

CLASS Training and Observation Process

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Core Implementation Question

- How do I weigh the preferred practices of observation with the realities of scaling up a system and the constraints that I face within my state? It is a balancing act that must consider:
 - Time
 - Money
 - Staff
 - Politics
 - Distance
 - Priorities

Questions

- How are staff selected?
- How is reliability ensured with the measures selected?
- How are time and costs estimated?
- How are multiple measures conducted?
- What is new with CLASS?

How are staff selected?

Selecting Staff

- Characteristics
 - Ability to be objective and well organized
 - Ability to work independently
 - Ability to travel
 - Have experience with observational measures
 - Have some experience with early childhood education
 - Have some classroom experience
 - Have at least a BA

Selecting Staff

- Preferable to have a smaller number of people conducting more observations because observers are more consistent in their use of an instrument if they use it frequently
- Decide contract vs. full time
- If possible, develop cohort with separate raters and feedback providers/coaches/technical assistance providers--both should be trained

Discussion

- How do you select staff?
- What obstacles do you face in determining staffing within your state model?

How is reliability ensured with the measures selected?

Ensuring Reliability

1

- Observation Training

2

- Reliability Testing

3

- Certification

4

- Calibration/Double Coding

5

- Annual Recertification

Training

- Train 15-20% more raters than you need due to attrition and reliability testing pass rate
- Schedule trainings about 3-4 months before ratings will begin
- Observer training - 2 days (16 hours plus pretraining activities)
- Train the trainer – 3 days (24 hours)

Reliability and Certification

- Recommend completing reliability testing immediately (3-6 hours per attempt)
- Have 3 opportunities-then must wait 1 year
- Receive certificate that should be shared
- Must train and certify on each tool used

Calibration/Double Coding

- Essential piece to to ensure continued reliable use of tools
- Teachers and administrators must have confidence that they are being assessed fairly and consistently
- Resource intensive so must calculate into time and budget
- Develop a system of regularly checking reliability of observers and providing feedback to them

Calibration/Double Coding

- Should practice coding in 5-10 classrooms before beginning rating
- Determine procedure to prevent drift
 - Double coding in classrooms
 - Typically 10-20% of all classrooms observed
 - As some states do not know their N at the beginning of a planning year, base on number of observations (every 10) or time (once per month)
 - Typically minimum of 80% agreement with partner (within 1 point) most report 90-95% in practice
 - Quarterly calibration through Teachstone

Annual Recertification

- Must recertify every 12 months
- Have 3 opportunities to pass (3-6 hours)
- Practice videos available
- Can attend another training if have not used tool

Discussion

- How is reliability ensured with the measures selected within your state?
- What obstacles do you face in ensuring reliability within your state model?

How are time and costs estimated?

Estimating Time and Costs

- Need to include time and costs to:
 - Conduct observation
 - Complete paperwork and reports
 - Schedule visits
 - Travel
 - Complete training
 - Complete certification
 - Complete recertification
 - Participate in reliability
 - Participate in supervision
 - Purchase manual/score sheet (cost only)

Estimating Time and Costs

- Direct cost estimated at \$300-\$500 per observation
- Florida estimate from 2007 was \$470.65 per observation (salary, overhead, benefits)
 - Based on estimate that a trained observer can complete 130 classroom observations per year (based on ERS)
- Must include non-direct costs noted above (training, manual, score sheets, assessment system, on going reliability)

Estimating Time and Costs

- Research suggests that sampling more classrooms per program is best
- Must weigh purpose and resources
- How many classrooms should be observed to be representative?
 - Typically one-third to one-half of classrooms from program
 - Minimum recommendation: at least one classroom for each age level and $\frac{1}{2}$ of classrooms

Estimating Time and Costs

- McCormick Tribune Center in Illinois study found that sampling $\frac{1}{2}$ of classrooms resulted in 72% of programs being assigned to same star level if all programs had been observed; a sample of $\frac{1}{3}$ resulted in a 67% match (only preK programs)
- Missouri study found that sampling $\frac{1}{2}$ of classrooms in each program resulted in 86% match and a sample of $\frac{1}{3}$ resulted in a 75% match (Infant to school age included)

Estimating Time and Costs

- One full-time observer
 - One observation per day
- 48 work weeks per year (11 months)
 - 4 weeks vacation/holiday
- 21.5 working days per month
 - Not able to observe every school day due to school closings, staff work days, snow days, scheduling constraints
 - Also include time for training, reliability supervision, professional development
- Adjust to 15 observation days per month
- Can complete 165 observations a year

Discussion

- How do you estimate time and costs within your state?
- What obstacles has your state faced estimating time and costs within your state model?

How are multiple measures conducted?

Conducting Multiple Observations

- Can the observer be trained to reliably use both during the same observation time?
 - Complete double coding within this model to test reliability
- Can the length of the observation be specified with a maximum/minimum for consistency?
 - Minimum 3 hours ERS
 - Minimum 2 hours CLASS
 - Plus report/paperwork time
- Can the observation period be divided?
 - 9-10 am ECERS-R
 - 10 am-1pm CLASS
 - 12-3pm ECERS
 - 3-5pm Final questions and report

Discussion

- How are multiple measures conducted in your state?
- What obstacles has your state faced implementing multiple measures in your state model?

What is new with CLASS?

CLASS Updates

- Brookes will publish a Spanish version of the CLASS manual Spring 2012 and the final version of the Toddler manual Summer/Fall 2012.
- Teachstone will publish a Spanish Toddler Dimension Guide Spring 2012.
- Infant will be piloted in 5 sites beginning Spring 2012. Interested?
- Professional development for Toddler will be available Winter 2012.

Discussion

- What topics would you like to discuss in future calls?