



COMPASS: BEYOND MINIMUM OBSERVATION REQUIREMENTS

While Act 54 and Bulletin 130 describe the minimum requirements for evaluations, each district and school has the ability to shape the Compass process. In response to questions from teachers and administrators, this memorandum clarifies basic requirements and how districts and schools can go beyond these minimum requirements to provide more frequent feedback to educators.

Classroom observations: Bulletin 130 defines an observation as the process of gathering facts, noting occurrences, and documenting evidence of performance. The Bulletin requires a minimum of two observations annually, at least one of which is a full-lesson observation. Above and beyond this one required full-lesson observation, districts can make choices about the number of observations teachers receive over the course of a school year and the duration of those observations. Any classroom visit may be considered an observation, regardless of whether it is referred to as a walkthrough, a snapshot, or any other name. Specifically, districts and schools may:

- (a) Observe teachers more frequently than the minimum requirement rule.
- (b) Determine the length of all observations beyond the one required, lesson-length observation.
- (c) Determine the components of the Compass rubric observed during each observation.
- (d) Decide whether all, some, or certain observations will be used to determine the final Professional Practice score. This means that districts can choose how to formulate the end-of-year Professional Practice rating. For example, districts may average full-lesson observations, average all observations, or apply different weights to observations of differing lengths.

MINIMUM COMPASS REQUIREMENTS

Bulletin 130: §105(B)(3)

- (a) A minimum of two observations, at least one of which is an announced observation lasting the entire length of the lesson and including a pre- and post-observation conference.
- (b) Teachers and administrators will be provided feedback on areas of strength and areas for development following all observations.
- (c) Additional evidence collected outside of observations, such as data, materials, and artifacts, may be used to inform evaluation.

By late August, the Compass Information System (CIS) will change to allow for different observation types. Principals and other administrators have suggested ways in which the tool can be helpful in assisting with conducting observations. In response, the Department will make a series of updates to CIS to allow for flexible approaches to observation and feedback. For example, CIS will no longer require that observers enter two (and only two) scored, full-lesson observations, nor will CIS require evaluators to rate every competency on the rubric when conducting an observation.