



## **Guidelines for CLASS Observation Documentation**

### **A. Observation Booklet:**

1. The observation booklet must be filled out entirely
  - a. Observation Sheet- complete **all** top portions for each observation cycle (teacher, start time/end time, number of adults and children and observer, etc.). Next, circle all that apply and **check the majority** (content & format- preK), (activity, grouping, & content- toddler), and (activity setting, physical setting, number present- infant).
2. The back scoring sheet must be filled out correctly calculating all dimension, domain, and overall scores. Cross-reference individual cycle scores for each dimension with your back summary sheet to ensure they match.
  - a. Include the overall scores with AND without Negative Climate
3. The two highest and lowest scoring dimensions for feedback must be indicated with H1, H2, L1, and L2 next to the dimension average (displayed on large chart) for preK and toddler observations, H1, and L1 for infant observations.
4. Any time periods that deviate from the 20 minutes observing and 10 minutes scoring (preK and toddler) or 15 minutes observing and 10 minutes scoring (infant observations only) should be documented on the last notes page after the scoring summary sheet.
  - a. Provide detailed information describing the reason for the deviation
5. The arrival time and departure time should be written underneath the start time/end time on the back scoring summary sheet (ensuring your end time includes the 10 minutes of scoring).
6. The observation ticket must be securely taped to the back of the observation booklet.
  - a. Provide the date completed and correct spelling of the teacher(s)' names

### **B. Observation Notes:**

1. All observation notes should be written or typed on the required notes pages and attached to the observation booklet after each corresponding cycle.
  - a. All altered notes pages must be approved by Picard Center
  - b. If longer quotes or back-and-forth exchanges are provided on a separate page, please indicate the dimension(s) in an organized manner
  - c. Include range or numerical score next to **each indicator** on each observation sheet to show how you arrived at the overall score for the dimension. For example:
    - i. Positive Climate- Relationships (H), Positive Affect (M), Positive Communication (M), Respect (H)



2. All dimension boxes must contain specific evidence to support the dimension score
  - a. **Never leave a dimension box blank**
3. **All indicators must be addressed in notes**
4. Provide a sufficient number of exact quotes, when applicable
5. A context or clarification statement should be added to support the numerical score
  - a. Ex.). Small group activity coloring or matching butterflies; teacher provides activity but time loss due to preparation or behavioral issues; teacher asked many how/why questions but failed to provide adequate wait time for students to respond.
6. If notes/examples fit in more than one dimension, you must reference the example or direct quote in both dimension boxes.

**C. Summary Statements** (provided for all CLASS dimensions):

1. Address each indicator with the following:
  - a. **A lead-in statement that addresses the indicator and frequency (past tense)**
    - i. Ex). *There were many indications that the teachers and students enjoyed warm, supportive relationships with one another.*
  - b. **Specific examples unique to the observation**
    - ii. Ex). *The lead teacher sat on the floor with the students playing with blocks and in a low chair as she worked with students during a sorting game.*
2. The number of specific examples provided must match the frequency term for the indicator. *The number of examples for each range (H,M,L) are a guide for reporting purposes ONLY and should not be used as a guide when scoring interactions.*
  - a. High-range (many, frequently, always)
    - i. 4 or 5 examples
  - b. Mid-range (sometimes, occasionally, at times)
    - i. 2 or 3 examples
  - c. Low-range (rarely, few, does not)
    - i. 1 example or clarification statement
    - ii. If no example is given, provide a clarification statement or example of behaviors observed for the indicator. Ex.). The teacher asked rote questions throughout the observation identifying shapes, colors, or numbers.
3. The specific examples must be written in one of two ways:
  - a. Written in grammatically correct sentences after the lead-in statement
    - i. Ex.). *For example, the teacher provided leadership roles for several students during the morning routine including calendar helper, attendance taker, and weather helper.*
  - b. Provided in parentheses and separated by semicolons after the lead-in statement



