

|| GUIDANCE FOR THE PRINCIPAL OR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR 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 instructional and leadership practice, measures of student learning and school performance, 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 principals and school/district administrators. Principals and school/district administrators 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 the direct observation of work performance for a full instructional period in accordance with state law. The sequence of the formative and summative evaluations is described in Section III below.

- B. Evaluation cycle for permanent principals or school/district administrators. Each local school district must determine the evaluation cycle for permanent (tenured) principals or school/district administrators. 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 (tenured) educators. That determination is left to local districts. The sequence of the formative and summative evaluations is described in Section 3 below.

III. Proposed Evaluation Cycle Sequences

Detailed sequences for probationary principal or school/district administrators and permanent (tenured) principal or school/district administrators 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.

Probationary Principals or School/District Administrators (One-Year Evaluation Cycle)

1. Semester 1: Formative Evaluation
 - (a) Self-Assessment (optional)
 - (b) Early-in-year conference to develop Action Plans.
 - (c) Review Individual Professional Development Plan (Years 2 and 3) at start of year.
 - (d) Formal on-site observation (full observation period); discussion of deficiencies (if applicable); informal and walk-through on-site observations throughout semester.
 - (e) Review of artifacts.
 - (f) First semester formative evaluation; complete formative evaluation portions of probationary evaluation document.
 - Ratings on eight Effective Practices
 - Review of progress on Action Plans.
 - 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 on-site observation (full observation period); discussion of deficiencies (if applicable); informal and walk-through observations continue.
 - (b) Collect stakeholder perception data.
 - (c) Review of artifacts.
 - (d) Self-assessment/reflection (optional)
 - (e) Second semester summative evaluation; complete full probationary evaluation document.
 - Ratings on eight Effective Practices
 - Rating on Action Plans.
 - Rating on 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)

Permanent (tenured) principals or school/district administrators. (Multi-year cycle)

1. Formative Years (one or two years)
 - (a) Self-Assessment/reflection (optional)
 - (b) Conference to develop Action Plans.
 - (c) Review Individual Professional Development Plan at start of year.
 - (d) Informal/walk-through on-site observations as determined by evaluator.
 - (e) Review of artifacts.
 - (f) Mid-year review of Action Plans and Individual Professional Development Plan (evaluator's discretion).
 - (g) Self-assessment/reflective summary (optional)
 - (h) End-of-year formative evaluation conference; complete formative evaluation document.
 - Discussion of Effective Practices (as needed)
 - Rating on Action Plans.
 - Rating on Individual Professional Development Plan.
 - Rating or review of local standards (optional)
 - No overall rating.
 - (i) Develop next year's Individual Professional Development Plan.
 - (j) 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 all certificated staff be evaluated on instructional performance, classroom organization and management, and personal and professional conduct when those criteria are applicable. Instructional performance and classroom organization and management may not apply to principals or school/district administrators.

The Nebraska principal/school or district administrator evaluation model includes the following evaluative criteria.

- A. **Leadership Practice.** The eight Effective Practices in the *Nebraska Principal Performance Framework* form the basis for the evaluation of leadership 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 primarily for principals. Pilot districts will need to make some adjustments to these standards and rubrics to provide for evaluation of the work of other school or district administrators.

**The Nebraska Effective Practices have been aligned to three nationally-recognized leadership frameworks: Robert Marzano’s administrative leadership framework; Douglas Reeves’ *Leadership Performance Matrix*, and the *McREL Principal Evaluation Rubric*. However, schools are not required to adopt these or any other national framework as part of the Nebraska evaluation model. Rather, the Effective Practice rubrics are to be used directly to assess leadership practice.
- B. **Student Achievement/School Performance.** The evaluation of the principal or school/district administrator’s impact on student achievement or other aspects school performance will be determined through the use of Action Plans. These are described in more detail in a separate guidance document entitled “Guidance for the Principal or School/District Administrator Action Plan Component.”
- C. **Professional Development.** The professional development efforts of principals or school/district administrators 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.”
- D. **Local Standards (Optional).** Pilot districts may adopt additional local standards for principals or school/district administrators, if desired.

- E. Overall Performance. Evaluators will assign an overall performance rating based on all of 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, Action Plans, 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 below in Section VII (D).

