



NEBRASKA TEACHER/PRINCIPAL EVALUATION PROJECT

GUIDANCE FOR THE TEACHER/EDUCATIONAL SPECIALIST EVALUATION PROCESS

I. The Evaluation Process Rationale

- In developing the Nebraska evaluation models, the Design/Pilot Committee has been guided by the charge from the State Board of Education and the recommendations of the Leadership Committee. The Board's charge called for evaluation models that included multiple measures of educator performance including classroom practice, measures of student learning, the gathering of student and stakeholder perceptions, and a focus on the improvement of instruction and leadership.
- The Leadership Committee further defined these measures and recommended that the evaluation models include both formative components and a summative component. The Committee stated that the formative components should be designed for the purpose of fostering professional growth and improved practice. The summative component is to be used for periodic evaluation of educator performance for the purpose of making employment decisions.
- This guidance document outlines the formative and summative elements of the evaluation process as developed in the Design Phase of the project.

II. The Evaluation Cycle

An evaluation cycle consists of one or more formative evaluations followed by a summative evaluation. The completion of the summative evaluation ends the evaluation cycle.

- A. [Evaluation cycle for probationary teachers/educational specialists](#). Teachers and educational specialists in the probationary stage of employment in a school district (generally the first three years of employment in the district) have a one-year evaluation cycle. The evaluation cycle includes a first semester formative evaluation and a second semester summative evaluation. Each semester's evaluation process must include at

least one formal observation of classroom or work performance for a full instructional period in accordance with state law. The sequence of the formative and summative evaluations is described Section III below.

- B. [Evaluation cycle for permanent teachers/educational specialists](#). Each local school district must determine the evaluation cycle for permanent (tenured) teachers and educational specialists. The Leadership Committee has recommended that the summative evaluation cycle not exceed three years. In a three-year cycle, Years 1 and 2 would include annual formative evaluations and Year 3 would include a summative evaluation. Unlike the requirements for probationary educators, there is no legal requirement for the number and duration of observations for permanent staff. That determination is left to local districts. The sequence of the formative and summative evaluations is described Section 3 below.

III. Proposed Evaluation Cycle Sequences

Detailed sequences for probationary teachers/educational specialists and permanent (tenured) teachers/specialists are included in the model Board policy. Summaries of the sequences are described below. In addition, the formative and summative evaluation forms include an annual Record of Evaluative Activities to be completed as part of the annual evaluation process.

- A. Probationary Teachers/Specialists (One-Year Evaluation Cycle)
1. **Semester 1: Formative Evaluation**
 - (a) Self-Assessment/reflection (optional)
 - (b) Conference to develop Student Learning Objectives/Specialist Program Objectives.
 - (c) Review Individual Professional Development Plan (Years 2 and 3) at start of year.
 - (d) Formal classroom/worksite observation (full instructional period); discussion of deficiencies (if applicable); informal and walk-through observations throughout.
 - (e) Review of artifacts.

- (f) First semester formative evaluation conference; completion of formative evaluation portions of probationary evaluation document.
 - Ratings on seven Effective Practices
 - Review of progress on SLO/SPO's.
 - Review Individual Professional Development Plan (Years 2 and 3)
 - Rating on local standards (optional)
 - No overall rating.
- (g) Prepare Plan for Improvement/Plan of Assistance (if applicable)

2. Semester 2: Summative Evaluation

- (a) Formal classroom/worksite observation (full instructional period); discussion of deficiencies (if applicable); informal and walk-through observations continue.
- (b) Collect student perception data.
- (c) Review of artifacts.
- (d) Self-assessment/reflection (optional)
- (e) Second semester summative evaluation; completion of full probationary evaluation document.
 - Ratings on seven Effective Practices
 - Rating on SLO/SPO's.
 - Rating Individual Professional Development Plan (Years 2 and 3)
 - Rating on local standards (optional)
 - Overall rating.
- (f) Develop next year's Individual Professional Development Plan.
- (g) Prepare Plan for Improvement/Plan of Assistance (if applicable)

B. Permanent (tenured) teachers/educational specialists. (Multi-year cycle)

1. Formative Years (one or two years)

- (a) Self-Assessment/reflection (optional)
- (b) Conference to develop Student Learning Objectives/Specialist Program Objectives.
- (c) Review Individual Professional Development Plan at start of year.
- (d) Informal/walk-through observations as determined by evaluator.
- (e) Review of artifacts.
- (d) Mid-year review of SLO/SPO's and Individual Professional Development Plan (evaluator's discretion).
- (e) Self-assessment/reflective summary (optional)
- (f) End-of-year formative evaluation conference; complete formative evaluation document.

