Assessment of Program Practices Tool (APT)
Observer Certification Process, 2016-17 Pilot

September

Orientation to the APT
Self-paced online training about the APT rating system and how the resulting data can be used
Assesses the trainee's knowledge of the APT rating system and its purpose

Practice using the APT in a familiar setting
Trainees conduct a solo practice observation of their own program and share their ratings with NIOST; NIOST provides feedback on their ratings
Assesses the trainee's ability to conduct an observation during a live program, as well as the validity of their ratings

October – November

Practice using the APT in the field
Trainees conduct a practice observation in tandem with a NIOST master observer at a less familiar program site and compare their ratings
Assesses the trainee's ability to provide feedback to staff they do not supervise and the reliability of their ratings

December – February

OPTIONAL practice observation
Trainees who would like extra practice conduct an observation of any program and share their ratings with NIOST; NIOST provides feedback. For trainees who did not pass their previous practice observation, this is an opportunity to make it up and stay on track for certification.
Assesses the validity of the trainee's ratings

March

Debrief and discuss observer bias
Trainees meet as a group in person with a NIOST master observer to debrief the training process and discuss techniques for mitigating bias in recording observation data
Trainees who have demonstrated that they record valid and reliable APT ratings become certified observers

April – May and the following season

Conduct official APT observations
Newly certified observers conduct observations at program sites they do not manage for evaluation purposes and report their ratings to NIOST and BASB

Boston After School & Beyond

National Institute on Out-of-School Time
at the Wellesley Centers for Women