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ABSTRACT

At present, there is a lack of information about how teacher-friendly or sustainable opportunity to learn (OTL) assessment strategies are when used in classrooms. This paper describes the results of a national survey of classroom teachers who teach in large urban school districts, districts that are members of the Council of Great City Schools. Elementary, middle school, and senior high school teachers were asked to rate and give their perceptions and opinions about how teacher-friendly the following OTL assessment strategies are: (1) teacher logs; (2) observations; (3) surveys; and (4) interval testing and small assessment tasks. Teacher-friendly means tasks that are sustainable over time because they are not burdensome. In all, 243 teachers responded to the questionnaire. Eighty percent had at least 10 years teaching experience, and 64% were white. Teachers' ratings of teacher-friendly and very-teacher-friendly were combined. If two-thirds of the teachers rated an OTL assessment strategy as teacher-friendly or very-teacher-friendly, the strategy was judged to have a favorable response. Elementary, middle school, and high school teachers rated favorably all aspects of three OTL assessment strategies: assessment, surveys about teaching, and surveys about resources needed for effective teaching. The exceptions were "keeping journals" and "observations for constructive feedback." These two strategies had mixed ratings for different groups of teachers, based on school level, age groups, and teaching experience. The OTL assessment strategy that received the highest ratings from all three levels of teachers was assessing students to determine their mastery of predetermined and taught skills or concepts. Large percentages of teachers responding to the survey indicated that they would implement these strategies or were already implementing some. What is missing in this body of information is how to move teachers beyond a verbal commitment to use all of the strategies to address the OTL variables. (Contains 4 tables and 22 references.) (SLD)

Project 2.1.4: Assessing Opportunity to Learn (OTL) in Urban Schools

Teachers' Evaluations of the Sustainability of Opportunity to Learn (OTL) Assessment Strategies: A National Survey of Classroom Teachers in Large Urban School Districts

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Introduction

Opportunity to learn (OTL) evolved into a conceptual framework (Stevens, 1993a) rather than a series of singular assessment survey items during my Senior Fellow's research project at the National Center for Education Statistics. During the year of research, OTL information from national and international studies were reviewed. A major research finding that had serious impact on the notion of an OTL conceptual framework came from the Second International Mathematics Study (Robitaille & Garden, 1989; Postlethwaite & Wiley,1992). When the study investigated cultural and instructional practices among the countries to explain academic differences, the only classroom or school variable to be significantly related to achievement growth was opportunity to learn (i.e., content coverage and content exposure). This was in contrast to much of the research in the United States that focused primarily on the relationship of race/ethnicity and poverty as the main contributors to students' academic achievement, recognizing that neither of these are alterable variables.

The Second International Mathematics Study (SIMS) and the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) looked at students' educational opportunities (Burstein, 1989; Schmidt & McKnight, 1995). With respect to the United States, findings from these studies should encourage educators to look beyond race/ethnicity and poverty when explaining differences in students' academic achievement.

From the review of the national and international studies, four variables were identified as being closely related to teaching and learning in the classroom. That is, what and how teachers do in their classrooms to promote students' academic achievement. These four variables were content coverage, content exposure, content emphasis, and quality of instructional delivery. Their original descriptions follow:

- **Content coverage**. Students covered the core curriculum for a particular grade level or subject area (Leinhardt, 1983; Leinhardt & Seewald, 1981; Winfield, 1987; Yoon, Burstein, Gold, Chen, & Kim, 1990).
- **Content exposure**. Teacher allows and allocates enough time for in-depth teaching of a concept or skill or subject area. There is time-on-task displayed by the students (Brophy & Good, 1986; Wiley, 1990; Winfield, 1987).
- **Content emphasis**. Teacher selects topics for instruction that are part of the core curriculum and are taught to all students (Goldenberg & Gallimore, 1991; LeMahieu & Leinhardt, 1985; McDonnell, Burstein, Catteral, Ormseth, & Moody, 1990; Shavelson & Stern, 1981).
- **Quality of instructional delivery**. Teacher presents lessons that are coherent so students are able to understand and use the information learned. Activities are connected logically and sequentially with a beginning, middle and end (Brophy & Good, 1986; Stevenson & Stigler, 1992; Stevens, 1993a).

