communication were directed at all students.

- Then, divide the number of times positive communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS” by the total number of times all six types of communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS.” This is the percent of teacher communication observations directed toward all students that were positive.

PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION DIRECTED TOWARD WHITE STUDENTS

- First, count the number of times the three types of positive communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS.”
- Next, add up the number of times the positive type of teacher communication was directed toward white students (male or female).
- Then, divide the number of times positive communication was observed directed at white students by the total number of times any positive communication was observed “DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS.” This is the percent of positive teacher communications directed at only some students that were directed toward white students.
- The same coding procedures as above “PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION DIRECTED TOWARD WHITE STUDENTS” can be used to measure the percent of positive communication directed toward other groups, such as male or female students regardless of race.

Remember that a single observation does not give a reliable or complete picture of instructional practice in that classroom. Make several observations and compute an average score by adding up the scores for each observation session and dividing by the total number of observation sessions.

It would be valuable to repeat a set of observations at some point later in the school year, particularly if there has been some attempt to improve the learning environment. Then the average scores could be compared to see if the desired change had taken place.

Record each communication behavior observed by putting tally marks in the appropriate column.

COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOR	DIRECTED TO ALL STUDENTS	DIRECTED TO ONLY SOME STUDENTS	DIRECTED TO FEMALE STUDENT		DIRECTED TO MALE STUDENT	
			Student of Color	White Student	Student of Color	White Student
RESPONDING TO STUDENT ANSWERS						
Teacher gives evaluative feedback to student response						
Teacher uses student response as opportunity for encouragement and support even if "incorrect" (+)						
Teacher gives additional information or ideas as feedback to student response (+)						
Teacher asks other students to give evaluative feedback to student response						
Teacher asks other students to give additional information or ideas as feedback to student response						
Teacher encourages student questions with genuine interest, patience and/or praise (+)						

Observing Teacher Communication in the Classroom—Giving Directions

Description

This tool is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of teacher communication in the classroom setting. Some of the observations are of teacher communication to the class as a whole, others are of communication with individual students. (In addition to the student categories in the chart below (gender, and student of color/white student), you may want to code in more specific categories of race or ethnicity.

Instructions to Data Collector

In order to identify patterns of communication of a given teacher, it will be important to conduct the observations at different times of day, on different days of the week, and at different times of the year for each teacher. In addition, to identify patterns of teacher communication among the teaching staff as a whole, it will be important to conduct observations in as many classrooms as possible. Also, in schools where there are subject teachers/classrooms (science, math, English, etc.), it will be useful to conduct observations in several classrooms and/or class periods for each subject.

Instructions for Coding and Analysis

The way in which teachers communicate with students affects student's level of interest and engagement in learning. Being direct when giving directions or rules students are expected to follow (rather than phrasing these directives as questions or suggestions), establishing simple non-verbal cues to give students cues for appropriate or expected behavior, and communicating in calm quiet ways promote equity in academic achievement.

Teacher communication in this area can be scored in three ways – how frequently each type of communication was observed, whether the communication was observed to be directed toward all students or only some of them, and if only some, toward which groups of students.

FREQUENCY OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

- First, count the total number of times each type of communication was observed by adding up the tally marks under "DIRECTED TO ALL STUDENTS" and those under "DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS."
- Next, sum the total number of tally marks across all three types of communication.
- Then, add the number of tally marks for the positive type of teacher communication (indicated by a + or plus sign) and divide by the total number of tally marks across all three types of communication. This is the percent of teacher communication that provides directions to students in clear, calm ways.

PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION TOWARD ALL STUDENTS

- First, count the number of times each type of communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS" and add up across all three types.
- Next, add up the total number of times the positive type of teacher communication was directed at all students.

- Then, divide the number of times positive communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS" by the total number of times all three types of communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS." This is the percent of teacher communication observations directed toward all students that were positive.

PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION DIRECTED TOWARD WHITE STUDENTS

- First, count the number of times that the positive communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS."
- Next, add up the number of times the positive type of teacher communication was directed toward white students (male or female).
- Then, divide the number of times positive communication was observed directed at white students by the total number of times any positive communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS." This is the percent of positive teacher communications directed at only some students that were directed toward white students.
- The same coding procedures as above "PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION DIRECTED TOWARD WHITE STUDENTS" can be used to measure the percent of positive communication directed toward other groups, such as male or female students regardless of race.

COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOR	DIRECTED TO ALL STUDENTS	DIRECTED TO ONLY SOME STUDENTS	DIRECTED TO FEMALE STUDENT		DIRECTED TO MALE STUDENT	
			Student of Color	White Student	Student of Color	White Student
GIVING DIRECTIONS						
Teacher uses questions or other non-directive cues to give a command						
Teacher uses non-verbal cues to give a command or information to students (+)						
Teacher raises voice to get students' attention						

Observing Teacher Communication in the Classroom—Expressions of Affect

Description

This tool is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of teacher communication in the classroom setting. Some of the observations are of teacher communication to the class as a whole, others are of communication with individual students. (In addition to the student categories in the chart below (gender, and student of color/white student), you may want to code in more specific categories of race or ethnicity.

Instructions to Data Collector

In order to identify patterns of communication of a given teacher, it will be important to conduct the observations at different times of day, on different days of the week, and at different times of the year for each teacher. In addition, to identify patterns of teacher communication among the teaching staff as a whole, it will be important to conduct observations in as many classrooms as possible. Also, in schools where there are subject teachers/classrooms (science, math, English, etc.), it will be useful to conduct observations in several classrooms and/or class periods for each subject.

Instructions for Coding and Analysis

The way in which teachers communicate with students affects student's level of interest and engagement in learning. Communicating with students with a warm tone and with respect promotes equity in academic achievement.

Teacher communication in this area can be scored in three ways – how frequently each type of communication was observed, whether the communication was observed to be directed toward all students or only some of them, and if only some, toward which groups of students.

FREQUENCY OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

- First, count the total number of times each type of communication was observed by adding up the tally marks under "DIRECTED TO ALL STUDENTS" and those under "DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS."
- Next, sum the total number of tally marks across all three types of communication.
- Then, add the number of tally marks for the two positive types of teacher communication (indicated by a + or plus sign) and divide by the total number of tally marks across all three types of communication. This is the percent of teacher communication that is warm and respectful toward students.

PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION TOWARD ALL STUDENTS

- First, count the number of times each type of communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS" and add up across all three types.
- Next, add up the total number of times the two positive types of teacher communication were directed at all students.

- Then, divide the number of times positive communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS" by the total number of times all three types of communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS." This is the percent of teacher communication observations directed toward all students that were positive.

PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION DIRECTED TOWARD WHITE STUDENTS

- First, count the number of times the two types of positive communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS."
- Next, add up the number of times the two positive types of teacher communication was directed toward white students (male or female).
- Then, divide the number of times positive communication was observed directed at white students by the total number of times any positive communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS." This is the percent of positive teacher communications directed at only some students that were directed toward white students.

The same coding procedures as above "PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION DIRECTED TOWARD WHITE STUDENTS" can be used to measure the percent of positive communication directed toward other groups, such as male or female students regardless of race.

COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOR	DIRECTED TO ALL STUDENTS	DIRECTED TO ONLY SOME STUDENTS	DIRECTED TO FEMALE STUDENT		DIRECTED TO MALE STUDENT	
			Student of Color	White Student	Student of Color	White Student
EXPRESSIONS OF AFFECT						
Teacher uses sarcasm or harsh tone with students						
Teacher expresses personal warmth toward students (+)						
Teacher uses expressions of politeness in talking with students (+)						

Observing Teacher Communication in the Classroom—Communicating Expectations

Description

This tool is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of teacher communication in the classroom setting. Some of the observations are of teacher communication to the class as a whole, others are of communication with individual students. (In addition to the student categories in the chart below (gender, and student of color/white student), you may want to code in more specific categories of race or ethnicity.

Instructions to Data Collector

In order to identify patterns of communication of a given teacher, it will be important to conduct the observations at different times of day, on different days of the week, and at different times of the year for each teacher. In addition, to identify patterns of teacher communication among the teaching staff as a whole, it will be important to conduct observations in as many classrooms as possible. Also, in schools where there are subject teachers/classrooms (science, math, English, etc.), it will be useful to conduct observations in several classrooms and/or class periods for each subject.

Instructions for Coding and Analysis

The way in which teachers communicate with students affects student's level of interest and engagement in learning. Conveying that students are and will do well and avoiding statements of negative expectations promote equity in academic achievement.

Teacher communication in this area can be scored in three ways – how frequently each type of communication was observed, whether the communication was observed to be directed toward all students or only some of them, and if only some, toward which groups of students.

FREQUENCY OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

- First, count the total number of times each type of communication was observed by adding up the tally marks under "DIRECTED TO ALL STUDENTS" and those under "DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS."
- Next, sum the total number of tally marks across the three types of communication.
- Then, add the number of tally marks for the two positive types of teacher communication (indicated by a + or plus sign) and divide by the total number of tally marks across the two types of communication. This is the percent of teacher communication that communicates positive expectations.

PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION TOWARD ALL STUDENTS

- First, count the number of times each type of communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS" and add up across all three types.
- Next, add up the total number of times the two positive types of teacher communication were directed at all students.

- Then, divide the number of times positive communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS" by the total number of times all three types of communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS." This is the percent of teacher communication observations directed toward all students that were positive.

PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION DIRECTED TOWARD WHITE STUDENTS

- First, count the number of times the two types of positive communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS."
- Next, add up the number of times the two positive types of teacher communication was directed toward white students (male or female).
- Then, divide the number of times positive communication was observed directed at white students by the total number of times any positive communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS." This is the percent of positive teacher communications directed at only some students that were directed toward white students.
- The same coding procedures as above "PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION DIRECTED TOWARD WHITE STUDENTS" can be used to measure the percent of positive communication directed toward other groups, such as male or female students regardless of race.

Record each communication behavior observed by putting tally marks in the appropriate column.

COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOR	DIRECTED TO ALL STUDENTS	DIRECTED TO ONLY SOME STUDENTS	DIRECTED TO FEMALE STUDENT		DIRECTED TO MALE STUDENT	
			Student of Color	White Student	Student of Color	White Student
COMMUNICATING EXPECTATIONS						
Teacher praises students for knowledge and skills (+)						
Teacher states that he/she expects that students will do well (+)						
Teacher expresses low expectations based on performance or behavior						

Observing Teacher Communication in the Classroom—Managing Student Behavior

Description

This tool is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of teacher communication in the classroom setting. Some of the observations are of teacher communication to the class as a whole, others are of communication with individual students. (In addition to the student categories in the chart below (gender, and student of color/white student), you may want to code in more specific categories of race or ethnicity.

Instructions to Data Collector

In order to identify patterns of communication of a given teacher, it will be important to conduct the observations at different times of day, on different days of the week, and at different times of the year for each teacher. In addition, to identify patterns of teacher communication among the teaching staff as a whole, it will be important to conduct observations in as many classrooms as possible. Also, in schools where there are subject teachers/classrooms (science, math, English, etc.), it will be useful to conduct observations in several classrooms and/or class periods for each subject.

Instructions for Coding and Analysis

The way in which teachers communicate with students affects student's level of interest and engagement in learning. Calling attention in positive ways to expectations for behavior promotes equity in academic achievement.

Teacher communication in this area can be scored in three ways – how frequently each type of communication was observed, whether the communication was observed to be directed toward all students or only some of them, and if only some, toward which groups of students.

FREQUENCY OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

- First, count the total number of times each type of communication was observed by adding up the tally marks under "DIRECTED TO ALL STUDENTS" and those under "DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS."
- Next, sum the total number of tally marks across the three types of communication.
- Then, add the number of tally marks for the two positive types of teacher communication (indicated by a + or plus sign) and divide by the total number of tally marks across the two types of communication. This is the percent of teacher communication that reinforces expectations for student behavior in positive ways.

PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION TOWARD ALL STUDENTS

- First, count the number of times each type of communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS" and add up across all three types.
- Next, add up the total number of times the two positive types of teacher communication were directed at all students.

- Then, divide the number of times positive communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS" by the total number of times all three types of communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ALL STUDENTS." This is the percent of teacher communication observations directed toward all students that were positive.

PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION DIRECTED TOWARD WHITE STUDENTS

- First, count the number of times the two types of positive communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS."
- Next, add up the number of times the two positive types of teacher communication was directed toward white students (male or female).
- Then, divide the number of times positive communication was observed directed at white students by the total number of times any positive communication was observed "DIRECTED AT ONLY SOME STUDENTS." This is the percent of positive teacher communications directed at only some students that were directed toward white students.
- The same coding procedures as above "PERCENT OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION DIRECTED TOWARD WHITE STUDENTS" can be used to measure the percent of positive communication directed toward other groups, such as male or female students regardless of race.

Record each communication behavior observed by putting tally marks in the appropriate column.

COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOR	DIRECTED TO ALL STUDENTS	DIRECTED TO ONLY SOME STUDENTS	DIRECTED TO FEMALE STUDENT		DIRECTED TO MALE STUDENT	
			Student of Color	White Student	Student of Color	White Student
MANAGING STUDENT BEHAVIOR						
Teacher reminds students of rules and procedures in positive, non-threatening or punitive way (+)						
Teacher makes note of positive student behavior (+)						
Teacher threatens consequences in response to student behavior						