- i. Ex. 1). (*close proximity sitting on rug with students; shared activities with matching game; social conversation about weekend plans*)
  - ii. Ex. 2). (*“Thank you for helping.”; “I appreciate you sharing with your friends.”; “I love the way you are being good listeners.”*)
4. Choose the strongest examples that support the numerical score
5. The examples should include specific details and/or context when necessary

### **Summary Statement Examples:**

1. **Positive Climate Example:** *There were many indications that the teachers and students enjoyed warm, supportive relationships with one another. The lead teacher sat on the floor with the students playing with the blocks and in a low chair as she worked with the students, picture matching and sorting. Some of the students engaged in peer conversations during centers and whole group and with their teachers about toothbrushes, favorite colors, and dinosaurs. There were some displays of positive affect by the teachers and students. During music and movement, the students laughed and were excited as they imitated animal sounds and movements. They also showed excitement during the morning routine of attendance. There were many positive communications displayed between the teachers and students. The teachers held and patted students’ hands, hugged students, and some students leaned closely against the second teacher. The lead teacher told the students, “You are all great listeners.” and “You are so smart.” The teachers and students often demonstrated respect for one another. Both teachers used a calm voice, the students’ names, and eye contact. The students were typically cooperative and shared materials with one another. Respectful language was heard throughout the observation with “please and “thank you.”*
2. **Quality of Feedback Example:** *The teacher occasionally provided scaffolding through hints. The teacher pointed to the smart board during the music and movement activity and used physical and verbal assistance to students to help them get the right answer or complete an activity (“Follow the block.”; “Hold it and I will help you.”; “Stay within the bubble.”). There were occasional back and forth exchanges between the teacher and students (parts of the book and holiday celebrations); however, some feedback was perfunctory where the exchange was brief (“Good answer.”). The teacher rarely queried the student or prompted students to explain their thinking or rationale for their responses or their actions (“Why did you make it pink?”). The teacher inconsistently provided additional information to expand on the students’ understanding or actions. (Student: “It’ll burn your mouth.” Teacher: “It’s hot. I have to cool it.”; Student: “They celebrate.” Teacher: “Families celebrate holidays in different ways.”). The teacher offered some general praise (“Awesome!”; “Good answer.”; “Good D.”) and some*

*specific feedback (“Awesome job writing all your numbers.”; “Thank you for recognizing her name.”).*

3. **Concept Development Example:** *The teacher rarely used discussions and activities that encouraged analysis and reasoning. The teacher often asked questions that focused on recalling facts in a rote manner, rather than asking questions that promoted higher order thinking skills. For example, she asked questions such as, “What are we going to use to listen to her?”; “What color would you like?”; “What letter is this?”. On a few occasions, the teacher provided opportunities for students to generate their own ideas. For example, the teacher had the students brainstorm about where bugs live and different aspects of Springtime. On a few occasions, the teacher attempted to link concepts from one activity to the next, but these connections were brief. For example, the teacher attempted to link the book, Bugs to the outdoor activity but did not take the integration any further. The teacher rarely attempted to relate concepts to the student’s actual lives. On one occasion, the teacher and students discussed Spring, Easter, and painted eggs but the discussion only consisted of one or two questions.*

#### **D. Guidelines for Selecting Feedback:**

##### **Highest Scoring Dimensions (PreK and Toddler Observations)**

1. Once the observation scoring summary sheet is filled out completely, review the dimension score averages and select the **highest** two averages (indicate which two you have selected with H1 and H2).
2. If you have multiple dimensions with the same average score, select no more than 1 dimension in each **domain** (This only occurs if you have three or more dimensions with the same average score. If you have only two dimensions with the same score those should be chosen).

**Example (PreK)** - Positive Climate (PC), Teacher Sensitivity (TS) and Behavior Management (BM) are all assigned a score of a 7. You would address one dimension in Emotional Support (either PC or TS) and BM in Classroom Organization.

**Example (Toddler)** - Positive Climate (PC), Regard for Child Perspectives (RCP), and Facilitation of Learning and Development (FLD) are all assigned a score of a 6. You would address one dimension in Emotional and Behavioral Support (PC or RCP) and FLD in Engaged Support for Learning.



