Best Foot Forward:

A Toolkit for Fast-Forwarding Classroom Observations Using Video

Best Foot Forward Project, 2015

Center for Education Policy Research
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

About the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University

The Center for Education Policy Research (CEPR) at Harvard University is a unique partnership among districts, states, foundations, and university-based researchers designed to leverage the overwhelming amount of newly available school-, teacher-, and student-level data to address previously intractable policy questions in education and improve educational outcomes for all students.

CEPR has built a network of relationships with school leaders around the country and engaging the best minds in social science to learn what's working—and what's not. At the traditional pace of educational research, progress on these questions would take decades. A concerted, coordinated effort, however, can dramatically accelerate progress.

About the Best Foot Forward Project

The Best Foot Forward project is a study grounded in a simple hypothesis: Video technology can help improve classroom observations. In 2012, the study team at CEPR piloted video observations in two states and one teacher certification program. From 2013–15, the team conducted a randomized controlled trial in four states. Half of teachers were randomly assigned to do video observations in lieu of their required in-person observations. Administrators were trained to watch video lessons and give online and in-person feedback using video clips. Teachers also received content-specific feedback from a virtual peer coach. The study team collected survey and focus group data from students, teachers, and administrators as well as observation and student achievement data to determine whether the video observation process made an impact on teacher practice and student learning.

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Best Foot Forward:

A Toolkit for Fast-Forwarding Classroom Observations Using Video

This toolkit provides practical guidance for education practitioners on using video observations to help teachers accelerate their development. For our purposes, a video observation is any process of watching a classroom lesson on tape and providing feedback on that lesson for improvement. Inside you will find different ways to implement video observations; recommendations for choosing appropriate technology and implementing it successfully; guidance for creating a secure, trustworthy environment for video use; and tools for assessing your readiness to start video observations in your school community. Each section includes a discussion of important lessons from the Best Foot Forward project, a study of digital video in classroom observations. Our goal is to provide you with a springboard from which you can successfully launch video observations in your school or district.

Why Video Observations?

Teachers deserve great feedback and meaningful observations, yet districts and states face substantial logistical hurdles and human capital challenges in scaling up high-quality observations.

• **Compliance culture.** In many districts, classroom observations are treated as exercises of compliance rather than opportunities for deep learning and collaboration.

• **Rudimentary reflection.** Teachers rely on notes and artifacts to tell them how they are doing when they need to see themselves in action to maximize feedback.

• **Inflexible time.** Administrators charged with observations have many other administrative demands, which make it difficult for them to find the time to observe during the day.

• **Inadequate content area feedback.** Teachers who might be able to provide feedback to other teachers about their subject area are otherwise busy in classrooms with their own students.

The charge is clear: Educators must identify ways to ensure that observations help all teachers tackle the challenges they face every day. From our experience in the Best Foot Forward project, video technology holds great promise for improving classroom observations and professional development. Video observations can deepen collaboration and reflection, capture details that otherwise go unnoticed in a live lesson observation, and make sharing instruction with administrators and teachers more convenient.

Video technology holds great promise for improving classroom observations and professional development.

How Can This Guide Help?

In implementing video observations across the country, we learned valuable lessons from the teachers, administrators, coaches, and technology vendors who helped make the Best Foot Forward project possible. Our hope is to share our collective knowledge of the protocols, considerations, and logistical requirements to leverage video successfully in the service of teacher development.

The toolkit is designed so that you can "cherry-pick" the resources and guidance you are seeking. That said, we recommend reading through its many components as there may be additional considerations to aid your implementation.

Who Should Use This Guide?

This guide is written for education leaders who want to implement video observations for formative or evaluative purposes. It is intended to provide practical guidance for designing and implementing a video observation process in your district or school community. It will be particularly valuable for

• district administrators,

• school administrators,

• instructional leaders, and

• teachers and teacher networks.

Though this guide often takes a district-focused perspective, it can be used for nondistrict organizations, such as teacher and leader training organizations, as well.

What's Inside?

Each section of the toolkit includes guiding questions, lessons learned, and recommendations for successful implementation. We have also embedded downloadable tools customized from states, districts, vendors, our study team, and partners. This toolkit is meant to be dynamic and collaborative. If you have ideas or resources to share, please reach out to us using **this feedback form**.

Leveraging Video for Learning: Strategies for Using Video Observations for Professional Growth

How can you employ video for teacher development? In this section you will find multiple models for using video, including self-reflection, peer collaboration, and coaching and evaluation. You will access research findings that demonstrate the promise of video technology to aid teacher innovation.

Cultivating Trust in Video Observations: Considerations for Teacher and Student Privacy

Strong public urgency exists around protecting the privacy of teachers and students. This section provides a collection of resources to help institute appropriate policies and procedures, communicate with parents, and protect those who are willing to use video to make a difference in classroom instruction.

Turnkey Technology: Recommendations for Setting up Schools for Effective Technology Implementation

Poor tools in the hands of the best-intentioned educators can stymie success. Good tools poorly implemented will have little benefit. Learn how to select the right hardware and software for your purposes and to train educators to implement well.

Measuring Readiness and Success: A Guide to Piloting and Large-Scale Implementation

Is your school, state, or district ready for successful implementation? This section includes tools to gauge readiness and measure successful implementation.

Leveraging Video for Learning

From the one-room schoolhouses of the past to contemporary classrooms carved up by grade and subject area, U.S. K–12 schools have a history of entrenched teacher isolation. Sociologist Dan Lortie once described the teaching profession as an "egg crate" ecosystem, in which classrooms, with a single teacher and set of students, are stacked on top of one another like egg crates. This structural separation, in which teachers develop their skills primarily through individual trial and error rather than through observation and collaboration with others, has been a major barrier to improving instruction.

Educators are now attempting to increase the extent to which teachers are observed, observe each other, and receive support from colleagues. Yet school and district leaders face significant structural impediments: Teachers are busy and cannot float between classes to observe during the day; administrators may not have the time to observe, give robust feedback, and broker peer support among teachers; and teachers rarely receive expert feedback in their own content area.

If used well, video technology can help overcome these barriers and accelerate the process of opening up instruction to observation and feedback.

IN THIS SECTION:

- How can teachers use video to accelerate effective self-analysis?

- How can video be used to connect teachers to peers for feedback and coaching?

- Under what conditions can video improve evaluative classroom observations?

Based on our work on the **Best Foot Forward project**, a study of video technology in classroom observations, here we detail five ways to use video to reflect, collaborate, and end teacher isolation: self-reflection, peer collaboration, virtual coaching, evaluation, and video libraries.

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"The reflection that I did myself, when I videoed, offered me more opportunity for growth than anything an outsider could do for me. Watching my kids, what went on in my room, how I handled it, and things I said—that was more important than any sit-down that I could have with anybody [else]. "

Best Foot Forward teacher, North Carolina (2013)

Approach 1: Video for Self-Reflection

▶ **Structured self-reflection** plays an important role in teachers' professional growth. Teachers may enter the profession with preconceived ideas about what good instruction looks like based on their previous experiences as a student. This leads to imitative, rather than intentional, practice. Systematic self-reflection, on the other hand, sharpens the intentionality of the practitioner and allows him or her to address the unique challenges of the classroom.

Education researchers tend to distinguish "reflection in practice" from "reflection on practice" (Schön, 1983). The process of reflecting in practice refers to in-the-moment or situational thinking. Reflecting on one's practice requires remembering past actions, evaluating what did or did not work, and using those judgments to drive a theory of action for future practice. Both are important approaches, but they suffer from three inherent flaws that make it difficult to translate self-reflection into meaningful changes.

1. **The Omniscience Flaw:** Reflection in practice requires teachers to effectively address whatever provokes them in the moment, yet sometimes the challenges that require action are not the ones teachers see or hear. For example, while working with a small group or helping an individual student, teachers may miss off-task students in other corners of the classroom. To maximize reflection in practice, teachers need extraordinary, all-knowing powers. While many teachers have superhero-like qualities, omniscience is not one of them.

2. **The Symptom-Treatment Flaw:** Another inadequacy of situational thinking is that it does not provide time for the consideration of root causes. Because teachers must react in the moment, the critical pause required to conduct an "act of search or investigation" is not possible (Dewey, 1910).

3. **The Recollection Flaw:** Reflection on practice relies on the accuracy of memory. Educators must recall the details of prior lessons to maximize their diagnosis, but those details often fade in memory. Reflection is best when specific, yet memory can only deliver an adumbrated version of what happened in any given hour.

To maximize the reflection process, educators need to analyze specific challenges (both noticed and unnoticed) and have time to consider the best course of action. Unfortunately, time and omniscience are in short supply. Better information can translate into better self-analysis. Here is how video self-analysis can help address each flaw:

The Omniscience Flaw	Observing self-taped lessons allows teachers the opportunity to notice challenges that are otherwise difficult to perceive while teaching.
Symptom-Treatment Flaw	Video allows educators to press pause and ponder the root causes of problems.
Recollection Flaw	Teachers can re-experience the specific details of what happened during a lesson, rather than rely on memory alone.

Of course, watching oneself on video is not an automatic ticket to professional growth. Consider how these Best Foot Forward participants experienced seeing themselves on video for the first time:

Teacher A: *I saw every little kind of weird thing, like that I swung my keys around when I talked for 10 minutes. You can see every little thing that you wouldn't recognize.*

Teacher B: *The first 10-minute segment I watched, I was like, "Oh, I do that? Really? I sound like that?"*

Teacher C: *...in the beginning, I was really focused in on myself. Then, going through I [started] listening to the conversations that were taking place.... That was really special for me to hear.*

Leaders should provide support for teachers to engage in intentional, structured self-analysis

Evident in these quotations are three common mistakes when watching one's self on tape.

1. **Information overload.** Paying attention to all details, like keys swinging or the number of utterances of "um." Distractions are important to note, but it takes an enormous amount of intention to filter out less significant details and focus on teaching and learning.

2. **Excessive self-criticism.** Teachers are their own worst critics because they care deeply about their craft. Watching oneself can be extremely challenging if nitpicking becomes the dominant stance.

3. **Watching the wrong film star.** Self-reflection doesn't mean making the teacher the star of the film. Student action must play a prominent role in a teacher's observation strategy. When Teacher C moved past watching herself and started listening to her students, she gained new insights into student thinking and behavior.

To address these mistakes, leaders should provide support for teachers to engage in intentional, structured self-analysis. This structured protocol can help teachers look past unimportant details, such as what they are wearing or how many times they use the word "like," and focus on the students. If used well, video can help teachers reflect on their in-the-moment practice, identify important issues that went unnoticed while teaching a lesson, and take the pause needed to reassess student needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Provide resources for teachers to watch themselves without being distracted by insignificant details. Teachers and instructional leaders can begin effective self-reflection using a focused protocol such as our Teacher Video Selfie module and our Self-Analysis Rubric, in which they practice filtering out distracting details and focus on students.

2. Replace generic self-assessments in teacher evaluation systems with a video self-analysis process. Teachers could keep the videos private and submit only a written reflection to fulfill their requirement.

3. Nudge video self-analysis. Leaders might recommend video self-reflection as a way for teachers to monitor development areas and practice specific skills following an observation.

VIDEO REFLECTION TOOLS

TOOL ID	RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION	INTENDED AUDIENCE
L1A	Teacher Video Selfie Module	A guided instructional module for teachers to practice effective self-reflection	Teachers
L1B	Self-analysis Rubric	A simple rubric for teachers to assess whether they've filtered out noisy or distracting details to focus on what matters and make the most of self-analysis	Teachers

> " The most effective evaluation we get is from someone who teaches our subject; a peer is going to give that."

