



Pre-conference Coaching Guide

A Guide to Providing Teacher Candidates Highly Effective
Content-Specific, Instructional Coaching

About this guide

During Performance Assessment cycles (pre-conference, observation, and post conference), teacher candidates greatly benefit from highly effective coaching that occurs during pre- and post conferences. Performance Assessments support coaches in progress monitoring each teacher candidate’s instructional practices and content knowledge development according to the levels identified in the teaching framework (rubric) adopted by the Teacher Preparation Program.

The pre-conference provides coaches an opportunity to support teacher candidates with content-specific coaching aligned to the state standards and pedagogical coaching aligned to the university's adopted teaching framework¹. It purposefully focuses on:

Instructional Planning Standards Aligned Data Driven	Equitable Teaching Practices Instructional Activities & Materials Instructional Strategies	Reflection Connections to prior feedback Build on Strengths Actions for Improvement
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Coaches may employ a range of coaching strategies (see coaching chart below), throughout a pre-conference, depending upon the developmental level of the teacher candidate being coached. This guide will provide a non-prescriptive approach to engaging in a pre-conference with a teacher candidate. There are suggested actions, considerations, and anticipations for coaches; however, it is important to note this guide it not intended to be comprehensive of *all* possible actions, considerations, or anticipations coaches may need to take while supporting teacher candidates of varying developmental levels during pre-conferences.

Facilitative/Cognitive	Dialogical	Directive
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¹ Example of teaching frameworks include the NIET TAP Rubric, Danielson Framework for Teaching, etc.

Metaphor for type of coaching	Sounding board or mediated thinking	Partner	Expert-Apprentice
Teacher Candidate Knowledge	Consciously aware of personal growth areas & pedagogical content knowledge	Has some pedagogical content knowledge, but needs support	Needs new knowledge to improve
Decision Making	Teacher Candidate	Teacher Candidate	Site Coordinator (coach)
Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Candidate shares expertise/ knowledge • Site Coordinator does not share expertise/ knowledge • Questions are used strategically to prompt Teacher Candidate thinking • Teacher Candidate does most of the thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Candidate shares expertise/ knowledge in areas of strength (dialogically) • Site Coordinator shares expertise/ knowledge in areas of need for Teacher Candidate (dialogically and/or explicitly through modeling) • Site Coordinator and Teacher Candidate think together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Candidate needs new knowledge • Site Coordinator shares expertise/ knowledge explicitly (modeling) • Site Coordinator integrates many CFUs to ensure Teacher Candidate understanding of new knowledge being modeled.
Focus of coaching	Site Coordinator values Teacher Candidate's pedagogical content knowledge. Site Coordinator	Site Coordinator values Teacher Candidate's pedagogical content knowledge. Site Coordinator enters	Site Coordinator has evidence of Teacher Candidate's pedagogical content knowledge development.

	enters the pre-conference with strategically planned questions to mediate Teacher Candidate thinking.	the pre-conference with questions to prompt Teacher Candidate thinking as well as some identified areas in need of thought-partnering.	The Site Coordinator enters the pre-conference with specific modeling s/he plans to do in order to support the Teacher Candidate's learning needs and to promote a successful implementation in the classroom. The Teacher Candidate is provided ample rehearsal opportunities to ensure successful PK-12 classroom implementation.
Mode of discourse	Inquiry	Balance of inquiry and advocacy	Advocacy

Coaching Types Reflection

What are your initial thoughts about the different coaching types?

In your prior experiences coaching teacher candidates, which coaching type have you used that feels most effective? How do you know they were effective?

What aspects of the preparation stage might be challenging for you (as the coach) and/or your teacher candidates?*****

What questions do you have? What additional support or resources might you need to seek out as a coach of Teacher Candidates?

