Utah Teaching Observation Tool
Version 3.0

Introduction

The **Utah Teaching Observation Tool** is to be used as part of the **Public Educator Evaluation Requirements (PEER)** model educator evaluation program. The tool is aligned with the standards and indicators of the **Utah Effective Teaching Standards** and **Continuum of Practice** and focuses on the measurement of high-leverage instructional activities necessary for effectively teaching the **Utah Core Standards**. All standards and indicators are represented in the observation tool. Standards and indicators are identified by notations at the end of each expectation. The results of the observation should be used in conjunction with self-evaluation, goal-setting, and formative evaluation and support.

Purposes

The Utah Teaching Observation Tool:

- Serves as a measurement of performance for individual teachers;
- Serves as a source of information for each teacher's annual rating;
- Serves as a guide for teachers as they reflect upon and improve their effectiveness;
- Provides information for professional development planning;
- Guides formative assessment and support of teachers; and
- Enhances implementation of the Utah Core.

Observations

Excellent instructional practice includes many activities performed by a teacher as part of his/her professional work. The **Utah Teaching Observation Tool** includes items that may be observed both formally and informally. Teaching practice may be observed iteratively in the classroom, at professional meetings, at grade or department team meetings, etc. Effective practice may be observed when teachers are interacting with students inside and outside of the classroom and during formal and informal interactions with parents, colleagues, and community members. Each expectation may be observed and recorded on more than one occasion during the rating period.

Ratings

The rating rubric includes four levels. The levels are cumulative across the rows of the rubric. An **Emerging Effective** teacher exemplifies the skills expected of a teacher who is new to the profession (Level 1) or an experienced teacher who is working in a new content area or grade level. An **Effective** teacher must exhibit the skills and knowledge described under the **Emerging** heading as well as those under the **Effective** heading. Likewise, a **Highly Effective** teacher exhibits all of the skills and knowledge described in the descriptors across the columns. Ratings are intended to support professionalism. Instruction becomes qualitatively better across the scale.

An experienced (Level 2) teacher who scores at the **Minimally Effective** level must have access to formative support to correct deficiencies and achieve the **Effective** level within a reasonable period of time. The **Not Effective** rating should be used when a teacher is performing below expectations and not making adequate growth toward becoming **Effective** on the expectation. The examples of **Not Effective** performance may be used as a guide, but are not inclusive and may not be used as a check list.

Evidence

Evidence provides confirmation that an expectation has been achieved at a particular level of effectiveness. Evidence may be introduced by the teacher or the evaluator and must be reviewed during the conference. Evidence may supply information and verification to expectations already observed and to those not yet observed. Evidence should be specific to the standard and the expectation, and must provide clear information supportive of the rating. General or unrelated data or examples will not be accepted as part of the assessment record and will not be added to the body of supportive evidence.

Section 1: The Learner and Learning

Teaching begins with the learning. To ensure that each student learns, new knowledge and skills, teachers must understand that learning and developmental patterns vary among individuals, that learners bring unique individual differences to the learning process, and that learners need supportive and safe learning environments to thrive.

Standard 1: Learner Development The teacher understands cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional and physical areas of student development.					
	Expectation	**Not Effective**	**Emerging Effective Minimally Effective**	**Effective**	**Highly Effective**
1.1	Creates developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences based on each student's strengths, interests, and needs (1a, 2e).	o Not effective *Evidence of ineffective performance may include:* - *No differentiation.* - *Unaware of developmental needs.* - *Instruction is not developmentally appropriate.* - *Lack of hands-on instruction.* - *Emotionally unsafe environment.* - *Teacher dependent problem-solving.* - *Lack of modeling.*	o Implements whole-class learning experiences that demonstrate an understanding of learners' develop-mental levels.	…and o Identifies appropriate developmental levels of individual learners and consistently and appropriately differentiates instruction. o Incorporates tools of language development into planning and instruction.	…and o Supports learners in setting and meeting their own learning goals, aligned to their diverse learning needs.
1.2	Collaborates with families, colleagues, and other professionals to promote student growth and development (1b).	o Not effective *Evidence of ineffective performance may include:* - *Not proactive in communication.* - *Not learner focused.* - *Defensive or hostile.* - *Continual excuses for not collaborating.* - *Not taking responsibility for learner growth.* - *Unaware of learner needs.* - *Doesn't communicate effectively.*	o Interacts with families and colleagues related to learner growth and development.	…and o Collaborates with family members and a full range of colleagues to help meet the unique needs of all learners.	…and o Anticipates the unique needs of each learner and collaborates within and outside the school to address those needs.

Standard 2: Learning Differences
The teacher understands individual learner differences and cultural and linguistic diversity.