Opportunity to Learn Assessment Strategies

In the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) international studies, teachers were surveyed about traditional OTL assessment strategies that questioned content exposure to instructional experiences and content coverage that measured content covered in small units such as individual test items. However, content coverage was used as the main indicator of opportunity to learn (Husen, 1967; Leinhart & Seewald, 1981). Burstein, Guiton, Bayley, and Isaacson (1991) compiled survey items from IEA and other large-scale educational surveys of science and mathematics opportunities. Many of these items were about content coverage: What percentage of the textbook or workbook did you cover when teaching the course? How many class periods did you devote to a particular topic? Did all students study

the same content in the class? Did you assign homework and how often? Items about content emphasis and the quality of instructional delivery were generally not included in these surveys.

Bailey (1996) reviewed current research on opportunity to learn and assessment strategies suggested by researchers that could measure the OTL variables of content coverage, content emphasis, content exposure, and quality of instructional delivery. The assessment strategies included teacher logs, observations, surveys, and interval testing and small assessment tasks:

- **Teacher logs.** Porter (1993) recommends that teachers can record the amount of time emphasis on different modes of instruction and different student activities (including assigned homework); and the portion of time in class spent on activities not directly related to the academic content of the course.
- **Observations.** Stevenson and Stigler (1992) and Stevens (1993b) noted that observations can record the percentage and time within a specified number of days devoted to teaching a subject content and to the amount of coherency of the lesson.
- Surveys. Goertz (1994) found that surveys can measure the material and human resources available to students such as teachers' access to instructional information through staff development and students' access to calculators and computers.
- **Interval testing and small assessment tasks.** Stevens (1993a) reported that ongoing assessment of students' learning through interval testing and small assessment tasks provide OTL information about the impact and quality of instructional delivery.

Research findings indicate that information obtained from OTL assessment strategies can be used to improve instruction. For example, information from interval testing and small assessment tasks tell a teacher about the success and failure of a particular lesson on the basis of

whether or not the students learned the information or performed the task and were able to transfer the information to other situations and activities.

Teachers can improve the quality of their instructional delivery, when they gain an awareness when all is not "right" in their classrooms. To do this teachers must acquire and use assessment information. This information can assist teachers to cross over to a new belief system that questions how effective is their teaching rather than blame the students for not learning.

What OTL Assessment Strategies are Teacher-Friendly, Sustainable on an Ongoing Basis in the Classroom?

Presently, there is a dearth of knowledge about how "teacher-friendly" or sustainable are the OTL assessment strategies when used in classrooms. It is proposed that knowledge about how classroom teachers judge which of the OTL assessment strategies merit being used on an ongoing basis in their schools and classrooms can have a powerful impact on teaching practices and students' academic achievement, particularly in urban schools.

This paper describes the results of a national survey of classroom teachers who teach in large urban school districts, districts that are members of the Council of the Great City Schools (see Appendix). Elementary, middle school, and senior high school teachers were asked to rate and give their perceptions and opinions about how teacher-friendly are the following OTL assessment strategies: (a) teacher logs, (b) observations, (c) surveys, and (d) interval testing and small assessment tasks. Teacher friendly is defined as teacher classroom practices that are sustainable over time because they are not burdensome. The purpose of this information is to move the research-based knowledge of opportunity to learn to procedural knowledge and practice—identifying OTL assessment strategies that can be used by teachers on an ongoing basis to improve students' academic achievement in urban schools. Table 1 describes how the OTL assessment strategies relate to the OTL conceptual framework.

The remainder of this paper is divided into three sections. The first section describes the methodology used in conducting the national survey of classroom teachers and the analysis of the data. The second section contains the findings from the survey. Section three contains recommendations for procedures and practice for the OTL assessment strategies.

