The United Federation of Teachers prepared this guide on the initial planning conference to help you ensure that the teacher evaluation and development system works for you.

A FEW KEY QUESTIONS

What is an initial planning conference or IPC?  
It is a mandatory one-on-one meeting between you and your evaluator as part of the city’s teacher evaluation and development system.

When is this meeting supposed to happen?  
The initial planning conference must be held at a time mutually agreed upon between you and your evaluator. It must also occur before any of the formal or informal classroom observations required under the evaluation system. Make sure that you and your evaluator hold your meeting by this year’s deadline of Friday, Oct. 30, 2015.

Why is the initial planning conference important?  
This conference is when you select an observation option for the year and indicate whether or not you consent to be videotaped during observations. It is also a crucial opportunity for you to sit down with your evaluator to reflect on your students’ data from last year and to discuss expectations for the year ahead, including your professional development goals for this year, the needs of the students in your classes, your instructional priorities and the particular ways in which your school’s administration can support you in your work with your students.

YOUR OBSERVATION OPTIONS

Observation option 1:  
- At least one formal observation  
- At least three informal observations

Observation option 2:  
- At least six informal observations

Observation option 3:  
This option is only available to teachers who had an overall “Highly Effective” rating the previous year:  
- At least three informal observations  
- Three classroom visits by colleagues to your classroom (you may consent to more than three)

Observation option 4:  
This option is only available to teachers who had an overall “Effective” rating the previous year:  
- At least four informal observations

A few definitions:  
Formal observations last a full period and involve pre- and post-observation conferences between you and your evaluator. Formal observations must be scheduled in advance by mutual agreement between you and your evaluator.  
Informal observations take at least 15 minutes and may be longer. All informal observations may be unannounced but, under every observation option for the year, at least one informal observation must be unannounced.  
Classroom visits are opportunities for teachers to observe and learn from the teaching practice of colleagues. The content of these visits are not used as part of teachers’ evaluation ratings.
HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE INITIAL PLANNING CONFERENCE

Decide in advance of your meeting which observation option you want and be prepared to give your evaluator a completed Measures of Teaching Practice observation option selection form at the end of the meeting. [See list of observation options on other side of this sheet.] Make sure you keep a copy of the completed form.

Decide whether or not you want to be videotaped as part of your evaluation and record this at your meeting using the observation option selection form. Again, make sure you keep a copy of the completed form.

Review your class rosters and look closely at the needs of the students you will be teaching. Be prepared to discuss this with your evaluator to make sure you have a shared understanding of the particular courses and students you have this year.

Identify opportunities for support. Before your meeting, consider what supports and resources you will need this year to help you in your development as an educator and in teaching your particular courses and students. Bring this list with you to the meeting to discuss with your evaluator.

Consider reviewing your evaluations and your observation feedback from the last two years prior to the initial planning conference. Your evaluator is likely to have reviewed your prior years’ evaluations so it would be helpful for you to have also looked at them again.

Prepare to discuss your Measures of Student Learning (MOSL). Be prepared to discuss with your evaluator the assessments that will be given to your classes this year and the possible assessments that may be used for your individual evaluation. Review your MOSL data from last year and come to the meeting with any questions you may have about your evaluator’s views on particular assessments and to discuss upcoming related activities, including the giving and scoring of baseline assessments.

Discuss opportunities for collaboration in teacher teams to support the administration and norming and scoring of assessments selected as MOSLs using the 75-minute block after the regular instructional day.

Consider whether you want to identify a few professional goals for the year in this meeting. Setting professional goals at this meeting is entirely up to you. It is not required. If you think it would be helpful to you to identify professional goals in this meeting, prepare by considering what you know about your students, courses and your own teaching style and what your instructional goals are for the year.

AT THE END OF YOUR INITIAL PLANNING CONFERENCE

At the conclusion of your meeting, you will need to give your evaluator a completed and signed form showing your observation option selection and your decision on whether to be videotaped. Make sure you are also given a copy of this completed form for your own records.