	Expectation	Not Effective	Emerging Effective Minimally Effective	Effective	Highly Effective
2.1	Allows learners multiple ways to demonstrate learning sensitive to diverse experiences, while holding high expectations for all (2a, 2b, 2c, 2d).	o Not effective *Evidence of ineffective performance may include:* - *Unaware of personal biases.* - *Not accepting of differences.* - *Resists change and adaptation.* - *Doesn't hold high expectations.* - *Evaluates on completion only.*	o Applies understanding of learner diversity to encourage all learners to reach their full potential.	…and o Uses learner differences as an asset to adapt, and deliver instruction for all learners. o Provides students multiple ways to demonstrate learning.	…and o Contributes to a school-wide culture that encourages learner perseverance and advancement. o Connects multiple perspectives to encourage learners to learn from each other.

Standard 3: Learning Environments
The teacher works with learners to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, encouraging positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

	Expectation	Not Effective	Emerging Effective Minimally Effective	Effective	Highly Effective
3.1	Develops learning experiences that engage and support students as self-directed learners who internalize classroom routines, expectations, and procedures (3a).	o Not effective *Evidence of ineffective performance may include:* - *No schedule planned.* - *Learners don't know what to do.* - *Instructional time is lost.* - *Lengthy transitions.* - *Unorganized.* - *Learners not engaged*	o Implements a daily schedule. o Establishes classroom routines, expectations, and procedures. o Establishes behavioral expectations focused on planned learning outcomes.	…and o Provides explicit direction so that learners know what to do and when to do it. o Supports each learner as he/she establishes expectations and develop responsibility for his/her own behavior.	…and o Collaborates with learners in establishing, reflecting and promoting learning outcomes, resulting in self-directed learning experiences.
3.2	Collaborates with students to establish a positive learning climate of openness, respectful interactions, support, and inquiry (3b).	o Not effective *Evidence of not effective performance may include:* - *Negative demeanor.* - *Frequent reprimands.* - *Lack of learner collaboration.* - *Inappropriate boundaries.* - *Inconsistent response and feedback.* - *Lack of monitoring or engagement with learners.* - *Teacher-focused strategies only (lecture, worksheet, video, etc.).* - *Emotionally unsafe environment.*	o Promotes a positive and respectful learning climate. o Provides opportunities for student interactions.	…and o Collaborates with students to establish a positive learning climate of openness, respectful interactions, support, and inquiry. o Organizes student learning teams for the purpose of developing cooperation, collaboration, and student leadership. o Promotes learner inquiry and exploration.	…and o Supports learners as they reflect on and modify their personal interactions. o Supports students to create and manage learning teams to meet learning goals.

	Expectation	Yes	No	
3.3	Uses positive classroom management strategies, including the resources of time, space, and attention, effectively (3c, 3d).	◯ ◯ ◯	◯ ◯ ◯	o Uses differentiated management strategies focusing on individual learner needs. o Gains and maintains student attention through active engagement. o Adjusts instructional pacing and transitions to maintain learner engagement and support learning.

Section 2: Instructional Practice

Effective instructional practice requires that teachers have a deep and flexible understanding of their content areas and be able to draw upon content knowledge as they work with learners to access information, apply knowledge in real-world settings, and address meaningful issues. They must also understand and integrate assessment, planning, and instructional strategies in coordinated and engaging ways to assure learner mastery of content.

	Standard 4: Content Knowledge The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline.				
	Expectation	**Not Effective**	**Emerging Effective Minimally Effective**	**Effective**	**Highly Effective**
4.1	Bases instruction on accurate content knowledge using multiple representations of concepts and appropriate academic language. (4a, 4c, 4d, 4e, 7c).	o Not effective *Evidence of ineffective performance may include:* - *Conveys inaccurate content, information, and/or concepts.* - *Uses only one way to teach a concept.* - *Strategies are not subject specific.*	o Demonstrates content knowledge in the teaching assignment. o Teaches the language and basic concepts of the discipline.	…and o Uses multiple representations and explanations of concepts to deepen each learner's understanding. o Teaches methods of inquiry and problem-solving. o Models and expects learners to evaluate, create, and think critically about the content. o Analyzes learner errors and misconceptions in order to redirect, focus, and deepen learning.	…and o Pursues opportunities to learn new academic language and developments in the discipline. o Motivates learners to extend and share their own knowledge beyond core content. o Anticipates possible learner misunderstandings and proactively mitigates concerns.