Methodology

Purpose of the Survey

It was proposed that training urban school teachers to use teacher-friendly OTL assessment strategies in their classrooms will ensure that their students receive a quality and equitable education. Also, implementing OTL assessment strategies will inform teachers about the effectiveness of their teaching practices. During informal discussions of opportunity to learn, one of the main arguments against investigating OTL has been that it requires more of the teacher's time. At the same time that this constraint is acknowledged, many school level educators felt that this position was unacceptable, particularly if educational equity remains an important issue to be addressed in urban school classrooms.

Ongoing assessment of students' opportunity to learn is currently in a developmental stage and most of the practices are cited in the research as singular activities and not part of a comprehensive and systematic approach to assessing opportunity to learn in classrooms. This study seeks to determine from classroom teachers which of the proposed OTL assessment strategies are viewed by them as "teacher-friendly" or sustainable over time and can be incorporated into a systematic approach to assessing OTL. The results of the survey will be used to refine workshop materials on how to use OTL assessment strategies in the classroom.

Study Questions

1. Which OTL assessment strategies were rated by urban school teachers as Not Teacher-Friendly, Teacher-Friendly or Very Teacher-Friendly?

2. What were the reasons given when some OTL assessment strategies were rated as being Not Teacher-Friendly?

Survey Instrument

Survey items were derived from prior research on opportunity to learn (Bailey, 1996). The initial version of the survey was piloted in the Los Angeles Unified School District. The respondents reported the following information about the survey: (a) directions were concise and clear; (b) survey format made the items easy to respond to; and (c) time to complete the survey ranged from 30 to 45 minutes. In addition, many teachers indicated that responding to the survey gave them ideas about OTL assessment practices to use in their own classrooms.

The survey was formatted to look at opportunity to learn assessment strategies in several ways: (a) how teachers rate various ways of assessing OTL; (b) which assessment strategies they would use in their classrooms; (c) which OTL strategies are currently being implemented in their classrooms; (d) open-ended descriptions of how teachers address the OTL strategies; (e) ratings of the level of difficulty implementing the OTL strategies; and (f) how often the strategies are used in the classroom. In addition, the survey solicited information from the teachers about their class and classroom activities.

Sample

The sample was purposive in that the 48 large urban school districts selected for the sample were all members of The Council of the Great City Schools. Fifteen teachers (five elementary, five middle school, and five senior high school) from each school district were selected and solicited to respond voluntarily to the survey through the direction of the school district's director or administrator for research, evaluation, and assessment.

Data Collection

Of the 48 school districts, 24 (50%) had teachers who returned completed survey forms. Teacher respondents totaled 243 (34%): 93 elementary, 82 middle school, and 68 senior high school. Responding school districts were from all geographic regions of the United States (see Table 2).

Of the 243 teachers, males numbered 57 (24%) and females 182 (75%). Ethnically, 64% were white, 23% were African American/Black, and 7% were Hispanic. Thirty-eight percent of the survey respondents were 40 years old and under, 38% between 41 and 50 years old, and 24% over fifty years old. The bachelor's degree was the highest degree for 47% of the teachers at the elementary, middle school and senior high school levels. Four senior high school teachers had Ph.D.'s.

Eighty percent of the teachers had at least ten years of teaching experience. Elementary school teachers' majors in college were principally in education while secondary teachers' majors were principally, English, mathematics, science and social science. For the academic years, 1995-96 and 1996-97, elementary teacher respondents taught the core curriculum with a few focusing on reading and English language arts while secondary teacher respondents taught English, mathematics, social studies, science, and foreign languages.

Findings

When teachers were asked to rate the various OTL assessment strategies, they were provided with two definitions to assist them in making their judgments. First, Teacher-Friendly was defined as a teaching-related activity viewed as not particularly labor-intensive and not very burdensome. Something the teacher will not mind doing on a weekly or monthly or quarterly basis. Second, Opportunity to Learn was defined as teaching activities that the teacher does to ensure students have access to information so that they do well on their assessments/tests.