3. If more than 1 dimension is assigned the same score in the same domain, use your judgment to determine which dimension was most strongly supported by **higher-level behaviors**.
4. If all dimensions are scored below a 3, there is no highest scoring dimension to address.

**NOTE:** We are **excluding** Negative Climate when selecting the highest scoring dimension.

#### **Lowest Scoring Dimensions** (PreK and Toddler Observations)

1. Review the dimension score averages and select the **lowest** two dimension averages (indicate which two you have selected with L1 and L2). If you have multiple dimensions with the same average score, select no more than 1 dimension in each domain (This only occurs if you have three or more dimensions with the same average score. If you have only two dimensions with the same score those should be chosen).

**Example (PreK)**- Instructional Learning Formats (ILF), Quality of Feedback (QF), and Language Modeling (LM) are all assigned a score of a 4. You would address one dimension in Instructional Support (QF or LM) and ILF in Classroom Organization.

**Example (Toddler)** - Quality of Feedback (QF), Behavior Guidance (BG), and Language Modeling (LM) are all assigned a score of a 3. You would address one dimension in Engaged Support for Learning (either LM or QF) and BG in Emotional and Behavioral Support.

2. If more than 1 dimension is assigned the same score in the same domain, use your judgment to determine which dimension was most strongly supported by **lower level behaviors**.
3. If dimension averages are a 6 or higher, there is no lowest scoring dimension to address.

**NOTE:** **Always** address Negative Climate in your lowest scoring dimension summary if the average score is a 3.5 or higher and notify the Picard Center immediately.

#### **Infant Observations:**

1. You will select the **highest** and **lowest** scoring dimension averages. If multiple dimensions are assigned the same score, use your judgement to determine which dimension was supported by **higher or lower level behaviors**.
2. If all dimensions are scored below a 3, there is no highest scoring dimension to address.
3. If all dimension averages are a 6 or higher, there is no lowest scoring dimension to address.

### **Common Patterns to Avoid in Summary Statements:**

1. Grammatical errors (misspellings, changing tense present/past or vice versa, open quotes or parentheses with missing ending quotes or parentheses), unnecessary spacing and font changes.
2. The specific examples are vague with no specificity or context.
  - a. For example, the teacher engaged in social conversations with students during center time.
3. The lead-in summary statement contradicts the specific examples provided for each indicator.
  - a. For example: There were some examples of teachers being aware, responsive, and addressing problems...The teachers were consistently aware of students who needed assistance.
  - b. Do not provide a lead-in sentence that addresses all in the indicators together.
4. The definition of the dimension is included in the summary statements.
5. A closing statement such as “The evidence supports the numerical score of a “6” is written at the end of the paragraph.
6. Inconsistencies in how specific examples are provided in the summary statements.
7. Using frequency terms at the cycle level, as this causes confusion to the reader.

### **Before submitting your feedback into the Louisiana Department of Education’s Early Childhood Portal ensure you have reviewed your writing for the following:**

1. Proper spelling, punctuation, and grammar,
2. Uniformity of spacing and font throughout my summary statements,
3. Addressing each indicator in all summary statements with specific examples and frequency terminology; and
4. Providing only the number of examples for each indicator that MATCHES the frequency term assigned.

## Guidance for Observations & Summary Statements during COVID-19

Third-party observers should use Teachstone’s guidance when considering how observations during the pandemic may be different from past observations. Please use the following considerations as you prepare for observations during COVID-19:

