

Evaluation and Support Program

It is universally accepted that good teaching is the most important element in a sound educational program. Student learning is directly affected by teacher competence; therefore, teacher evaluation shall be accomplished using a teacher evaluation plan which demonstrates a clear link between teacher evaluation, professional development and improved student learning. (The educator evaluation and support plan or revisions must be approved annually by the State Department of Education prior to District implementation.)

Note: "Teacher or "Administrator" for purposes of evaluation shall include each professional employee of the Board, below the rank of Superintendent, who holds a certificate or permit issued by the State Board of Education.

Appraisal of teaching performance should serve three purposes:

1. To raise the quality of instruction and educational services to the children of our community resulting in improved student learning.
2. To raise the standards of the teaching profession as a whole.
3. To aid the individual teacher to grow professionally, linking district-wide teacher evaluation and professional development plans.

Evaluation of teacher performance must be a cooperative, continuing process designed to improve student learning and the quality of instruction. The Superintendent shall annually evaluate or cause to be evaluated all certified employees in accordance with guidelines established by the State Board of Education. The teacher shares with those who work with the teacher the responsibility for developing effective evaluation procedures and instruments and for the development and maintenance of professional standards and attitudes regarding the evaluation process.

The Board of Education directs the Superintendent and the teachers' and administrators' representatives to develop, in harmony with the latest guidelines for the state model evaluation program issued by the Connecticut Department of Education and such other guidelines as may be mutually agreed upon, a system-wide program for evaluating the instructional process and all certified personnel as one means to improve student learning and insure the quality of instruction. The evaluation plan shall include, but need not be limited to, strengths, areas needing improvement, strategies for improvement and multiple indicators of student academic growth.* Further, claims of failure to follow such guidelines shall be subject to the grievance procedure in collective bargaining agreements negotiated subsequent to July 1, 2004.

Note: The district's evaluation plan, submitted to the State Department of Education for approval, may be the district's selection of the state model evaluation plan, SEED (Connecticut's System for Educator

Evaluation and Development), or a hybrid of SEED, or a district-proposed alternative evaluation and support plan which fulfills the state guidelines.

The Superintendent and all employees whose administrative and supervisory duties equal at least 50% of their time shall include a minimum of fifteen hours of training in the evaluation of teachers pursuant to Section 10-151b, as part of the required professional development activity during each five year period for reissuance of their professional educator certificate.

**The State Board of Education as required has adopted guidelines for a model teacher and administrator evaluation and support program which is to provide guidance on the use of multiple indicators of student academic growth in teacher evaluations. The guidelines include, but are not limited to:*

- 1. The use of four performance evaluations designators: exemplary, proficient, developing and below standards;*
- 2. The use of multiple indicators of student academic growth and development in teacher and administrative evaluations;*
- 3. Methods for assessing student academic growth and development;*
- 4. A consideration of control factors, tracked by the state-wide public school information system that may influence teacher performance ratings, including, but not limited to, student characteristics, student attendance and student mobility;*
- 5. Minimum requirements for teacher evaluation instruments and procedures, including scoring systems to determine exemplary, proficient, developing and below standard ratings;*
- 6. The development and implementation of periodic-training programs regarding the teacher evaluation and support program to be offered by the local or regional board of education or RESC to teachers whose performance is being evaluated and to administrators who are conducting the performance evaluations;*
- 7. The provision of professional development services based on individual or group needs identified through evaluations;*
- 8. The creation of individual teacher improvement and remediation plans for teachers who are rated "developing" or "below standard" in performance;*
- 9. Opportunities for career development and professional growth; and*
- 10. A validation procedure to audit evaluation ratings of "exemplary" or "below standard" evaluation ratings.*

These guidelines will be validated after the pilot programs conducted in the 2012-2013 school year.

The Superintendent shall annually evaluate or cause to be evaluated each teacher and administrator in accordance with guidelines established by the State Board of Education and such other guidelines as may be established by mutual agreement between the Board and the teachers' and administrators' representatives, and may conduct additional formative evaluations toward producing an annual summative evaluation.

In the event that a teacher or an administrator does not receive a summative evaluation during the school year, such individual shall receive a rating of "not rated" for that year.

Note: The SBE may waive the requirement of consistency with SBE's model guidelines for any district that, before the model guidelines are validated, (after the pilots 2012-2013), developed a teacher evaluation program that is determined by the SBE to substantially comply with the guidelines.

The Superintendent shall report to the Board by June 1 annually on the status of the evaluations. In addition, by June 30 annually, the Superintendent shall report to the Commissioner of Education on the implementation of evaluations, including their frequency, aggregate evaluation ratings, the number of teachers and administrators not evaluated, and other requirements as determined by the State Department of Education.