- Discussion of Effective Practices (as needed)
 - Ratings on SLO/SPO's.
 - Rating on Individual Professional Development Plan.
 - Rating or review of local standards (optional)
 - No overall rating.
- (g) Develop next year's Individual Professional Development Plan.
- (h) Prepare Plan for Improvement/Plan of Assistance (if applicable); move to semester or yearly summative evaluation cycle if performance warrants.

2. Summative Year

- (a) Self-Assessment/reflection (optional)
- (b) Conference to develop Student Learning Objectives/Specialist Program Objectives.
- (c) Review Individual Professional Development Plan at start of year.
- (d) At least one formal classroom/worksite observation (length to be determined by evaluator); discussion of deficiencies (if applicable).
- (e) Informal/walk-through observations as determined by evaluator.
- (f) Review of artifacts.
- (g) Collect student perception data.
- (h) Mid-year review of SLO/SPO's and Individual Professional Development Plan (evaluator's discretion).
- (i) Self-assessment/reflective summary (optional)
- (j) End-of-year summative evaluation conference; complete summative evaluation document.
- Ratings on 7 Effective Practices.
 - Rating on SLO/SPO's. Rating on Individual Professional Development Plan.
 - Rating on local standards (optional)
 - Overall rating.
- (k) Develop next year's Individual Professional Development Plan.
- (l) Prepare Plan for Improvement/Plan of Assistance (if applicable); move to semester or yearly summative evaluation cycle if performance warrants.

IV. The Evaluative Criteria

Nebraska Department of Education Rule 10, *Accreditation of Schools*, requires that teachers be evaluated on instructional performance, classroom organization and management, and personal and professional conduct. Instructional performance and classroom organization and management may not apply for some educational specialists.

The Nebraska teacher/educational specialist evaluation model includes the following evaluative criteria.

- A. **Nebraska Teacher Performance Framework.** The seven Effective Practices in the *Nebraska Teacher Performance Framework* form the basis for the evaluation of all teacher practice. A set of rubrics with example behaviors and sources of evidence have been developed for the Effective Practices. However, the *Framework* and rubrics are designed for classroom teachers. Pilot districts will need to make some adjustments to these standards and rubrics to provide for evaluation of the work of various types of educational specialists. Sample rubrics for some types of specialists have been developed by Charlotte Danielson and Robert Marzano.
- B. **Classroom Practice.** The analysis of classroom practice for teachers is to be based on either Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* or Robert Marzano's *Causal Evaluation Model*. These provide more detailed analyses of classroom performance than do the more summative rubrics of the Nebraska Framework. For example, the Nebraska Framework has a single rubric for "Instructional Strategies" while the Danielson and Marzano frameworks analyze multiple skills in the general category of Instruction.

The instructional frameworks will form the basis of classroom observation, reflection, and discussion throughout the formative evaluation period for teachers. However, the data gathered in this process and conclusions drawn must be transferred to the Nebraska *Framework's* seven Effective Practices for the summative evaluation.

It is anticipated that rating the teacher/educational specialist on the Effective Practices rubrics will be a holistic process based on the evaluator's informed judgment after a thorough review of the evidence collected in the evaluation process, not a mathematical determination. No specific weights or mathematical values are assigned in the Nebraska evaluation model.

- C. **Student Achievement/Specialist Program Performance.** The evaluation of the teacher’s impact on student achievement or the specialist’s impact on other aspects of school performance will be determined through the use of Student Learning Objectives or Specialist Program Objectives. These are described in more detail in a separate guidance document entitled “Guidance for the Student Learning Objective/Specialist Program Objectives Component.”
- D. **Professional Development.** The professional development efforts of teachers/educational specialists shall be evaluated through the annual rating of an Individual Professional Development Plan. Such plans are described in more detail in a separate guidance document entitled “Guidance for the Individual Professional Development Plan Component.”
- E. **Local Standards (Optional).** Pilot districts may adopt such additional local standards for teachers/educational specialists as may be appropriate.
- F. **Overall Performance.** Evaluators will assign an overall performance rating based on the evaluative criteria above as part of the summative evaluation. The overall rating is based on the evaluator’s judgment following a thorough review of the evidence collected in the evaluation process, not a mathematical determination. The evaluative criteria are not weighted nor are mathematical values assigned.

V. Levels of Performance

The Effective Practices, Student Learning Objectives/Specialist Program Objectives, Individual Professional Development Plans, and Overall Performance are all rated at one of four levels of performance: **Exemplary, Proficient, Basic, or Unsatisfactory**. A rating of “Basic” on any component requires the development of a Plan for Improvement; a rating of “Unsatisfactory” on any component requires the development of a Plan of Assistance. These are further described in Section VII (D).

