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:
  o Time
  o Money
  o Staff
  o Politics
  o Distance
  o 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
  o Ability to be objective and well organized
  o Ability to work independently
  o Ability to travel
  o Have experience with observational measures
  o Have some experience with early childhood education
  o Have some classroom experience
  o 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 then 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 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
  o 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
  o 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:
  o Conduct observation
  o Complete paperwork and reports
  o Schedule visits
  o Travel
  o Complete training
  o Complete certification
  o Complete recertification
  o Participate in reliability
  o Participate in supervision
  o 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)
  o 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?
  o Typically one-third to one-half of classrooms from program
  o Minimum recommendation: at least one classroom for each age level and ½ of classrooms
Estimating Time and Costs

• McCormick Tribune Center in Illinois study found that sampling ½ of classrooms resulted in 72% of programs being assigned to same star level if all programs had been observed; a sample of 1/3 resulted in a 67% match (only preK programs)

• Missouri study found that sampling ½ of classrooms in each program resulted in 86% match and a sample of 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?
  o Complete double coding within this model to test reliability

• Can the length of the observation be specified with a maximum/minimum for consistency?
  o Minimum 3 hours ERS
  o Minimum 2 hours CLASS
  o Plus report/paperwork time

• Can the observation period be divided?
  o 9-10 am ECERS-R
  o 10 am-1pm CLASS
  o 12-3pm ECERS
  o 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?