

Overview of Three Teacher Evaluation Approaches

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

Developed by Bob Pianta, Karen LaParo & Bridget Hamre at the University of Virginia

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is an observation tool designed to provide feedback to educators across three to four main domains and multiple dimensions within each domain. The dimensions are then broken into specific indicators by dimension. The domains are based on research suggesting that student-teacher or student-adult interactions are one of the most important contributors to student learning (Hamre & Pianta, 2007). The three domains covered in both the pre-K and K-5 version are Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support. A fourth dimension, Student Engagement, is added to the Upper Elementary rubric.

While the language of the domains remains consistent, dimensions and scoring with the dimensions may vary depending on the developmental and age level of the classroom. For example, language modeling is more critical for students in Pre-K than for students in Upper Elementary. By Upper Elementary, Content Understanding becomes a critical piece of Instructional Support. The CLASS framework has a consistent framework allowing it be used across multiple age levels and yet, recognizes that the practices within the domains changes as students progress through their schooling.

Scores for the CLASS framework range from 1 to 7 and are based on a rubric scoring system. Evaluators rate teachers across the multiple dimensions within a domain over multiple observation cycles. The scores are averaged across observation cycles to give an educator an overall score for each dimension and for each domain observed.

The Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument

Developed by Charlotte Danielson of the Danielson Group

The Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument (Danielson, 2013) has four main domains: 1) Planning and Preparation, 2) The Classroom Environment, 3) Instruction and 4) Professional Responsibilities. Each domain is then broken down into several components comprised of multiple elements with indicators.

A rubric evaluation framework with four levels assesses teacher skills across multiple critical attributes within each domain area. The four levels are Unsatisfactory, Basic, Proficient and Distinguished. The framework is intended for use as both an evaluative and reflection tool to help guide deeper understanding of instructional practices.

Marzano Art and Science of Teaching Framework Developed by Robert Marzano of the Marzano Center

The Marzano Art and Science of Teaching Framework (Marzano, 2012) focuses on the strategies and behaviors used by teachers to enhance classroom instruction. The Marzano Framework has four main domains encompassing 60 elements with the majority of the elements (41) being in Domain 1: Classroom Strategies and Behaviors. Domain 1 has the most elements and has been shown in research studies to have the most causal link to student achievement (reference). Because Domain 1 is expansive the 41 elements are further organized into nine Design Questions and then into Lesson Segments. The organizational framework of Domain 1 helps with both observation and feedback to the educator. The other Domains are: Domain 2: Planning and Preparing, Domain 3: Reflecting on Teaching and Domain 4: Collegiality and Professionalism.

The scale for Marzano's Teaching Framework model is a 5-point rubric based scale (0 to 5). The teacher is evaluated based on both behaviors from him/her and the behaviors of the students. The scoring is as follows: 0=Not Using, 1=Beginning, 2=Developing, 3=Applying and 4=Innovating.

Comparing the Evaluation Frameworks

Similarities

All three frameworks seek to provide feedback to teachers in a way that informs and improves interactions with students and instructional practices. The underlying philosophy is as teachers improve in their practice student achievement also improves. The frameworks are all based on research around teacher instruction, teacher-student interactions and student engagement.

All three frameworks emphasize the importance of active student learning and student engagement. In addition, the frameworks are looking for educators to push beyond rote learning and to encourage students' critical thinking, questioning and analytical skills. The push for rigor comes from engaging students into lessons through multiple modalities, technology and effective questioning.

Each of the frameworks groups practices into large domains and then breaks those domains down into smaller chunks. The smaller chunks are more specific and allow for the evaluator to provide meaningful feedback that is actionable. The rubrics for each of the frameworks provide examples for what the tool rates as exemplary and as well as examples areas of improvement. Each rubric provides enough examples that an action plan could be developed to improve practice within a given area.

The CLASS and Danielson frameworks were both reviewed as part of the MET project funded through the Gates Foundation. Both frameworks were found to be valid and reliable instruments. Effective practices on the domains measured by the tools were associated with greater gains in student achievement (Kane & Staiger, 2012).

Differences

CLASS does not have a specific professionalism domain that both the Danielson and Marzano frameworks address. Nor does CLASS have a teacher self-reflection component that is addressed in the other frameworks. As CLASS is strictly an observation tool, it would be difficult to observe the ongoing professionalism or self-reflection processes. The other frameworks included those components and may be helpful in addressing all parts of a teacher's evaluation.