- “Some schools are limiting children's interaction with one another by separating them into set small groups within the classroom. When this is the case, observers may consider the manual’s guidance related to coding center time at the high range of Concept Development: There should be clear evidence that the teacher is engaging in these types of interactions with students as he or she moves around the classroom with the assumption that, over time, most students will be exposed to the interactions. (p. 66, Pre-K manual & p. 68, K-3 manual) (Teachstone, 2020, p. 5).”
- “Some behavioral markers may be difficult to assess or simply not present due to new health and safety procedures (Teachstone, 2020).” “Observers may need to look for evidence of CLASS indicators outside of the behavioral markers listed in the manual. Observers should remember that the listed behavioral markers are designed to illustrate the kinds of interactions an observer might see, but are not exhaustive. Additional behavioral markers not listed in the manuals can meet the overarching intent of both the indicators and dimensions
- Observers will need to pay close attention to body language and other nonverbal communications to determine the intent and efficacy of interactions if the use of masks, social distancing, or video recording during observations makes it more difficult to see or hear.
- In those instances when they cannot hear well, observers should not attempt to interpret what the teacher and children are saying. Rather, observers should note, sort, and score based solely on what they see and hear.
- Observers should review the section on “Remaining Objective” in Chapter 2 of the manual. Observers must avoid adjusting any scores because a teacher is “doing the best she can” in the current environment.
- Some observers may be nervous about how their ability to see and hear will be affected by COVID-related precautions in place in the classroom. Observers should recall that interactions are multi-faceted. The observer does not capture the fullness of everything communicated verbally and nonverbally between teachers and children during the observation period for any CLASS observation, even one conducted under normal circumstances. The observer is limited by the amount that they can see, hear, and note at once—there is always more happening than can be captured. All observers have been in classrooms where it is difficult to see or hear certain interactions due to the classroom layout, the general level of noise when young children are in a small space, or a particularly soft-spoken teacher. In these cases, observers must focus on what they can see and hear, which is typically sufficient to assess all CLASS dimensions Updated August 31, 2020 - Page 14 (Teachstone, 2020).”



## **Infant Observations**

Please refer to Teachstone's guidance on recognizing behaviors during COVID-19. Found here: [https://info.teachstone.com/hubfs/Pages%20from%20Covid19Impacts\\_InSchool\\_Infant.pdf](https://info.teachstone.com/hubfs/Pages%20from%20Covid19Impacts_InSchool_Infant.pdf)

## **Toddler Observations**

Please refer to Teachstone's guidance on recognizing behaviors during COVID-19. Found here: [http://info.teachstone.com/hubfs/Pages%20from%20Covid19Impacts\\_InSchool\\_Toddler.pdf](http://info.teachstone.com/hubfs/Pages%20from%20Covid19Impacts_InSchool_Toddler.pdf)

## **PreK Observations**

Please refer to Teachstone's guidance on recognizing behaviors during COVID-19. Found here: [http://info.teachstone.com/hubfs/Pages%20from%20Covid19Impacts\\_InSchool\\_PK-K3.pdf](http://info.teachstone.com/hubfs/Pages%20from%20Covid19Impacts_InSchool_PK-K3.pdf)

### **Summary Statement Guidance:**

The summary statement template can still be used to write your summary statements for your observations. Most of the summary statements are still applicable; however, clarification statements might be needed with slight changes in the behaviors observed following the summary statements.

Please see the following examples Infant Observations- **Relational Climate:**

**Relational Behaviors-** All summary statements are still applicable. Physical proximity, eye contact, joint attention, and verbal and physical affection should be observable, with teachers making only slight adjustments to these behaviors. Your examples might change following your summary statements such as the infant sat close or next to the teacher rather than in her lap.

**Emotional Expression-** All summary statements are still applicable. The high range statement could be modified if the teacher is wearing a mask or face covering where smiles are not observed. However, you may still use the statement if you see the following: teachers' smiling is evident in their eyes, eyebrows, temples, and cheekbones or the teacher uses photos to express positive emotions.

**Respect for Infants' State-** All summary statements are still applicable. Observers should look for teachers to clearly communicate their intentions when they need to remove a toy or wash an infant's hands.

**Lack of Adult Negativity-** All summary statements are still applicable. Overall, behavioral markers within this indicator remain unaffected. However, with increased concerns around coughing and sneezing, it is important for teachers to monitor and mitigate their own negative feelings when they come into contact with infants' saliva. Observers will look for teachers to remain positive in their interactions when infants sneeze, cough, or drool.