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 principals or school/district administrators should be based in part on the on-site observation of the educator performing his or her duties. Multiple observations of performance throughout the year, including formal, informal, and walk-through observations, are encouraged. Some observations should be targeted to the administrator’s Action Plans. On-site observations are direct observations of the administrator performing his/her work, regardless of actual location.
 1. Formal On-site Observations of a principals or school/district administrators 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 observation period in the case of probationary educators 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 On-site Observations are less than a full observation 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 employee, 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 On-site Observations are brief work site visits, generally five to ten minutes in duration, for the purpose of monitoring the leadership 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 principals or school/district administrators, at least one formal on-site observation for a full observation period is required each semester. A full observation period is defined as the equivalent of a typical instructional period as listed on the normal daily schedule of the school to which the administrator is normally assigned. For probationary administrators who do not normally work in a specific school, a full observation period shall not be less than 45 minutes.

For permanent (tenured) principals or school/district administrators, 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 7(D) below.

- B. The Collection of Artifacts. Evaluators are encouraged to collect and analyze extensive data regarding the performance of principals and other school/district administrators. Such artifacts might include student, parent/community, and faculty communications, agendas, schedules and other management communications, student achievement data analyses, feedback to teachers following observations, and such other reports, plans, and similar documents as the evaluator determines to be relevant. The development of artifact portfolios is not required in the Nebraska models.
- C. Stakeholder Perception Data. At least once during the evaluation cycle, typically during the summative year, the evaluator shall arrange for the sampling of stakeholder perception via a commercial or locally developed survey. The gathering of stakeholder data as part of the Action Plan process is encouraged. 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/School or District Performance Data. On an annual basis, principals or school/district administrators shall develop and implement Action Plans designed to improve student achievement or school or program performance. For the 2013-14 school year, each principal or school/district administrator participating in the pilot project shall develop and implement **one** Action Plan during the second semester. For subsequent years, each principal or school/district administrator shall develop and implement at least **two** Action Plans for the school year. This requirement is discussed in detail in a separate guidance document entitled “Guidance for the Principal or School/District Administrator Action Plan Component.”
- E. Evidence of Professional Development. On an annual basis, principals and school/district administrators 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 principals and school/district administrators and their evaluators are encouraged.
 - 1. Formal on-site observations require a pre-conference, post-conference, and written observation report.
 - 2. Informal on-site observations require some type of oral or written feedback but not a full post-conference or written report.
 - 3. Walk-through on-site observations do not require feedback.

4. 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.
5. Conferences to develop and review Action Plans 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.
6. For probationary principals or school/district administrators, 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.
7. For permanent principals or school/district administrators, 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 principal or school/district administrator, 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 principals or school/district administrators.

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 administrator's evaluation file. The principal or school/district administrator shall acknowledge receipt of the evaluator's report.

A rating of "Basic" on any of the eight Effective Practices or any other component of a principal or school/district administrator'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, and assistance and resources to be provided. The Plan for Improvement must be reviewed by the administrator and his/her evaluator at least once per semester. If a permanent principal or school/district administrator 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" in any component of a principal or school/district administrator's formative or summative evaluation must 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, and assistance and resources to be provided, including provisions for an assistance team. The Plan of Assistance must be reviewed by the educator and his/her evaluator at least once per quarter. Principals or school/district administrators 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 Principal or School/District Administrator Evaluation Form (combined formative/summative). Designed as a single form to be used each year.
 - 2. Permanent (Tenured) Principal or School/District Administrator Formative Evaluation Form. Abbreviated form designed to be used in formative years of cycle only.
 - 3. Permanent (Tenured) Principal or School/District Administrator Summative Evaluation Form. Comprehensive form designed to be used in summative year of cycle only.
 - 4. Record of Evaluation Activities. Included in forms listed above.

- B. Supporting Forms/Documents
 - 1. Action Plan Template and Rubrics. Designed to document Action Plans. Separate templates used for each Action Plan. Rubric provides for rating of each individual Action Plan 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

- 1. Neb. Statute 79-828, Probationary Certificated Employees
- 2. NDE Rule 10, Accreditation of Schools, Section 007.06, Certificated Employee

2. Summative Year

- (a) Self-Assessment/reflection (optional)
- (b) Conference to develop Action Plans.
- (c) Review Individual Professional Development Plan at start of year.
- (d) At least one formal on-site observation (length to be determined by evaluator); discussion of deficiencies (if applicable).
- (e) Informal/walk-through on-site observations as determined by evaluator.
- (f) Review of artifacts.
- (g) Collect stakeholder perception data.
- (h) Mid-year review of Action Plans 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 eight Effective Practices.
 - Rating on Action Plans.
 - 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.

This guidance document is advisory in nature but is binding on an agency until amended by such agency. A guidance document does not include internal procedural documents that only affect the internal operations of the agency and does not impose additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties or include confidential information or rules and regulations made in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act. If you believe that this guidance document imposes additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties, you may request a review of the document. For comments regarding this document contact nde.guidance@nebraska.gov.