Overview of the Pre-conference Stages

<u>Stage 1</u>	<u>Stage 2</u>	<u>Stage 3</u>	<u>Stage 4</u>	<u>Stage 5</u>
Preparation	Standards & Objectives, Content Coaching	Assessment & Materials	Instructional Design	Instructional Delivery & Refinement Rehearsals

Summary Table & Materials Links

<p style="text-align: center;">Stage 1 Preparation</p>	<p>The Site Coordinator and Teacher Candidate schedule a time to meet for the pre-conference (usually about 2-3 days before the observed lesson is scheduled to be taught). During this stage of the pre-conference, a Teacher Candidate collaborates with his/her mentor teacher to identify a state standard to be addressed through an upcoming lesson. The Teacher Candidate administers a pre-assessment to his/her PK-12 students and uses the data and the available curriculum to develop a lesson plan. The lesson plan along with the student achievement chart (SAC) are submitted to the Site Coordinator before the pre-conference (usually 24 hours before).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POP Cycle Packet
<p style="text-align: center;">Stage 2 Standards & Objectives Content Coaching</p>	<p>During this stage of the pre-conference, the Site Coordinator and Teacher Candidate discuss the focus and coherence of the state standard to ensure the Teacher Candidate has a clear understanding of the grade level content and skills the standard calls for. Additionally, the Teacher Candidate explains the scope and sequence of the learning (content and skills) related to the standard being addressed in the classroom before, during, and after the lesson being observed. The pre-assessment (SAC) results are leveraged at this time in the pre-conference to promote effective data-driven learning objective development (building from basic to complex sub-objectives).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum Quality Ratings •
<p style="text-align: center;">Stage 3 Assessment & Materials</p>	<p>The Site Coordinator and Teacher Candidate take a deep dive into the assessment and its criteria developed/being utilized to assess PK-12 student proficiency in the observed lesson. The focus of this stage of the pre-conference is to ensure alignment of not only the assessment, but the instructional materials to the lesson objective and state standard. This part of the conference allows for dialogue and support (when needed) to ensure the level of rigor students will experience and the materials students will use during the lesson are at grade level.</p>	

<p>Stage 4 Instructional Design</p>	<p>During this stage of the pre-conference, the Site Coordinator and Teacher Candidate discuss the lesson structure, instructional strategies to be implemented, and the strategic and authentic connections to students' cultural heritage and interests based on SPS data. Furthermore, the Teacher Candidate will explain the ways s/he planned for student opportunities to learn and use content-specific language aligned to the state standard throughout the lesson.</p>	
<p>Step 5 Instructional Delivery & Refinement Rehearsals</p>	<p>This final stage of the pre-conference provides the Teacher Candidate a safe place to rehearse their planned instructional model (Tier I and II) and receive feedback from the Site Coordinator. This stage also provides the Teacher Candidate an opportunity to reflect on prior (if applicable) area(s) of refinement and rehearse the ways s/he has planned to demonstrate improvement. Again, the Site Coordinator can provide proactive feedback based on the rehearsal to support the Teacher Candidate and the PK-12 students in experiencing a successful teaching and learning experience.</p>	

Stage 1: Preparation

The Site Coordinator and Teacher Candidate schedule a time to meet for the pre-conference (usually about 2-3 days before the observed lesson is scheduled to be taught). During this stage of the pre-conference, a Teacher Candidate collaborates with his/her mentor teacher to identify a state standard to be addressed through an upcoming lesson. The Teacher Candidate administers a pre-assessment to his/her PK-12 students and uses the data and the available curriculum to develop a lesson plan. The lesson plan along with the student achievement chart (SAC) are submitted to the Site Coordinator *before* the pre-conference (usually 24 hours before). Establishing deadlines for Teacher Candidate submissions of lesson plans and SACs allow the Site Coordinator to prepare for the pre-conference effectively by identifying and planning for the coaching type(s) that will best support the Teacher Candidate in being successful.

