

SUPPORTING Improved Educator Evaluations

What is the Colorado State Model Evaluation System?

Senate Bill 10-191 was passed with the idea that every child in every community deserves excellent classroom teachers and building leaders who are supported in their professional growth. As part of the bill, the way both principals and teachers are evaluated in Colorado is changing. To support school districts in implementing the new evaluation requirements, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) is developing a model system as an option for districts to use for teacher and principal evaluations. The Colorado State Model Evaluation System is being piloted in 27 school districts of varying size and location in the 2011-16 school years. Educator feedback from these pilot districts is informing improvements to the model system prior to implementation.

What are the key priorities?

CDE has worked with a variety of stakeholders throughout the design and development of the Colorado State Model Evaluation System. This collaborative process has remained focused on five key priorities:

- Data should inform decisions, but human judgment will always be an essential component of evaluations
- The implementation and evaluation of the system must embody continuous improvement
- The purpose of the system is to provide meaningful and credible feedback that improves performance
- The development and implementation of evaluation systems must continue to involve all stakeholders in a collaborative process
- Educator evaluations must take place within a larger system that is aligned and supportive

What is the evaluation cycle?

The Colorado State Model Evaluation System uses a meaningful process for educator evaluation. The year-long cycle includes regular conversations between the evaluator and evaluatee; it is not a one-time event or observation, but rather a process that focuses on continuous improvement of the skills, knowledge and student outcomes of the person being evaluated. The cycle allows for districts to determine how many observations are included prior to the mid-year and final reviews. The cycle includes, but is not limited to:

- Annual orientation to the system/tools
- Educator self-assessment

District flexibility

State Board of Education rules state that districts may design their own evaluation system if they:

- Provide annual assurances that their system meets or exceeds the statewide Quality Standards
- Adhere to the requirements of state statute and State Board of Education rules
- Have their final evaluation ratings result in either: highly effective, effective, partially effective or ineffective

Districts who adopt the model system have flexibility to customize:

- If the statewide summative exam is taken in the grade level, it must count as one measure in the 50 percent student learning outcomes Quality Standard. Each school district may choose what other measures will contribute. They may also choose to use assessments from the CDE Resource Bank being developed by the Content Collaboratives
- Each district can decide how much each of the professional practice Quality Standards is weighted. Each standard must have a “measurable influence” on the total and the total of the standards must equal 50 percent of the total rating

- Review of annual goals and performance plan
- A mid-year review
- An evaluator assessment
- An end-of-year review
- A final rating
- Goal-setting and performance planning for the next school year

How will a principal or teacher be evaluated?

Educators will be rated on Quality Standards that measure professional practice and student learning outcomes (student growth). The criterion for evaluating specialized service professionals (formally referred to as other licensed personnel) is still being developed. Note that the evaluation requirements for specialized service professionals do not go into effect until the 2014-15 school year (one year after the principal/teacher evaluation implementation). Teachers will be evaluated on six Quality Standards:

- Half of the evaluation will be based on the five Quality Standards that measure professional practice: content knowledge, establish classroom environment, facilitate learning, reflect on practice and demonstrate leadership. The Quality Standards can be measured using the state-developed rubric that identifies the practices necessary to achieve the standards.
- The sixth Quality Standard, student learning outcomes (student growth), will account for the other half of the evaluation. The standard will be based on multiple measures, not a single assessment. Teachers must have a team attribution student growth score and at least one individual attribution student growth score. If a teacher teaches a subject that takes the statewide summative exam, it must be used as one of the multiple measures. In early 2013, draft guidance was released to give districts/BOCES a starting point for determining the 50 percent student learning outcomes portion.

Principals will be evaluated on seven Quality Standards:

- Half of the evaluation will be based on the six professional practice Quality Standards: strategic leadership, instructional leadership, school cultural and equity leadership, human resource leadership, managerial leadership and external development leadership. The professional practices can be measured with the state-developed rubric.
- The other half of a principal's evaluation will be based on the seventh Quality Standard which measures the student learning outcomes (student growth) in their school. Principals must have a team attribution score and student growth scores that are aligned to their teachers. The score on the School Performance Framework would be applicable.

How is a final rating determined?

Colorado is committed to designing and maintaining an evaluation system that is fair to all educators. With insight from the pilot districts, CDE is working on a system to combine ratings for all Quality Standards into a final rating of either: highly effective, effective, partially effective or ineffective.

Where can I learn more?

- Learn more about the Colorado State Model Evaluation System: www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/StateModelEvaluationSystem.asp
- View the student learning outcomes draft guidance: www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/StudentGrowthGuide.asp
- Access all CDE fact sheets: www.cde.state.co.us/Communications/factsheets.html