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Teacher Evaluation: Applying the New System to Specific Categories of Educators

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) is developing a new evaluation system which will be implemented for instructionally certified teachers in 2013-14 and educational specialists beginning in 2014-15.¹ The hallmark of the new system is the inclusion of multiple measures of student achievement as a significant component of the overall rating. Measures of student performance have been addressed extensively in earlier Advisories. Equally significant for the new evaluation system is PDE's effort to refine the rubric used in observing professional practice. The rubric is based on the work of Charlotte Danielson. Those conducting observations will be asked to apply the rubric by looking for specific evidence of professional performance. PDE is developing documents to describe specific kinds of evidence, with examples of professional practice within specific certification areas, to help administrators evaluate educators' practice.

PDE is working with educators from across the Commonwealth to adapt the new rubric to reflect the different work of several categories of professional assignment. As described below, specific elements of the new system will reflect the professional assignments of special educators, licensed professionals, education specialists, and educators assigned to positions in ESL, gifted, and library sciences.

Special Educators. Special educators will be evaluated using the same observation rubric as other classroom teachers. Results from the observation rubric will comprise 50 percent of a special educator's overall evaluation score. This rubric is available on PDE's website:
http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/educator_effectiveness_project/20903.

PDE is currently working with stakeholder groups in several areas of special education to identify and describe what "evidence and possible examples"² of effective practice might look like for instructionally certified educators (*see list below*) with unique roles and functions. These evidence statements and possible examples of effective practice can be used alongside the classroom observation rubric to help administrators understand the unique characteristics of effective instruction in special education.

Specifically, PDE has convened stakeholder groups to address what evidence and possible examples might look like for special educators teaching in the following areas: autistic support; life skills/MDS; emotional support; learning support; vision; speech language pathology, and deaf/hard of hearing.

Special educators also will be evaluated on multiple measures of student achievement. These measures will comprise half of a special educator's overall evaluation. PDE is continuing to develop specific criteria for this portion of the new evaluation system; as information becomes available it will be posted on PDE's and PSEA's websites.

¹In July, Governor Corbett signed Act 82 of 2012. The new law directs PDE to develop a new educator evaluation system to be implemented beginning in the 2012-14 school year. As it develops the new system, PDE sought advice from a number of stakeholder groups, including PSEA, but our role is advisory only. Decisions about the new system are being made by PDE.

² PDE uses the term "evidence and possible examples" to refer to a series of documents the Department is producing with the assistance of stakeholder groups. These documents describe effective practice and give examples of what effective practice may look like within specific areas of professional assignment and in the terms adopted by the new rubric.

Education Specialists. For educators working under an education specialist certificate, 80 percent of their overall evaluation in the new system will be based upon the results of an observation rubric. Each education specialist certification area will have a unique observation rubric that describes the roles, duties, and functions of individuals working under the certificate. Pennsylvania currently issues seven education specialist certificates: dental hygienist, elementary school counselor, home and school visitor, instructional technology specialist, secondary school counselor, school nurse, and school psychologist.

PDE currently is working with groups of education specialists to revise Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* to reflect the specific roles, duties, and functions of each specialist certification area. PSEA is participating in each of the stakeholder groups. Each stakeholder group will complete a draft rubric by early 2013 and make it available on PDE's website; these rubrics will be piloted beginning in spring 2013 and running through the 2013-14 school year.

School-wide measures of student achievement will comprise the remaining 20 percent of the overall evaluation result for professionals working on an education specialist certificate. PDE will release details about the school-wide measure of student achievement by early 2013.

Licensed Professionals. PDE is also developing specific rubrics, based upon the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, for licensed professionals working under professional contracts in public school settings. Specifically, PDE has convened stakeholder groups to develop rubrics that reflect the roles, duties, and functions of occupational therapists, physical therapists, social workers, and behavior specialists who work within the public school system.

School-wide measures of student achievement will comprise the remaining 20 percent of the overall evaluation result for licensed professionals working in public school settings. PDE will release details about the school-wide measure of student achievement by early 2013.

ESL Teachers, Gifted Teachers, Reading Specialists, Early Intervention Teachers, Career and Technology Education Teachers, Speech Language Pathologists, and School Librarians. All teachers working under instructional certificates, including those listed here, will be evaluated with the same observation rubric as other classroom teachers. Results from the observation rubric will comprise 50 percent of the overall evaluation score. This observation rubric is available on PDE's website (see link above).

PDE currently is working with stakeholder groups in these listed instructional certification areas to describe "evidence and possible examples" of effective practice within each area of assignment. These evidence statements and possible examples of effective practice can be used alongside the classroom observation rubric to help administrators understand the unique characteristics of effective instruction in each of the areas listed above. PSEA has appointed members to these stakeholder groups.

Educators working under instructional certificates in these areas also will be evaluated on multiple measures of student achievement. These measures will comprise half of the overall evaluation. PDE is continuing to develop specific criteria for this portion of the new evaluation system; as information becomes available it will be posted on PDE's and PSEA's websites.

For more information on issues related to the new educator evaluation system, contact Dr. Carla Claycomb, cclaycomb@psea.org, in PSEA's Education Services Department.