Proficiency Descriptors for Stage 1: Preparation

Teacher Candidate brings ALL of the following to the pre-conference:

1. State Standards
2. Completed lesson plan
3. Teaching Framework/rubric
4. Assessment sample (Example completed at proficiency level)
5. Student Achievement Chart (SAC) with proficiency levels identified in writing and pre-test outcomes
6. Materials (texts, manipulatives, websites/videos/apps, etc.) being considered for use in the lesson
7. Ability to articulate most recent Reinforcement and Refinement areas (PAs 2-4 only)
8. SPS Action Plan Progress Report Results (PAs 2-4 only)

Site Coordinator Preparation for the Pre-conference

	Site Coordinator Actions	Site Coordinator Considerations	Site Coordinator Anticipations
Communication	<p>Communicate, to teacher candidates and mentor teachers, all of the required preparation for engaging in a pre-conference. (location where all templates/exemplars will be posted for easy access)</p> <p>Communicate, to teacher candidates, the deadlines for submitting the POP cycle packet prior to the pre-conference.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scheduling the pre-conference about 2-3 days before the observed lesson will take place ● What are the <i>varied</i> (verbal and written) ways I plan to communicate the required preparation and timeline associated with engaging in a pre-conference? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For teacher candidates? 	<p>During POP Cycle 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher Candidate confusion about the POP Cycle process and deadlines associated with the different stages ● Teacher Candidate and/or Mentor Teacher confusion about their co-teaching roles during the observed lesson (Can they or can't they use co-teaching strategies? If yes- which strategies?)

	<p>Communicate, to teacher candidates and Mentor Teachers, how co-teaching plays/does not play a role in the POP Cycle (observed lesson)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For mentor teachers? 	
<p>Prepared Materials</p>	<p>Have templates and examples (if possible) of the following materials easily accessible for teacher candidates and Mentor Teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teaching framework/rubric ● POP Cycle packet ● Student Achievement Chart (SAC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What if the TC misses the submission deadline for the PA packet? ● What if the TC submits an incomplete PA packet (e.g. <i>missing the SAC, lesson plan incomplete, no assessment included, etc.</i>)? ● What if the TC doesn't bring the materials the students will use, in the lesson, to the pre-conference? 	<p>During POP Cycle 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher Candidate confusion about locating the required pre-conference materials <p>During any/all POP Cycles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher Candidate missing submission deadlines ● Teacher Candidate not fully prepared to engage in pre-conference (materials not complete or lack of preparedness in planning)

Stage 1 Reflection

What are your initial thoughts about the preparation stage of pre-conferences?

What aspects of the preparation stage might be most beneficial for you (as the coach) and/or your teacher candidates?

What aspects of the preparation stage might be challenging for you (as the coach) and/or your teacher candidates?

What questions do you have?

Stage 2: Standards & Objectives, Content Coaching



Coaching teacher candidates, in this stage of the pre-conference, ensures that standards-aligned instruction is a pathway to the equitable practices needed to close the gaps caused by systemic and systematic racism, bias, and poverty. During this critical stage, the Site Coordinator and Teacher Candidate discuss the coherence and rigor of the state standard to ensure the Teacher Candidate has a clear understanding of the grade level content and skills the standards call for. Standards are what students should know and do. It is a long way from standards to instructional delivery.

- The standards were developed to ensure all students have access to curriculum and instruction that will prepare them for the demands in the real world.

- Curriculum has to be designed to ensure that it meets the standards.
- The curriculum, the instructional planning informed by it, and the actual delivery of instruction are all rooted in the standards.
- Our accountability is to the standards and to the students, and the goal is college and career readiness

Another important aspect to providing quality content coaching to teacher candidates relates to equity and language. We know that language and content develop in tandem and in integrated ways. During the pre-conference, coaches can promote equitable practices by coaching teacher candidates in planning for structured ways PK-12 students can experience and practice challenging content language. Acquiring language for the use of standard English in writing and speaking benefits all students. During this stage, teacher candidates may need coaching in helping to plan for scaffolding students to independence through complex tasks and amplifying grade level text language and task complexity.

Additionally, during this stage in the pre-conference the Teacher Candidate explains the scope and sequence of the learning (content and skills) related to the standard being addressed in the classroom before, during, and after the lesson being observed. The pre-assessment (SAC) results are leveraged at this time in the pre-conference to promote effective data-driven learning objective development (building from basic to complex sub-objectives).

