Schenectady City School District

Teaching Assistant Observation Handbook



2023-2024

OBSERVATION TIMELINE- Probationary

All Probationary Teaching Assistants (TA) will have at least one (1) formal observation each year, with the opportunity for a second upon the TEACHING ASSISTANTs request. **There are no unannounced observations for Teaching Assistants**

Observations for Teaching Assistants place between;

- February 1st- April 1st
- 2nd Requested observations must take place before May 15th

Scheduling:

By January 15thth an administrator should have reached out to the TEACHING ASSISTANT to collaboratively schedule the pre observation meeting, observation, and post observation meeting.

Timeline for scheduling:

- **Pre-Observation** must take place within 5 school days before the observation.
- **Post Observation** must take place within 5 school days after the observation.
- If the TA member does not hear from an administrator by **January 16th**, they should contact their building principal.
- If they do not hear from their building principal within **5 school days** of of the observation, they should contact the SFT Para Vice President

All pre observations, observations and post observations are scheduled and recorded in StaffTrac

PRE-OBSERVATION MEETING:

Pre-Observation Form: The TEACHING ASSISTANT should be prepared to answer all the questions that appear on the *Pre-Obs Questions. Questions must be complete prior to the preobservation.*

The administrator is responsible for directing the conversation based on the *Pre-Obs Questions*.

- It is the administrator's responsibility to take notes based on the conversation.
- Teaching Assistant can verbally provide evidence for those parts of the rubric.

Missed Pre-Observation:

- If the administrator needs to cancel or misses the pre observation, all efforts will be made by the administrator to meet with the TA before their observation, allowing the TA the time they feel they need to make changes based on the conversation.
 - If that is not possible, the TA can choose to cancel the observation and reschedule all aspects. They can also choose to do the pre-observation after the observation so that TA can present evidence for scoring purposes.

OBSERVATION

The administrator conducts a full session/meeting observation (1 class period not to exceed 45 minutes) The administrator takes notes based on domains listed in the Teaching Assistant Rubric .

The TA rating is based on four categories: unsatisfactory, basic, proficient and distinguished.

There may be areas during the course of the observation that are not observable. The administrator conducting the observation can check the non-observable box to indicate.

Missed Observation:

- If the administrator needs to cancel the observation **before the pre-observation** has occurred, then they will work collaboratively with the TA to set up another meeting time with flexibility by the administrator so that it does not create any additional issues for the TEACHING ASSISTANT.
- If the administrator needs to cancel the observation **after the pre-observation** has already occurred, then the administrator will work collaboratively with the TA to schedule another observation with flexibility by the administrator so that it does not create any additional issues for the TA
- If the administrator cancels **a second time** the TA should contact the SFT Para Vice-President.

POST OBSERVATION

Post Observation Form: The Teaching Assistant should complete *Post-Obs Questions:* Stafftrac. This should be completed no later than one school day before the post observation conference.

During the post observation the TA and administrator go over...

- and finalize any open issues from the pre-observation
- evidence from the observation and *Post-Obs Questions*
- any additional evidence provided by the Teaching Assistant

Scoring: The Teaching Assistant and administrator collaboratively arrive at a ranking for each area based on the evidence and the criterion from the Rubric

• The Rubric for TEACHING ASSISTANTs does not have a culminating score

Missed Post Conference:

If the administrator misses or cancels a post conference, they will reschedule as soon as possible based on the Teaching Assistant's schedule.

If the issue is not addressed within **5 school days** from the missed conference the Teaching Assistant should contact the SFT Para Vice President.

OBSERVATION REMINDERS FOR ADMINISTRATORS:

It is best practice to script the observation. This will provide the evidence needed for each of the areas, as well as assist in providing feedback to the Teaching Assistant. It will also allow for a more productive conversation around clinical practice. Building administrators should collaborate with the appropriate district administrator when they have questions about interpreting the Teaching Assistant rubric.

TENURED Teaching Assistants

- 1) Tenured teaching assistants will be evaluated once annually in writing/electronically on a standardized form (Stafftrac).
- 2) Each employee should be evaluated after a reasonable time to become familiar with the assignment. Classroom teachers shall complete a written narrative commenting on the Teaching Assistant's performance throughout the year, but it is only intended to assist the building administrator in completing their final evaluation of the Teaching Assistant. If a Teaching Assistant does not have a cooperating teacher, the building administrator will do the observation in isolation.
- 3) The administrator supervisor shall be responsible for the Teaching Assistant's evaluation
- 4) Shall a Teaching Assistant be dissatisfied by their evaluation, he/she/they may request a conference with the supervising teacher and the immediate administrator supervisor.
- 5) Evaluation must be completed by May 31st