Teachers judged the OTL assessment strategies by using three rating categories: Very Teacher-Friendly; Teacher-Friendly; and Not Teacher-Friendly. OTL assessment strategies were judged to have favorable ratings if two-thirds (66 2/3%) of the teachers selected the strategy as Teacher-Friendly and/or Very Teacher-Friendly. Two OTL assessment strategies, Keeping Journals and Observations for Constructive Feedback, had less than two-thirds of the teachers at each of the three school levels rating them as Teacher-Friendly and/or Very Teacher-Friendly. Overall, elementary teachers gave favorable ratings that ranged from 76-97% for most of the OTL assessment strategies. Middle school teachers' favorable ratings ranged from 72-94%. At the senior high school level, the teachers' favorable ratings ranged from 66-96%. (See Table 3.) More specific information about the OTL assessment strategies and their ratings follow.

Keeping Journals

Elementary and middle school level teachers did not rate any item about Keeping Journals favorably while senior high school level teachers rated favorably only one aspect of Keeping Journals. Seventy-two percent of these teachers indicated that keeping a daily journal of what teaching strategies were used to cover content in the core subject was Teacher-Friendly and Very Teacher Friendly. Negative comments from all three school levels of teachers who rated this strategy as Not Teacher-Friendly were mainly about the amount of time needed to implement this type of OTL assessment strategy. Some teachers felt that keeping journals was appropriate only for beginning teachers while others indicated that this assessment strategy would become a "paper chase."

Assessment

All aspects of developing and implementing interval/unit testing/assessments for students received very favorable ratings from teachers at all school levels (e.g., 86-96%). Elementary, middle, and senior teachers indicated that developing assessments for small units of

information by grade level or department was a Teacher-Friendly OTL assessment strategy. Also, administering to students these small assessments on a monthly or quarterly basis was Teacher-Friendly. There were no appreciable differences among the ratings by age groups or teacher experience at any of the school levels. There were a few comments that these OTL assessment strategies were Not Teacher-Friendly because they were labor intensive efforts, required too much time, and mandated a lock-step assessment procedure that may not be beneficial to all students. However, most of the teachers who made these comments added that these strategies were important, needed, and useful.

Observations for Constructive Feedback

This OTL assessment strategy is closely related to the OTL variable, Quality of Instructional Delivery. This OTL variable and its related OTL assessment strategy are concerned with the need for lesson presentations to be coherent. That is, lessons should have a logistical and sequential beginning, middle, and end. There were mixed ratings from the teachers in the three school levels about the assessment activities associated with this OTL assessment strategy. For example, having teacher colleagues observe them directly or by videotape was favorably rated by elementary and senior high school teachers but not by middle school teachers. Senior high school teachers rated as Teacher-Friendly the activity of observing teacher colleagues' classes to record if the subject taught was the subject scheduled to be taught. The observation activities that received favorable ratings for being Teacher-Friendly from all three school levels was for the administrator conducting the observations to determine the coherency of the lessons and the percentage of time spent teaching the lesson.

Surveys about Teaching

Teachers at each school level rated favorably: (a) surveying students to determine if the topic was taught; (b) surveying students about the quality of the teaching for understanding the

subject/topic; and (c) surveying themselves and their colleagues about the quality of their teaching for understanding. Senior high school teachers had higher percentages of favorable ratings for surveying students while elementary teachers had the higher percentage of favorable ratings for surveying themselves and their colleagues about the quality of their teaching . In regard to the OTL assessment strategy of surveying students about whether the content was taught, this activity's ratings could be differentiated by age groups within school levels who felt the strategy was Not Teacher-Friendly. The largest proportion of the elementary teachers who rated the strategy as Not Teacher-Friendly was in the 51-60 age group. It was the 41-50 age group of teachers at the middle school level and the 21-30 age group of teachers at the senior high school level with the largest proportions who gave unfavorable ratings .