Classroom practice as analyzed in the Danielson or Marzano instructional frameworks is not rated per se in the summative evaluation. Rather the conclusions drawn are translated into the ratings of the seven Effective Practices in the *Nebraska Teacher Framework*.

Local Standards are rated as **Met/Not Met** on the model’s forms. However, local districts can determine any levels of performance they wish for this optional component.

VI. Gathering Evaluation Data

- A. **Direct Observation of Work Performance.** The evaluation of all teachers and educational specialists should be based in part on the direct observation of the educator performing his or her duties. Multiple observations of teacher/educational specialist performance throughout the year, including formal, informal, and walk-through observations are encouraged. Recent research indicates that multiple, short observations of observations by multiple observers are more effective than single, long observations in determining teacher effectiveness.
1. Formal Observations of a teacher or educational specialist's performance shall include (1) advance notice to the educator of the time and date of the observation; (2) a pre-observation conference with the observer; (3) observation for a full instructional period in the case of probationary employees and for a duration determined by the observer in the case of permanent employees; (4) a post-observation conference with the observer, and (5) a written report summarizing strengths and suggestions for improvement.
 2. Informal Observations are less than a full instructional period in duration, but somewhat longer than a walk-through observation. A duration of 15-20 minutes may be appropriate. Informal observations may be pre-announced or unannounced. They must include some oral or written feedback to the teacher/educational specialist, but a formal post-conference and written observation report are not required unless specific deficiencies are noted. For example, a brief, informal conversation or e-mail exchange would suffice to meet this requirement.

3. Walk-through Observations are brief classroom or work space visits, generally five to ten minutes in duration, for the purpose of monitoring the teaching and learning process. Such observations are generally unannounced and do not include a conference or required written report. Brief oral or written feedback to the employee may be provided at the observer's discretion, but is not required unless specific deficiencies are noted.

- For probationary teachers, at least one formal observation for a full instructional period is required each semester. For probationary educational specialists for whom classroom observation is not feasible, direct observation of the educator's work performance for the equivalent of a full instructional period in the school in which the specialist is observed is required.
- A full instructional period is defined in the model policy as the full duration of the class or subject period in which the observation takes place.
- For permanent (tenured) teachers/educational specialists, the frequency and duration of observations is to be determined by the local district. The model Board policy calls for at least one formal observation as defined above during the summative year of the evaluation cycle and other observations as determined by the evaluator or local policy during the formative years.
- If deficiencies are noted in the work performance of any probationary or permanent employee, the evaluator shall provide the employee at the time of the observation with a list of deficiencies, a list of suggestions for improvement, and assistance in overcoming the deficiencies, and follow-up evaluations and assistance when deficiencies remain. Further information on addressing deficiencies is provided in Section VII (D) below.

B. **The Collection of Artifacts.** Evaluators are encouraged to collect and analyze extensive data regarding the performance of teachers/educational specialists. Such artifacts might include lesson plans, examples of student work, parent contact logs, schedules, and similar data. The development of artifact portfolios is not required in the Nebraska models.

- C. **Student/Stakeholder Perception Data.** At least once during the evaluation cycle, typically during the summative year, the evaluator shall arrange for the sampling of student perception (or stakeholder perception if that is more appropriate for an educational specialist) via a student/stakeholder survey. This requirement is discussed in detail in a separate guidance document entitled “Guidance for the Gathering of Student and Stakeholder Perception Data.”
- D. **Student Achievement/Program Performance Data.** On an annual basis, teachers and educational specialists shall develop and implement either a Student Learning Objectives plan or Specialist Program Objectives plan. In the 2013-14 pilot year, each teacher/educational specialist will develop **one** SLO/SPO during the second semester. In subsequent years, each teacher/educational specialist will develop **two** SLO/SPO’s per year. This requirement is discussed in detail in a separate guidance document entitled “Guidance for the Student Learning Objective/Specialist Program Objectives Component.”
- E. **Evidence of Professional Development.** On an annual basis, teachers/educational specialists shall develop and implement an Individual Professional Development Plan based on the results of the employee’s most recent summative evaluation. This requirement is discussed in detail in a separate guidance document entitled “Guidance for the Individual Professional Development Plan Component.”
- F. **Self-assessment/Reflection.** The use of self-assessment/reflection in the evaluation process is encouraged but not required. Local districts will need to develop their own forms and procedures for this component, if desired.

