

Policy Alignment

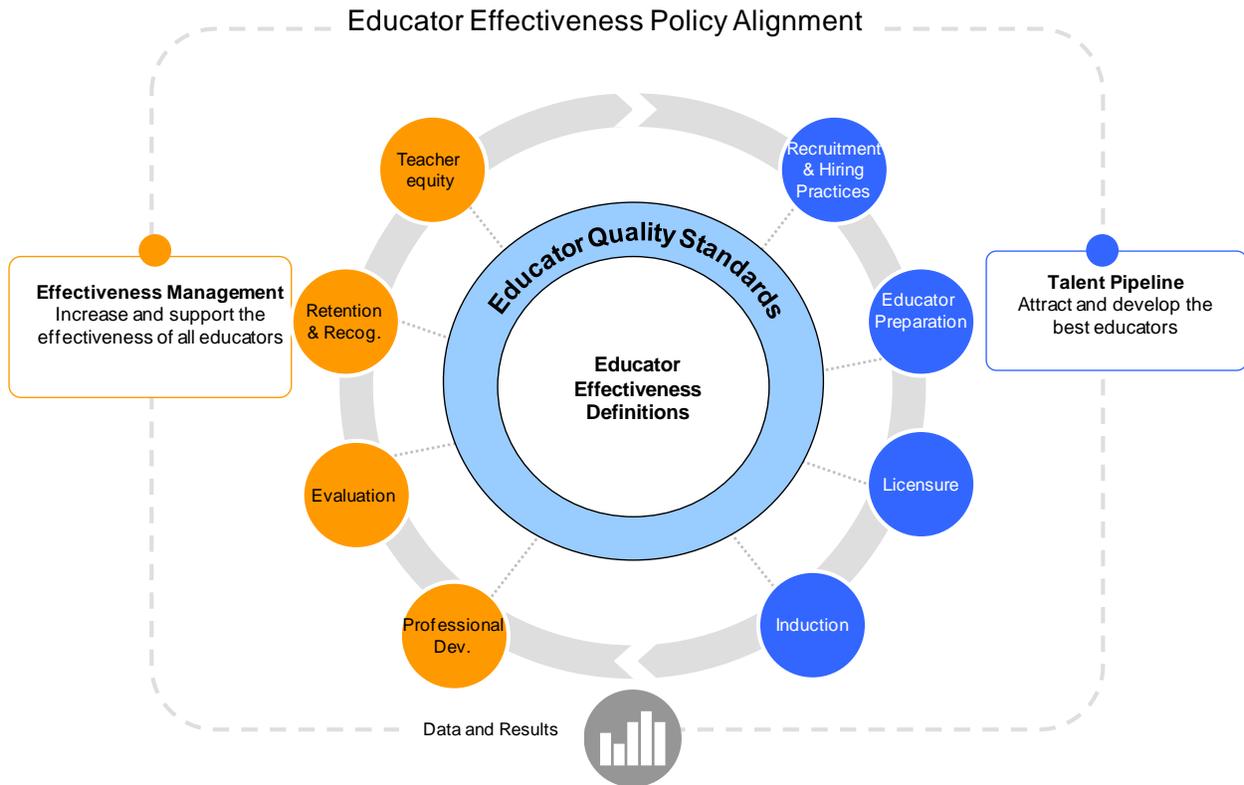
Recommendations to the State Council on Educator Effectiveness Second Read

Summary of Changes from First Read

This document attempts to simplify, clarify, and sequence the recommendations presented in the first read. A summary section and graphical representation of the recommendations are included. Specific language has been added to the recommendation regarding protections of educator evaluation data. Minor edits were made throughout the document in response to State Council members' written and verbal feedback.

Summary of Recommendations

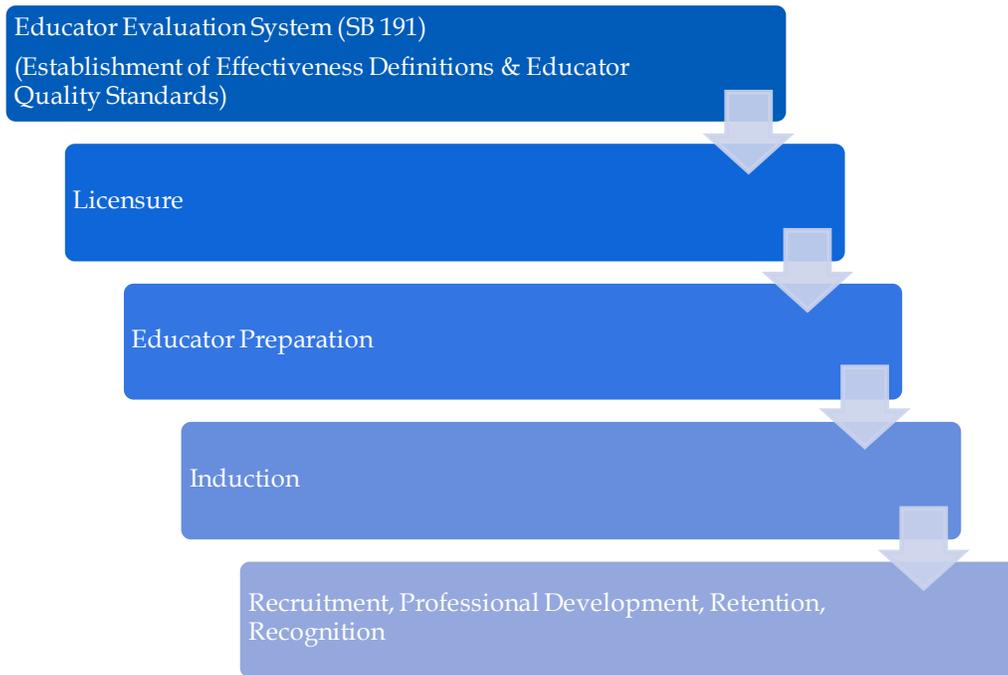
The State Council is charged with recommending educator effectiveness definitions and educator quality standards to the State Board for review and action. Upon adoption by the State Board, the educator effectiveness definitions and quality standards form the basis of the state's educator evaluation system. To ensure alignment of the evaluation system with the state's educator preparation, licensure, induction, professional development, and other related educator policies, the work group recommends that the state align existing and future educator effectiveness policies to the state's educator effectiveness definitions and quality standards. The figure below illustrates the envisioned alignment of the system. All policies are mutually reinforcing and centered on rigorous, research-based educator quality standards and definitions.