Surveys about Resources Needed for Effective Teaching

Teachers across the three school levels indicated by their favorable ratings that the activities of surveying teachers about their access to staff development opportunities in critical areas at the time of need and surveying students and teachers about their access to instructional materials were Teacher-Friendly and Very Teacher-Friendly.

OTL Assessment Strategies That Teachers Will Use in Their Classrooms

Overall, over two-thirds of the teachers in each of the three school levels indicated that they would use OTL assessment strategies in their classrooms (see Table 4). Ninety-five percent of the elementary and middle school teachers and 91% of senior high school teachers indicated that they would adopt and use the strategy of assessing mastery of pre-determined and taught small units of skills or concepts. In addition, over 80% of the teachers at each of the school levels indicated that they would adopt and use observations as an OTL assessment strategy. Conducting surveys also received high percentages. In response to teachers keeping journals

only 60% of middle school teachers and 70% of the elementary and senior high school teachers indicated that they would use this OTL assessment strategy.

Comments from Teachers Who Rated OTL Assessment Strategies as Not Teacher-Friendly

Less than 20% of the teachers within each school level rated OTL assessment strategies as Not Teacher-Friendly. As a reminder, teachers' comments were solicited only if they rated an activity as Not Teacher-Friendly. Although the comments were small in number, they proved to be illuminating.

Direct and Videotape Observations. The largest percentage of teachers who felt that this OTL assessment strategy was Not Teacher-Friendly were middle school teachers. However, the younger teachers in each school level were more negative than the other age groups. Teachers commented that they did not trust the selection of appropriate teachers for the observation and felt that it could be threatening if the school atmosphere is not good. Also, they felt that the strategy was logistically unfeasible because of class coverage issues.

Observation of Scheduled Lesson Taught. At the elementary and middle school levels, a large percentage of the teachers rated this OTL assessment strategy as Not Teacher-Friendly. The main issue associated with the unfavorable ratings centered around the appropriateness of teacher roles. Many felt that this was an administrative duty.

Surveys about Teaching. First, those teachers who gave Not Teacher-Friendly ratings for surveying students about whether the subject/topic had been taught indicated that students would be taking control if allowed to evaluate teachers and teachers should not be accountable to students. Second, it was a mix of teachers who indicated by their ratings that the OTL assessment strategy of surveying students about the quality of the lesson taught for understanding was Not Teacher-Friendly. The mix included teachers in all age groups in the middle schools, more

experienced (i.e., six or more years teaching) teachers in the elementary schools, and less experienced teachers in senior high schools.

Surveys about Resources Needed for Effective Teaching. Those few who rated this strategy as Not Teacher-Friendly questioned the utility and appropriateness of the information when gathered from students. High school teachers with three to five years of experience responded slightly more negatively to this OTL assessment strategy.

Surveys about Access to Staff Development in Critical Areas at the Time of Need. Only 10% of teachers at each school level felt that this OTL assessment strategy was Not Teacher-Friendly. In these very small groups, teachers with 11 to 19 years teaching experience at each school level were slightly more negative than other groups.

Summary of Findings

Teachers' ratings of Teacher-Friendly and Very Teacher-Friendly were combined to determine which OTL assessment strategies were viewed by them as being not very burdensome or sustainable over time. If two-thirds of the teachers rated an OTL assessment strategy as Teacher-Friendly and Very Teacher-Friendly, the strategy was judged to have a favorable response. Elementary, middle, and senior high teachers rated favorably all aspects of three OTL assessment strategies—Assessment, Surveys about Teaching, and Surveys about Resources Needed for Effective Teaching. The exceptions were Keeping Journals and Observations for Constructive Feedback. These two strategies had mixed ratings for different groups of teachers—school levels, age groups, and teaching experience. For some, the ratings were favorable and for others not favorable.