Best Foot Forward teacher, North Carolina (2013)
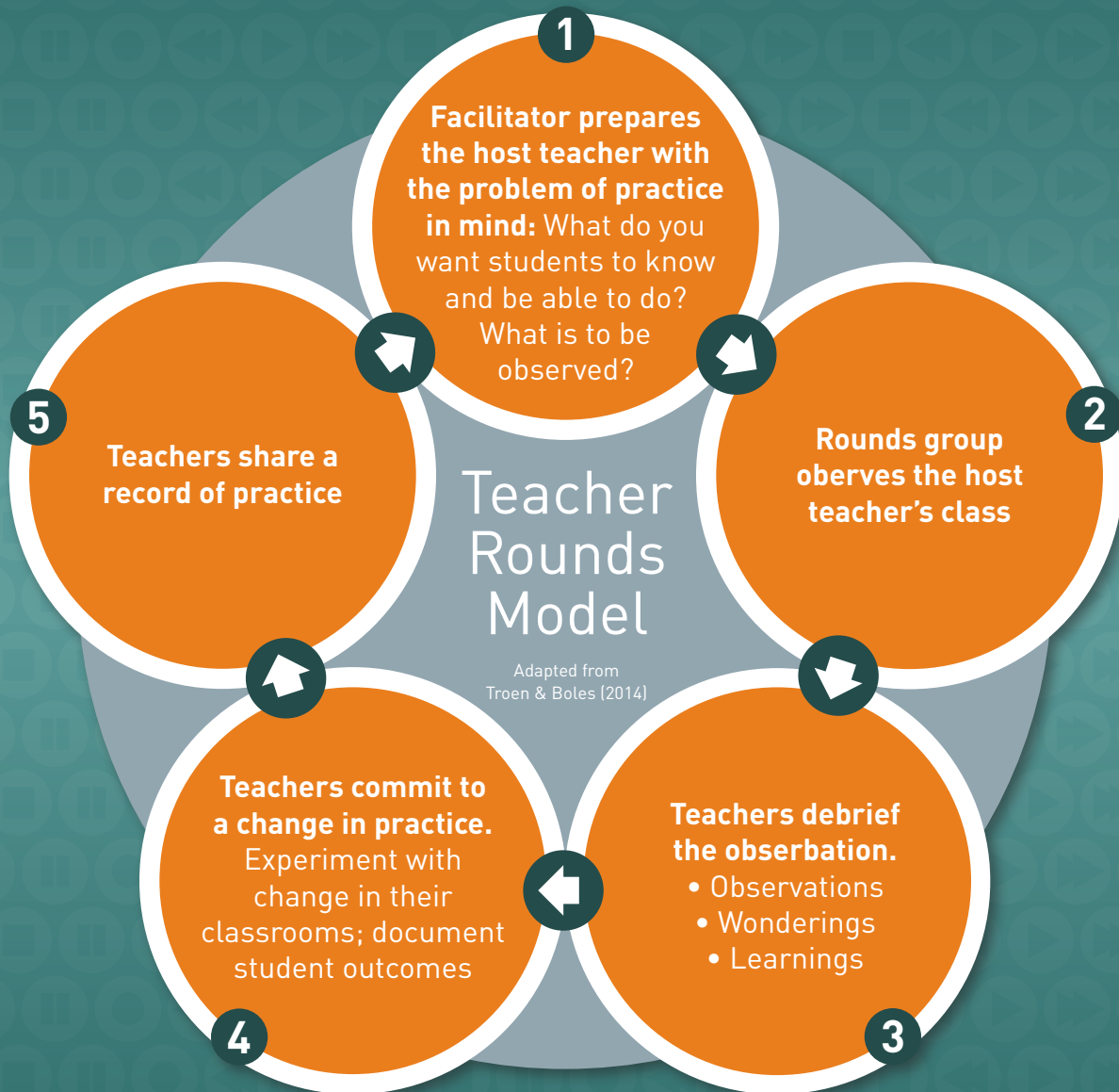
Approach 2: Video for Peer Collaboration

▶ **Teachers' participation in collaborative discussion** is predictive of changes to teachers' instruction (Parise, 2010). Improvement can also be predicted by the extent to which teachers seek instructional advice from their colleagues (Sun, 2014). Yet it isn't easy to facilitate peer collaboration, given that teachers are responsible for instructing their own students during the school day.

The introduction of video technology in a school or across schools may make it easier for teachers to observe their colleagues' instruction and give or receive instructional support. With easy access to video cameras, teachers can record their lessons for other teachers to view at their convenience or in organized peer learning communities.

A video club is one context in which groups of teachers analyze one another's teaching. When Elizabeth van Es (2012) studied a group of fourth- and fifth-grade teachers who came together once or twice a month to examine classroom videos, she found that the process afforded increasingly substantive conversations around student–student, teacher–student and whole class interactions. One important finding was that over the course of the video observation collaborative, teachers moved from general judgments of the lesson to more specific, evidence-based thinking as result of club participation. By solving problems together, they effectively met their individual goals and deepened their relationship with the curriculum.

Teacher Rounds provide another way to use video in peer-to-peer teacher collaboration (Troen & Boles, 2014). This model is based on medical rounds that have long been used by physicians to develop their skillset and crowdsource feedback from fellow professionals. In this process, teachers start by observing one another in person. Then they meet to discuss the lessons, and teachers commit to making a specific change in practice. The cycle closes with teachers videotaping their implementation of these changes and sharing that video with colleagues. In this way, video is used as an accountability mechanism for making feedback actionable.

In each model, there is a designated peer facilitator, a well-structured dialogue or protocol for discussion of instructional practice, and a teacher-identified challenge or goal. In order for this to work, teachers must give as much helpful feedback as they receive. ○

Teacher Rounds Model

Adapted from Troen & Boles (2014)

1. **Facilitator prepares the host teacher with the problem of practice in mind:** What do you want students to know and be able to do? What is to be observed?

2. **Rounds group oberves the host teacher's class**

3. **Teachers debrief the obserbation.**
   - Observations
   - Wonderings
   - Learnings

4. **Teachers commit to a change in practice.** Experiment with change in their classrooms; document student outcomes

5. **Teachers share a record of practice**

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Education leaders should consider promoting opportunities to join or start a video club or teacher rounds process. These opportunities can contribute to a "culture of continuous improvement" in which teachers grow through formative, low-stakes feedback.

2. Leaders ought to consider incentivizing teachers' participation. For example, districts leaders might award teachers who participate in video observations with professional learning units. Because these activities require added time, allowing teachers additional planning time will also attract teachers who might otherwise feel too busy to join the group.

> Video technology in a school or across schools may make it easier for teachers to observe their colleagues' instruction and give or receive instructional support.

VIDEO COLLABORATION TOOLS

TOOL ID	RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION	INTENDED AUDIENCE
L2A	Effects of a Video-Based Teacher Observation Program on the De-privatization of Instruction: Evidence from a Randomized Experiment	Research findings from the Best Foot Forward project regarding how video technology may be an effective tool for efforts to improve instruction by increasing peer observation and support	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders, teachers
L2B	Video Club Start-Up Guide	Considerations to start building a video club in your school or district	School administrators, instructional leaders, teachers
L2C	Rounds: Puts Teachers in Charge of Learning	A description of the protocol and requirements for the Teacher Rounds process	School administrators, instructional leaders, teachers
L2D	Video Club Research Summaries	Summaries of additional research about the use and structure of video clubs in schools across the country	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders, teachers

" [My coach said,] "You could try this, I noticed this, and this worked for me." Then I didn't have to go into another teacher's classroom hoping that I might see the answer to my problem—I had a specific behavior or task that I could do that would change immediately."

Best Foot Forward teacher, Georgia (2014)

Approach 3: Video for Virtual Coaching

▶ **In the information economy,** technology makes it increasingly possible for personnel to work and be managed in a virtual office environment, yet there is something inherently "live" about teaching. Like other live-action professions, such as medicine, law, or sports, teaching involves improvised personal interactions that can be difficult to view and support from afar. Video technology may help bridge that distance to make virtual coaching possible.

In the education sector, virtual coaching occurs when an observer and teacher do not share the same physical space for instructional feedback. Rather than relying on the analysis of secondary artifacts, a virtual coach can get a direct glimpse of a teacher's classroom when a video lesson is shared online. Many platforms now allow the sharing of video and the ability for coaches to annotate that video with questions and commentary at specific time-stamped moments of the lesson. The teacher can then rewatch his or her lesson alongside contextualized feedback.

The virtual coaching process affords teachers several benefits. First, teachers are able to get an outside perspective that is difficult to capture when in-school observers already have relationships with the students, parents, and teachers in the classrooms they observe. While no observation—virtual or in-person—is completely objective, distance from the context may help reduce personal bias and give teachers a fresh perspective.

Additionally, virtual coaching can connect teachers with more content-specific feedback. Principals cannot possibly be specialists in every subject area. Imagine a principal, a former middle school math teacher, giving feedback to a second-grade literacy teacher. While there are many important things that this administrator can do to help a teacher develop, fluency instruction might not be one of them. Video technology makes it possible to connect teachers with virtual experts in their own subject areas and get feedback on their pedagogical content.

Virtual coaching can have very real benefits for teachers, but there are three inherent challenges in providing feedback from afar.

1. Misinterpretation. Without body language to read and respond to, there is a heightened risk of confusion, particularly if feedback is delivered in writing alone. This can lead to a contentious post-observation conversation.

2. Context. Prior to virtual coaching in the Best Foot Forward project, many teachers expressed concern about an external coach not knowing the particulars of his or her classroom or curricular context.

3. Accountability. Without a personal relationship with an observer, accountability to submit a videotaped lesson to an observer or to respond to his or her feedback may be more difficult to establish.

Knowing these challenges, there are several simple steps that leaders and coaches can take to make the experience successful:

Diagnose needs. Use the needs of the participating teachers to drive the hiring of your coaching experts. Ask: Do we have a shortage of specialists in one particular area or grade band? Are we seeing slow growth in a particular tested subject area or a domain in the observation data?

Choose the right coaches. There are two approaches to finding great coaches—insourcing or outsourcing. In the insourcing model, districts can use data (e.g., growth scores, student surveys, or observation evidence) or principal nominations to identify high performers in the areas of need and honor their expertise through an offer as an afterschool virtual coach. In the outsourcing model, districts can extend capacity by contracting with an external provider to hire and manage matched experts. In both cases, it is important to select teachers or former teachers with evidence of effectiveness and strong communications skills, and to provide coaches training in both observing and feedback delivery.

Distance from the context may help reduce personal bias and give teachers a fresh perspective.

In choosing between these models, leaders should examine the costs and benefits of both models in terms of budget and capacity, but also tap teacher stakeholders to understand the comfort level with internal versus external coaches. Some teachers will prefer the absolute anonymity of a third-party coach while others will prefer a teacher who understands the expectations and curriculum in his or her context.

Require a one-on-one kickoff call. Imagine getting critical feedback from someone you have never met. Your first instinct might be to object to that person's ability to deliver judgment on your professional practice. An introductory call is critical, so that professionals can meet, discuss their backgrounds, and establish a collaborative working style before beginning the video observation process. Documenting a teacher's self-identified goals will also help the teacher select the right videos for coaching.

Include a coaching conversation. Written feedback cannot replace the power of a real dialogue. Coaches should schedule a follow-up phone call or video chat after video comments have been shared with the teacher.

Embed video clips in the conversation protocol. The video is not just a tool for observation. It is also a tool for learning and coaching. In Coaching with Video Vignettes, you will find four high-leverage strategies that make the most of coaching conversations through guided noticing: narration, questioning, coding and counting, and pivotal pausing.

Keep scoring secondary. In the Best Foot Forward project, teachers expressed greater receptivity to feedback when virtual coaches did not share scores before a coaching conversation (or assign scores at all). If scores are being collected (e.g., in an evaluative conversation), it is better to keep them private until after the coaching conversation. Not only is the conversation an opportunity to gather evidence that wasn't easily observable on video, but when a score is apparent before a coaching session, it changes the focus of the conversation from practice to measurement.