CLASS should be seen as a tool to dive deeper into instructional practices by reflecting and perhaps collaborating with a coach or colleague. It can be used for program evaluation purposes and may provide teachers with more sensitive scores. The categories for Danielson are quite broad and a teacher may stay in one category for a long period of time even if skills have increased in a dimension.

Across the frameworks, CLASS differentiates on what components may be more critical for at-risk students. While Danielson and Marzano talk about knowing the context of the classrooms, CLASS specifically highlights areas for teachers when teaching at-risk populations. For example, the Emotional Support domain is critical when teaching at-risk students, therefore, a coach may choose to focus on that area before moving into the practices within the Instructional Support domain.

For the Danielson Framework for Teaching, training is highly recommended but not required to use the tool. Through the Teachscape website, online training and resources are available. In order to become a reliable CLASS observer, one must attend training, and then become reliable through an online reliability process. Reliability is to be renewed on an annual basis. Marzano's Art and Science of Teaching Framework is available to download online. Trainings and workshops are offered across multiple topics. One of the trainings includes inter-rater reliability training for the evaluation framework.

Resources

These websites are resources to learn more about each reviewed framework. Each website contains information about the products, trainings, research articles and other online resources such as videos and blogs.

For Marzano's Art and Science of Teaching Framework: <http://www.marzanocenter.com/>

For Danielson's Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument: <http://danielsongroup.org/>

For the CLASS Framework: <http://teachstone.com/>

The fourth resource is the website for Measures of Effective Teaching Project (MET) funded through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. This site contains resources for frequently asked questions on teacher evaluation frameworks, research articles, policy briefs and other resources for school staff to consider.

<http://www.metproject.org/>

Comparisons of Domains and Dimensions across the Frameworks

The following section lists each Nebraska Performance Framework domain and lists which of the domains from the three frameworks fall under that category. Some domains and dimensions are appropriate for more than one category while others did not seem to fit under the state framework but were part of the overall evaluation framework. For the CLASS framework, none of the domains cover professionalism or vision and collaboration.

Nebraska Performance Framework	CLASS Robert Pianta, Karen LaParo & Bridget Hamre	Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument Charlotte Danielson	Marzano Art and Science of Teaching Framework Robert Marzano
<p>Foundational Knowledge: The teacher demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge of content, pedagogy, students and standards needed to provide each student with effective opportunities for learning, development and achievement.</p>	<p>Instructional Support: Content Understanding (Upper) Emotional Support: Regard for Student Perspectives (Pre-K-Upper)</p>	<p>Demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy (1a), knowledge of students (1b)</p>	<p>DQ8 Establishing and Maintaining Effective Relationships with Students(36) Understands Students' Interests and Background</p>
<p>Planning and Preparation: The teacher integrates knowledge of content, pedagogy, students and standards with the established curriculum to set high expectations and develop rigorous instruction for each student that supports the growth of student learning, development and achievement.</p>	<p>Classroom Organization: Productivity; Instructional Learning Formats (Pre-k-Upper) Instructional Support: Concept Development (Prek-3); Emotional Support: Regard for Student Perspectives, Teacher Sensitivity (Pre-k-Upper) Student Engagement (Upper)</p>	<p>Demonstrating knowledge of students (1b); Demonstrating knowledge of resources (1d); Designing coherent instruction (1e)</p>	<p>DQ1 Communicating Learning Goals and Feedback (1, 2) Providing Clear Learning Goals and Scales, Tracking Student Progress DQ2 Helping Students Interact with New Knowledge (6, 7, 9, 15, 21, 23) Identifying Critical Information, Organizing Students to Interact with New Knowledge, Chunking Content into "digestible bite", Organizing students to practice and deepen knowledge, Organizing students for cognitively complex tasks, Providing resources and guidance DQ5 Engaging Students (24, 32, 40, 41) Noticing when students are not</p>

