

Minnesota's Instructional Feedback Observation Program

What is the Program all about?

High quality teacher feedback centered on observation evidence is essential for improving teaching practice and an important skill for school administrators to master. Yet, many principals and assistant principals struggle to provide teachers effective feedback using observation and other evidence. How can principals be assured that their feedback to teachers powerfully influences classroom practice?

Working with the premise that you get what you measure, American Institutes for Research (AIR) developed the Instructional Feedback Observation (IFO) process to advance principals' skills as teacher evaluators. Using IFO, principal supervisors collect and use videos of principals' post-observation conference meetings with teachers to pinpoint areas of strength and improvement in principals' skills delivering feedback.

How was the Program Developed?

AIR's Instructional Feedback Observation process was developed in 2014 by educators and researchers in response to principals' learning needs. Between 2014 and 2016, IFO has undergone content validation, refinement, and testing with superintendents and principals in Idaho, Maine, Missouri, and U.S. Virgin Islands. In 2016 the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) contracted with AIR to build our capacity to provide training in the use of the IFO process and tool through our own network of trainers.

What are the Components of the Program?

- **The Four Step Process**

The protocol is organized into four steps: prepare, collect, analyze, and discuss and plan. The observation of principal practice will be fair and consistent only to the extent that the supervisor carefully prepares for and follows the procedures.

- **The Rubric**

The foundation of the IFO tool is a rubric that has been developed through research review on performance feedback. As part of the principal evaluation or coaching process, supervisors provide feedback on the degree to which principals are proficient in providing teachers with actionable feedback.

The IFO Rubric describes key practices that principals should use when conducting instructional feedback conferences with teachers to review observation results and provide feedback. The rubric translates these practices into five concrete behavioral indicators (evidence use, professional interaction, differentiated questioning, leading conversation into action, and written feedback) that are described across four levels of performance.

What are the Training Expectations?

As a participant, you can expect that:

- You'll build knowledge and confidence in using IFO through a mix of in-person and online support;
- You will work through the entire IFO process, which means that you will work with several principals to collect and rate performance videos;
- Your feedback on IFO training quality will be listened to and acted upon;
- You will not be required to incorporate IFO into your principal development and evaluation system.

How do I Obtain Registration Information and Additional Information?

MDE is piloting the IFO process during the first half of the 2016-17 school year. Information on training opportunities following the pilot will be posted on the "Resources for Principal Supervisors" webpage. For further information please contact Michael Coty at michael.coty@state.mn.us.