

# Informal Observations

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An informal observation is an unannounced visit of any length. An informal observation may occur at any time during the school day.

Not all evaluators will use informal observations; however, you should be aware of what you can do after you have been informally observed.

## What to do after your informal observation:

Though it is not required, if you choose, you may request a meeting with your observer after any informal observation.

Only written feedback from an informal observation may be included in your summative evaluation. If it's not in writing, then it cannot be included in your summative evaluation.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
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## A Guide to Navigating Your Certified Staff Evaluation

*Revised Fall 2014*

*FAQs and Tips for Success*

Includes information about new evaluation guidelines as a result of the Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA), as well as advice for making the most of your pre-observation, post-observation, and summative conferences.

# Formal Observations

## Process Overview:

- Preparation for Pre-Observation
- Reflection
- Pre-Observation Conference
- Post-Observation Conference
- Observation

## Important Resources

- The revised *Standards for Professional Practice* booklet (often called “The Gray Book”) can be found on the HR Sharepoint: <http://sharepoint.naperville203.org/district/hr/default.aspx>. Under “Evaluation Documents,” click “Category: Evaluation Forms Certified” or “Category: Evaluation Forms Non-Certified.”
- To learn more about these revised evaluation procedures, pension reform, contract negotiations, and other news that impacts District 203 certified staff, visit the NUEA website: [www.nuea203.org](http://www.nuea203.org) and the site just for members: [www.nuea203.org/members](http://www.nuea203.org/members)
- To learn more about the Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA), visit the Illinois State Board of Education website: <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/PERA/default.htm>

### 2-3 Weeks Before Your Pre-Observation:

- Become familiar with the current language of the four domains. Read your revised *Standards for Professional Practice* booklet thoroughly (see the “Important Resources” section of this brochure), and review Charlotte Danielson’s *Framework for Teaching* (2013).
  - Consider the following: How will you demonstrate evidence in each of the domain categories with this particular group of students? This evidence should be documented in your lesson plans and in your pre-observation documents.
    - Refer to Danielson’s critical attributes; they will give you examples of how you might demonstrate each domain component in the classroom.
  - Talk with your colleagues. Ask them about strategies that they are using to meet each of the domain categories.
- Have a conversation with your evaluator. Ask the following questions:
  - What do you expect to see for each of the domains?
  - What does evidence of each domain look like to you?
  - How would you like me to provide evidence of domain categories that may not be directly stated in my lesson plans?
  - How would you like me to provide evidence of domain categories that may not be directly evident when you are in my classroom?
- Log on to TalentEd and review the required evaluation forms; see your evaluator with any questions.

### In Your Pre-Observation:

- Explain your progress toward the goals you set at the beginning of the year. Be sure to provide evidence of your progress.
- Consider each of the domains. In your pre-observation paperwork, refer directly to domain language. Don’t be afraid to quote Danielson directly. Be prepared to provide evidence in your pre-observation documents
- Refer to the pre-observation document; take the time to answer all questions with as much clarity and detail as possible. Be sure to use domain language where appropriate.
- Bring concrete evidence. By law, evaluators can only comment on what they see when they write up their notes on teacher observations. Provide your evaluator with documentation representing all four domains, such as planning guides, student records, classroom management plans, and team meeting notes (for example).

### Your Observation:

- Evaluators should be on time; by law, they must stay for either a full lesson or for at least 45 minutes.

### In Your Post-Observation:

- Your post-observation conference should occur within ten (10) working days of your observation.
- If you are asked to provide a reflection statement prior to the post-observation conference, you are within your rights to request your evaluator’s written feedback prior to the post-observation conference. If no paperwork is requested prior to the post-observation conference, then both parties may discuss their reflections together at the time of the conference.
- Evaluators cannot use hearsay in their observation feedback.
- Take the time to read your written feedback carefully. Compare your written feedback to the language on the domain rubrics.
  - If you disagree with the written feedback, compare the written feedback to the evidence that you have gathered before, during, and after your observation.
  - If you still disagree, you may write a rebuttal. This rebuttal must be submitted within ten (10) working days, and will be attached to your official observation documents (see contract section 4.3).
  - You may request an additional observation.
  - If you are in danger of receiving a “Needs Improvement” or an “Unsatisfactory” summative rating, your evaluator is required to observe you one more time. You should also contact your NUEA Building Rep or our NUEA UniServ Director.
- Ask your evaluator to see the notes they took during your observation. This can facilitate a dialogue about the ratings you earned in each domain.
- Remember: signing a summative evaluation form only indicates that you have received it, not that you agree with it.