			<p>engaged, Presenting Unusual or Intriguing information, Asking questions of Low expectancy students, Probing Incorrect Answers with Low expectancy students; Domain 2: Planning and Preparing (42-49); Domain 3: Reflecting on Teaching (51, 52)</p> <p>Evaluating the effectiveness of individual lessons and units, Evaluating the effectiveness of specific pedagogical strategies and behaviors</p>
<p>The Learning Environment: The teacher creates and maintains a learning environment that fosters positive relationships and promotes active student engagement in learning, development and achievement.</p>	<p>Emotional Support: Positive Climate (PreK-Upper), Negative Climate (PreK-3), Teacher Sensitivity (PreK-Upper), Regard for Student Perspectives (PreK-Upper) Classroom Organization: Negative Climate (Upper); Behavior Management (PreK-Upper); Productivity (PreK-Upper) Student Engagement (Upper)</p>	<p>Domain 2: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport (2a); Establishing a Culture for Learning(2b); Managing Classroom Procedures (2c); Organizing the Physical Space (2e)</p>	<p>DQ1 Communicating Learning Goals and Feedback(3) Celebrating Success DQ5 Engaging Students (24, 29, 30, 31) Noticing when students are not engaged, Using physical movement, Demonstrating intensity and enthusiasm, Using friendly controversy DQ6 Establishing Rules and Procedures (4, 5) Establishing classroom routines, Organizing the physical layout of the classroom DQ7 Recognizing Adherence to Rules and Procedures (33, 34 ,35) Demonstrating "withitness", Applying consequences for lack of</p>

			<p>adherence to rules and procedures, Acknowledging adherence to rules and procedures</p> <p>DQ8 Establishing and Maintaining Effective Relationships with Students (36, 37, 38)</p> <p>Understanding students' interests and backgrounds, Using verbal and nonverbal behaviors that indicate affection for students, Displaying objectivity and control</p> <p>DQ9 Communicating High Expectations for All Students (39)</p> <p>Demonstrating Value and respect for low expectancy students</p>
<p>Instructional Strategies: The teacher uses effective instructional strategies to ensure growth in student achievement.</p>	<p>Instructional Support: Concept Development, Quality of Feedback, Language Modeling (PreK-3)</p> <p>Classroom Organization: Instructional Learning Formats (PreK-Upper), Content Understanding, Analysis and Inquiry, Quality of Feedback, Instructional Dialogue (Upper);</p> <p>Emotional Support: Positive Climate and Teacher Sensitivity (PreK-Upper)</p>	<p>Using Discussion and Questioning techniques (3b); Engaging Students in Learning (3c); Using assessment in instruction (3d); Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness (3e); Demonstrating knowledge of resources (1d)</p>	<p>DQ2 Helping Students Interact with New Knowledge (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12) Organizing students to interact with new knowledge, Previewing new content, Chunking content into "digestible bites", Processing of new information, Elaborating on new information, Recording and representing knowledge</p> <p>DQ3 Helping Students Practice and Deepen New Knowledge (14, 15, 17, 19, 20) Reviewing content, Organizing students to practice and deepen knowledge, Examining</p>

			<p>similarities and differences, Practicing skills, strategies and processes, Revising knowledge</p> <p>DQ4 Helping Students Generate and Test Hypotheses (21, 22) Organizing students for cognitively complex tasks, Engaging students in cognitively complex tasks involving hypothesis generation and testing</p> <p>DQ5: Engaging Students (24, 25, 26, 27) Noticing when students are not engaged, Using academic games, Managing response rates, Using physical movement, Maintaining a lively pace</p> <p>DQ7: Recognizing Adherence to Rules and Procedures (33) Demonstrating "withitness"; DQ9: Communicating High Expectations for All Students (40,41) Asking questions of low expectancy students, Probing incorrect answers with low expectancy students</p> <p>Domain 2: Planning and Preparing (45, 46) Use of available traditional resources, Use of available technology</p>
Assessment: The teacher systematically uses multiple	Instructional Support: Concept Development (PreK-3); Quality of	Designing Student Assessments (1f)	DQ2: Helping Students Interact with New Knowledge (13)