Close the cycle with another video. The final component of any coaching cycle should be the submission of another video in which the teacher showcases the implementation of a "next step."

These guidelines will help address the challenges of remote coaching in a school environment and help teachers work toward a positive and useful professional development experience. ⭕

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Select experienced teachers in your area of need.** Video technology allows people in different places to collaborate in real time, so you can focus coaching on targeted growth, rather than convenience. Bringing in an expert with specific content knowledge can help isolated teachers expand their practice.

2. **Create routines for a solid coaching relationship.** A positive, productive relationship between a coach and teacher is central to successful coaching and can be achieved by an early conversation about goals and a score-free post-conference dialogue.

3. **Use video to demonstrate change in practice as well as diagnose areas of need.** After a teacher and coach identify actionable next steps for improvement, the teacher can videotape those next steps and share them with the coach as a springboard for discussing the effectiveness of new strategies in the classroom.

🧰 REMOTE COACHING TOOLS

TOOL ID	RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION	INTENDED AUDIENCE
L3A	Coaching with Video Vignettes: Four Guided Noticing Techniques	Four strategies to help teachers have an aha moment in virtual coaching experiences	Teacher coaches, teachers, school administrators
L3B	Coaching Tip: Dealing with Distractions While Using Video Models	Tips from a Teachstone blogger about focusing the feedback conversation while using video	Teacher coaches, teachers, school administrators
L3C	Helping Teachers See Themselves	Reflections from TNTP on effective virtual coaching based on experience working with Best Foot Forward participants	Teacher coaches, school administrators, district administrators
L3D	Introductory Coaching Conversation Protocol	Tools for holding introductory and regular coaching conversations, courtesy of the MQI Coaching Project at the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University	Teacher coaches, school administrators, district administrators
L3E	Coaching Conversation Planning Guide		
L3F	Collaborative Coaching Log		
L3G	Vendors for Remote Coaching	A list of companies and organizations that provide remote coaching services for teachers*	District administrators, school administrators

Please note that this does not constitute an endorsement of any products or services.

"Sometimes I've been in evaluations where I'm like, "You saw that? What are you talking about? I have no idea what you're saying," but because of video, that was absent from our discussion. "

Best Foot Forward teacher, Georgia (2014)

Approach 4: Video for Evaluation

▶ **At first,** the idea of using video technology in an evaluation sounds very much like Big Brother, but in the Best Foot Forward project, we learned that a well-designed process can actually give teachers more control over what administrators see compared to in-person observations. Initial findings indicate that video contributed to perceptions of greater fairness in the evaluation process as well as greater satisfaction with feedback and the process overall. The following considerations are intended to aid education leaders when designing a video evaluation process.

Let teachers choose the video. In the formative coaching process a teacher might share a significant classroom dilemma, but in an evaluation, teachers want to showcase their best work to their managers. This may be difficult in surprise, in-person observations: A teacher may become more nervous or aware of the evaluative gaze while teaching, thereby altering his or her practice; the day's planned activity may not represent a teacher's typical instruction; or an administrator may only be present for part of a lesson and miss student demonstrations of understanding at the end of the hour. If teachers control the camera, they are able to choose a videotaped lesson that they believe represents a comprehensive view of their best work.

Not only does this process increase teacher agency in evaluation, but it also encourages teachers to rewatch several lessons and contemplate what constitutes effective, evaluation-worthy instruction before choosing what will be submitted to the administrator. In

other words, it builds in more self-reflection than the typical in-person observation process and better prepares teachers for an equal part in the post-conference conversation.

One common objection to giving teachers control of the camera is that some teachers might put on a "dog and pony show." However, in the Best Foot Forward project, we found that there were no significant differences in teacher and administrator perceptions of lesson authenticity between those using videos and those being observed in person. Teachers' mean scores, as assigned by third-party raters, were indeed higher on self-selected videos compared to videos that teachers did not select for evaluation. However, the scores on videos that teachers selected for evaluative observation were still highly correlated with the scores on videos that were not selected for observation, maintaining ranking scores between teachers. In other words, teachers put their "best foot forward," but this did not

fundamentally change the distribution of observation scores between teachers. More information about these findings can be found in the Best Foot Forward research brief.

Use video observations in tandem with in-person observations. When we polled our study participants, we found that the majority of teachers, whether or not they actually participated in video observations, would support video to replace in-person observations entirely. More than two thirds supported using videos to replace some in-person observations. Yet administrators expressed difficulty learning about students through a video interface. In focus groups, they discussed how much they missed being in the classroom. Ultimately, we recommend using video alongside in-person observations. For example, in-person walkthroughs throughout the year give administrators a chance to collect evidence over time and support teachers and students more frequently whereas full-length observations might be conducted via video at more convenient times of day, when class is not in session and principals can fully examine instruction. Another approach would be to let teachers submit lessons that demonstrate growth in areas identified in prior live observations.

Consider involving normed external observers. We learned that the use of video did not save administrators' time; in fact, administrators who provided feedback using video reported spending more time on the observation process as a whole than the control group. When we dug into this finding, however, we learned that the increase was driven by time spent watching instruction rather than doing paperwork. In other words, the increase in total time was driven by instructional activities rather than compliance.

One way to make video observations more efficient is to involve outside raters. For example, one district in Georgia allows outside raters to score and tag a video, but then

After participating in Best Foot Forward, teachers who had used video were more likely to support replacing some or all of their in-person observations with video observations.

53%
of control teachers support

68%
of treatment teachers support
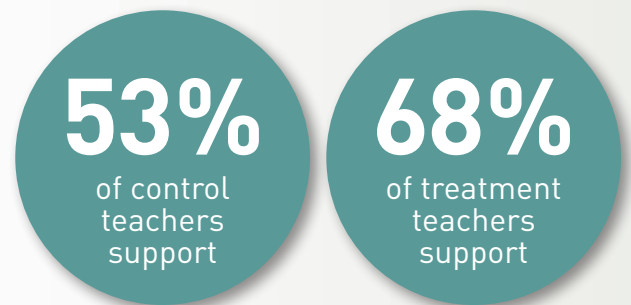
principals approve the final scoring. In this model, principals watch only preidentified, high-leverage moments in the lesson. It preserves final judgment for the administrator while affording them more time and support by giving them access to another expert's determinations.

Ensure familiarity with working technology first. When classroom observations have stakes attached to them, the last thing teachers want to worry about is whether their technology works, and the last thing administrators want to think about is whether they will be able to stream a video on the district network. The Turnkey Technology section of this toolkit includes considerations and principles to help lessen technological difficulty throughout the process. ○

A Video Observation Cycle
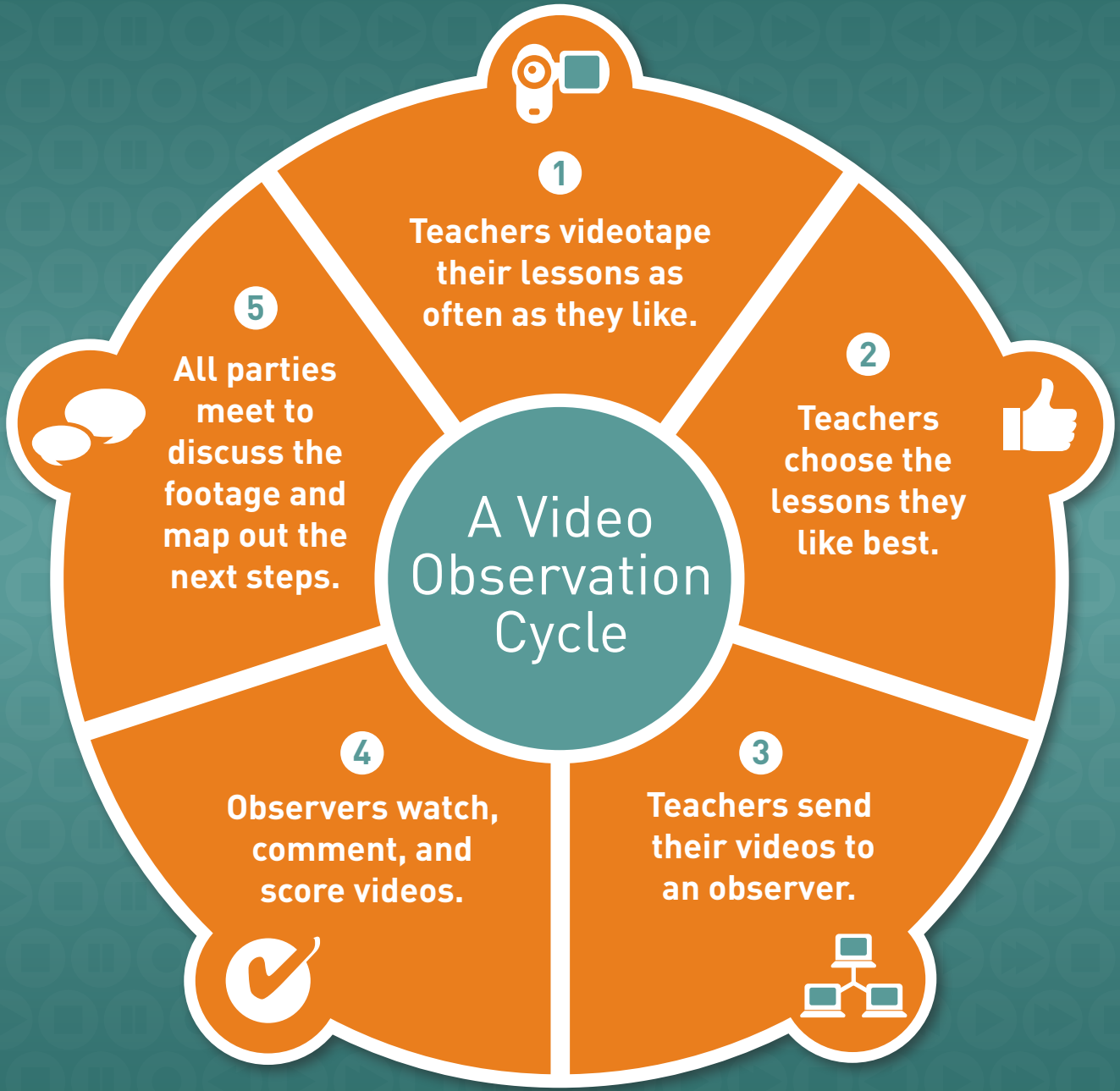
1 Teachers videotape their lessons as often as they like.

2 Teachers choose the lessons they like best.

3 Teachers send their videos to an observer.

4 Observers watch, comment, and score videos.

5 All parties meet to discuss the footage and map out the next steps.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Let teachers choose videos for observation. When teachers put their best foot forward, they are able to showcase their best work to their managers. Research shows that this approach increases perceptions of fairness in an observation.

2. Use video observations in tandem with in-person observations. Administrators' presence in classrooms is important for many reasons; video can help shift the quality and focus of principal time in classrooms. Since the two need not be mutually exclusive, consider what types of evidence are best collected by video compared to in-person.

3. Consider involving normed external observers to create more administrator capacity, increase the reliability of the final evaluation score, and give teachers more content-specific feedback about their practice.

4. Ensure familiarity with working technology first. Nobody should worry about a poor evaluation because a camera was not working. Be sure to read our Turnkey Technology section, so that the tools you choose minimize malfunction and maximize success.

