

MnSTOI Observation Process

Fall 2000

I. Maintain a folder for each teacher. Within that folder include two files, one for each of the two teacher observations. Each folder should include the following:

- a) one MnSTOI Teacher Demographics Form per teacher, and
- b) one MnSTOI Researcher Demographics Form per teacher.

Each file should contain:

- c) one MnSTOI Pre-Observation Form per visit (2 forms).
- d) one MnSTOI Observation Form.
- e) one MnSTOI Post-Observation Form per visit (2 forms), and
- f) one MnSTOI Reporting Form per visit (2 forms).

II. The complete MnSTOI Observation Process will require three visits: an initial meeting and two separate classroom observations. One observation will focus on a lesson to develop student understanding of important content and the other will focus on student inquiry.

III. Contact the teacher and set up an initial meeting to explain the observation procedure.

IV. Initial meeting

A. Share the following information.

You are participating in a statewide research project designed to describe the knowledge and skills of Minnesota's beginning teachers along with the conditions under which they work. To gather this information, a researcher will make two visits to your classroom to observe your teaching. To get a more complete understanding about why you teach as you do, you will also be asked to complete various forms. Prior to the first classroom observation, you will complete the **MnSTOI Teacher Demographics Form** and prior to each classroom observation you will complete a **MnSTOI Pre-Observation Form** based on your plans for the observed lesson. It should take you no more than 30 minutes to complete these forms. After each of the researcher's classroom visit, you will complete the **MnSTOI Post-Observation Form** (20 minutes) based on what occurred during the lesson and return it to the researcher within one week of each classroom observation. Make specific arrangements with the researcher regarding how the **MnSTOI Post-Observation Form** will be returned. This process will be repeated for the second classroom observation. The two lessons will each have a different focus. One will focus on a lesson to develop student understanding of important content and the other will focus on student inquiry.

During this research project, you will not have access to the researcher's observations nor will individual researchers be providing comments about your teaching. All information collected in the study will be confidential and no reference will be made to you as an individual teacher. At the conclusion of the project, the researcher will be able to share with you the general results of the study. Once all paperwork is complete you will receive a stipend for your participation in the project.

B. Share only forms a, c, and e with the teacher. Go over the instruments with the teacher and answer their questions about each form. Please keep notes about areas of teacher concern with the instruments for future instrument modifications.

C. Establish a time to make the first classroom visit. Be sure that you find a time that will allow you to arrive a few minutes before the interview to review teacher responses to forms a and c. Make a basic drawing of the classroom and its features. Also allow for time to spend a few minutes after the observation to answer any immediate questions about your observation.

D. Before you complete your initial visit, be sure that the teacher has clean copies of forms a, c, and e. Remind the teacher that forms a and c are to be completed and given to you when you arrive for the first observation. Make arrangements to communicate with the teacher in case an observation needs to be rescheduled.

V. Prior to your first observation, review the **MnSTOI Observation Form** (d). Gather any materials you will need for the observation including clean copies of forms c and e for the teacher's second observation.

VI. On the day of an observation:

A. As soon as you arrive in the classroom for an observation, review the teacher's comments on the **MnSTOI Teacher Demographics Form** (a) and the **MnSTOI Pre-Observation Form** (c).

B. Make a sketch of the classroom including general classroom features and any safety equipment.

C. Complete notes of your observation on the **MnSTOI Observation Form** or your own paper on the lesson.

D. At the conclusion of the observation, obtain answers to any immediate questions. If you are uncertain, clarify if the teacher intended the lesson to focus on student conceptual learning or inquiry. Remind the teacher to complete the **MnSTOI Post Observation Form** (e) and return it to you within one week. Plan to follow up with the teacher if you have not heard from him/her within a week.

E. Thank the teacher for his/her efforts, and if you have not already done so, set up an appointment for your next classroom observation. Make sure that the teacher has the forms (c and e) which need to be completed prior to the next observation.

VII. Before your second classroom visit, use **MnSTOI Forms** b, c, d, and e, to complete a **MnSTOI Reporting Form** (f) for that visit so that your observations are limited to what you saw in a single classroom observation.

VIII. Repeat the process for the second observation. After the second classroom observation, again thank the teacher and set up a time for the STII.