VII. Evaluation Procedures

- A. **Annual Notice.** Under NDE Rule 10, *Accreditation of Schools*, annual written notice of the district’s evaluation policy and procedures must be provided to educators covered by the district’s evaluation policy.
- B. **Schedule of Evaluation Activities.** The evaluation forms provided within the Nebraska model outline a schedule of evaluation activities for both formative and summative evaluation intervals. In addition, a proposed sequence of activities is included in the model Board policy and is summarized in Section 3 above.

- C. **Conference and Reports.** Frequent conferences and the sharing of both oral and written feedback between teachers/educational specialists and evaluators is encouraged.
- Formal observations require a pre-conference, post-conference, and written observation report.
 - Informal observations require some type of oral or written feedback but not a full post-conference or written report.
 - Walk-through observations do not require feedback.
 - A conference and written report is required after any observation in which specific deficiencies are noted. Procedures for addressing deficiencies are described in Section D below.
 - Conferences to develop and review Student Learning Objectives/Specialist Program Objectives and Individual Professional Development Plans should be held at intervals throughout the year. The rating of these components will take place during the educator's annual formative or summative evaluation.
 - For probationary teachers/educational specialists, a formative evaluation conference and the completion of the formative components of the evaluation document must be held during the first semester of the school year. A summative evaluation conference and completion of the summative evaluation document is to be held during the second semester of the school year.
 - For permanent teachers/educational specialists, a formative evaluation conference and the completion of the formative evaluation document is to be held during each formative evaluation year; a summative evaluation conference and completion of the summative form is to be held during the summative year of the evaluation cycle.

D. **Procedures for Addressing Deficiencies in Performance.**

- Nebraska statute requires that if deficiencies are noted in any observation of a probationary teacher/educational specialist, the evaluator is to provide the educator at the time of observation with a list of deficiencies, a list of suggestions for improvement and assistance in overcoming the deficiencies, and follow-up evaluations and assistance when deficiencies remain. The model policy extends the same requirement for permanent teachers/educational specialists.
- The model policy also requires that a description of the deficiencies and suggestions for improvement be provided both orally and in writing following the observation and a copy of the written report shall be retained as part of the

educator's evaluation file. The teacher/educational specialist shall acknowledge receipt of the evaluator's report.

- A rating of "Basic" on any of the seven Effective Practices or any other component of a teacher/educational specialist's formative or summative evaluation must result in a specific **Plan for Improvement** for that component. A form is provided for this purpose in the evaluation model. It includes provision for recommendations for improvement, a timeline, assistance, and resources to be provided. The Plan for Improvement must be reviewed by the educator and his/her evaluator at least once per semester. If a permanent teacher/specialist receives an overall rating of "Basic" on the summative evaluation, he/she must be placed on an annual summative evaluation cycle until the overall "Basic" rating is removed.
- A rating of "Unsatisfactory" on any of the seven Effective Practices or any other component of a teacher/specialist's formative or summative evaluation will result in a specific **Plan of Assistance** for that component. A form is provided for this purpose in the evaluation model. It includes a listing of deficiencies leading to the "Unsatisfactory" rating, provision for recommendations to correct the deficiencies, criteria to be used to assess the correction of deficiencies, a timeline, assistance, and resources to be provided, includes provisions for an assistance team. The Plan of Assistance must be reviewed by the educator and his/her evaluator at least once per quarter. Teachers/educational specialists participating in a Plan of Assistance shall receive a summative evaluation based on the relevant components once per semester.

VIII. Evaluation and Supporting Forms

A. Formative/Summative Evaluation Forms

1. Probationary Teacher/Specialist Evaluation Form (combined formative/summative). Designed as a single form to be used each year.
2. Permanent (Tenured) Teacher/Specialist Formative Evaluation Form. Abbreviated form designed to be used in formative years of cycle only.
3. Permanent (Tenured) Teacher/Specialist Summative Evaluation Form. Comprehensive form designed to be used in summative year of cycle only.
4. Record of Evaluation Activities. Included with forms listed above.

B. Supporting Forms/Documents

1. Student Learning Objectives Template and SLO/SPO Rubrics. Designed to document SLO/SPO plans. Separate templates used for each SLO or SPO. Rubric provides for rating of each individual SLO/SPO and a combined rating used on the formative or summative evaluation document.
2. Individual Professional Development Plan Template and Rubrics. Same for teachers/specialists and principals/other administrators. Rubric provides for analysis of plan and implementation and final rating for formative or summative evaluation document.
3. Plan for Improvement Template.
4. Plan of Assistance Template.

IX. Resources

A. Neb. Statute 79-828, *Probationary Certificated Employees*

B. NDE Rule 10, *Accreditation of Schools*, Section 007.06, *Certificated Employee Evaluation*.

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