VIDEO EVALUATION TOOLS

TOOL ID	RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION	INTENDED AUDIENCE
L4A	The Best Foot Forward Project: Substituting Teacher-Collected Video for In-Person Classroom Observations	Information about the Best Foot Forward project and how video stacked up against in-person observations in an evaluation system regarding both improvements and challenges	Departments of education, district administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders, teachers
L4B	The Power of Shared Evidence	PowerPoint presentation from the Best Foot Forward project focusing on the mechanisms by which video improves the feedback conversation in an evaluation	Departments of education, district administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders, teachers
L4C	When Teachers Choose: Fairness and Authenticity in Teacher-Initiated Classroom Observations	PowerPoint presentation from the Best Foot Forward project focusing on the impacts of teacher video choice on the fairness and reliability of observation scores	Departments of education, district administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders, teachers
L4D	A Clearer View of the Classroom	A glimpse at video as an advanced evaluation tool offering more depth to teachers and administrators, from District Administration	District administrators

Approach 5: Build a Video Library

▶ **Many school districts train observers** to measure performance using stock videos of instruction. We often hear complaints from educators about how these videos do not reflect the challenges, demographics, curricula, and standards of effectiveness that are particular to their context. Once teachers begin collecting videos for formative or evaluative purposes, leaders have an opportunity to build a pedagogical video library that helps establish a common vision of what excellent, rigorous instruction looks like in their own context. This can be particularly meaningful for new teachers, looking for exposure to best practices. It also gives school leaders an opportunity to celebrate excellent teachers by showcasing their work and holding them up as exemplar practitioners. In this section, and in Choose the Right Technology, you can find tools to identify platforms that will allow you to effectively build this library.[1] ○

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Determine your purpose.** Are you organizing your videos along organizational priorities (e.g., Common Core instruction) or your local rubric? For what purpose do you need exemplars? For example, knowing that examples of differentiation are a particular area of need in the district will help drive the collection of videos for your library.

2. **Ask observers and teachers who watch in-district video to nominate great teachers and exemplar video clips.** Building central capacity to watch hours of footage from across a school district is a costly endeavor. Tap the observers already watching video to identify examples of excellence. There are also a growing number of publicly available video libraries to draw from as you build your own local resources, a selection of which can be found in this toolkit.

3. **Ask teachers for permission.** Teachers using video for coaching purposes may not be ready to share their videos with the entire district, even if it's an excellent example of instruction. Consider creating incentives for video sharing, including publicly recognizing teachers who are willing to open up their classroom for the betterment of all district teachers. You can learn more about protecting teacher privacy in the Cultivating Trust section of the toolkit.

4. **Build capacity to master-code filmed instruction to your observational tool and curricular standards.** Ultimately, you want to build a searchable library that teachers can use when building instructional units and need great ideas, and that coaches or administrators can use when developing teachers in particular areas of need.

🧰 VIDEO LIBRARY TOOLS

TOOL ID	RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION	INTENDED AUDIENCE
L5A	Libraries of Videotaped Instruction	A list of online collections of classroom video*	Teachers, instructional leaders, school administrators

Please note that this does not constitute an endorsement of any products or services.

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[1] This section was developed in collaboration with Tamika Guishard of B. Good Productions, pedagogical video consultant and former filming specialist at DC Public Schools

Cultivating Trust in Video Observations

Successful implementation of video observations requires a safe environment for teachers and students—one in which the right privacy processes and policies are in place and communicated to all involved parties.

In this section, we use the findings of the **Best Foot Forward project**, a study of video technology in classroom observations, to provide an overview of common concerns around video observations, strategies to address concerns from teachers and parents, and tips on how to create a trustworthy environment with video.

Please note that you will need to work with your own legal team to assess the policies and requirements in your own state or district. The content here is based on our experience in the Best Foot Forward project from 2012-2015 and may not apply to you, as laws around videotaping in schools are constantly being revised and updated.

IN THIS SECTION:

- What are the concerns that teachers may have about video observations, and what can I do to alleviate those concerns?

- What steps do I need to take in order to be ready to implement video observations in my district or school?

- What should I communicate to parents about the use of video in their child's classroom?

STEP 1:
CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR TEACHERS

[P. 23]

STEP 2:
COMMUNICATE WITH PARENTS AND MANAGE STUDENT PRIVACY CONCERNS

[P. 26]

"I'm very shy, I guess. I don't like people in my classroom. It's very awkward. After a while I can get over it, but I'm still aware that they're there, and it's very uncomfortable for me."

Best Foot Forward teacher, California (2014)

Step 1: Create a Safe Environment for Teachers

▶ **With the proliferation** of high-stakes in-person observations, it is understandable that teachers may be more nervous than ever to open their doors to administrators or external observers, even when an observation is not for evaluative purposes. Teachers may be even more apprehensive about taping their instruction and sharing a video with others. Who will see it? How will it be stored? Could it be used against me? Is it a permanent record? Some teachers may be concerned about security and access to their videos. For other teachers, it may be the first time that they watch themselves teach, and they may feel exposed and vulnerable. For these reasons, creating an environment where teachers can feel safe sharing instruction is critical.

When you first introduce the idea of using video to support teacher learning and development, you will want to be prepared to address the benefits and risks of using video with teachers. It is important to share that teacher-controlled video observations can actually help increase the feelings of safety and trust that teachers have in being observed. For example, if video observations are used for evaluative purposes, school districts can audit the quality of classroom observations against master raters' scores and ensure that teachers are getting the fairest possible evaluation. Teachers in the Best Foot Forward project found the video observation process significantly fairer than an in-person observation process.

Furthermore, video can help improve the conditions for discussing professional practice with a manager. In the Best Foot Forward project, researchers found that video observations created the conditions for less adversarial feedback following an observation. As one teacher from California described:

It became an actual conversation. It wasn't them going through a checklist and saying, 'We saw this, this, this, do you agree? Okay.' It was more of, 'I noticed that…,' and then we had the video to support it. It didn't feel personal. It wasn't an attack.

As such, video observations can help foster a culture of collaboration and improve relationships among teachers and observers.

After learning the benefits of video observations, teachers will also want to know whether videos can be used beyond the intended purpose. Here we describe some steps you can take to address those concerns.

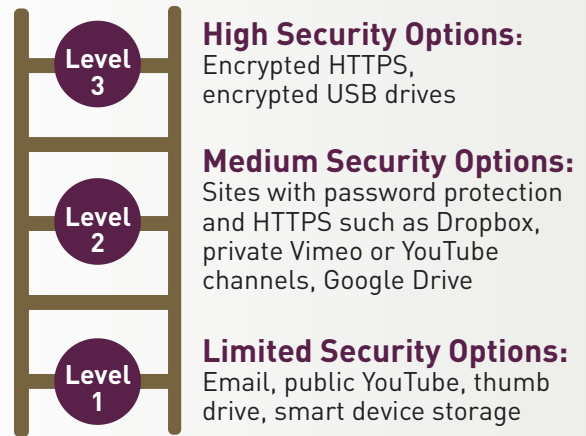## GUIDELINES FOR CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR VIDEO OBSERVATIONS

Investigate what privacy policies and practices exist in your district. Most schools and districts have a policy around video use. Local collective bargaining laws may also exist and, if so, must be taken into consideration. A clear understanding of your district's policy environment will allow you to communicate more effectively with both parents and teachers.

Communicate! Share your privacy plan with teachers and parents. Teachers need to be assured that the recorded video will be handled and stored in a secure manner. You may need to create consent forms for teachers if the video will be used for purposes outside of evaluation and professional development. Parents will also need to be informed about video use and what it means for their child and be provided an opportunity to opt out. Consider how teachers will be involved in parent outreach.

Discuss the purpose of video observations with teachers and highlight the benefits. Be clear about the intended use of the video in your school/district, whether it's for evaluation, peer-to-peer collaboration, self-reflection, etc. Think through the messages that you convey about the use of video as teachers may feel apprehensive about the idea of recording themselves and sharing their video with an observer. Emphasize the goal of growth and learning as a standard for evaluation, as this Delaware administrator from the Best Foot Forward project describes: "We really try to stay away from 'gotchas' as this is always an opportunity for us to grow… [We tell our teachers] it's not about you being in trouble or not getting it right." Remind teachers of the benefits of recording their classroom practice, especially as it relates to giving their students a great education.

Allow teachers to record the lesson of their choice and choose what observers see. In traditional in-person observations, evidence is collected and owned by the observer. This

Climbing the Security Ladder

Level 3

High Security Options: Encrypted HTTPS, encrypted USB drives

Level 2

Medium Security Options: Sites with password protection and HTTPS such as Dropbox, private Vimeo or YouTube channels, Google Drive

Level 1

Limited Security Options: Email, public YouTube, thumb drive, smart device storage

creates the conditions for dispute over what happened during an observed lesson. However, when teachers are co-owners of evidence, taping and choosing what gets seen, they become much more engaged in the process. By shifting the locus of ownership, the teacher became the primary investigator. Having agency in one's own learning process creates the conditions for safety and learning.

Recognize that teachers might be nervous about the feedback process. Teachers may be worried about being judged negatively by their peers or their administrator, so it is important to emphasize that the video observation process is not meant to be a form of monitoring or fodder for negative accountability. Allow teachers to identify areas for improvement on their own, and scaffold their learning process by asking guiding questions.

Encourage teachers to regularly share their videos with other teachers. If teachers feel uncomfortable sharing video of their classroom with externally appointed observers, start with low-stakes peer observations. You might let teachers choose a qualified friend or colleague to give them feedback. Teachers will learn from one another and become more comfortable in the process. ⊙

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Take all steps necessary to ensure data privacy and security.** Read our Video Privacy Questions to ensure that you have covered all of the necessary steps.

2. **Assess your existing school climate.** If trust between teachers and administrators is a challenge at a school, video can assist school staff in building their relationships, but start with using video for formative feedback to scaffold trust and feelings of safety.

3. **Explain the process and its benefits to teachers.** Prepare consent forms for teachers and students as needed. Review our customizable sample forms if you need examples.

4. **Give teachers a choice in what lesson is recorded and shared.** Remember that video observations should be optional.

5. **Encourage teachers to build networks of support and feedback within schools.** The culture around video starts with the person implementing it. Create a culture of collaboration that shows that teachers are supported, valued, and heard.

6. **Collect feedback.** Be sure to check in with teachers who are using video to learn what they like about the process and what is challenging or uncomfortable. Use this feedback to continuously improve your processes.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT TOOLS

TOOL ID	RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION	INTENDED AUDIENCE
C1A	Teacher Letter: Benefits of Video Observations and Common Questions about Privacy and Video Use	A template letter to teachers highlighting the benefits of using video for classroom observations and evaluation, as well as responses to possible concerns over privacy	Teachers (to be modified by district or school administrators)
C1B	Video Privacy Questions: A Timeline	Checklist of the important steps to take when implementing video	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders
C1C	Sample Teacher Consent Form	Sample teacher form that can be customized for use in your district and that allows teachers to select what level of video observation they would like to implement	Teachers (to be modified by district or school administrators)
C1D	Collective Bargaining Agreement (Sample)	Sample agreement from a district using video; can be used as a reference when discussing video with your teachers' union	District administrators

Parents will have questions: How can teachers effectively harness the power of video observations while protecting student privacy?

Step 2: Communicate with Parents and Manage Student Privacy Concerns

▶ **Maintaining student privacy** and clear communication with parents will be a vital part of implementing video observations in your school or district. Parents will have several questions about the role of video in the classroom, including the intended purpose of the video, what their child's participation involves, how the videos will used, and the benefits and risks of their child appearing in the videos.

You should be transparent in your communications to parents and inform parents that:

• Students are not the subject of the observation;

• Video will be used for educational purposes only, not for commercial endeavors;

• Video will be used to support teachers' development, which will allow them to identify their strengths and areas for growth, in addition to making sure student needs are met;

• All video data collected will be handled in a secure manner;

• Student participation is always voluntary and dependent upon their parents' consent; and

• Students will not be penalized if parents do not allow students to be on tape.

