USING LOW INFERENCE FEEDBACK AND CONFERENCING

A School Leader’s Guide for Improvement
Reflection Questions

• What is your approach to completing a classroom observation?

• What kind of notes do you make when visiting a classroom?

• How do you provide teachers with feedback?

• How does your feedback impact classroom instruction?
“I used to concentrate on how a teacher delivers a lesson more than how the students receive the lesson. Now I notice things that I had never seen before, like the students’ behavior, seating, or lack of response in class.”
– Teacher Leader, 2005

Reflect on the above quote. Where do your observation practices fall on this continuum of teaching and learning?

Let’s Practice

- Which are written in low inference and which are written in high inference? How can you tell?
- How can we change the high inference statement into low inference statements?

1. The teacher asked 3 clarifying questions to the pair of students.

2. One child did not understand the assignment.

3. There are five students who had their heads down.

4. This student is an English Language Learner.

5. Two causes for the American Revolution were listed and discussed.
Low Inference Feedback and Conferencing is:

Providing a detailed record of what took place in a classroom.

- Evaluators can use a tool for observing that allows for anecdotal records from the visit.

Not subjective, just a restatement of the facts.

- Removing subjectivity will enable evaluators to more accurately score evaluations and focus on goal attainment.

More focused on student learning and interaction.

- Evaluators can focus on how students are learning in response to teacher planning and instruction, this will narrow the gap between teaching and learning.

Attentive to professional learning and growth.

- Pointing out facts and citing anecdotal evidence will allow teachers to reflect more closely on classroom practices and show instructional growth.

Allowing educators to engage in collegial conversations without debating facts or providing opinions.

- Evaluators and teachers are able to more efficiently communicate about classroom practices and remove the tendency to give unwarranted opinions, praises, or reprimands.
### Georgia Department of Education

**Using Low Inference Feedback and Conferencing**

**Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent**

**April 25, 2013**

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#### Low Inference Classroom Visitation Tool – SAMPLE ONLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade (Circle)</th>
<th>P-K</th>
<th>K</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject, time/period, # students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of class</td>
<td></td>
<td>( ) Gen Ed.</td>
<td>( ) inclusion</td>
<td>( ) gifted</td>
<td>( ) ELL/ESL</td>
<td>( ) Other:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td>This is the teacher’s _________ year of teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson portion viewed (Circle)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Beginning</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>End</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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#### Anecdotal Evidence: Low-Inference Observations

- **What is the teacher doing?**
- **What are the students doing?**

- What do you see and hear the teacher and students doing? *Quantify and quote.*
- What evidence can you gather of student learning? *Actively collect data.*
- What will students know and be able to do at the end of the lesson? *Search out evidence of rigor and new understandings from students.*

#### Look for specifics from TAPS domains *(These are only suggestions, refer to TKES handbook!)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning:</th>
<th>Instructional Delivery:</th>
<th>Assessment of and for Learning:</th>
<th>Learning Environment:</th>
<th>Professionalism and Communication:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Activities</td>
<td>Importance of content</td>
<td>Assessment Criteria</td>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>Teacher – Student interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Expectations for learning</td>
<td>Monitoring learning</td>
<td>Monitoring behavior</td>
<td>Reference to website, other parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>Quality of Questions</td>
<td>Feedback to students</td>
<td>Response to behavior</td>
<td>communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>Discussion techniques</td>
<td>Student assessment of progress</td>
<td>Student pride in work</td>
<td>Teacher dress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson/Unit Structure</td>
<td>Student participation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Professionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activities / Assignments</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Groupings</td>
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<td>Materials</td>
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<td>Resources</td>
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<td>Structure</td>
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<td>Pacing</td>
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Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent

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How to Use Low Inference Feedback and Conferencing to Enhance the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System:

1. Evaluator schedules significant, protected time to be in teacher’s classroom.

2. During a classroom visit, Walkthrough or Formative Assessment, the evaluator takes anecdotal notes regarding classroom interactions and student learning.

3. Upon completion of the visit, the evaluator returns to complete the Walkthrough or Formative Assessment form electronically through the TLE Electronic Platform.

4. Using either the Notes Library or Comment Feature within the TLE Electronic Platform, evaluators cite specific, factual evidence from the visit to support the ratings on the TKES standards. Only factual evidence should be entered, all praises, reprimands, and/or opinions should be removed.

5. Once form is completed, the evaluator can save and share the form with the relevant teacher. The low inference feedback on the form will provide consistent and factual evidence for the teacher to reference.

6. The evaluator may choose to have a face to face conference which will allow the low inference feedback to be used to discuss classroom practices and teacher professional growth, removing evaluator subjectivity and allowing for professional conversations.

7. Low inference statements from Walkthroughs and Formative Assessments will be valuable references as evaluators review the totality of evidence and consistency of practice to rate the Summative Evaluation.
**Georgia Department of Education**  
**Using Low Inference Feedback and Conferencing**  
**Action Plan Template**

**Purpose:** To create a plan for utilizing low inference feedback and conferencing for your improvement effort and support implementation.

**Directions:**
1. Using this form as a template, develop an action plan to help hold yourself and your other evaluators accountable for practicing low inference feedback and conferencing.
2. Distribute copies of each work plan to other evaluators if necessary. Otherwise, this form can be used as a self-reflection and be held private.

**Goal:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Steps</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Potential Barriers</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What Will Be Done?</td>
<td>Who Will Do It? (Day/Month)</td>
<td>Resources Available, Resources Needed</td>
<td>A. What individuals might resist? What are your personal barriers? How? Why?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of Success (How will you know that you are making progress?)</td>
<td>Resources Needed</td>
<td>A.</td>
<td>B.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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