

Eight Tips to Save Time Evaluating Teachers

As Ohio school districts use the teacher evaluation model, there is more emphasis than ever on the principal's responsibility to ensure high-quality instruction in classrooms. In short, the "teacher evaluator" role is the most important one a principal must perform.

Many principals are concerned about having enough time to do evaluations well. As we collaborated with colleagues in another state,¹ the Ohio Department of Education learned of several time-savers such as the ideas below that may help in conducting evaluations both efficiently and effectively.

- **Share the load.** Think about what administrative duties others can perform for you (perhaps someone from your own staff, district office or educational service center).
- **Reminders work.** Refresh teachers' understanding of the evaluation system; answering their questions early on will save time throughout this year. Starting the year with a review of the system will give teachers the time they need to digest the system and maximize its benefits.
- **Point to successes.** Identify examples of good work your teachers already are accomplishing. What activities could they document and further strengthen as the year's plans are laid?
- **Share examples.** Show teachers high-quality student learning objectives so they can fashion their work on examples you consider excellent.
- **Find helpers and tools.** Recruit a trainer (teacher-leader, regional field specialist or educational service center professional) to answer additional questions from teachers. Also, attend any available training on the electronic Teacher and Principal Evaluation System and use the resources provided on the [Help page](#).
- **Come ready.** Prepare questions or an outline for pre- and post-evaluation conferences. A structure will help keep these important conversations on track. Take advantage of model tools and resources designed for this purpose that are posted [here](#) and in the electronic Teacher and Principal Evaluation System.
- **Write it down, right away.** Spend 15 minutes immediately following each classroom visit completing observations in a quiet place away from distractions. Taking a laptop or iPad to the observation will help.
- **Keep a schedule.** Pace yourself by planning a certain number of observations per month, with time allotted for make-ups. The sample timeline [here](#) will help you plan for the year.

¹ Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction; Teacher and Principal Evaluation Project (2013).