Help Aspire create a better norming process to align observers across the organization and help further teacher growth and development

Context
In recent years, states, school districts, and CMOs have devoted an unprecedented level of effort to developing new feedback and evaluation systems with an emphasis on measuring and driving teacher effectiveness. As the Gates Foundations' MET project states 'The goal is to improve practice so that teachers can better help their students graduate from high school ready to succeed in college and beyond.' A wide body of research suggests that among school-related factors teachers matter the most in impacting student performance and success.

One major component of the teacher evaluation at Aspire and across the country is the teacher observation. Recent reports point to peer observation and multiple observers as the key to providing more accurate, unbiased, and actionable feedback. However, this need for multiple observers presents some new challenges: how do we ensure that all observers are aligned on what excellent teaching really is? At Aspire, and across the College Ready Promise (TCRP) network, we've developed a norming process to help align evaluators across the organization around top performers and expectations along every dimension of Aspire's instructional rubric.

MET Project: Ensuring Fair and Reliable Measures of Effective Teaching
Teachers Matter: Understanding Teachers' Impact on Student Achievement
Measuring Teacher Effectiveness
NYT: Helping Teachers Learn

Problem
Help Aspire develop a tool to facilitate its norming process: particularly around the pain point of reviewing quality and alignment of evidence collected during observations.

About Aspire's Norming Process
In preparation for the coming year, all principals, instructional coaches, and deans at Aspire underwent a certification process to ensure that organization-wide we are aligned on what each indicator dimension is designed to measure and what a level 2 vs. a level 4 practice looks like.

For this process, observers gather regionally and conduct a mock formal observation. This involves several steps:
Observers....
(1) Upload lesson plan and pre-conference notes into the web-based observation platform: BloomBoard. The observer can then highlight specific sections of the lesson plan or notes and tag them to specific indicators in the instructional rubric. The goal is to collect objective evidence that relates to each indicator within the instructional rubric.
(2) Observers then review the collected evidence for each indicator and based on the evidence

collected, they rate the lesson plan along each dimension in the instructional rubric

(3) Next, the observers will watch a video of a sample teacher, and practice live-scripting/collecting evidence from the observation

(4) After the video is complete, the observer would again tag specific snippets of the evidence collected to indicators along the instructional rubric and then rate each indicator based on this evidence collected.

(5) The third step is the post-conference meeting where the observer will upload analysis of student work, teacher reflection, and post-conference notes and again tag and rate the evidence collected along the instructional rubric.

(6) Once the observers complete the observation, the data is exported from BloomBoard, aggregated, and then the ratings by indicator are compared with the 'true' score ratings to assess accuracy and alignment of ratings.

(6) Evidence collected is also exported from BloomBoard and then uploaded into an access database. 'Readers' (observers who have already been trained and certified) review each observer's evidence collected for quality and alignment. For each indicator of the rubric readers use a front-end access tool to review the evidence and indicate whether or not the evidence collected is aligned and they provide feedback on the quality of this evidence.

The review of observers' evidence collected is a very tedious and time-consuming task that requires each 'reader' to click through many records in an access database and to enter comments and rate the quality and accuracy of evidence collected.

Additional data/evidence
- Aspire Instructional Rubric
- Demo of www.bloomboard.com
- Sample certification data
- Demo of existing 'reader tool'

Current Reader Tool Screenshot

LaunchForm | **Reader 1 Form**

Certification Observation Jan 2013

EmpID	2997
ObservID	25060
Status	Complete
Trainee First	Mr. Certification
Trainee Last	Evans
School	Home Office

ErrorPattern1 Summary
Ways To Address: Avoid summary. Script exact teacher and student language.

ErrorPattern2
Ways To Address:

ErrorPattern3
Ways To Address:

Notes Too much evidence tagged to 2.4A Routines, procedures and transitions. Not necessary to have so much evidence here.

Reader Scores | % Strong/Aligned

		Quality	Alignment
Reader1	Julie Tsai	CC	CERT

Captured Evidence [Update Quality Scores]

Ind	Time Stamp	Evidence	Quality	Alignment	Reader 1 Notes	Reader 2 Notes
1.1.B	1/17/2013 5:55:20 PM	SWBAT describe social issues of the 1980's including: AIDS the environment drug and alcohol abuse and elderly retirement issues	Strong	Aligned		
1.2.B	1/17/2013 5:57:16 PM	by correctly answering reading and cloze notes questions making group presentations where they analyze compare and contrast the issues of the 80's with present day and scoring a 75% or better on the exit quiz.	Strong	Aligned		
1.1.A	1/17/2013 5:57:16 PM	by correctly answering reading and cloze notes questions making group presentations where they analyze compare and contrast the issues of the 80's with present day and scoring a 75% or better on the exit quiz.	Strong	Aligned		

Count of Evidence by Indicat

Indicato	Count
3.4.C	2
3.3.C	2
3.3.B	2
3.1.A	2
1.4.B	2
1.5.A	2
1.3.A	3
2.2.B	3
1.5.B	3
3.3.D	3
2.2.A	3
4.1.A	4
1.1.A	4
3.1.B	4
4.1.B	4
1.4.A	5
1.2.A	5
1.1.B	6
1.2.B	6
2.3.A	6
2.3.B	6
3.1.C	6
3.2.A	6
3.4.A	6
3.4.B	6
2.1.A	9
3.2.B	9
3.3.A	15