



The “1” or Not Evident

“This week was a perfect example of the problem of the “1”. I taught my lesson a bit earlier than usual because of a change in schedule; later, my administrator came in to observe me. I was marked down with a 1 in some areas because she was not there for my lesson. I recognize that she did not observe it. Being given a “1” because the principal did not see it is very different than being given a “1” because you didn't include it or do it. They need to be marked differently.”



You were marked a "Not Evident" - that means merely that the observer didn't see that you implemented the indicator while they were in your classroom. Think about the following:

- The “1” or “Not Evident” is not a “mark down”.** It is true, it can mean that you should have implemented something that you didn't. But, it can also mean that it just wasn't evident because you did it before or did it after the observation, or that it just wasn't applicable in that particular 20 minute time period. We are asking observers to have conversations with educators if the “Not Evident” should have been implemented and wasn't.
- The new observation is not designed only for “formal” or direct instruction lessons.** Teachers instruct (or should be) instructing students all day or all class period. Yes, some of that instruction is direct instruction, some of that is practice, some is group work, etc. Three (or four, in the case of provisional educators) unscheduled, informal observations ought to provide your evaluator with enough information about your overall practice, including direct and non-direct instruction times, to accurately reflect your teaching as they rate each performance indicator on your summative end of year evaluation. Be patient, as time goes on, your observer will likely catch you doing direct instruction but, remember, most of the observation items should be observable regardless of the type of instruction you are doing.
- Changing the “Not Evident” to two categories, “Not Applicable” and “Not Evident But Should Have Been,” would create a “1” with numerical meaning.** Some people have suggested we add a “Not Applicable” rating which would receive a score with no value. The “Not Evident But Should Have Been” would receive a value of 1. If this were the case, the “Not Evident But Should Have Been” would now be incrementally worse than “Somewhat Evident”. This would mean that the “1” would reflect a “mark down” on your observation and would yield a score that could, with the other ratings, be averaged into an overall score. Because the observations are informal and unscheduled, this new “1” that would be a “mark down” would create issues for both the observer and the teacher since the observer would not have enough information to decide whether an item is “Not Applicable” or “Not Evident But Should Have Been”. As a result, the teacher might actually be “marked down” on something they did five minutes before the observer entered the room.
- Your observation is not your evaluation.** The observations do give your evaluator information to use for your summative end of year evaluation, but they will use observation information as part of all the information they know about you and your practice. This information will include observations, and the way she sees you interact with your students in the hallways, the information she gets from parents, from colleagues, from surveys, and the information she gets from you when you have conversations about your practice, your observations, and the “Not Evident/s” you receive.
- When you get a “Not Evident”, take a moment to reflect.** Ask yourself, “Did I do this before the observer came in? Or, could I have implemented this item, and if so, how?” Have conversations with your administrator about what she saw, and what you are doing or have done – you can do this via email or in person – to provide her with additional information for ratings on your Summative Evaluation.