

# TEACHER TALENT TOOLBOX

## Set Clear Norms for Evaluators and Teachers

For a fair evaluation system, each of your observers must share the same standards of effective teaching and learning. These shared standards lead to consistent evaluations across your school. The process of ensuring that your leadership team is evaluating teachers consistently is known as "norming." To norm your observations, bring together anyone responsible for observing teachers for a leadership development session.

To norm observers:

- All participants watch the same video lesson and independently score the teacher using your school's observation evaluation rubric.
- A "master rating" (predetermined by the school's leader) is shared, along with evidence for that rating.
- All participants reflect on the evidence they highlighted and compare their responses to the master rating.
- The process is repeated with multiple lessons

These development sessions train observers to select consistent, accurate observation ratings for teachers.

### PREPARING FOR A NORMING SESSION

In preparation for a norming activity, you will need to collect the following resources:

- 2-3 video-recorded lessons showing a range of teacher performance levels
- Your evaluation/observation rubric
- A handout for your participants to record what they observe while viewing the lesson
- Having a "master rating" is an essential component of the activity; this is your opportunity to clearly set your expectations for performance.

Norming activities should happen several times through the year. Think of these activities as hitting a "reset button." They are the best way to ensure that a common set of expectations for excellent instruction are in place across your school.

### NORMING WITH TEACHERS

Clarity around performance expectations and system implementation is essential in helping teachers internalize evaluation as a process that improves instructional practice. There are multiple benefits to including teachers in the norming process:

- Teachers gain experience in the application of the evaluation/observation rubric and understand evaluators' roles.
- Teachers actively engage with the evaluation/observation rubric.
- Teachers hear the evidence drawn out by their school's leadership; they know what the expectations look like in practice.
- Before including teachers in a norming activity, first conduct a norming session with your school's leadership team. This ensures that everyone is on the same page, and a firm master rating with evidence has been established for each video. Then, plan the session with teachers.
- Do not use videos of teachers in your school for initial sessions. Eventually and ideally, your teachers will volunteer to have their lessons evaluated by their peers, but this takes trust to accomplish.
- Give teachers multiple opportunities to practice using the rubric during the same session. Their first time through, they will be learning about the rubric; subsequent rounds will help them to internalize the performance expectations and what they look like in practice.
- For each round, provide your master rating and evidence after teachers have determined their results, and encourage teachers to ask clarifying questions.
- Consider allowing teachers to provide suggestions for how the teacher could improve her practice to meet the expectations in the rubric.

Repeating this activity several times through the year will continue to clarify your expectations for teacher practice; you may invite teachers to volunteer to have their lessons recorded to use during these activities. This is a great opportunity for teachers to receive additional feedback on their practice, and for you to highlight and leverage the strengths of your teachers.