

# Rewarding Excellence in Instruction and Leadership

## A Closer Look at the Peer Evaluator Program: *Information for Teachers*

*Alhambra ESD*

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Developing Talent, Enhancing Careers,  
Improving Student Learning



An Initiative of the Maricopa County  
Education Service Agency and REIL Districts



# Peer Evaluator Overview

A major goal of the *Rewarding Excellence in Instruction and Leadership* program is to develop talent in teaching and leading through a sustainable, comprehensive program of performance-based evaluation and support. As



part of this goal, teachers will receive specific ***content- and pedagogy-based feedback*** on their performance as part of a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation system. Peer evaluators, along with building-level administrators, will ensure that all teachers receive ongoing feedback through the implementation of multiple observation cycles over the course of the school year. The REIL Learning Observation Cycle (pre-conference, observation, and post-conference) provides an opportunity for a teacher and evaluator to engage in an intentional, ongoing, data-driven dialogue designed to improve classroom instruction and student academic progress.

## Peer Evaluator Training

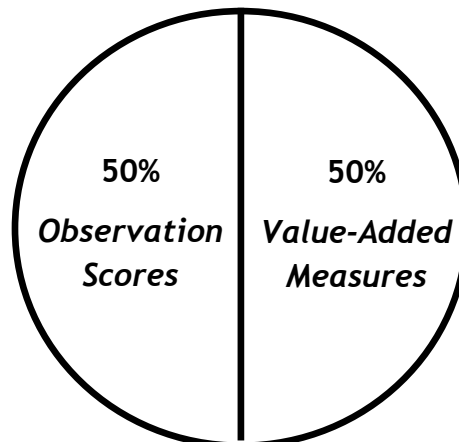
Peer evaluators participate in rigorous professional development to ensure their assigned teachers receive quality feedback. In addition, peer evaluators attend qualified and certified evaluator training to maintain consistency and accuracy in scoring. In order to establish and maintain inter-rater agreement, peer evaluators will participate in an annual certified evaluator assessment, and their performance on this assessment will inform the *Observation & Evaluation of Instruction* element on the *REIL Peer Evaluator Observation Instrument* .

## Determining Peer Evaluator Effectiveness

The effectiveness of REIL peer evaluators will be determined based on the same components used for teacher effectiveness.

- Field specialists, in collaboration with central office staff, will observe peer evaluators in action and provide rubric scores based on the *REIL Peer Evaluator Observation Instrument*.
- Measures of student growth will also be used to determine effectiveness of REIL peer evaluators. Students of teachers who receive support from peer evaluators will serve as the assigned student group for this analysis. Individual and team value-added components will be determined using student growth of teachers they support.
- Peer evaluators will also receive an aggregated, district-level, value-added score based on the districts they support.

These measures will be combined to generate a REIL Score that will determine placement on the performance award continuum.



# What Can I Expect from my Peer Evaluator?

## The Pre-Conference

During the pre-conference, the peer evaluator will open the conversation by asking questions related to the pre-conference elements. You will have the opportunity to articulate your plans for the lesson and share pertinent documentation as informed by the *Learning Observation Instrument* rubric elements. The peer evaluator will listen closely and take notes to capture your responses. In order to probe for additional evidence, if necessary, the peer evaluator will follow-up with relevant questions to ensure evidence has been collected to inform your scores for the pre-conference elements. In addition, the peer evaluator will provide brief, supportive feedback (e.g., “Consider how you can use real-time assessment to improve your students’ overt responses in order to measure progress and adjust instruction.”). Your peer evaluator will also share your scores with you at the conclusion of the pre-conference, or shortly thereafter, ensuring you have at least 24 hours between receipt of the scores and the classroom observation so that you can use your pre-conference dialogue to your best advantage.

## The Observation

During the observation, your peer evaluator will observe the lesson you discussed during the pre-conference in order to gather the necessary evidence to provide scores for all 16 of the observation elements. He/she will script the lesson as well as student responses and actions. There may be times when your peer evaluator walks around the classroom to observe or talk to individual or groups of students. The peer evaluator will remain in your classroom for the entire lesson, as delineated in the pre-conference.