The OTL assessment strategy that received the highest ratings from all three levels of teachers was assessing students to determine their mastery of pre-determined and taught skills or concepts. Within this OTL assessment strategy, teachers rated favorably such activities as

teachers developing at grade level or subject department small unit assessments for use on a monthly or quarterly basis; and teachers administering tests or assessments to students on a monthly or quarterly basis.

Most aspects of Keeping Journals did not receive enough favorable ratings at the three school levels. One exception, 72% of the senior high school teachers indicated that using journals to keep track of what teaching strategies they used during the instructional period to cover content in core subjects was Teacher-Friendly. The time needed to implement these strategies was the major reason listed for most of the negative ratings.

There were mixed reactions to various aspects of using Observations for Constructive Feedback. All three school levels approved of having the administrator observe whether the lessons taught had coherency (beginning, middle, and end) and having the administrator observe periodically to record the percentage of time spent teaching a subject. Elementary and senior high school teachers approved the OTL assessment strategy of teachers observing each other teach directly or by videotape to see if the lesson was coherent. The comments that accompanied the Not Teacher-Friendly ratings were concerned that the teachers selected to observe might not be appropriate, that the school atmosphere might not be good, that teachers would feel threatened, and class coverage was not feasible.

Although conducting surveys received approval by the three school levels of teachers, Surveys about School Resources Needed for Effective Teaching received higher favorable ratings than Surveys about Teaching. In particular, teachers viewed as an important OTL assessment strategy, surveying teachers about their opportunities for or access to staff development in critical areas at the time of need. Large portions of elementary, middle, and senior high school teachers rated this as Very-Teacher-Friendly. Ratings for surveys about teachers access to teacher or instructional materials were quite similar. The lower ratings for

Surveys about Teaching were due to teachers' concern that students were rating teachers and feelings by some teachers that teachers should not be accountable to students.

Over 90% of the teachers in each of the school levels indicated that they would adopt and use the OTL assessment strategies of assessing students' mastery of pre-determined and taught skills and concepts on a monthly or quarterly basis. These small unit assessments would be developed by department and grade level teachers. Percentages between 76 and 86 were received to adopt and use observations, surveys about teaching and surveys about resources. Keeping journals received the lowest percentages from the teachers, 60-70%.

Discussion of the Study Results

The conceptual framework for opportunity to learn (OTL) has four major variables—Content Coverage, Content Emphasis, Content Exposure and Quality of Instructional Delivery. All of these variables are closely related to what teachers do in their classrooms when teaching. The OLT assessment strategies are various procedures to address the OTL variables. Teachers found most of the assessment strategies to be teacher-friendly or sustainable over time. That is, most of these strategies were viewed as not burdensome to implement. In fact, large percentages of the teachers responding to the survey indicated that they would implement the strategies in their classrooms or they were already implementing some of the strategies. What is missing in this body of information is how to move teachers beyond their verbal commitment to use all of the strategies to address all of the OTL variables.

We know from the research results from the IEA studies of mathematics that opportunity to learn is significantly related to students' academic achievement. This was true when only content coverage and content exposure variables were the main components of OTL. In the United States, where there is no national curriculum and freedom of choice spreads the curriculum across a much larger range of topics, Content Emphasis within a school district and

within a school plays a major role in focusing teachers to teach specific topics within the subject matter.

Teachers can cover content, expose students to the curriculum, and emphasize or focus on certain agreed upon topics within the curriculum but the power of these OTL variables are diluted when lessons are presented that are incoherent and thus ineffective. After viewing the videotapes of lessons from the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), they reveal how important it is for teachers to plan and present coherent lessons.

How do we know what individual teachers and teachers in grade levels or subject departments do to address all of these OTL variables effectively and that students are improving their academic achievement? The obvious answer is through implementing OTL assessment strategies. Without being reflective about what is being taught and recording these reflections, the sometimes very insightful information is lost. Without actually assessing periodically students about information taught, the results of academic achievement are left to end-of-semester or end-of-year standardized school district testing/assessment which leaves no time for teaching modifications. Without observing how teachers teach, there is no feedback to them about what is effective or not effective. Without knowing how to plan and use coherent lesson presentations, students are short-changed in learning problem solving skills and content information. In this respect, teachers indicated that students with a variety of academic abilities, disruptive students, and uninterested students limited how they taught in their classrooms. Could better lesson presentations reduce these limitations?