Written Report

- 1. A written report or electronic equivalent shall be maintained for all Teaching Assistant after it has been read and signed by the employee
- 2. The Teaching Assistant shall have the opportunity to write a response. Such response will be a permanent attachment to the evaluation

SCSD Teaching Assistant Untenured Pre and Post Observation Questions, and Evaluation Rubric

SCSD TA Untenured Pre-Observation

		Observation:
1.	What is the relationship between you and your cooperating to responsibilities have been delegated or agreed upon?	eacher? What roles or
	Notes:	
2.	What is the objective of the lesson, and what do you want the does your role allow you to assist students' achieving the lea	
	Notes:	
3.	What will students be doing during the lesson/observation?	
	Notes:	

In what ways do you support the classroom teacher in differentiatin	g this lesson?
Notes:	
Are there any special circumstances/ nature of the classroom that vaware of that may impact the lesson?	ve should be made
Notes:	
	Are there any special circumstances/ nature of the classroom that vaware of that may impact the lesson?

SCSD TA Untenured Post-Observation

1.	How did you feel the lesson went? If the lesson was successful, wh wasn't successful, why?	y? If the lesson
	Notes:	
2.	Reflecting on the lesson, are there any adjustments or changes tha made?	t you would have
	Notes:	
3.	Based on feedback from your observation and experience during the professional development would assist you in approving your practi	
	Notes:	

Knowledge of Content	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable
	Conveys knowledge of content that is inaccurate.	Conveys knowledge that is accurate and current.	Conveys knowledge that is accurate and current, corrects errors made by students.	Conveys knowledge that is accurate and current, makes real-life connections with the curriculum.	Not observable at this time
Use of Instructional Time	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable
	Does not effectively support the teacher's efforts to maximize instructional time.	materials but	Consistently supports the teacher's effort to maximize instructional time.	Consistently supports and enhances the teacher's efforts to maximize instructional time.	
Resources for Students/Use of Materials	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable
	Not aware of resources or uses materials that are not appropriate.	Aware of resources and materials but demonstrates minimal use of different resources.	Aware of and uses a wide variety of resources and materials to meet students' different learning needs.	Aware of and uses a wide variety of resources that enrich and enhance learning.	Not observable at this time
Instructional Delivery					
Implements/Supports Instructional Lesson Plans	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable

	Has limited knowledge and understanding of the roles and responsibilities of implementing the instructional plan.	Has basic knowledge and understanding of the roles and responsibilities of implementing the instructional plan.	Clear about the purpose for the lesson or unit, implements it effectively and collaborates with the classroom teacher to implement the instructional plan.	Makes the purpose of the lesson or unit clear, implements it effectively and collaborates with the classroom teacher to implement and enhance the instructional plan.	Not observable at this time
Reinforcing Student Expectations	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable
	Consistently reinforced low expectations for students' ability to learn.	Sometimes has reinforced low expectations for students' ability to learn.	Consistently reinforced high expectations in accordance with students' ability to learn and provides the necessary support.	Consistently reinforced high expectations in accordance with students' ability to learn and provides the necessary supports. Includes students in setting the expectations.	Not observable at this time.
Instructional Techniques	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable
	Does not vary instructional technique to accommodate the variety of student learning styles.	Offers minimal variation in instructional techniques to accommodate the variety of student learning styles.	Consistently varies instructional techniques to accommodate the variety of student learning styles.	Consistently varies instructional techniques, materials to best meet all students' learning styles and modifies techniques to meet individual student needs.	Not observable at this time

Classroom Management					
Reinforcing Expectations for Student Behavior	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable
	Does not reinforce established classroom rules.	Minimally supports established classroom rules	Consistently reinforces established classroom rules.	Reinforces established classroom rules and collaborates with the classroom teacher to modify the environment as needed.	Not observable at this time
Use of Preventative Strategies	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable
	Rarely uses preventative strategies.	Inconsistently uses preventative strategies.	Consistently uses preventative strategies.	Utilizes a variety of preventative strategies.	Not observable at this tme
Interactions with Students	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable
	Interactions are negative, demeaning, sarcastic, or inappropriate to the age or culture of the students.	Interactions with students are generally appropriate, but may reflect occasional inconsistencies, favoritism, or disregard for students' cultures.	Interactions with students are consistently positive and demonstrate general warmth, caring, and respect. Favoritism is not displayed.	Interactions with all students are positive and demonstrate general warmth, caring, and respect.	Not observable at this time
Record Keeping	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable

	Does not follow established record keeping systems within the classroom. Information is not recorded accurately or recorded at all.	Inconsistently follows record keeping system within the classroom. On some occasions there are errors made by the teaching assistants.	Consistently follows assigned record keeping tasks within the classroom. Information is consistently recorded accurately.	Follows established record keeping systems within the classroom. Information is recorded accurately and collaborates with the classroom teacher to improve record keeping systems in the classroom.	Not observable at this time
Student Development	1			1	
Student Needs	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable
	Is not alert to student's needs or learning Uses inappropriate	Attempts to address students' needs.	Effectively addresses students' needs.	Proactively addresses students' needs.	Not observable at this time
Supporting Student Involvement	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable
	Does not support student involvement.	Attempts to actively involve students.	Actively involves students.	Proactively involves students in a variety of ways.	Not observable at this time
Fosters Student Independence	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable

	Unable to use strategies that promote student independence.	Attempts to actively involve students	Implements strategies to promote student independence most of the time.	Implements strategies to promote student independence. Incorporates students' input in how they are supported.	Not observable at this time
Collaboration/Professional R	esponsibilities				
Interactions with Colleagues	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable
	negative and can have a negative effect on	to fulfill required duties	understanding and appreciation of the	Uses the unique contributions of others to help create an effective work team. Teaching Assistant takes initiative in assuming leadership roles among staff.	Not observable at this time
Professionalism/Ethical Conduct	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable
	Unable to demonstrate a positive work ethic.	Inconsistently demonstrates a positive work ethic and ability to	Consistently demonstrates a positive work ethic and ability to	Manages time effectively and prioritizes work appropriately.	Not observable at this time

		maintain confidentiality.	maintain confidentiality.	Consistently demonstrates professional behavior, attitude, and work ethic and continually strives to improve performance.	
Participation	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable
	Avoids participation in school inservice/ team meetings / projects / activities when specifically asked.	Inconsistently participates in school inservice / team meetings / projects / activities when specifically asked.	Consistently participates in school inservice / team meetings / projects / activities when specifically asked.	Seeks opportunities to participate in school inservice / team meetings / projects / activities.	Not observable at this time.
Professional Growth	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable
	Does not seek opportunities to grow professionally.	Inconsistently seeks to grow professionally and attempts to apply new learning and reflect on practice.	Consistently attends professional growth opportunities, applies new learning and reflects on practice.	Initiates and attends professional growth opportunities, applies new learning, and shares new learning with colleagues and reflects on practice.	Not observable at this time
Receptivity to Feedback	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observable
	Resists feedback on performance from either supervisor or more experienced colleagues.	Reluctantly accepts feedback on performance.	Welcomes feedback from others and uses such feedback to modify instruction.	Seeks out feedback from a variety of sources, uses the information to improve	Not observable at this time

		instruction, and provides information on the effectiveness	
		of the changes.	

SCSD Teaching Assistant Tenured Summative Evaluation

Content Knowledge and Preparation	on				
Knowledge of Content	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	
	Conveys knowledge of content that is inaccurate.	Conveys knowledge that is accurate and current.	Conveys knowledge that is accurate and current, corrects errors made by students.	Conveys knowledge that is accurate and current, makes real-life connections with the curriculum.	
Use of Instructional Time	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	
	Does not effectively support the teacher's efforts to maximize instructional time.	Aware of resources and materials but demonstrates minimal use of different resources.	Consistently supports the teacher's effort to maximize instructional time.	Consistently supports and enhances the teacher's efforts to maximize instructional time.	
Resources for Students/Use of Materials	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	
	Not aware of resources or uses materials that are not appropriate.	Aware of resources and materials but demonstrates minimal use of different resources. Aware of and uses a wide variety of resources and materials to meet students' different learning needs.		Aware of and uses a wide variety of resources that enrich and enhance learning.	
Instructional Delivery					
Implements/Supports Instructional Lesson	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	
Plans	Has limited knowledge and understanding of the roles and responsibilities of implementing the instructional plan.	Has basic knowledge and understanding of the roles and responsibilities of implementing the instructional plan.	Clear about the purpose for the lesson or unit, implements it effectively and collaborates with the classroom teacher to implement the instructional plan.	Makes the purpose of the lesson or unit clear, implements it effectively and collaborates with the classroom teacher to implement and enhance the instructional plan.	
Reinforcing Student Expectations	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	