Proficiency Descriptors for Stage 2: Standards & Objectives, Content Coaching

Teacher Candidate explains and Site Coordinator prompts/coaches to ensure the coherence and rigor of the standard being taught in the lesson to be observed:

1. Read the standard, in its entirety, being addressed in the lesson
2. Explain the standard being utilized for the lesson (re: content /skills)
3. Explain the scope & sequence of the standard being addressed in the lesson in the following way:
 - a. What was taught (content & skills) before the lesson being observed? Student outcomes (referencing the pre-test SAC)
 - b. What will be taught (content & skills) after the lesson being observed? Expected outcomes?
 - c. Was this standard addressed in prior grade levels? What is the difference in rigor?
 - d. Is this standard addressed in future grade levels? What is the difference in rigor?
4. Explain the developed objective and sub-objectives for the lesson to be observed in the following way:
 - a. Identify and explain the alignment of the objective's verb to that in the state standard

- b. Explain the measurable K.U.D. (What will students Know, Understand, and/or be able to Do at the end of this lesson?)
- c. Explain the lesson's sub-objectives, specifically identifying ALL of the following:
 - i. Connections to prior learning (currently & in prior grade level(s)/lessons)
 - ii. Relevance to students' real-lives and/or the real world
 - iii. New, and/or review, content knowledge and skills (to include content-specific vocabulary)

Standards and Objectives, Content Coaching

	Site Coordinator Actions	Site Coordinator Considerations	Site Coordinator Anticipations
Content Coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for this stage by reviewing the standard(s) being addressed in the lesson, before the pre-conference • Prepare for this stage by having an understanding of the curriculum used by the placement school/district (level of quality) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will I support the Teacher Candidate and the Mentor Teacher if the adopted curriculum are of low quality? • What if after some content coaching it is evident the Teacher Candidate is not ready/able to deliver coherent, rigorous standards-based instruction? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teacher candidates having barriers to answering some questions in this stage

Suggested Coaching Questions

Across Grade Coherence:

1. How does the lesson support students in building new understanding onto foundations built in previous years/grade levels?
2. How will you lead students to make connections to prior learning?
3. What is the prerequisite knowledge will students need to make connections to previous learning?
4. How do you identify any prerequisite knowledge gaps your students may have?

Rigor:

Math

1. Where is/will fluency be built into this lesson or upcoming lessons?
2. How will students' lack of fluency be addressed in the lesson?
3. How will you provide students opportunities to share their thinking as they are working with math concepts?
4. How have you planned for students to have application opportunities during the lesson?
5. How did you determine the application tasks students will experience during the lesson? How do you know the tasks are grade-level aligned?

ELA

Stage 2 Reflection

What are your initial thoughts about the standards and objectives stage of pre-conferences?

How is this stage similar and different to other coaching protocols you have used to conference with teacher candidates?

What types of resources/tools do you need to effectively coach teacher candidates in the instructional planning and delivery of standards-aligned instruction?

How does this stage promote equity for PK-12 students?

What questions do you have?

Stage 3: Assessment and Materials

The Site Coordinator and Teacher Candidate take a deep dive into the assessment and its criteria developed/being utilized to assess PK-12 student proficiency in the observed lesson. The focus of this stage of the pre-conference is to ensure alignment of not only the assessment, but the instructional materials to the lesson objective and state standard. This part of the conference allows for dialogue and support (when needed) to ensure the level of rigor students will experience and the materials students will use during the lesson are at grade level. Equity ensures that all children – regardless of circumstances – are receiving high-quality and standards-aligned instruction with access to high-quality, grade-level materials and resources.

Proficiency Descriptors for Stage 3: Assessment and Materials

Teacher Candidate explains and Site Coordinator prompts/coaches to ensure the alignment and rigor of the post-test students will complete for the lesson to be observed to the state standard(s):

1. Show an example of a completed assessment being utilized for lesson completed at a proficient level
2. Explain the alignment of assessment to objective and standard (With specific attention to verb(s))
3. Explain the criteria for the assessment at a highly proficient level
4. Explain how they will formatively assess (i.e. Check for understanding (CFU)), throughout the lesson, prior to administering a summative assessment
5. Explain how and why they will differentiate assessment(s) by citing evidence from the pre-test (SAC)