Survey information alone will not bring about changes in the classroom. However, this information can be useful in building a strong OTL model that can be taught via staff development to improve teaching practices and hopefully to improve students' academic achievement. We now know what aspects of the OTL assessment strategies that need to be

eliminated or upgraded to be more fully acceptable to teachers. This is important information because through teacher reports, we know they spend a large amount of time doing out-of-classroom teacher-related activities. We must be sensitive to suggesting more activities that consume time and provide minimal useful information. However, we know that OTL when implemented and assessed can bring about positive change in urban classrooms.

Table 1

Relationship of OTL Conceptual Framework Variables to OTL Assessment Strategies

OTL Framework Variable	OTL Assessment Strategy
1. Content Coverage	
Teacher arranges for all students to have access to the core curriculum. Teacher arranges for all students to have access to critical subject matter. Teacher ensures that there is curriculum content and test content overlap.	• Using Networking for Collaborating to Improve Instructional Practices • Keeping Journals • Assessing Students' Mastery of Skills and Concepts • Conducting Surveys about Teacher Practices
2. Content Emphasis	
Teacher selects topics from the curriculum to teach. Teacher selects the dominant level to teach the curriculum. Teacher selects which skills and concepts to teach and which to emphasize to all groups of students.	• Using Networking for Collaborating to Improve Instructional Practices • Keeping Journals • Assessing Students' Mastery of Skills and Concepts • Conducting Surveys about Teacher Practices
3. Content Exposure	
Teacher organizes classes so that there is time-on-task for students. Teacher provides enough time for students to learn the content of the curriculum and to cover adequately a specific topic or subject.	• Using Networking for Collaborating to Improve Instructional Practices • Conducting Surveys about Teacher Practices
4. Quality of Instructional Delivery	
Teacher uses teaching practices (coherent lessons) to produce students' academic achievement. Teacher uses varied teaching strategies and practices to meet the educational needs of all students. Teacher has a cognitive command of the subject matter.	• Using Networking for Collaborating to Improve Instructional Practices • Keeping Journals • Assessing Students' Mastery of Skills and Concepts • Conducting Observations for Constructive Feedback • Conducting Surveys about School Resources Needed for Effective Training

Table 2

The Council of the Great City Schools' School Districts by Regions

		Region					
District	Total	East	Midwest	Central	South	Southwest	West
Members	48	12	9	4	8	5	10
Responding	24	6	7	2	1	3	5
Percentage	50	50	78	50	13	60	50

Table 3

Selected OTL Assessment Strategies Rated as Teacher-Friendly and Very Teacher-Friendly by Two-thirds or More of the Teachers in Each School Level

Strategy	School Level		
	Elementary n=93	Middle n=82	Senior n=68
Keeping Journals			
1. Keeping a daily journal to keep track of what strategies you and your students used during your instructional period to cover content in the core subjects (reading, mathematics, language arts, and science).	----	----	72.1% (10.3)
Assessment			
2. Assessing mastery of pre-determined and taught skills/concepts.	96.7 (41.9)	93.9 (34.1)	95.6 (44.1)
3. Develop assessments with grade level subject department teachers to assess small units of information on a monthly or quarterly basis.	92.5 (32.3)	86.6 (15.9)	86.7 (33.8)
4. Administer to students monthly/quarterly assessments of skills/concepts.	96.7 (41.9)	91.5 (22.0)	88.2 (35.3)
Observations for Constructive Feedback			
5. Have colleague(s) observe directly your teaching and/or observe videotape lessons taught by you and then rate/describe how coherent was the lesson—Did it have a beginning, middle, and end?	81.8 (15.1)	----	76.4 (13.2)
6. Have colleague(s) observe your classes to record if the subject taught by you is the subject scheduled to be taught.	----	----	70.1 (11.8)

Note: (Very Teacher-Friendly)

Table 3 (cont'd.)

