

Guidance included in August 1, 2014, [Field Memo](#):

RIDE issues guidance on new legislation regarding annual evaluation of teachers

Recently passed legislation, H 7096 Sub B, on educator evaluation introduces limitations to the *frequency* with which any tenured teacher may be evaluated. The legislation still requires each LEA to have an approved evaluation system for implementation. This is the first of two guidance documents and attends to the issues that affect planning for the upcoming school year. The second document will focus on longer-term issues, including the implications for certification renewal now that there will not be annual evaluation results for teachers.

Defining Evaluation

For the purposes of this guidance document, it is necessary to distinguish summative evaluation within an approved educator-evaluation system from the ongoing supervision of staff for instructional improvement that is required in all LEAs. The summative evaluation that occurs under an approved system yields a summative score that is currently connected to certification renewal. Ongoing supervision may include practices such as observations, conferencing, examining student performance, and other forms of providing feedback that result in the improvement of teaching and learning. Information from ongoing supervision may be used for locally determined purposes, but this information does not result in a summative score reported to RIDE.

Affected Educators

The legislation stipulates an evaluation cycle for tenured teachers who receive Highly Effective and Effective ratings. Specifically, the legislation notes that a cyclical process will be in place following the receipt of either of these two ratings; therefore the 2013-14 ratings will

determine the cyclical options. Tenured teachers who did not receive an evaluation rating during the previous school year for any reason must be part of a full, summative evaluation in coming school year (2014-15). Teachers who are using a certification that is different from the certification used during the 2013-14 school year must be part of a full, summative evaluation . Finally, non-tenured teachers must be part of a full, summative evaluation annually.

Support professionals do not have an evaluation rating from the 2013-14 school year, since 2013-14 2 was a year of gradual implementation for support professionals. Therefore, all support professionals must be part of a full, summative evaluation for the first time under an approved evaluation system in 2014-15.

Principals are not included in this legislation; therefore, principals will continue to be evaluated annually.

Planning for Implementation

The legislation states that a tenured teacher with a Highly Effective rating shall be evaluated no more than once every three years and that a tenured teacher with an Effective rating shall be evaluated no more than once every two years. LEAs should develop a mechanism to divide the Highly Effective tenured teachers into three groups, in order to avoid the overburdening of administrators that this legislation sought, in part, to address. The first group should be evaluated in the upcoming school year, the second group in the 2015-16 school year, and the third group in the 2016-17 school year. Similarly the tenured teachers with an Effective rating should be divided into two groups, with the first group being fully evaluated in the upcoming school year.

Annual Conferences

The legislation also calls for annual conferences for all Highly Effective and Effective teachers who are in a cyclical year. As the legislation

states: “The conference shall be in accordance with a process and scope determined by each school district’s educator evaluation committee.” The purposes of these conferences may include but are not limited to:

- feedback on classroom walkthroughs;
- discussions about median growth scores when available and about other local student learning measures; and
- other feedback that will assist with professional growth and the improvement of instruction and student learning.

Provisions for More Frequent Evaluation

The legislation provides a mechanism for LEAs to require more frequent evaluations under two conditions. LEAs may call for more frequent evaluations as part of a negotiated collective bargaining agreement. Second, more frequent evaluations may occur if any concerns about a teacher’s performance arise at any time. Requiring more frequent evaluations must be done in accordance with local school-district policies and with any negotiated collective bargaining agreement. LEAs that have existing negotiated collective bargaining agreements that require annual evaluations must continue to provide annual evaluations until such agreements are renegotiated.

Triggers for more frequent evaluations may include but are not limited to:

- informal classroom walkthroughs;
- professional conduct; and
- median growth scores or other measures of student learning.

Next Steps

RIDE remains committed to working with LEAs to ensure that the Educator Evaluation System provides a mechanism and structure that

supports ongoing improvement for every educator in our state, for the benefit of our students. The legislation speaks to the frequency of the evaluation cycle, not the content or process. There is still much work to be done together to strengthen both the models and their implementation. This work includes:

- adjusting the EPSS to account for the cyclical evaluations of Highly Effective and Effective tenured teachers. (We recommend that all caseloads or rosters be maintained, even if some staff members will not be evaluated in the 2014-15 school year. We will send further guidance in the next few weeks.);
- examining the current evaluation system components and requirements to make revisions based on implementation outcomes in LEAs;
- continuing to examine and refine the SLO process so that it aligns with strong instructional practices and well-designed curriculum-embedded assessments; and
- reviewing and revising the certification renewal process in light of the legislation, as there won't be annual evaluation data on every tenured teacher. Later this year, we will issue guidance on evaluations and certification.