Depending on your staff capacity, additional techniques to maintain student privacy may be used, such as face blurring. Certain software programs, such as Adobe Premiere, Final Cut Pro, iMovie, or Camtasia include features that allow you to blur a face on screen (or even track a specific pixel pattern, such as a face, depending on your tech savviness), and instructions can be found online. YouTube also provides a face blurring technology for videos shared through their platform.

TYPES OF PARENTAL CONSENT FORMS
Is your media release form opt-in or opt-out?
Opt-out (passive) consent: Parents only need to return the form if they do not allow their child to participate.
Opt-in (active) consent: Parents must return the form regardless of whether they choose to give permission.

There are a number of ways to inform parents about video observations, including webinars, back-to-school night sessions, sending letters home, or presenting at PTA meetings. It may be beneficial to speak with a few parent leaders and discuss the best way to reach parents with concerns. We have developed a few tools that can serve as a starting point in your efforts to communicate with them.

STUDENT DATA PRIVACY

While many states and districts do not currently have policies or laws in place that govern the use of video technology in classrooms, it is important that you are aware of regulations that may exist in your district. It is also important that you review your district's policy on consent—every district has specific requirements.

Currently, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) does not specifically cover the use of video observations for teachers because these video recordings are managed by teachers.

However, classroom video observations will be subject to regulations under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) when identifiable students appear on film. Even if the video is not maintained for the purpose of student record keeping, a video of students is treated as a student record. FERPA does not apply if students cannot be identified in the video. In all other cases, parental consent forms should describe the specific security features in place and grant permission for the videos to be shared on the Internet or any other medium. Because the video is considered to be a student record, parents have the right to request access to any video of their child. If this happens, it then becomes necessary to mask other students in the class because their records may not be disclosed. Also note that under FERPA, videos may only be used to share best practices when in the legitimate interest of the district, and then only within the district. We strongly recommend that you use active (opt-in) parental consent forms to receive permission to record students.

Please refer to your district or state department of education website or contact them directly to learn more about your area's policies and practices. When implementing policies that include minors, audio and/or video recordings, and the Internet, you should always consult with your legal team. In addition, there are a multitude of resources on the web that focus on this issue, and we have included some of these below. ○

WHAT IS FERPA?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act is a federal law that was created to govern the protection of student records in all schools who receive funds from the U.S. Department of Education. Classroom observation videos are considered a student record and therefore will be governed by FERPA, so you should **always consult with your district's legal team** before enacting policy. You can learn more about FERPA on the **Department of Education website.**

WHAT IS COPPA?

The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act is a Federal Trade Commission regulation that prevents the online collection of personal information from children under 13. It regulates what a Web site operator must include in a privacy policy, dictates when and how to seek verifiable consent from a parent, and what responsibilities an operator has to protect children's privacy and safety online. Classroom observation videos are uploaded by teachers and therefore are not governed by COPPA, but you should **always consult with your district's legal team** before enacting policy. You can learn more about COPPA and schools on the **FTC website.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Review the current policies that may exist in your state or district around student data use.

2. Take all steps necessary to ensure data privacy and security. Read our <u>privacy timeline</u> to ensure that you have covered all of the necessary steps, and verify that you are in compliance with local, state, and federal laws by reviewing your policies with a legal team.

3. Communicate clearly and thoroughly with parents. Review the <u>frequently asked questions</u> to ensure that you have addressed the most common questions and concerns.

4. Engage in discussions. The idea of videotaping can make parents uncomfortable, so be sure to open doorways for ongoing communication of concerns and feedback.

PARENT COMMUNICATION TOOLS

TOOL ID	RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION	INTENDED AUDIENCE
C2A	<u>Common Questions Around Privacy and Video Use: Parents</u>	A list of frequently asked questions that you can share with students' parents	Parents (to be modified by district or school administrators, instructional leaders, or teachers)
C2B	<u>Student Privacy: What Parents Need to Know about Video</u>	Slides that can be customized to inform parents about video observations and what it means for the students involved	Parents (to be modified by district or school administrators, instructional leaders, or teachers)
C2C	<u>Student Media Release Form: Opt-in</u>	Sample forms that can be customized for your context	Parents (to be modified by district or school administrators)
C2D	<u>Student Media Release Form: Opt-out</u>		
C2E	<u>Face Blurring: When Footage Requires Anonymity</u>	Tools from YouTube to conveniently blur faces in a video	District technology staff

Turnkey Technology: Setting up Schools for Effective Implementation

Video is a powerful tool for teachers to hone their expertise, share best practices, and receive feedback. However, the potential will not be realized if the right technology and infrastructure is not in place. Teachers and school administrators have demanding jobs, so it is essential to ensure that new technologies supplement their work without adding undue stress, confusion, and wasted time.

Thoughtful implementation of technology was a key consideration of the **Best Foot Forward project**, a study of how video use can improve classroom observations.

This section describes the components of a classroom video kit as well as the considerations that go into making an informed selection. We also share our knowledge of incorporating video technology into existing infrastructure and making sure that the necessary supports are in place, and we share some best practices for training teachers and administrators to use new video technology. This section contains both practical "big picture" considerations for district and school leaders and also more specific advice for the individuals who may be responsible for ultimately selecting and implementing the new video equipment.

IN THIS SECTION:

- **What do I need to consider when selecting optimal video technology?**

- **What personnel, budgetary, and technological infra-structure do I need to support effective video use?**

- **How can I design an effective training that minimizes the need for training support and remediation throughout the year?**

STEP 1:
CHOOSE THE RIGHT TECHNOLOGY

[P. 30]

STEP 2:
SET UP YOUR INFRA-STRUCTURE

[P. 34]

STEP 3:
TRAIN TEACHERS AND OBSERVERS

[P. 38]

"One of [my teachers] was frustrated at the very beginning with how the technology didn't work for her, so she didn't embrace it for the rest of the time. It became an impediment. So I don't know that she got a lot of out of it and wasn't as reflective as...others were."

Best Foot Forward principal, Colorado (2014)

Step 1: Choose the Right Technology

▶ **The classroom video kit** is the keystone to any successful video observation process. Teachers will not reap the benefits of video if their equipment is difficult to operate. For your classroom video pilot to succeed, you will need to select high-quality technology that is user-friendly and well-supported.

If you choose a kit that is more complex to use, be sure to increase the amount of training and support to ensure successful implementation and adoption.

To choose the right technology, start by considering how the video will be used after being recorded. When you reach a decision, you should plan to pilot the technology with a small group of teachers and observers, collect their feedback, and adjust your technology and protocols as needed.

Researchers in the Best Foot Forward project replaced live teacher evaluations with videotaped observations. This required high-quality audio and a wide view of the classroom to provide optimal evidence for teachers and evaluators. When video is used for other purposes, such as distance learning for absent students or teacher team collaboration, the same caliber of audio and visuals may not be necessary. Similarly, you will also need to consider how teachers and observers will review the videos.

KEY TECHNOLOGY TERMS

Hardware: technology that occupies a physical space, in this case things like a video camera, microphone, or computer

Kit: all the pieces of hardware and software needed to complete a video observation

Software: programs or websites accessed from a computer to support your use of video, such as for editing length or sharing with another person (a viewing platform is an example of software)

Viewing Platform: a website that allows people to share videos with specific people

Classrooms are dynamic, student-centered spaces. This makes video capture more complex.

A CLASSROOM VIDEO KIT

Essential	Optional
• Video camera • Microphone (internal to camera or external) • Tripod or stand • Viewing platform	• Wide-angle lens • Storage container for equipment • Additional microphone

THE BEST FOOT FORWARD KIT

• Video camera (tablet)
• Robotic base
• Two external microphones
• Tripod
• Viewing platform

5 WAYS TO USE VIDEO OBSERVATIONS

1. Self-reflection

2. Peer collaboration

3. Teacher coaching

4. Formal observation

5. Best practices library

OUR GUIDING RULE ON TECHNOLOGY

When selecting your technology, a single priority should guide your decision-making: simplicity and ease of use. Prioritizing this will yield the best results. If not, make sure that technological support is readily available to the teachers and administrators involved in the process. It can be tempting to invest in a high-tech setup that would result in video with the highest-quality image and sound. However, most teachers don't have time to master a complex system on top of their daily demands. No matter the complexity of the camera kit, purposeful training can help prepare your teachers to capture the most important parts of the lesson.

CAMERAS

Teachers today rarely stand at the front of the classroom lecturing students for hours on end: Classrooms are much more dynamic, student-centered spaces. This makes video capture more complex. A live observer can move around a classroom or easily shift focus from student work in one corner to the lesson chart paper in another, but a video camera on its own cannot. That's why it's important to prioritize the focus features of a particular video camera.

Some sophisticated devices allow you to film an entire room with a wide-angle lens or a moving robot base, while a smartphone on a sm all tripod may be perfect for filming small group work. A semi-permanent installation may work well if each teacher is using his or her own camera, you know what view you want to have consistently, and the room is secure. A more portable setup would be preferable if teachers will use the camera dynamically (sometimes filming the entire class, other times small groups), share a single camera between classrooms, or need to bring it home at times. The Hardware Decision Guide will help showcase various features that support your purpose.

A Window into the Classroom: What Can a Camera Capture?

Board Work and Teacher Actions

Whole-room Activity

Student Engagement

Small Group Work
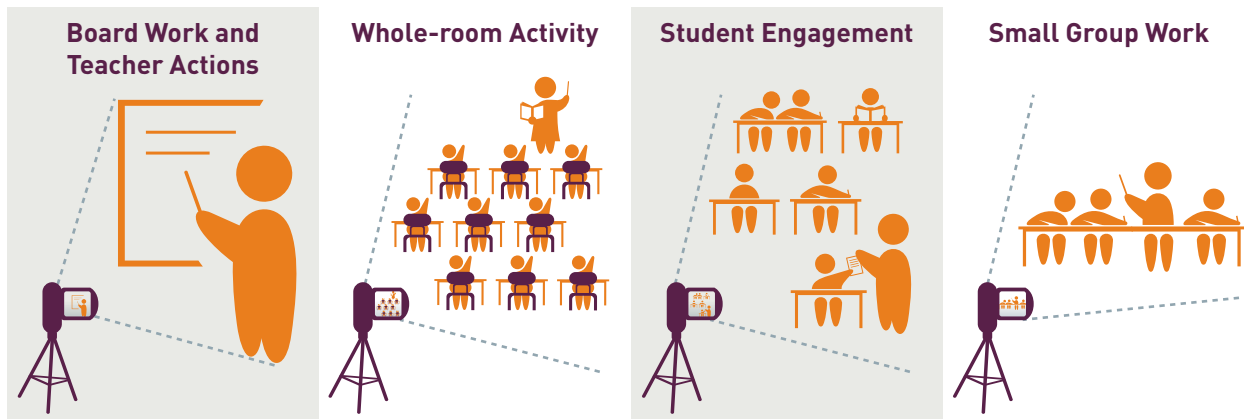
MICROPHONES

In addition to dynamic visuals, classrooms also provide a challenging soundscape. For example, a teacher delivering direct instruction is relatively easy to capture, but when students engage in group work there will be a lot of competing noise that can be difficult to understand during playback. You can choose between microphones that are built into the camera or external microphones that can be placed in the classroom. With external microphones, choose wireless technology whenever possible so that teachers have free range of motion, and you don't add any tripping hazards. You have a few choices for how you record audio in the classroom.

1. **Camera's internal microphone:** Although the simplest solution, an internal microphone has limited range and will generally capture whatever is loudest in the classroom, such as a teacher giving instruction or the student sitting close to the camera having a conversation.

2. **Single external microphone:** A single microphone can often be used easily with most cameras. With any external microphone, choose wireless microphones whenever possible, and decide whether this is something that teacher wears or if it is strategically placed among a group of students.

3. **Dual external microphones:** Using two microphones is a little more complex, so use our guiding rule on technology: Make the complexity of the kit proportionate to the support available. However, if used well, this option can give a clear recording throughout the lesson of both the teacher and another area of the room. For example, a second microphone could be used to capture student questions more clearly or to pick up smaller conversations.