Strategy	School Level		
	Elementary n=93	Middle n=82	Senior n=68
7. Have colleague(s) observe periodically your classroom to record the percentage of time you spent teaching the subject.	----	----	66.1 (13.2)
8. Have the administrator observe lessons taught by you and then rate/describe how coherent was the lesson—Did it have a beginning, middle, and end?	87.1 (21.5)	81.7 (8.5)	88.2 (23.5)
9. Have administrator observe periodically your classroom to record the percentage of time you spent teaching the subject.	87.1 (21.5)	81.7 (8.5)	88.2 (23.5)
6. Have administrator observe your classroom to see if the subject taught by you is the subject scheduled to be taught.	----	71.9 (8.5)	----
Surveys about Teaching			
11. Survey students to determine if the subject/topic was taught.	78.5 (17.2)	79.3 (13.4)	86.7 (33.8)
12. Survey students about the quality of the teaching of topic/subject in the context of their ability to understand.	76.3 (20.4)	75.6 (7.3)	85.3 (14.1)
13. Survey yourself and colleagues about the quality of your teaching a topic/subject (e.g., quality is whether your students understood the topic/subject and whether you need to change your teaching practices).	83.9 (23.7)	75.7 (9.8)	72.1 (16.2)

Note: (Very Teacher-Friendly)

Table 3 (cont'd.)

Strategy	School Level		
	Elementary n=93	Middle n=82	Senior n=68
Surveys about School Resources Needed for Effective Teaching			
14. Survey students about their access to instructional materials: calculators, computers, etc.	88.2 (28.0)	90.2 (20.7)	88.2 (29.4)
15. Survey teachers about their access to teaching/instructional materials.	92.5 (38.7)	93.9 (32.9)	86.7 (33.8)
16. Survey teachers about their opportunities for or access to staff development in critical areas at the time of need.	95.7 (36.6)	92.7 (25.6)	91.2 (39.7)

Note: (Very Teacher-Friendly)

Table 4

Percentage of Teachers by School Level Who Indicated That They Would Use OTL Assessment Strategies in Their Classrooms/School

Strategy	School Level		
	Elementary n=93	Middle n=82	Senior n=68
1. Keeping Journals	69.9%	59.8%	66.2%
2. Assessment	94.6	95.1	91.2
3. Observations	86.0	80.5	80.9
4. Surveys about Teaching	78.5	76.8	67.6
5. Surveys about School Resources	82.8	79.3	73.5

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Appendix

The Council of the Great City Schools' Districts by Region

East

- Baltimore* (1)
- Boston
- Buffalo* (2)
- Washington, DC* (3)
- Newark
- New York City* (4)
- Norfolk* (5)
- Philadelphia
- Pittsburgh
- Providence
- Richmond
- Rochester* (6)

Midwest

- Chicago
- Cleveland* (7)
- Dayton* (9)
- Detroit* (10)
- Milwaukee* (11)
- Minneapolis* (12)
- St. Paul* (13)
- Toledo

Central

- Denver
- Oklahoma City
- Omaha* (14)
- St. Louis* (15)

South

- Atlanta
- Birmingham* (16)
- Broward (Fort Lauderdale)
- Dade County, FL (Miami)
- Jefferson County, KY
- Memphis
- Nashville
- New Orleans

Southwest

- Dallas
- El Paso* (17)
- Fort Worth* (18)
- Houston* (19)
- San Antonio

West

- Clark County, NV (Las Vegas)* (20)
- Fresno* (21)
- Los Angeles* (22)
- Long Beach* (23)
- Oakland
- Portland
- San Diego
- San Francisco
- Seattle* (24)
- Tucson

Note: *Respondent School Districts

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