



Evidence-based tools and guidance
for delivering effective programs

PLANNING & MANAGEMENT
ACADEMICS & ENRICHMENT
STAFFING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SITE CLIMATE
STUDENT RECRUITMENT & ATTENDANCE

summerlearningtoolkit.org



GUIDANCE FOR SAMPLES: PITTSBURGH ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY OBSERVATION

This document provides guidance on how to use the Pittsburgh Enrichment Activity Observation samples available in the Summer Learning Toolkit. You can access the samples through the links below or in the Planning and Management section of the Toolkit.

What are the *PITTSBURGH ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY OBSERVATION* samples and how can you use them?

Developed by Pittsburgh Public Schools, the Pittsburgh Enrichment Activity Observation samples include an observation form and companion feedback form used to observe and continuously improve enrichment activities. In Pittsburgh, activity specialists conduct observations multiple times per activity over the course of the summer to ensure enrichment activities are well managed and implemented with fidelity to the Summer B.O.O.S.T. model (formerly Summer Dreamers Academy), including promoting a positive and supportive climate where youth are encouraged to actively engage in activities. The Pittsburgh Enrichment Activity Observation Form prompts observers to collect data on nine indicators related to Activity Content and Structure and Classroom Culture and Management, using a three-point scale. The Pittsburgh Enrichment Activity Observation Feedback Form provides a template for assessors to give feedback to instructional staff based on the same indicators and scale.

Why is formal observation important?

RAND recommends that summer programs engage in a continuous improvement process that includes evaluation of a site's culture and climate as well as the use of time and academic quality in classrooms. RAND also recommends that site leaders periodically observe instruction to understand which teachers may need additional support. Classroom observation can be a useful way to collect site and classroom information to use in support of continuous improvement.

Who can benefit from these resources?

- District central office managers
- School-based program leaders
- Nonprofit program leaders
- Teachers
- Enrichment staff

Tips for effective observation

It is important to use an observation tool that is valid (assesses what it says and does) and reliable (produces similar results across observers and instances of use). For those reasons, you may want to consider using an established observation tool that has been tested for validity and reliability. If you choose to develop your own observation tool, develop and deliver training for observers on how to use the tool prior to implementation.

Additional tips include:

- Ensure teachers know when they will be observed, what observers will be looking for, and that they have the chance to ask questions in advance. Provide teachers with a blank copy of the observation tool during professional development.
- After observations are complete, discuss data with teachers in a timely manner through in-person coaching sessions.
- Use the observation data to help teachers set goals for professional development.
- Equip coaches or site leaders to use data to provide ongoing support to teachers. Identify common areas of need to inform in-service professional development and pre-program training for the following summer.

