

Authentic Assessment in the Classroom: Strategies for Supporting Early Childhood Educators

Organizational Strategies

- Help teachers gain familiarity with different observation methods and tools.
- Check in periodically to see if teachers are managing and organizing their assessment data.
- Help brainstorm new strategies with teachers if they are stuck in the observation and documentation process.
- Pair teachers who are experiencing success with those who are experiencing challenges.
- Invite teachers to share their observational methods, tools, and organizational strategies with one another.
- Help teachers identify times during class that they can observe and document. For example, during free play, on the playground, or during snack time.
- Discuss the different contexts for observation: observing in the action, out of the action and after the fact.
- Share strategies such as observing a few children at a time, focusing on a single activity, or enlisting the help of assistants and other staff.
- Identify an administrator, advanced teacher, or data coach to help support the teachers with their authentic assessment implementations.

Staff Meetings

- Set aside a small amount of time during staff meetings for teachers to talk about authentic data collection and to share examples.
- Ask staff to identify areas or skills that are particularly challenging to observe.
- Brainstorm ideas for embedding learning opportunities throughout the classroom.
- Guide teachers to at the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPs) to look at additional ideas for appropriate activities.
- Arrange for teachers implementing authentic assessment to have a common planning time.
- Practice observing and documenting together as a team during meetings.
- Plan staff development sessions around challenges/issues that teachers need additional support with.

Authentic Assessment in the Classroom: Strategies for Supporting Early Childhood Educators

General Practices

- Acknowledge the commitment it takes to implement authentic assessment.
- Remind teachers how authentic assessment can (and will!) positively impact the children, families, and their teaching.
- Be mindful of the “stages of development” teachers move through as they learn to implement authentic assessment.
- Check in with teachers periodically to see how it’s going.
- Use collected data to provide ongoing feedback.
- Identify where each teacher is in the process and create a plan to support them.

Authentic Assessment in the Classroom: General Strategies for Supporting Teachers

What can I do each day to support teachers in the classroom?

How can I incorporate support into our weekly interactions and meetings?

What can I do at the end of each quarter to provide feedback and ongoing support?

What can I do throughout the year to provide support for my staff as they continue to implement authentic assessment?