

Observation and Evaluation Process for Educators

Philosophy and Purpose

The philosophy and purpose of the observation and evaluation process in the Diocese of Wilmington is to foster educational excellence and professional growth aligned to the mission of each Catholic school. The process is formative, ongoing, and collaborative with the ultimate goal of improving the quality of teaching and student learning by:

- Affirming mastery of professional standards.
- Providing feedback for potential areas in need of professional improvement.
- Establishing goals to foster continuous growth.

Responsibility for Observation and Evaluation

The school principal bears the primary responsibility for the observation and evaluation of teachers. The principal may designate an assistant principal, another member of the administrative team deemed educationally qualified, and/or department chair to assist in the process. The observations outlined below, conducted by an administrator, will be used for evaluative purposes; observations by level coordinators, mentors, or colleagues are encouraged for professional growth and will not be used for evaluative purposes.

Types of Observations

- **Classroom Observations of Short Duration**
 - Announced or unannounced classroom visits with a minimum of 15 minutes in length
 - These observations are recommended to reflect the beginning, middle, and the end of the class period.
 - A minimum of 3 will be conducted annually.
 - These observations should be adequately spaced throughout the school year.
 - Written feedback, based on the standards/indicators, must be signed by the observer and the educator for each of the observations.
- **Informal Classroom Walkthroughs**
 - Unannounced classroom walkthroughs lasting a minimum of 5 minutes will occur periodically.
 - Verbal or written feedback to the educator is encouraged.
 - If written feedback is deemed necessary/appropriate, signatures are required by both parties.
- **Interactions Beyond the Classroom:**
 - Observations that take place outside of the educator's classroom.
 - Written feedback is given at least once by the mid-point of the school year. Ongoing verbal feedback to the educator is encouraged.
- **Teacher-Requested Observations**
 - Teachers may request an observation of up to a full class period in length.
 - Teacher-requested observations will be used in addition to the observations described above.

- Verbal or written feedback to the educator is encouraged and may be requested by the teacher.
 - If written feedback is provided signatures are required by both the teacher and the administrator.
- **Full Length Classroom Observations**
 - Teachers prior to their first 90 days of employment at their school will be observed for a full class period by the principal.
 - Full length classroom observations may be conducted at an administrator's discretion.

Timeline for Observation Feedback

- The principal or designated observer should provide the educator with a written report for each observation of short duration within one week of the observation.
- Required observations should be completed by May 1 each year and placed in the educator's personnel file.

Summative Evaluations

It is recommended that teachers are annually invited to participate in a written self-reflection submitted to their school administrator, to help inform their summative evaluation. The summative evaluation, based on the Professional Standards for Catholic School Educators, reflects the information shared from all observations of the educator throughout the specified year, and the teacher self-reflection, if submitted. Summative evaluations will be completed according to the following schedule:

- Teachers in years one through five will receive an annual summative evaluation.
- Teachers with more than five years of experience who are new to a diocesan/parish school will receive a summative evaluation in their first year.
- Teachers with more than five years of experience, who are upholding professional standards, will typically receive a summative evaluation every other year. These teachers may request to receive a summative evaluation each year and principals will honor this request.

The original, signed copy of the summative evaluation will be sent to the Catholic Schools Office by June 30. The school should place a copy of the summative evaluation in the educator's personnel file and give a copy to the educator.

Acknowledgement of Written Feedback

All classroom observations and summative evaluations must be signed by the principal and the educator. Signature by the educator acknowledges receipt of, and not necessarily agreement with, the evaluation.

Each educator will be offered the opportunity to meet with the principal about his/her classroom observations or summative evaluation and be invited to submit a written response within one week of receiving it. The educator's comments should be attached to the report before it is placed in the personnel file.

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