	Standard 5: Assessment				
	The teacher uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, monitor learner progress, guide planning and instruction, and determine whether the outcomes described in content standards have been met.				
	Expectation	**Not Effective**	**Emerging Effective Minimally Effective**	**Effective**	**Highly Effective**
5.1	Uses data sources to assess the effectiveness of instruction and to make adjustments in planning and instruction (5a, 5c, 5d, 8a).	o Not effective *Evidence of ineffective performance may include:* - *Makes teaching decisions in isolation.* - *No adjustments to instruction based on data.* - *Sticks to pre-determined plans.* - *Provides only one learning opportunity.* - *No preassessment or enrichment for advanced learners.* - *Same assessments for all learners.*	o Uses data to evaluate the outcomes of teaching. o Monitors learner performance and responds to individual learning needs.	…and o Targets instructional strategies based on data. Uses multiple formative and summative assessments to make ongoing adjustments in instruction based on a wide range of individual learner needs. o Targets intervention and enrichment strategies based on data.	…and o Provides multiple assessment options for the learner to demonstrate knowledge and skills. o Collaborates with colleagues to use a variety of data to reflect and adapt planning and instruction.
5.2	Documents student progress and provides descriptive feedback to student, parent/guardian, and other stakeholders in a variety of ways (5b, 5e).	o *Not effective* *Evidence of ineffective performance may include:* - *Documentation is not accurate, current or thorough.* - *Feedback is inconsistent, incomplete, or inaccessible.*	o Documents and shares assessment feedback with learners and parents/guardians as required. o Identifies elements of quality work.	…and o Uses a variety of effective formats to document and provide feedback on learner progress. o Initiates ongoing, open communication between home and school about learner progress. o Provides timely, descriptive, and specific feedback to individuals and groups. o Provides ways for learners to monitor and reflect upon their own progress.	…and o Provides opportunities for learners to self-assess work and receive peer feedback. o Engages learners in using feedback to improve future performance.

Standard 6: Instructional Planning
The teacher plans instruction to support students in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, Utah Core Standards, practices, and the community context.

	Expectation	Not Effective	Emerging Effective Minimally Effective	Effective	Highly Effective
6.1	Demonstrates knowledge of the Utah Core Standards and references them in short- and long-term planning (6a, 6b, 4b).	o Not effective *Evidence of ineffective performance may include:* - *Materials are not aligned with standards.* - *Unfamiliar with Utah Core.* - *No evidence of long-term planning.*	o Aligns daily instruction with the Utah Core Standards. o Selects instructional materials that support standards.	…and o Plans and implements short- and long-term learning experiences that reference Utah Core Standards learning objectives and content. o Organizes and adapts learning experiences and materials to align with the Utah Core Standards. o Adapts pre-determined plans, materials, and timeframes to meet individual learner needs.	…and o Plans authentic learning experiences. o Evaluates the effectiveness of planning in response to student learning data and makes needed adjustments.
6.2	Integrates cross-disciplinary skills into instruction to purposefully engage learners in applying content knowledge (6b, 6e).	o Not effective *Evidence of ineffective performance may include:* - *Focuses on one discipline at a time.* - *Learners not engaged in content.* - *Plans solely in isolation.*	o Provides opportunities for students to use knowledge in various ways.	…and o Plans lessons that demonstrate how knowledge and skills transfer to other content areas. o Designs learning experiences that promote the application of knowledge in multiple content areas.	…and o Collaborates with colleagues to establish links between disciplines and influence school-wide teaching practices.

Standard 7: Instructional Strategies
The teacher uses various instructional strategies to ensure that all learners develop a deep understanding of content areas and their connections and build skills to apply and extend knowledge in meaningful ways.

	Expectation	Not Effective	Emerging Effective Minimally Effective	Effective	Highly Effective
7.1	Practices a range of developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate instructional strategies to meet the needs of individuals and groups of learners (2b, 2e, 6c, 7a, 7b).	o Not effective *Evidence of ineffective performance may include:* - *Inappropriate strategies.* - *Minimal variety in strategies.* - *Insensitivity to individual differences.* - *No evidence of differentiation for individuals or groups.*	o Identifies each learner's diverse learning strengths and needs. o Uses a limited number of instructional strategies.	…and o Monitors and adjusts instruction in response to developmental, cultural, and linguistic needs of individuals and groups of learners. o Differentiates instruction by using a variety of appropriate strategies.	…and o Uses instructional strategies relevant to each learner's developmental, cultural, and linguistic backgrouds. o Uses learner differences as an asset in implementing effective instruction for all students.