Remediation Plans

Teachers rated "below standard" or "developing" shall have an improvement and remediation plan that:

1. is developed in consultation with the teacher and his/her union representative;
2. identifies resources, support, and other methods to address documented deficiencies;
3. contains a timeline for implementing such measures in the same school year as the plan is issued; and
4. provides success indicators that include a minimum overall rating of "proficient" at the end of the improvement and remediation plan.

Evaluation Training

The Board, prior to implementing the teacher evaluation and support program, but not later than July 1, 2014, shall conduct training programs for all evaluators and orientation for all District teachers regarding the District's teacher evaluation and support program. Such training shall provide instruction to evaluators regarding how to conduct proper performance evaluations prior to conducting an evaluation under the teacher evaluation and support program. The orientation for each teacher shall be completed before a teacher receives an evaluation under the teacher evaluation and support program.

Note: "Teacher" includes all certified employees below the rank of Superintendent.

Implementation Plan

The Board of Education recognizes that the State Board of Education (SBE) has adopted a modified plan for the implementation of Connecticut's Educator Evaluation and Support System for the 2013-2014 school year. The District, in the 2013-2014 "Bridge Year" will:

☒ [X] implement the whole evaluation model district-wide, consisting of all components of both teacher and administrative evaluation, as outlined in the "Guidelines for Connecticut's Educator Evaluation and Support System (SEED)."

☐ [] implement the whole model in at least one-third of the District's schools, for all certified teachers and administrators within those schools.

☐ [] implement the whole model in at least fifty percent of the District's schools, for classroom teachers only and administrators within those schools.

☐ [] implement a locally-developed and state-approved model/option.

The certified staff, in 2013-2014, not evaluated under the new system shall be evaluated under the district's existing evaluation plan.

Note: *Districts that choose an alternate approach to implementing the whole evaluation model district-wide (first option above) must convene a committee consisting of representation of local bargaining unit(s) and superintendent's representatives. If an alternate approach is decided upon, it must (1) involve implementation of the whole model and (2) represent a minimum of one-third of the district's certified staff, including administrators. The board of education must act upon the recommendations of this committee.*

Audit

The Board, starting July 1, 2014, if selected, will participate as required, in an audit of its evaluation program, conducted by the State Department of Education.

All teachers teaching in public schools at the elementary, middle and high school levels (including special education teachers) must be determined to be "highly qualified," as defined in the No Child Left Behind Act. To be determined "highly qualified," a teacher must use the HOUSSSE plan if he or she has not passed a state subject-matter test, does not hold advanced certification (e.g., National Board Certification) in all of the core academic content areas that he or she teaches (see appendix "Questions and Answers" document for more detailed information). The reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) identifies special education teachers as teachers who must demonstrate competency (i.e., be highly qualified) in the core academic subjects that they teach.

Because the District's teacher evaluation and professional development guidelines (1) were reviewed and critiqued using the State Department of Education's peer review process and (2) include subject-matter knowledge assessment, Connecticut's district teacher evaluation plans have been approved by the U.S. Department of Education as Connecticut's official HOUSSE plan.

To ensure that this statewide HOUSSE is standardized across districts throughout the state, it is critical that the District evaluates a teacher's subject-matter competency in the core academic content areas, based on the Common Core of Teaching (CCT), using both of the following:

- A. foundational skills and competencies; and
- B. the discipline-based professional standards.

The Superintendent is directed to develop appropriate regulations, based upon guidance promulgated by the State Department of Education, pertaining to the District's HOUSSE plan.

(cf. 2400 - Evaluation of Administrators and Administration)
(cf. 4111/4211 - Recruitment and Selection)
(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-145b Teaching certificates
10-151a Access of teacher to supervisory records and reports in personnel file
10-151b Evaluation by superintendent of certain educational personnel. (amended by PA 04-137, An Act Concerning Teachers' Evaluations, P.A. 10-111, An Act Concerning Education Reform in Connecticut, and P.A. 12-116 An Act Concerning Educational Reform.)
10-151c Records of teacher performance and evaluation not public records
10-220a (b) In-service training. Professional development. Institutes for educators. Cooperative and beginning teacher programs, regulations.
20 U.S.C. Section 1119 No Child Left Behind Act
34 C.F.R. 200.55 Federal Regulations
Circular Letter C-6, Series 2004-2005, Determining "Highly Qualified" Teachers
Circular Letter C-9, Series 2004-2005, "No Child Left Behind" and Districts' High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) Plans.
PA 11-135 An Act Concerning Implementation Dates for Secondary School Reform
PA 12-116 An Act Concerning Education Reform
Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation, adopted by the State Board of Education, June 27, 2012

Connecticut's System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) state model evaluation system.

Board adopted: November 13, 2014