

## What to Expect on the Day of the CLASS® Observation

Third Party CLASS® observations will be performed by certified, reliable observers who have had in-depth training in how to conduct the observation. Observers are staff members and contractors of the Picard Center for Child Development and Lifelong Learning at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. They are trained to execute the protocols developed by the Louisiana Department of Education and the Picard Center. At least two weeks before the scheduled observations are to begin, the Picard Center mails individual letters to the site principals and/or directors informing them of the observation window and an electronic copy of the letters is emailed to the Lead Agency contacts. The Picard Center will also attempt to contact the site, by phone, 1-3 days prior to the observation(s). It is imperative that site principals and/or directors inform staff members that observations will occur.

For in person observations conducted during COVID-19, observers will follow all COVID-19 health and safety protocols and procedures found in the [Fall 2020 Local Observation Protocol Guidance for Early Childhood Community Networks](#), inclusive of the following the following requirements:

- Observers will request and comply with the health and safety procedures required by each site, inclusive of participating in any required health screenings that the site conducts upon entry to the facility prior to each observation visit;
- Observers will have access to and utilize required personal protective equipment needed for each observation visit;
- Observers will report if they are exposed to, or diagnosed with, COVID-19 to the Picard Center; and
- Observers will maintain appropriate social distancing throughout the observation.

Upon arrival at the site, the observer will report to the administration office and:

- Introduce himself/herself to office staff and administrator (if available),
- Present identification and sign-in on appropriate site documentation,
- Present a *Child Care Criminal Background Check (for licensed centers only)*,
- Request to review site health and safety protocols to ensure compliance,
- Work with administration and/or teacher to determine the best place to sit or stand during the observation (understanding that observers may need to stay in one place due to social distancing protocols),
- Verify classroom information with administrator/director or designee (i.e., classroom locations by age, ensure 50% of enrolled students are in attendance),
- Verify the correct spelling of the teacher's name, and
- Receive an **updated daily schedule** for the classroom being observed. "Whenever observers are entering a new setting, it can be helpful to speak to the school/program and teachers ahead of time to gather information about the classroom. This is especially true at this time, when enrollment and health and safety practices may be changing from week to week (Teachstone, 2020)."

Sites are asked to report any scheduling conflicts to the Picard Center before the observation window begins. Based upon site reported optimal learning times, the CLASS® observation typically starts at the beginning of the school day and continues throughout the morning for approximately (100-120 minutes). The total time the observer is present at the site is dependent upon the daily schedule and extracurricular activities.

The following activities, 'pull-outs, and specials' **will not** be observed:

- Physical Education,
- Music,
- Computer,
- Library,
- Art,
- Cafeteria-based meals,
- Toileting in pre-K classrooms where the whole classroom visits the toilet together,
- Outdoor recess **is not** included in pre-K observations but is included in infant and toddler observations (as per Teachstone© guidelines).

Additional COVID-19 protocols require the observer to remain in the classroom throughout the observation visit and he/she will not observe any activities outside of the classroom.

Upon entering the classroom, the observer will introduce himself/herself and request an updated daily schedule (if they have not received one from the office). Based on the daily schedule, the observer will plan for the observation/scoring. The teacher should notify the observer of any schedule deviations, which may affect the observation. The observer may be accompanied by a second observer to shadow score simultaneously. The primary purpose of this shadow score is to ensure inter-rater reliability, which has no reflection of the quality of the site being observed or alters the score. However, while Louisiana remains in Phase 1, 2, or 3 of its COVID-19 reopening plan, in-person observations should be limited to one individual observer and shadow scoring will not take place. This will limit the impact of observers on the classroom group size.

The observation will consist of **four 20-minute observation cycles** each followed by **10-minute** scoring cycles (average 120-minute total time) for pre-K and toddler observations and **four 15-minute observation cycles** each followed by **10-minute** scoring cycles (average 100-minute total time) for infant observations. Teachstone© recommends observers remain in the classroom when scoring. In the event that observers remain in the classroom, they will turn their back on the class and quietly complete the scoring. If children approach an observer, he/she will kindly redirect the child into classroom activities.

Observers **will not**:

- Ask teachers to change schedules, move rooms, rearrange children or groups
- Engage in back and forth conversations with children or teachers
- Conduct observations during the 10-minute break time between cycles
- Conduct more than four cycles of observations
- Use their phone during the observation
- Share feedback immediately following an observation

In the event that an observation is unable to be completed due to non-compliance by a site, the Picard Center will notify the LDE immediately. Any issues or concerns with observers should be reported to [earlychildhood@la.gov](mailto:earlychildhood@la.gov) or to the Picard Center for Child Development. If the observers determine that required health and safety protocols are not being followed at the site, the observers may terminate the visit and contact the Picard Center to reschedule the observation. In the unusual circumstance of any suspected abuse or neglect observed at the time of the observation the observer must report the observed behaviors to the Office of Community Services as mandated by law.

At the conclusion of the observation, the observer will confirm with the teacher that the observation is complete. ***There will not be an exit interview after the observation***, however, general feedback on the highest and lowest scoring CLASS<sup>®</sup> dimensions for infant observations and the two highest and two lowest scoring CLASS<sup>®</sup> dimensions for pre-K and toddler observations will be available on the Louisiana Department of Education’s Early Childhood portal within 2 weeks of the observation being conducted.



Community Network: Site Name/Site Code  
Date: Teacher Last Name, Teacher First Name

**PreK 3<sup>rd</sup> Party CLASS<sup>™</sup> Observation Feedback**

Emotional Support:	Score
Classroom Organization:	Score
Instructional Support:	Score
Total Domain Average:	Score

**Highest Score: Positive Climate**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Highest Score: Instructional Learning Formats**

**Lowest Score: Concept Development**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Lowest Score: Quality of Feedback**

Any questions or concerns about the observation procedures can be addressed to Kara Farmer-Primeaux at the Picard Center at 337.482.1569 or [classactull@gmail.com](mailto:classactull@gmail.com).