Teacher Candidate explains and Site Coordinator prompts/coaches to ensure the lesson materials are grade-level appropriate and aligned to the state standard:

1. Show and explain the materials/resources students will access throughout the lesson in the following way:
 - a. Show materials/resources from each lesson segment (instructional input, guided practice, independent practice or 5Es)
 - b. Explain selection process/criteria for materials/resources (i.e. provided in school curriculum, online research, mentor teacher, etc.)
 - c. Explain alignment of materials/resources to grade-level state standard
 - d. Explain how and why they will differentiate materials/resources to support ALL students in accessing grade-level content

Assessment and Materials

	Site Coordinator Actions	Site Coordinator Considerations	Site Coordinator Anticipations

Suggested Reflection Questions

Stage 3 Reflection

What are your initial thoughts about the assessment and materials stage of pre-conferences?

How is this stage similar and different to other coaching protocols you have used to conference with teacher candidates?

How does this stage promote equity for PK-12 students?

What questions do you have?

Stage 4: Instructional Design

During this stage of the pre-conference, the Site Coordinator and Teacher Candidate discuss the lesson structure, instructional strategies to be implemented, and the strategic and authentic connections to students' cultural heritage and interests based on SPS data. Furthermore, the Teacher Candidate will explain the ways s/he planned for student opportunities to learn and use content-specific language aligned to the state standard throughout the lesson.

Proficiency Descriptors for Stage 4: Instructional Design

Teacher Candidate explains and Site Coordinator prompts/coaches to ensure the instructional design is equitable for all students.

1. Explain how the lesson structure (sequence re: gradual release or, inquiry, 5 E's) increases in complexity as the lesson progresses; therefore, scaffolding ALL students toward independence with the most complex task (assessment)
2. Explain specific instructional strategies to be utilized to enhance student content knowledge
3. Explain the ways:
 - a. student cultural heritage and interests are incorporated into the lesson (make connections to SPS data if available)
 - b. students will learn and have opportunities to use content-specific language in the lesson

Instructional Design

	Site Coordinator Actions	Site Coordinator Considerations	Site Coordinator Anticipations

Suggested Reflection Questions

Stage 4 Reflection

What are your initial thoughts about the assessment and materials stage of pre-conferences?

How is this stage similar and different to other coaching protocols you have used to conference with teacher candidates?

How does this stage promote equity for PK-12 students?

What questions do you have?

Stage 5: Instructional Delivery and Refinement Rehearsal

This final stage of the pre-conference provides the Teacher Candidate a safe place to rehearse their planned instructional model (Tier I and II) and receive feedback from the Site Coordinator. This stage also provides the Teacher Candidate an opportunity to reflect on prior (if applicable) area(s) of refinement and rehearse the ways s/he has planned to demonstrate improvement. Again, the Site Coordinator can provide proactive feedback based on the rehearsal to support the Teacher Candidate and the PK-12 students in experiencing a successful teaching and learning experience.

Proficiency Descriptors for Stage 5: Instructional Delivery and Refinement Rehearsal

Teacher Candidate explains and rehearses and receives feedback from Site Coordinator.

1. Rehearse (model) how they plan to model for students (Tier I (procedural) and Tier II (metacognition))
2. Explain a recent rubric refinement area and actions they are taking to improve in this area (Note: Refinement may be from previous PA, Mentor or, self-selected)
3. Explain how they plan to display improvement in their refinement area within this lesson
4. Rehearse (model), their plan for this area of refinement within this lesson

Instructional Delivery and Refinement Rehearsal

	Site Coordinator Actions	Site Coordinator Considerations	Site Coordinator Anticipations

Suggested Reflection Questions

Stage 5 Reflection

What are your initial thoughts about the Instructional Delivery and Refinement Rehearsal stage of pre-conferences?

How is this stage similar and different to other coaching protocols you have used to conference with teacher candidates?

What aspects of the preparation stage might be most beneficial for you (as the coach) and/or your teacher candidates? PK-12 students in the placement classroom?

What aspects of the preparation stage might be challenging for you (as the coach) and/or your teacher candidates?

What questions do you have?