Certain microphones will work better for capturing teacher–student conversations than for hearing a small group discussion. At this time, the only way to hear nearly everything that happens in a classroom is to have a sound crew there with a variety of equipment. However, the options listed here are versatile, and our Microphone Guide can explain further details and help you determine what's best for your schools.

VIEWING PLATFORMS

In most cases, we recommend an online viewing platform—that is, a website that allows people to share videos with one another. A viewing platform that can integrate your district's rubric and provide analytics will be needed for evaluation purposes while you may only need viewing and commenting features for other types of coaching and collaboration. See the Viewing Platform List to find the resource that best meets your needs.

COST MANAGEMENT

Classroom video technology can be an expensive endeavor, particularly if you select a camera kit for every teacher or choose devices with elaborate features. The good news is that purchasing a camera unit doesn't have to break the bank.

If you don't have one camera per teacher, schools or teams can share a camera kit and log off of the device once they've retrieved their personal video footage. Another cost-saving option could be to leverage something already in schools, such as tablet devices, which can be outfitted with supportive accessories to aid sound and angle. Some devices use an SD card, in which case you could provide these to teachers to use with their smartphone or certain tablet devices.

Return to your original purpose for using video. For example, you'll want widespread technology access for formal observations and evaluations. For creating a video library of best teaching practices, you may only need to have one setup at each school or even a few kits at the central office that could be shared among schools. Viewing platforms for watching the videos can be free or cost a small annual fee. ○

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Consider your space and goals.** Some cameras are easily moved, like a classic camcorder or smartphone, while others can be affixed to a wall or ceiling. You'll want higher-quality video for formal evaluation than you might need for peer collaboration. Check that the technology you select is compatible with your context.

2. **Put your technology to the test.** Before planning for implementation at full scale, try piloting your kit with a small group of teachers. Their experience is an excellent way to uncover what works well, what should be adjusted, and what should not be implemented at scale. It is wise to include teachers with varying competency using new technology.

3. **A good relationship with your technology vendor goes a long way.** Once you find your dream equipment, you still need to plan for a dream partnership with the technology vendor. You want to find a partner that is knowledgeable, accommodating, and responsive and that provides you with any analytics you need.

TECHNOLOGY TOOLS

TOOL ID	RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION	INTENDED AUDIENCE
T1A	Choose the Right Camera	A guide to matching video equipment to your goals*	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders, teachers
T1B	Audio Design: Microphones for the Classroom	A description of different types of microphones and their best uses*	
T1C	Viewing Platform Vendor List	A guide to platforms that can be used for reviewing classroom videos*	

Please note that this does not constitute an endorsement of any products or services.

"If you're going to have issues, thank goodness that there are people there who are going to help you."

Best Foot Forward teacher, Delaware (2014)

Step 2: Set up Your Infrastructure

▶ **When implementing** a new technology in schools there will be malfunctions and glitches that you just can't plan for. However, you can plan to have people and protocols in place to respond to these challenges, which will ensure that your program runs as smoothly as possible.

There are at least three key considerations for infrastructure: network connection and accessibility, support staff, and an established protocol and timeline.
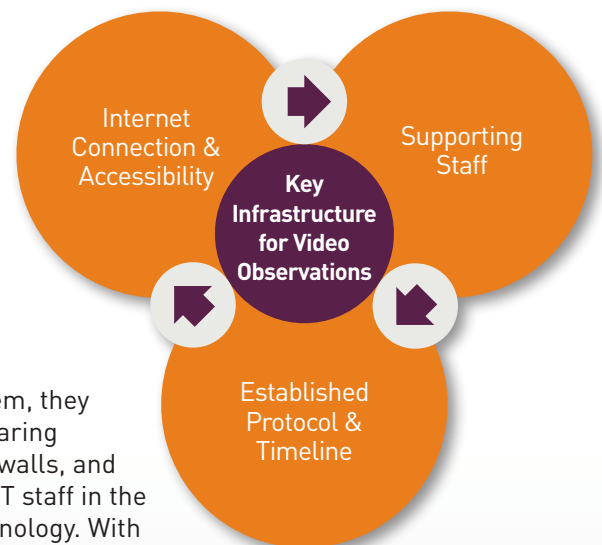
NETWORK CONNECTION

For teachers and observers to share videos and interact with them, they need to use the Internet. In addition to requiring the Internet, sharing videos can prove challenging due to large file sizes, network firewalls, and download restrictions. To minimize this challenge, include your IT staff in the process of planning and testing before launching new video technology. With some cameras and sharing platforms it is important to speak with the vendor's support or engineering staff in order to identify particular obstacles that could prevent successful use. Some common culprits we've encountered include the following:

Internet Connection & Accessibility

Supporting Staff

Key Infrastructure for Video Observations

Established Protocol & Timeline

OBSTACLES TO UPLOADING VIDEO TO THE INTERNET	
Computer/ network speed	Videos are large files and get larger as the quality increases. Older computers, or ones with low storage capacities, may struggle to play video smoothly, especially online.
Browser compatibility	Some viewing platforms are optimized for a specific web browser, such as Chrome, Safari, Internet Explorer, or Firefox. Your platform vendor will know this information, and your local IT team can ensure the necessary programs are installed.
Firewalls	Most districts use firewalls to filter certain content. If your district blocks sites like YouTube for watching videos, this may impact other websites for sharing video.
Plugins	Playing video online usually requires a plugin module, which is software that works with your Internet browser. Plugins usually need to be downloaded, and some districts restrict download capabilities.
MAC addresses	Some video cameras may have a MAC address, a unique identifier that allows that device to communicate with a network. If you have a camera that uploads directly to a platform, your IT team may need to safe-list the MAC addresses for any cameras being used.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Even the best technology may have glitches, so having support personnel available to work through challenges will preserve momentum in adoption of the new technology. An internal point person can work with teachers and administrators in a troubleshooting role, or at the least act as a liaison with vendor support teams.

Your vendor should always provide support: They know the technology best. As an educational institution with a multiple purchases, it is reasonable to expect a technology vendor to provide a case manager for your district. This person should be able to work with your IT staff to provide any technical details for implementation and to work with you throughout the year in providing analytics. There may be cases where your support does not actually come from the product manufacturer. Some retailers provide support for their products.

As you move past the initial phase of training, support needs will subside but not diminish. Consider appointing a willing teacher or other school-based tech coordinator to be an in-school trainer. This person may go through a more in-depth training and practice before others so that he or she can answer ongoing questions and provide continued support for teachers and observers. Schools will benefit from readily available support because it allows teachers to reach out to a coworker for support rather than an external technology provider, and thus increases teacher comfort with the process. A support protocol that requires the individual teacher to spend even 30 extra minutes on trial-and-error troubleshooting is not going to be popular.

In addition to designated people who can support teachers and administrators, it is wise to provide help materials that can be accessed at any time. A binder providing directions for setup and use, troubleshooting tips, a scheduling calendar, and frequently asked questions is helpful. A
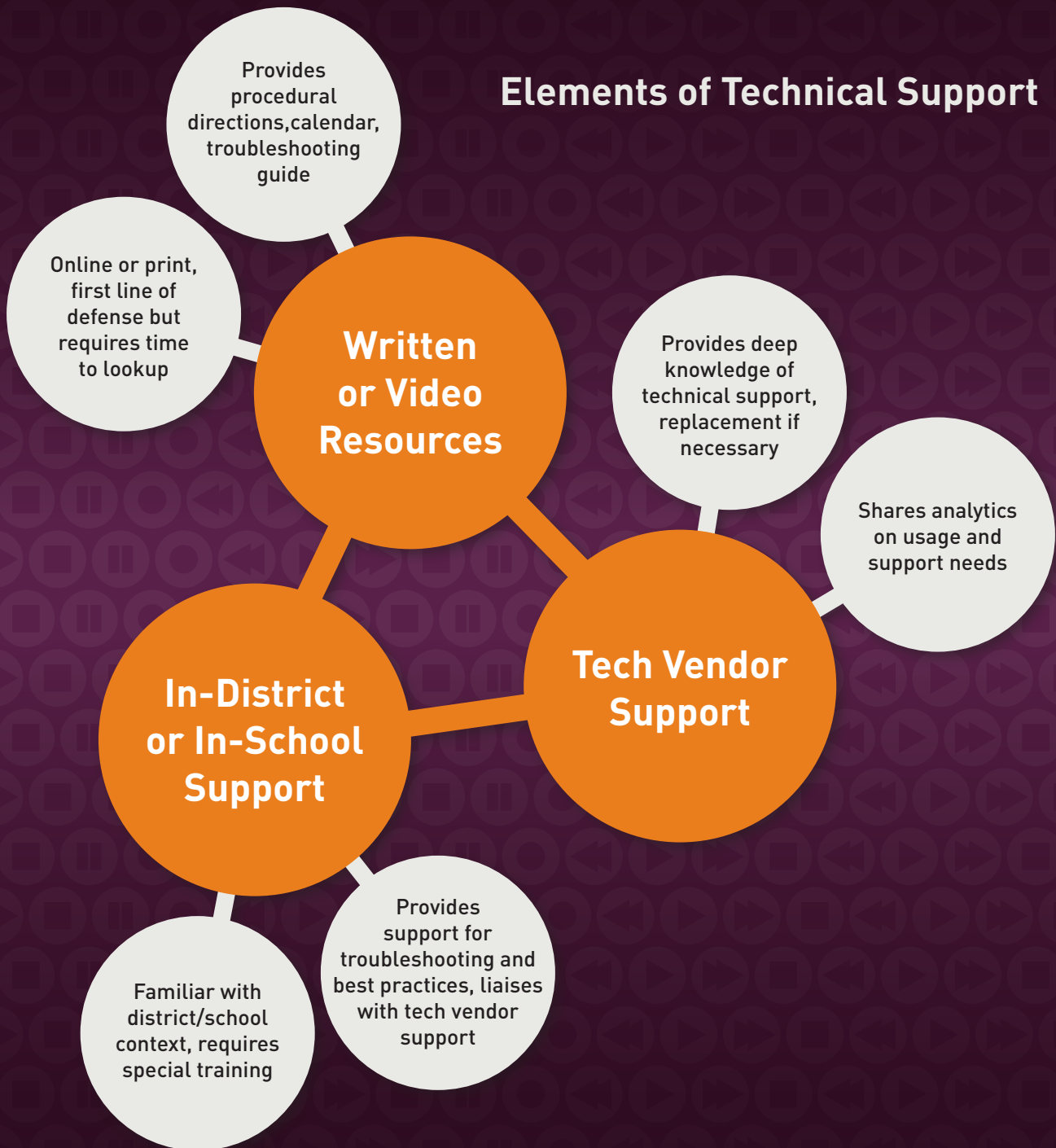
how-to guide can also be created online and include videos. While a guide is an important element of your support infrastructure, it is not a standalone solution; also be sure to utilize the in-district or in-school support staff as well as the tech vendor support described above. Giving teachers and administrators a clear outline on these three distinct resources and how they work together will reduce frustration when problems arise.

> An internal point person can work with teachers and administrators in a troubleshooting role, or at the least act as a liaison with manufacturer support teams.

CHECKLIST FOR LAUNCH

- ✔ Video and audio equipment has been selected and tested.
- ✔ IT staff has checked network access to viewing platform.
- ✔ IT staff has tested network abilities to handle video.
- ✔ Step-by-step procedures for setup, filming, uploading, and sharing have been shared.
- ✔ A calendar of benchmarks and due dates has been created and shared.
- ✔ Directions to in-person, phone, or written support are accessible.