<p>methods of formative and summative assessment to measure student progress and to inform ongoing planning, instruction and reporting.</p>	<p>Feedback (PreK-Upper), Analysis and Inquiry (Upper)</p>		<p>Reflecting on learning DQ3: Helping Students Practice and Deepen New Knowledge (17, 18, 20) Examining similarities and differences, Examining errors in reasoning, Revising knowledge</p>
<p>Professionalism: The teacher acts as an ethical and responsible member of the professional community.</p>		<p>Reflecting on Teaching (4a); Maintaining Accurate Records (4b); Participating in the Professional Community (4d); Growing and Developing Professionally (4e); Showing Professionalism (4f)</p>	<p>Domain 3: Reflecting on Teaching (50, 53, 54) Identifying areas of pedagogical strength and weakness, Developing a written growth and development plan, Monitoring progress relative to the professional growth and development plan Domain 4: Collegiality and Professionalism (59) Adhering to district and school rules and procedures</p>
<p>Vision and Collaboration: The teacher contributes to and promotes the vision of the school and collaborates with students, families, colleagues, and the larger community to share responsibility for the growth of student learning, development, and achievement.</p>		<p>Communicating with Families (4c); Participating in the Professional Community (4d)</p>	<p>Domain 4: Collegiality and Professionalism (55, 56, 57, 58, 60) Promoting positive interactions with colleagues, Promoting positive interactions about students and parents, Seeking mentorship for areas of need or interest, mentoring other teachers and sharing ideas and strategies, Participating in district and school initiatives</p>

Current Uses in Various Programs in Nebraska

The third section of this report focuses on current usage of the different evaluation frameworks across several student populations. This is by no means inclusive of every program or district in Nebraska but rather seeks to highlight uses and the possibility of future use.

21st Century Community Learning Centers

For the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) programs, a measure of quality is the CLASS framework. The evaluation team from UNMC scores videos from the programs and provides a written report with specific scores and feedback for each domain and dimension. CLASS reports are used for assistance in program improvement. One question from Karen Stevens (21st CCLC Program Director at the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE)) was if staff felt confused about the feedback if they are using a separate or different teacher evaluation tool within their school building or district.

Feedback from the programs has generally been positive on the use of the CLASS. For purposes of the programs, videos are sent in and scores and reports are given to the program as a whole rather than just one instructor. This format has also been used when evaluating other Extended Learning and Summer School programs (both those housed in school districts and those within the community).

Nebraska Step Up to Quality

Eleanor Shirley (Director, Step up to Quality program at NDE) is interested in the CLASS but anticipates training teams on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Third Edition (ECERS-3) before moving to the CLASS. For the Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) framework, CLASS is not a requirement for schools and may seem like an unnecessary addition to already full plates. For QRIS, programs can choose either to use the ECERS or CLASS if they are center-based. The philosophy behind the team is that the environment needs to be good and solid first. Her team has already put together a document comparing Danielson, Marzano and Nebraska's Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals. The team is discussing how to integrate the framework along with the new ECERS-3 into both Center-based programs and Home/Community based childcare settings. One challenge for the Danielson and Marzano frameworks is how to adapt them for modestly educated providers. Another challenge in adopting more

than one quality framework tool is efficiency and the use of public funds for assessments. Ms. Shirley continues to be interested in how to best inform and evaluate all levels of providers on their “teaching effectiveness”.

The coaches in the programs are using data to reflect more on their own practices. Anecdotally, coaches are more amenable to using the CLASS framework over the ECERS to provide feedback. Ms. Shirley is working on coordination of coaches from multiple programs (i.e. Step Up to Quality, Pyramid, etc.) so as to not overwhelm providers with too much feedback but rather to provide cohesive, meaningful feedback across programs. Coaches will need some training in both the Environment Rating Scales (ERS) and CLASS tools.

The current Professional Development plan is to train first on the ECERS-3 while also providing understanding on the uses of the CLASS system. They will be offering professional development on Infant CLASS training, Early Childhood Services will offer Toddler CLASS training and internal staff will provide Pre-K CLASS training in 2016.

Other early childhood and preschool programs in the Omaha metro area currently use both the Environment Rating Scale (ERS) and the CLASS. All of the Educare sites in the state of Nebraska (Lincoln, Omaha (2) and Winnebago) are required as part of the national Educare system to complete both the ERS and CLASS in each classroom annually.

Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties for Instructional Coaching Evaluation

As part of the Learning Community evaluation on Instructional Coaching, CLASS videos are submitted 1-2 times per year on a sampling of teachers from each participating school district. Videos are scored and feedback reports are given to both individual teachers and the coaches working with those teachers. All the districts (Bellevue Public Schools, Omaha Public Schools, and Westside Community Schools) participating agreed to not use the CLASS scores as part of a teacher’s performance evaluation and therefore, individual scores are not shared with building level principals or central office administrators. Rather aggregate scores are shared to demonstrate possible patterns, changes over time, areas of strength and areas for possible improvement. In the summer of 2014, the Learning Community hosted CLASS training for school districts to attend and become reliable on the K-5 CLASS tool. All of the three districts sent representatives to be trained.