	Expectation	Not Effective	Emerging Effective Minimally Effective	Effective	Highly Effective
7.2	Provides multiple opportunities for students to develop higher-order and meta-cognitive skills (3f, 6d, 7h, 7e).	o Not effective *Evidence of ineffective performance may include:* - *Uses mostly memorization, recall, and rote knowledge.* - *Uses one mode of communication.*	o Uses instructional strategies that incorporate higher-order thinking. o Uses a variety of questioning strategies to promote engagement and learning	…and o Provides learners with explicit instruction to analyze, synthesize, and make decisions. o Provides opportunities for learners to reflect on their own learning. o Provides opportunities for students to generate and evaluate new ideas.	…and o Creates complex, open-ended learning opportunities where learners develop inventive solutions to real-world problems. o Adapts levels of questions to engage each learner in appropriately differentiated high-level learning.
7.3	Supports and expands each learner's communication skills through reading, writing, listening, and speaking (7d,).	o Not effective *Evidence of ineffective performance may include:* - *Communication is teacher centered.* - *Only one communication skill typically used.* - *Skills not taught or developed specifically.*	o Provides opportunities for learners to practice communication skills.	…and o Teaches content-specific reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills for effective communication. o Provides opportunities for learners to expand communication skills to articulate thoughts and ideas.	…and o Engages each student to transfer communication skills to real-world contexts. o Promotes the use of multiple forms of communication that furthers understanding of content and builds critical thinking.
7.4	Uses a variety of available and appropriate technology and resources to support learning (3e7f, 7g).	o Not effective *Evidence of ineffective performance may include:* - *Technology does not support effective learning.* - *Repetitive use of single technology.* - *Avoids using available technology.*	o Uses technology to support instruction.	…and o Evaluates and uses various technologies to support content and skill development. o Incorporates technology to extend learner content knowledge and skill development.	…and o Provides opportunities for learners to critically analyze information from multiple and diverse sources and perspectives. o Investigates and uses new technologies to enhance learner engagement in learning.
7.5	Develops learners' abilities to find and use information to solve real-world problems (7g, 7f).	o Not effective *Evidence of ineffective performance may include:* - *Uses limited or unreliable sources of information.* - *Information sources not appropriate for complexity of concepts.*	o Exposes learners to various media and other sources.	o Develops each learner's ability to find, understand, and analyze diverse sources of information. o Provides opportunities for learners to use multiple sources of information to solve real-world problems.	o Fosters a learning environment where learners offer opinions, support claims, and share perspectives to solve problems.

Section 3: Professional Responsibility

Creating and supporting safe, productive learning environments that result in learners achieving at the highest levels is a teacher's primary responsibility. To do this well, teachers must engage in meaningful, intensive professional learning by regularly examining practice through ongoing study, self-reflection, and collaboration. They must be aware of legal and ethical requirements and engage in the highest levels of professional and ethical conduct.

	Standard 8: Reflection and Continuous Growth The teacher is a reflective practitioner who uses evidence to continually evaluate and adapt practice to meet the needs of each learner.			
	Expectation	**Yes**	**No**	
8.1	Adapts and improves practice based on reflection and new learning (8b, 8c, 8d, 8e).	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	o Applies current professional learning to classroom practice, consistent with its intent. o Acknowledges the impact of bias on own teaching. o Collaborates with supervisor to develop a professional learning plan based on data and the Utah Effective Teaching Standards.

	Standard 9: Leadership and Collaboration The teacher is a leader who engages collaboratively with learners, families, colleagues, and community members to build a shared vision and supportive professional culture focused on student growth and success.			
	Expectation	**Yes**	**No**	
9.1	Participates actively in decision-making processes, while building a shared culture that affects the school and larger educational community (9a, 9b, 9d, 9e).	○ ○	○ ○	o Participates with colleagues and collaborates in decision making. o Accepts responsibility for the success of all learners.
9.2	Advocates for the learners, the school, the community, and the profession (9c).	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	o Contributes to student success by responding to learner, family, and community concerns. o Advocates for all students to be prepared for high school graduation and future school work success. o Seeks opportunities to make a positive impact on teaching quality, school improvement, and student achievement.

	Standard 10: Professional and Ethical Behavior The teacher demonstrates the highest standard of legal, moral, and ethical conduct, as specified in Utah State Board Rule R277-515.			
	Expectation	Yes	No	
10.1	Is responsible for compliance with federal and state laws, State Board of Education administrative rules, state assessment policies, local board policies, and supervisory directives (10a, 5f).	○	○	o Understands, adheres to and upholds federal and state laws, State Board of Education rules, state and local policies, supervisory directives, and professional moral and ethical conduct, and holds others accountable to do the same.

10.2	Is responsible for compliance with all requirements of State Board of Education Rule R277-530 at all levels of teacher development (10b).	○ ○	○ ○	o Avoids actions that may adversely affect ability to perform assigned duties and carry out the responsibilities of the profession, including role-model responsibilities.
		○	○	o Takes responsibility to understand professional requirements, to maintain a current Utah Educator License, and to complete license upgrades, renewals and additional requirements in a timely way.
		○	○	o Maintains integrity and confidentiality in matters concerning student records and collegial consultation.
		○	○	o Maintains accurate instructional and non-instructional records.
		○	○	o Develops appropriate student-teacher relationships as defined in rule, law, and policy.
		○	○	o Maintains professional demeanor and appearance as defined by the Local Education Agency (LEA).