Elements of Technical Support

Written or Video Resources

- Provides procedural directions, calendar, troubleshooting guide
- Online or print, first line of defense but requires time to lookup

Tech Vendor Support

- Provides deep knowledge of technical support, replacement if necessary
- Shares analytics on usage and support needs

In-District or In-School Support

- Familiar with district/school context, requires special training
- Provides support for troubleshooting and best practices, liaises with tech vendor support

TIMELINE

Be certain to build in as much time as possible to pilot new technology before implementing at scale. Your new video observation system may involve video hardware, audio hardware, and an online viewing platform, all of which need to work cooperatively and consistently. As described in Choose the Right Technology, it is important to pilot technology before wide-scale implementation to ensure that your AV equipment is compatible, that you can upload to computers smoothly, and that uploading to an online platform is not blocked due to video file size, network firewalls, or browser compatibility.

The easiest time to introduce a new process is at the start of the school year, so prepare to have technology tested and training prepared for the first day of school. In addition, if you're using video as part of a formal observation or professional development program, then you should set a timeline of benchmarks and due dates for tasks like recording and uploading videos, sharing work, or providing feedback. If the infrastructure as described here is not in place by your launch date, then you will likely lose momentum early on, and workloads will build up until later in the year. ⊙

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Appoint a resident expert.** Having someone locally available to support your educators will streamline support, help identify recurring challenges, and reduce frustration. Consider incentives for a "video captain" or IT specialist who takes this mantle.

2. **Ask for a support manager with your technology vendor.** Having someone who has intimate knowledge of the technology and how you will use it will help ensure that the process meets your expectations and that you have a direct point of contact to track successes and challenges.

3. **Provide written or video resources for reference.** When using video, teachers and principals may choose to complete observation work outside of school hours. Should they encounter any difficulty at this time, it is helpful to have support materials available.

4. **Test the whole process, adapt, and repeat.** If there are certain elements that cause regular difficulty, work with your in-district and vendor support to troubleshoot, and, if needed, replace particular components or protocols.

🧰 INFRASTRUCTURE TOOLS

TOOL ID	RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION	INTENDED AUDIENCE
T2A	Infrastructure Checklist for Launch	A checklist to ensure your infrastructure is in place before teachers and administrators start using the technology	District administrators, school administrators
T2B	Sample Support Structure	An organizational chart to streamline support for users	
T2C	How to Talk to Technology Vendors: A Guide for Education Leaders	Advice for making the most of your collaboration with tech vendors	

"You want to spend time reflecting on the video, not trying to figure out how to play it."

Best Foot Forward teacher, Colorado (2014)

Step 3: Train Teachers and Observers

▶ **As part of the Best Foot Forward project,** teachers and observers were trained to use self-controlled audio and video equipment, as well as an online platform for sharing videos and providing feedback and evaluation. Teachers and administrators completed either a five-hour in-person training or a blend of online training modules and in-person support early in the school year. Many teachers and school administrators expressed a desire for periodic trainings throughout the year to continue to improve their use of video.

Strong initial training and ongoing support will sustain successful use of video in the classroom. Effective technology implementation provides a foundation upon which schools can build a better observation process. If the foundation is weak, the real work of teacher development will suffer. Therefore, it is essential to provide opportunities for early, hands-on practice with the equipment and immediate feedback. In this section, we'll look at the **who, what, when, where,** and **how** of implementing a strong training opportunity for your educators.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND TRAININGS ON CLASSROOM VIDEO?

Learning to use video is a collaborative experience for teachers and administrators. Make sure that they work together to understand the big picture and where their responsibilities in the observation process come together. It may seem intuitive to separate teachers' and administrators' trainings, so that each group is focused on the specific skills that they will need to succeed; however, with Best Foot Forward, we learned that having both parties come together to define their roles, expectations, and goals in the observation process can be highly effective. While you'll still want to have specific training sessions for each group on the pieces of technology that they will use, getting both groups to invest in the process by having a joint conversation will improve long-term engagement and mutual support.

As you plan your training, consider how you will also train the people who will lead support, whether they're IT staff, district staff, or specific teachers. These people should have the most in-depth knowledge of the technology and should receive comprehensive training and practice.

WHAT SKILLS SHOULD BE COVERED IN TRAINING?

The technology you select will mandate the particular skills your teachers and administrators need to learn to become proficient. Identify each discrete step in the observation process. You should provide the opportunity for all participants to go through the full observation cycle. Teachers should setup their equipment, film, upload, and share a video. Observers should practice accessing and sharing feedback on the video. See our Sample Training Agenda for an example of how to train educators for formal video observations.

Teachers and administrators will have varying levels of comfort with technology. Before beginning the training, you can ask teachers to self-rate their comfort with technology or give them a short activity to evaluate their readiness. Tailor training based on this level of comfort. When developing your training and support structures, consider how you can differentiate training based on these levels. Underscore the value of video, take the time to address any concerns, and provide a clear pathway to ongoing support. Consistently highlight that a mindset based on learning and growth, not prior knowledge or skills, will lead to success.

Beyond discomfort with the technology, the experience of watching oneself on video can make many teachers uneasy at first. This will change over time. Break the ice early by having teachers film each other in pairs and watch the video. In the long run, these steps will make teachers more comfortable with video and encourage them to direct their own learning.

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME FOR TRAINING?

Training should occur at a time when both teachers and administrators can meet together, so consider professional development times or school staff development days. You can also consider breaking training into multiple days covering discrete skills or plan to have check-in trainings to troubleshoot areas of need throughout the school year.

WHERE SHOULD TRAINING TAKE PLACE?

Whenever possible, hold the training in the context in which video will be used: Training to film in the cafeteria will not be as effective as giving teachers the opportunity to set up the technology in their own classroom (or a classroom similar to theirs) and testing the camera in their unique space.

> You should measure the success of training by assessing each teacher's independent ability to setup equipment, record video, and upload video to a shared platform. Similarly, observers should complete an online mock observation in full.

HOW MIGHT VIDEO FIT INTO EXISTING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AND HOW IS SUCCESS MEASURED?

Most school districts train their observers on how to complete teacher observations and evaluations, and many also train teachers to understand their instructional rubrics and strategies for growth and professional development. When implementing video, consider how you can build off of what already exists: Administrators may practice scoring by tagging a video using the rubric, or teachers may learn to identify certain practices by reviewing them on existing video. Using this prior knowledge will allow you to introduce video as a new tool in the process, not a new process in itself.

You should measure the success of training by assessing each teacher's independent ability to setup equipment, record video, and upload video to a shared platform. Similarly, observers should complete an online mock observation in full. Use data from this final assessment exercise to provide differential supports to those who are still struggling with the technology.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

As with your technology, keep training simple. Once you design your optimal teacher and observer training, bring in fresh eyes to re-evaluate your design for simplicity and clarity. Remember that a simple implementation and training process will lead to deeper teacher learning. In addition, always keep in mind that it is the quality of instruction, not the quality of video, is the central concern—a low-resolution video of great teaching and learning is better than a high-definition video of an empty classroom! ◗

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Prioritize your essential skills.** There is a lot to be learned when introducing a new technology into schools. Format your training so that the most important skills are clearly identified and participants have an opportunity to practice each of them.

2. **Bring teachers and observers together.** Video observations will be a shared experience, so it makes the most sense to bring all parties together at the start, rather than beginning separately and coming together at a later point in the process. Not having a shared understanding is likely to increase confusion and decrease satisfaction.

3. **Hold more than one training session.** Troubleshooting any challenges early on will smooth the implementation process. Some teachers might have difficulty the first times they attempt to record, or administrators might have questions once they begin reviewing in earnest. Consider a check-in session after the first month or recurring training opportunities, and film at least one training to save as a support resource.

🧰 TRAINING TOOLS

TOOL ID	RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION	INTENDED AUDIENCE
T3A	Teacher Letter: Benefits of Video Observations and Common Questions about Privacy and Video Use	A template letter to teachers highlighting the benefits of using video for classroom observations and evaluation, as well as responses to possible concerns over privacy	Teachers (to be modified by district or school administrators)
T3B	Classroom Video Training Example	A sample lesson plan for a training for teachers and principals on using video for formal observations	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders
T3C	MTTS Study: Quick Guides	Some how-to videos for using video technology in the classroom from the MTTS Study	Teachers, instructional leaders, school administrators, district administrators
T3D	Measuring Training Success	A rubric to evaluate the efficacy of your technology training	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders

Measuring Readiness and Assessing Success

Implementing video observations for the first time can feel like a start-up venture: exciting but perilous. There is as much potential for value as there is for unforeseen challenges.

Equipped with a video observation protocol, stakeholder buy-in, and the right technology, you may feel ready to get started at scale. Before beginning implementation, however, we strongly advise that you first test your new observation process and technology with select teachers who can help refine implementation and inform its future direction. This section of the toolkit, based on findings from the **Best Foot Forward project**, helps you design a pilot initiative to test and evaluate the effectiveness of your video observation program.

IN THIS SECTION:

- How will I know that I am ready to introduce video observations into my school or district?

- What are the key indicators of success?

- What data will lead to better supports around implementation?

STEP 1:
ENSURE
READINESS

[P. 42]

STEP 2:
ASSESS
SUCCESS

[P. 44]

Step 1: Ensure Readiness

▶ **In the Best Foot Forward project,** an impact evaluation of video observations, we started our initiative with a five-month pilot. This allowed us to test the technology to ensure there was sufficient stakeholder enthusiasm to justify expanding video observations into new states and districts. It gave us the chance to identify problems, requirements, and benefits early on, and that made our work much easier in the years that followed.

Additionally, if you are considering using video for evaluation, rather than coaching or peer collaboration, we strongly recommend using video for formative purposes first. Evaluation can cause anxiety to run high. A nonevaluative launch allows teachers to become comfortable with the technological tools and processes before there are stakes attached.

By starting with a small, low-stakes pilot, you can minimize the impact of the challenges you might otherwise encounter at scale. Here are some additional considerations to keep in mind as you get started. ○

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Recruit willing teachers and observers.** If teachers are excited about the video observation process, the pilot will go well. If you compel teachers or observers to participate, you will spend too much time convincing uninterested parties to use the cameras instead of learning from your implementers about how to make the experience successful.

2. **Celebrate and reward your teachers' participation.** Your pilot participants are your partners in learning. It is helpful to identify ways to reward and celebrate them for putting their "best foot forward." Be sure to express gratitude for participants' willingness to inform the future of video observations in your state or district.

3. **Align video observations with your organizational priorities.** If your video observation initiative doesn't align with the goals and efforts set forth by senior leadership in your organization, it will seem like just "another thing." There is no reason why video observations can't reinforce or enhance your curriculum efforts or professional development plans for the year.

4. **Commit to collecting feedback throughout the year.** A pilot will be a waste of time if you miss the opportunity to learn from participants and course-correct along the way. Establish regular check-in meetings with individuals or school teams to learn about the process.

5. **Use an intake form to assess the baseline readiness of participants.** How comfortable do they feel using the technology after initial training? Is their school culture amenable to collaboration? Have they carved out time to discuss their videos? Do they know who their support contacts are? Getting a baseline measure of readiness will allow leaders to provide differentiated support to participants. The data will help explain why satisfaction might be stronger in some contexts as opposed to others.

SCALING FOR SUCCESS: HOW VIDEO OBSERVATIONS WENT VIRAL IN NEWTON COUNTY

Newton County Schools first installed a small number of cameras in its classrooms for safety and security purposes in 2012. "For us video was part of creating a safe classroom environment," says Superintendent Samantha Fuhrey, Ed.S. Teachers using the cameras soon saw an opportunity for professional growth. "We discovered that the camera system could be used for so much more," Fuhrey explained. "We learned that the video footage enhanced our professional learning communities because teachers were able to capture their instructional techniques and share them with their colleagues in a setting that was not evaluative."