## The Post-Conference

With the REIL program, the post-conference experience has been transformed to focus on student progress and analysis of instruction. Although you will leave the post-conference knowing how you have scored on each element across five ru-



brics, a broader purpose is for you to leave the post-conference with the feedback necessary to improve future instruction and student learning. To prepare for the post-conference, your peer evaluator will review the evidence gathered during the pre-conference and observed lesson in order to establish your conference objective, which will result in identification of a *reinforcement* (an action taken that had a positive influence on student learning) and a *refinement* (an action, when implemented in the future, will contribute to more effective student learning). In selecting a refinement, your peer evaluator will use evidence from the script to identify areas for growth and then prioritize them to determine which would have the greatest impact on the quality of instruction and student learning. During the post-conference, your peer evaluator will open the conversation by asking you an initial question to gather information for scoring each of the post-conference elements. You will have the opportunity to share an analysis of the lesson and share any documentation as informed by the *Learning Observation Instrument* rubric elements. In addition, your peer evaluator may ask questions for clarification, review any data and artifacts that are presented, and script the discussion. Your peer evaluator will make sure you leave your post-conference knowing what your next steps are and how they will impact classroom practice.

# Frequently Asked Questions

1

**How long should the pre-conference, observation, and post-conference be?**

*The full observation cycle should be approximately 2 hours: pre-conference (20-30 minutes), observation (full class lesson), and post-conference (30-40 minutes).*

2

**Will my peer evaluator support me with planning for my observation?**

*Prior to the pre-conference, teachers are encouraged to seek site-based resources (e.g., building-level administration, coaches, mentor teachers) to support with lesson design and content. Peer evaluators provide additional feedback/coaching at the conclusion of the pre-conference following the scoring of the pre-conference elements. The purpose of the pre-conference is to accurately evaluate a teacher's ability to plan a lesson in relation to the content standards and student progress.*

3

**Why should I submit a lesson plan to my peer evaluator prior to the pre-conference?**

*It is highly encouraged that a teacher submit the lesson plan at least 24 hours in advance of a pre-conference in order to allow additional time for the peer evaluator to provide an optimal pre-conference experience for you. Submission of the lesson plan allows the peer evaluator to become familiar with the lesson and provide accurate feedback according to content standards and organization of the lesson.*

4

**Why do I need to bring data and artifacts to the pre-conference?**

*During the pre-conference, you will be asked to produce evidence and discuss planning in relation to Real-Time Assessment, Correct Level of Difficulty, Content Accessibility, and Task Analysis. There are examples of artifacts listed in the Teacher Pre-Conference Form.*

5

**When should I receive my pre-conference scores?**

*It is most likely that you will receive the scores of the 4 pre-conference elements upon conclusion of the pre-conference. Your peer evaluator will ensure you have at least 24 hours between receipt of the scores and the classroom observation so that you can make necessary adjustments to the lesson.*

6

**When should I receive my post-conference scores?**

*At the conclusion of the post-conference the peer evaluator will share the scores of the 2 post-conference elements.*

7

**Will my peer evaluator go through every score with me?**

*The role of the peer evaluator is to provide feedback so that you can effectively process and implement strategies to positively impact instruction and/or lesson design. Directly focusing on one reinforcement and one refinement will allow the peer evaluator to provide feedback on particular elements in identified rubrics. In this way, you can have a more in-depth conversation about elements most critical to improving teaching and student learning. For these reasons, the peer evaluator and teacher will not discuss every score.*

8

**Will my refinement always be focused on the lowest score I earned on the LOI?**

*Peer evaluators are trained to select a refinement focusing on an element that will have the highest impact of teacher effectiveness and student growth. Your refinement will not necessarily always be focused on the lowest score.*

9

**Are peer evaluators eligible for performance pay?**

*Peer evaluators receive a REIL Score and are eligible for performance pay based on observation scores from the REIL Peer Evaluator Observation Instrument and student growth data from the teachers with which they work.*

10

**How do the scores I receive from the peer evaluator impact my REIL Score?**

*The LOI scores received from peer evaluators, as well as principals, are combined with student growth data in calculating the cumulative REIL Score.*