Todd Tripple, Ed.D., Director of Curriculum and Learning for Bellevue Public Schools, was interviewed on his experiences in using both the Danielson Framework and the CLASS framework during the 2014-15 school year. The following are his answers and

experiences in using and integrating two evaluation frameworks for elementary school teachers along with their instructional coaches.

What have been your experiences with both the CLASS and Danielson framework? Do you see them working together or conflicting?

I see them definitely working together as they both deal with effective instruction. Danielson is our evaluation framework district-wide, so it gets top billing and teachers are familiar with it. However, the domains and indicators of Danielson match up really well with CLASS. It was nice to be able to take the data from CLASS and use it in a discussion through the lens of Danielson.

What have you heard from either instructional coaches or teachers about the use of both?

Both tools are great for shaping conversations between coaches and teachers. Coaches especially like it because it is data to discuss, not the coach pointing something out or pointing out a deficiency in the teacher. They are discussing the observation data. It is like Jim Knight and Parker Palmer talk about “The Third Thing” principle. It allows coaches to maintain that partnership approach to helping teachers. They just discuss the CLASS data and the Danielson observation data (if a teacher chooses); however, they are not the ones conducting the observation or the evaluation. The evaluation framework protects the relationship between the teacher and coach, but still gives them something meaningful to work on.

What do you see as useful for both tools?

Danielson

Danielson is a nice framework for doing business from start to finish: planning, classroom environment, instruction, and reflection. All are important and essential components of teaching and learning and the Danielson Framework touches on all of them. It is great for coaching, as stated earlier, as it really helps drive coaching conversations

In addition it has been great for data/coaching discussions. Specifically, under 3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques, coaches and teachers have had to dive into what types of questions are being asked by the teacher, who is answering them, and how are they answering? The framework helps them consider areas such as student vs. teacher talk time. Great conversations have

occurred around this indicator. Finally, the Danielson framework has been great for school improvement. We can tie everything back to Danielson because this is how we evaluate our teaching.

CLASS

The specific data received on the main Domains has been great, especially in the Emotional Support and Instructional Support domains. The CLASS data have helped initiate reflective conversations between teachers and coaches ([Reflecting on Teaching](#) is Danielson indicator 4a and something in instructional coaching that is promoted in Bellevue Public Schools). CLASS data has been useful in this regard. For example, the Domains, Dimensions, and Indicators of CLASS are very helpful, detailed, and logical. It is easy for a coach and teacher to discuss the data and reflect on the teaching that occurred and understand what steps could be taken to improve (great because that allows a coaching cycle to begin). The specificity in the Instructional Support domain is helpful in identifying areas to improve.

Finally, the video component of the CLASS was valuable and a big positive. Using a video format as a self-reflection tool is something promoted in coaching and having to submit videos helped teachers be comfortable with using video. Once they were more comfortable with the process, teachers wanted to review their videos themselves or with coaches.

What are some drawbacks?

Some drawbacks were structural and logistical, on the part of district, not the tools.

One drawback to both was having specific examples of what to do to improve. The tools indicate how to know what should be happening and what it should look like and sound like, but did not provide specific teaching strategies to accomplish that. For example, I may know I need to ask better questions or utilize some different grouping strategies, but how? What next? Having reviewed the Marzano framework, I feel the Marzano evaluation framework actually gives some specific research-based strategies to try as next steps. Not all schools have an instructional coach to collaborate with so teachers may be left on their own to try and determine next best steps.

Are there any issues with having two evaluation frameworks used within the same system?

No, we did use CLASS on a limited basis, as not every teacher in the building had a CLASS video and not every teacher worked with a coach. The combination of the two frameworks provided a more complete picture of teaching, which is great for reflective conversations and future planning. One major plus for the CLASS framework is the ability to use the video component and refer back to the video for coaching and reflection. If we continue to use more of both, I see it again being Danielson as the overarching umbrella and CLASS would be how we more specifically look at Domain 2: Classroom Environment and Domain 3: Instruction of Danielson Framework.

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