	Consistently reinforced low expectations for students' ability to learn.	Sometimes has reinforced low expectations for students' ability to learn.	Consistently reinforced high expectations in accordance with students' ability to learn and provides the necessary support.	Consistently reinforced high expectations in accordance with students' ability to learn and provides the necessary supports. Includes students in setting the expectations.
Instructional Techniques	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	Does not vary instructional technique to accommodate the variety of student learning styles.	Offers minimal variation in instructional techniques to accommodate the variety of student learning styles.	Consistently varies instructional techniques to accommodate the variety of student learning styles.	Consistently varies instructional techniques, materials to best meet all students' learning styles and modifies techniques to meet individual student needs.
Classroom Management				
Reinforcing Expectations for Student	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
Behavior	Does not reinforce established classroom rules.	Minimally supports established classroom rules	Consistently reinforces established classroom rules.	Reinforces established classroom rules and collaborates with the classroom teacher to modify the environment as needed.
Use of Preventative Strategies	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	Rarely uses preventative strategies.	Inconsistently uses preventative strategies.	Consistently uses preventative strategies.	Utilizes a variety of preventative strategies.
Interactions with Students	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	Interactions are negative, demeaning, sarcastic, or inappropriate to the age or culture of the students.	Interactions with students are generally appropriate, but may reflect occasional inconsistencies, favoritism, or disregard for students' cultures.	Interactions with students are consistently positive and demonstrate general warmth, caring, and respect.	Interactions with all students are positive and demonstrate general warmth, caring, and respect.

			Favoritism is not displayed.			
Record Keeping	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished		
	Does not follow established record keeping systems within the classroom.	Inconsistently follows record keeping system within the classroom.	Consistently follows assigned record keeping tasks within the classroom.	Follows established record keeping systems within the classroom.		
	Information is not recorded accurately or recorded at all.	On some occasions there are errors made by the teaching assistants.	Information is consistently recorded accurately.	Information is recorded accurately and collaborates with the classroom teacher to improve record keeping systems in the classroom.		
Oral and Written Language	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished		
	or written language may	Spoken language is audible and written language is legible. Both are used correctly. Vocabulary is correct but is not always appropriate to students ages.	Spoken and written language is clear and correct. Vocabulary is appropriate to a student's age and interest.	Spoken and written language is correct and expressive, with well-chosen vocabulary that enriches the lesson.		
Collaboration/Professional Responsibilities						
	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished		
	Interactions with colleagues are negative and can have a negative effect on students.	Maintains basic interactions with colleagues to be able to fulfill required duties	Interactions with colleagues are characterized by mutual support and cooperation to meet the needs of students. Demonstrates an understanding and appreciation of the contributions of people with	Uses the unique contributions of others to help create an effective work team. Teaching Assistant takes initiative in assuming leadership roles among staff.		

			diverse backgrounds and work styles.			
Professionalism/Ethical Conduct	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished		
	Unable to demonstrate a positive work ethic.	Inconsistently demonstrates a positive work ethic and ability to maintain confidentiality.	Consistently demonstrates a positive work ethic and ability to maintain confidentiality.	Manages time effectively and prioritizes work appropriately. Consistently demonstrates professional behavior, attitude, and work ethic and continually strives to improve performance.		
Participation	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished		
	Avoids participation in school inservice/ team meetings / projects / activities when specifically asked.	Inconsistently participates in school inservice / team meetings / projects / activities when specifically asked.	Consistently participates in school inservice / team meetings / projects / activities when specifically asked.	Seeks opportunities to participate in school inservice / team meetings / projects / activities.		
Student Development						
Student Needs	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished		
	Is not alert to student's needs or learning or uses inappropriate techniques.	Attempts to address students' needs.	Effectively addresses students' needs.	Proactively addresses students' needs.		
Supporting Student Involvement	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished		
	Does not support student involvement.	Attempts to actively involve students.	Actively involves students.	Proactively involves students in a variety of ways.		
Supporting Student Independence	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished		

	student independent.	Implements strategies to promote student independence some of the time.	Implements strategies to promote student independence most of the time.	Implements strategies to promote student independence. Incorporates students input in how they are supported.
	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	professionally.	Inconsistently seeks to grow professionally and attempts to apply new learning and reflect on practice.	Consistently attends professional growth opportunities, applies new learning and reflects on practice.	Imitates and attends professional growth opportunities, applies new learning with colleagues and reflects on practice
	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	Resists feedback on performance from either supervisor or more experienced colleagues.	Reluctantly accepts feedback on performance.	Welcomes feedback from others and uses such feedback to modify instruction.	Seeks out feedback from a variety of sources, uses the information to improve instruction and provides information on the effectiveness of the changes.

Reflective questions:

- 1. Comments regarding overall performance.
- 2. Specific areas needing improvements.
- 3. Identify if there are other required trainings for professional development.