

Rebuttal Writing Tips

- When receiving your Post Observation Conference you must have the opportunity to read it and **always** ask for a copy. (see page 30 of NTU contract, E: Opportunity to Read)
- A rebuttal is an **important** document and should NOT be typed into the Bloomboard comment section. The Bloomboard comment section should simply say, “See hard copy rebuttal which was submitted to administration on (date) and sent to Human Resources to be placed in my personnel file. (Page 30 of your NTU contract, Item G. Right To Inspect File.
- Example: Start your rebuttal with “Please provide me with concrete exemplars for each of the following components: 1a, 2b, 3a, etc.”
- Be calm at your meeting regardless of your scores.
- Take time to read and review your copy and take a deep breath before you begin your written response, otherwise your rebuttal might be too subjective.
- After writing your first draft, walk away and calm down. Then edit and rewrite as needed.
- Write in a manner that reflects your professional title. In almost all cases the reader will only get to know you through your rebuttal.
- Never email any type of response to your evaluation, always submit a hard copy.
- Use only language that is associated with the Framework for Effective Teaching Rubric and the components outlined in that document.
- Use language that is only objective in nature, no opinions, accusations, long narrative stories, etc.

- Do not use names in your rebuttal.
- Talk about what YOU did during the lesson rather than what the administrator did.
- Use first person language in your response to the various components, 1a, 1b, 1c, etc. An example would be thus:

Example

1. Lesson Design and Focus

From the **effective** column:

Teacher connects lesson to all of the following: previous learning, unit objectives, and long-term goals.

Change to:

I connected the lesson to all of the following: previous learning, unit objectives, and long-term goals as evidenced by:

- Lesson Plans from previous lessons, current lesson plan, pacing plan, etc. (See Attached Documentation)
- Related unit objective planning documents. (See Attached Documentation)

- In writing your rebuttal you should NEVER look at the descriptors for Partially Effective or Ineffective. Use only the language from the Effective, or Highly Effective columns.
- Never reiterate your low score. Example: “I received an ineffective for component 1a, but I feel.....” You do NOT need to remind anyone of a low score.
- Make sure to include pictures of your classroom especially if you need to illustrate classroom environment, proper set ups, data walls, word walls, etc.

- Attach any student instructions, questions asked during lessons (include various levels), vocabulary lists, research-based documentation etc.
- Utilize the Internet to extract evidence from any researchers whose ideas or concepts you have used in your planning. (Ex., Marzano, Gardner, Bloom’s Taxonomy, etc.) Attach concepts if you used them in planning, or execution of your lesson.
- Attach student work if applicable to evidence mastery of observed lesson.
- Attach student tests, quizzes and graded homework if applicable to evidence mastery of observed lesson.
- Attach any Power Teacher data related to the lesson, lesson planning, assessment, etc.
- If you need to write a short narrative, do it at the end of the document. Be brief, clear and concise with your points. Illustrate all of the strengths in your lesson which are in direct contrast to your score.
- End each component rebuttal statement with the score you feel that you should have received and the level that it corresponds to. Ex. “My score in this area should have been 3, Effective.”
- A teacher has 10 days from the day of the post observation to write a rebuttal. If you require additional time start your rebuttal with a disclaimer. “Due to the complexity of my rebuttal I required additional time to respond.”
- After you have checked and proofread your rebuttal for spelling and grammar hand a copy to your administrator to be placed in your file. Include ALL documentation and supporting evidence along with the rebuttal.
- Mail a copy (registered mail, return receipt requested), of rebuttal and ALL documentation and supporting evidence to:

**Newark Public Schools
 Human Resources Dept.
 2 Cedar Street
 Newark, NJ 07102**

- Include a short cover letter stating that you would like this rebuttal placed in your personnel file.
- Mail a copy (registered mail, return receipt requested), of rebuttal and ALL documentation and supporting evidence to the regional office that pertains to your school. Include a short cover letter stating that you would like this rebuttal placed in your personnel file.
- For an Annual Evaluation that you do NOT agree with, compose an email to the following: evaluations@nps.k12.nj.us and cc Mike Maillaro at mmaillaro@newarkteachersunion.com

Example: My name is ____, ID# ____, and my position is ____ at ____ School. I do not agree with my annual evaluation and would like to appeal it.

- If there are items that you feel you cannot respond to in your rebuttal then do not respond to them. (Ex. tardiness, absenteeism, no lesson plans, lack of documentation for student progress, etc.)
- Administrator rebuttal to your rebuttal. As ludicrous as this sounds there have been administrators who will call teachers in to do a critique of their submitted rebuttal. If this happens it is best to get your NTU building rep to step in and explain that to the administrator that the evaluation alone serves the purpose.
- Some components of the framework that teachers are being scored on can seem vague. The NTU has asked the NPS to provide us with exemplars for each component. We asked for concrete examples of what type of documentation teachers need to provide in order to receive effective, or highly effective scores. We have been waiting for these exemplars since July of 2012 and have not received anything from NPS. If a teacher is not sure, or needs clarity for the type of documentation required for a vague component of the framework, then they should ask the administrator who evaluates them to provide a clear and concise example of what is required in order to obtain the effective, or highly effective score.