Newton County Schools (NCS) administrators saw that there was a need for content-specific support for their mathematics teachers, so they contracted with remote subject area specialists from an outside agency to watch teachers' videos and provide feedback about their mathematics instruction. Eventually, they were able to identify a highly effective math teacher within NCS, and they trained him to provide video coaching to others. "He's still teaching the high level mathematics courses at his school, but he's also using video to provide instructional support to other teachers in our secondary program." Fuhrey believes that creating opportunities for teacher leadership, such as video coaching, allows for time shifting that

Newton County Schools (GA) Camera Installation
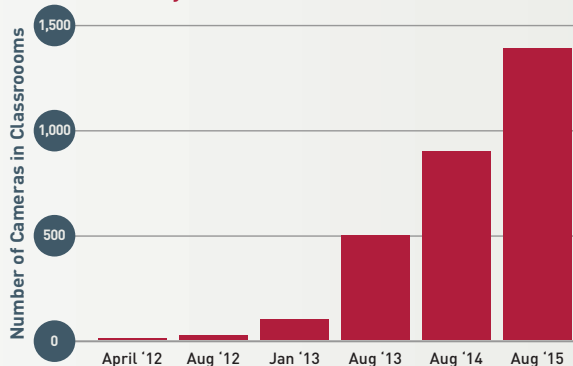
keeps highly effective teachers in the classroom and contributes to systemic excellence outside of class hours.

In response to teacher demand, NCS received state approval for teachers to have the option to substitute one in-person evaluation for a video evaluation, and they are hoping to expand this option. Fuhrey sees this as a unique example of reaching consensus between administrative and teaching teams. "Last March [2015] we had just over 22,000 video recordings across the district, and that's without a mandate to do so." In three years, the number of cameras installed in classrooms grew from two to 1,390—not because teachers were compelled by administrators but because they recognized the impact of the technology on their practice. Fuhrey and her administrative team followed teachers' initiative and embraced the context that allowed video to flourish.

ENSURING READINESS TOOLS

TOOL ID	RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION	INTENDED AUDIENCE
M1A	Assess Your Video Observation Readiness	A high-level checklist to identify gaps in your overall level of preparedness to implement video observations	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders

Step 2: Assess Success

▶ **Cameras, software platforms, and coaches** can be costly investments, so you will want to have clearly envisioned plans for evaluating the effectiveness of your initiative. An honest evaluation of the first run will enable you to determine whether video is helping educators realize their goals or if it is distracting from them. Ultimately, collecting data will help you adjust implementation to better support teachers and observers in maximizing the value of video.

It is important to ask the right questions. These inquiries fall into three categories: teacher growth and collaboration, overall educator satisfaction, and technology and logistical support.

ARE EDUCATORS BENEFITING FROM PARTICIPATION?

In the Best Foot Forward project, we were able to measure the causal benefits of video observations in a randomized controlled trial. We looked at student growth, as well as teacher, student and administrator surveys to assess the value of the process. Education leaders can ask teachers to report on their learning relative to other professional development activities or evaluation approaches. Other questions might cover whether they noticed specific aspects of their instruction not noticed before, whether they gained valuable insight into student behavior, or how they used video footage to address or improve instruction. Leaders can also ask questions to understand whether there is more frequent teacher-to-teacher collaboration in schools resulting from the use of video and whether teachers are more willing to share instruction outside of their schools. Finally, leaders can look at growth in observation scores, student survey ratings, or other available data from the year prior to and the end of the year following the video observation initiative to detect any strong correlations with the video work.

DO EDUCATORS LIKE THE PROCESS?

The acceptance of the video observation process by teachers and administrators is a precondition to scaling technology. Without widespread support in the pilot phase, it is unlikely that other teachers and administrators, who often rely on word of mouth from peers, will support your efforts. Collecting educator satisfaction data and teacher testimonials will help you validate growing the program and cultivate greater trust from hesitant participants.

IS THE TECHNOLOGY USER-FRIENDLY?

Leaders must assess the participants' attitudes toward the technology early and often. Not only should leaders consider teacher and observer attitudes, but they should also quantify the amount of time it takes to manage the technology, whether there is adequate technical support for teachers and observers, and whether cameras and network connections are accessible.

If you are contracting with a software company to provide a video observation platform for your teachers, ask the vendor for usage data. Usage data will help you know how often and how long your observers and teachers interact with the platform. This will help you assess relevancy and value. For example, if teachers repeatedly visit the site and spend a long time in the system, there is a high likelihood that it is relevant to their work. If there are teachers who never use the site, there is a strong likelihood they have encountered technological challenges, are disengaged from the video observation process, or have found a different way to share videos. ⊙

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Identify someone to collect survey data after implementation.** Use data to identify whether learning and collaboration are increasing due to the program and whether there are technical fixes or adjustments you can make to improve the process.

2. **Use survey data to identify your video champions.** Look for high rates of satisfaction with the process and technical comfort: These are teachers who might be willing to help spread the word about the program or work with teachers who feel less comfortable with technology.

3. **Host a final focus group to explore the meaning behind your survey findings.** Not only will it help you better understand the costs versus benefits of video in your context, but it will also give educators a chance to be heard and shape the innovation going forward.

4. **Share your successes beyond your school, district, or state lines.** Tell us your story or contribute to the video observation toolkit here.

MEASURING SUCCESS TOOLS

TOOL ID	RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION	INTENDED AUDIENCE
M2A	Teacher Video Pilot Success Survey	A sample survey to evaluate the success of your video observation initiative and identify areas for improvement	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders
M2B	Sample Video Observations Focus Group Script	A focus group script for you to customize to learn more about the value of video observations from your teachers	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders

Appendix

🧰 COMPLETE LIST OF VIDEO OBSERVATION TOOLS

TOOL ID	RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION	INTENDED AUDIENCE
L1A	Teacher Video Selfie	A guided instructional module for teachers to practice effective self-reflection	Teachers
L1B	Video Self-Analysis Rubric	A simple rubric for teachers to assess whether they've filtered out noisy or distracting details to focus on what matters and make the most of self-analysis. This resource should be used in conjunction with the Teacher Video Selfie module	Teachers
L2A	Effects of a Video-Based Teacher Observation Program on the De-privatization of Instruction: Evidence from a Randomized Experiment	Research findings from the Best Foot Forward project regarding how video technology may be an effective tool for efforts to improve instruction by increasing peer observation and support	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders, teachers
L2B	Video Club Start-Up Guide	Considerations to start building a video club in your school or district	School administrators, instructional leaders, teachers
L2C	Rounds: Puts Teachers in Charge of Learning	A description of the protocol and requirements for the Teacher Rounds process	School administrators, instructional leaders, teachers
L2D	Video Club Research Summaries	Summaries of additional research about the use and structure of video clubs in schools across the country	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders, teachers
L3A	Coaching with Video Vignettes: Four Guided Noticing Techniques	Four guided noticing strategies to help teachers have an aha moment in virtual coaching experiences	Teacher coaches, teachers, school administrators
L3B	Coaching Tip: Dealing with Distractions While Using Video Models	Tips from a Teachstone blogger about focusing the feedback conversation while using video	Teacher coaches, teachers, school administrators
L3C	Helping Teachers See Themselves	Reflections from TNTP on effective virtual coaching based on experience working with Best Foot Forward participants	Teacher coaches, school administrators, district administrators

L3D	Introductory Coaching Conversation Protocol	Tools for holding introductory and regular coaching conversations, courtesy of the MQI Coaching Project at the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University	Teacher coaches, school administrators, district administrators
L3E	Coaching Conversation Planning Guide		
L3F	Collaborative Coaching Log		
L3G	Vendors for Remote Coaching	A list of companies and organizations that provide remote coaching services for teachers*	District administrators, school administrators
L4A	The Best Foot Forward Project: Substituting Teacher-Collected Video for In-Person Classroom Observations	Information about the Best Foot Forward project and how video stacked up against in-person observations in an evaluation system regarding both improvements and challenges	Departments of education, district administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders, teachers
L4B	The Power of Shared Evidence	PowerPoint presentation from the Best Foot Forward project focusing on the mechanisms by which video improves the feedback conversation in an evaluation	Departments of education, district administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders, teachers
L4C	When Teachers Choose: Fairness and Authenticity in Teacher-Initiated Classroom Observations	PowerPoint presentations from the Best Foot Forward project focusing on the impacts of teacher video choice on the fairness and reliability of observation scores	Departments of education, district administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders, teachers
L4D	A Clearer View of the Classroom	A glimpse at video as an advanced evaluation tool offering more depth to teachers and administrators, from District Administration	District administrators
L5A	Libraries of Videotaped Instruction	A list of online collections of classroom video*	Teachers, instructional leaders, school administrators
C1A	Teacher Letter: Benefits of Video Observations and Common Questions about Privacy and Video Use	A template letter to teachers highlighting the benefits of using video for classroom observations and evaluation, as well as responses to possible concerns over privacy	Teachers (to be modified by district or school administrators)
C1B	Video Privacy Questions: A Timeline	Checklist of the important steps to take when implementing video	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders
C1C	Sample teacher consent form	Sample teacher form that can be customized for use in your district and that allows teachers to select what level of video observation they would like to implement	Teachers (to be modified by district or school administrators)

Please note that this does not constitute an endorsement of any products or services.

C1D	Collective Bargaining Agreement (Sample)	Sample agreement from a district using video; can be used as a reference when discussing video with your teachers' union	District administrators
C2A	Common Questions Around Privacy and Video Use: Parents	A list of frequently asked questions that you can share with students' parents	Parents (to be modified by district or school administrators, instructional leaders, or teachers)
C2B	Student Privacy: Video Observations in Classrooms: What Parents Need to Know	Slides that can be customized to inform parents about video observations and what it means for the students involved	Parents (to be modified by district or school administrators, instructional leaders, or teachers)
C2C	Student Media Release Form: Opt-in	Sample forms that can be customized for your context	Parents (to be modified by district or school administrators)
C2D	Student Media Release Form: Opt-out		
C2E	Face Blurring: When Footage Requires Anonymity	Tools from YouTube to conveniently blur faces in a video	District technology staff
T1A	Choose the Right Camera	A guide to matching video equipment to your goals*	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders, teachers
T1B	Audio Design: Microphones for the Classroom	A description of different types of microphones and their best uses*	
T1C	Viewing Platform Vendor List	A guide to platforms that can be used for reviewing classroom videos*	
T2A	Infrastructure Checklist for Launch	A checklist to ensure your infrastructure is in place before teachers and administrators start using the technology	District administrators, school administrators
T2B	Teacher Letter: Benefits of Video Observations and Common Questions about Privacy and Video Use	An organizational chart to streamline support for users	
T2C	How to Talk to Technology Vendors: A Guide for Education Leaders	Advice for making the most of your collaboration with tech vendors	
T3A	Teacher Letter: Benefits of Video Observations and Common Questions about Privacy and Video Use	A template letter to teachers highlighting the benefits of using video for classroom observations and evaluation, as well as responses to possible concerns over privacy	Teachers (to be modified by district or school administrators)

Please note that this does not constitute an endorsement of any products or services.

T3B	Classroom Video Training Example	A sample lesson plan for a training for teachers and principals on using video for formal observations	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders
T3C	MTTS Study: Quick-Guides	Some how-to videos for using video technology in the classroom from the MTTS Study	Teachers, instructional leaders, school administrators, district administrators
T3D	Measuring Training Success	A rubric to evaluate the efficacy of your technology training	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders
M1A	Assess Your Video Observation Readiness	A high-level checklist to identify gaps in your overall level of preparedness to implement video observations	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders
M2A	Teacher Video Pilot Success Survey	A sample survey to evaluate the success of your video observation initiative and identify areas for improvement	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders
M2B	Sample Video Observations Focus Group Script	A focus group script for you to customize to learn more about the value of video observations from your teachers	District administrators, school administrators, instructional leaders

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