

## Steps to Peer Observation at the Adult Learning Program

By Lee Haller

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The Adult Learning Program of Jamaica Plain Community Center uses an annual peer observation and feedback process for teachers' professional development. We developed our process for this, including our document, *Elements of Quality Teaching* and all the forms, over a series of staff retreats.

- Teachers fill out a *Teacher Self-Reflection Form* where they describe their areas of relative strength and weakness, using our *Elements of Quality Teaching* document
- Teachers fill out a *Peer Matching Form* where they describe their areas of expertise someone observing them might learn from, what they would like to learn by observing, and whether they prefer to observe someone in a level close to theirs or something different.
- The director matches pairs. Some teachers observe and are observed by the same person (A B), others are part of two different pairs (A B, CA, BD). It gets complicated!
- Staff meeting time or a non-instructional night is used for pairs to meet, pre-observation, to discuss the self-reflection of the observee and what they each hope to gain. They use a *Classroom Observation Form* to decide what aspects the observer will pay specific attention to. The observer takes notes of that meeting.
- The director schedules observation sessions. Each observer sits in for a whole three-hour class, and takes notes. The observer's class has a sub.
- Pairs meet again after the observation. The observer writes up the *Classroom Observation Form* to share feedback with observee.

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## More Resources for Teacher Observation Projects

<[www.aelweb.vcu.edu/projects/observation/](http://www.aelweb.vcu.edu/projects/observation/)>

### **The Virginia Teacher Feedback and Guidance Project**

Description of a process, set of tools, guides for the observer, and supplemental materials for teacher observation projects designed to better understand classroom practice.

<[www.sabes.org/resources/observation/index.htm](http://www.sabes.org/resources/observation/index.htm)>

### **Teacher Observation in Adult Basic Education** by Alex Risley Schroeder.

The description of an observation process plus links for tools and forms.

<[www.sabes.org/resources/observation/programs.htm](http://www.sabes.org/resources/observation/programs.htm)>

### **Teacher Observation at Two Massachusetts ABE Programs**

The description of the process and samples of forms and guides.