The work group recommends that the alignment process begin with a review and revamping of the state's licensure system which is based on professional standards that were developed in the early 1990s. The standards will need to be replaced by the educator quality standards, as appropriate, and the system

updated to reflect current research and professional practice. As the state’s licensure system is updated, educator preparation program approval which is also based on the licensure standards will need alignment and revision – in conjunction with the review and approval of induction programs. Alignment of recruitment, professional development, retention efforts, and recognition programs can occur over time.

Sequenced Policy Alignment



Recommendations for State Council Consideration

1. Develop and adopt statutory provisions to provide appropriate protections regarding the use and reporting of educator evaluation data.
2. Revamp the state’s educator licensure system to help ensure, support, and drive increased educator effectiveness.
3. Revise and strengthen the state’s educator preparation program approval process to increase the effectiveness of new educators.
4. Strengthen the requirements for review and approval of induction programs.
5. Increase the impact of professional development funded by state and federal sources.
6. Leverage and encourage district use of existing policies and programs that support districts’ use of evaluation data for making decisions in such areas as compensation, promotion, retention, removal, and professional development.
7. Provide staffing and identify stable funding sources for the School Leadership Academy.
8. Integrate educator effectiveness into the statewide system of accountability and support.
9. Align educator recognition to effectiveness definitions and educator quality standards.
10. Survey districts and monitor early implementation to identify needed resources to support implementation of the state’s educator evaluation system.

The following pages provide greater detail for each of these ten recommendations.

Statutory Authority for Recommendations

- On or before March 1, 2011, to make recommendations to the State Board for policy changes, as appropriate, that will support local school districts' use of evaluation data for decisions in areas such as compensation, promotion, retention, removal and professional development
- On or before March 1, 2011, to make recommendations to the State Board for policy changes, as appropriate, that will ensure that the standards and criteria applicable to teacher and principal licensure and the accreditation of preparation programs are directly aligned with and support the preparation and licensure of effective educators

Recommendation 1:

Develop and adopt statutory provisions to provide appropriate protections regarding the use and reporting of educator evaluation data.

The work group discussed and identified the following desired uses of educator evaluation data for State Council consideration:

Use of Educator Evaluation Data at the Individual Educator Level

- Improve instruction
- Enhance educator effectiveness
- Identify areas for professional development
- Make employment decisions
- Conduct research and analysis

Use of Educator Evaluation Data at the State Level

- Report and examine state, district, and school-level trends in educator effectiveness
- Track progress toward state-level educator effectiveness goals
- Conduct research and analysis
- Evaluate the effectiveness of educator preparation programs and professional development offerings

To meet the desired uses of educator evaluation data, the work group recommends to the State Council that school-, district-, and state-level aggregations of rating data be made public, and that the state not disclose individual educator evaluation ratings.

The work group reviewed state statutes, the Freedom of Information Act, and current CDE procedures regarding disclosure of human resource data. The work group found that CDE uses the following citation as authority for maintaining the privacy of individual human resource data and for collecting and reporting human resource statistics in such a manner as to prevent identification of individual educators.

Section 22-2-11(3)(a), C.R.S., states that "Except when requested by the governor or a committee of the general assembly or pursuant to compliance with section 22-32-109.8 or 22-2-119, all papers filed in the department of education that contain personal information about applicants for employment, employees, or holders of educator licenses or authorizations or about pupils' test scores are classified as confidential in nature...It is unlawful for any officer, employee, or other person to divulge or to make known in any way, any such personal information without the written consent of said applicant, employee, educator or pupil; but the information may be divulged or made known in the normal and proper course of administration of programs relating thereto without such written consent. Nothing in this subsection (3) shall be construed in a manner to prohibit the publication of statistics relative to the aforementioned information when so classified as to prevent the identification of educators or pupils involved in said statistics."

The work group recommends continued adherence to this statute which provides protections for educator privacy at the state level while allowing for transparency of effectiveness ratings in the aggregate. However, the work group noted that the law does not apply at the district or local level. As a result, the work group recommends the development and adoption of parallel statutory or regulatory language at the district level.

The work group was requested to review statutory language from Tennessee regarding privacy of data. The statutory language is provided below. Please note that it applies only to the privacy of “estimates of specific teacher effects on the educational progress of students” (e.g., value add scores), but does not prevent disclosure of individual educator ratings (such as effectiveness ratings).

Tennessee code Annotated 49-1-606(b)--The estimates of specific teacher effects on the educational progress of students will not be a public record, and will be made available only to the specific teacher, the teacher's appropriate administrators as designated by the local board of education and school board members. ... The estimates of specific teacher effects may also be made available to the state board approved teacher preparation programs of individual teachers. The estimates made available to the preparation programs shall not be personally identifiable with a particular teacher."

Recommendation 2:

Revamp the state’s educator licensure system to help ensure, support, and drive increased educator effectiveness.

Adopted in 1991, the state’s licensure system focuses largely on conducting criminal background checks, fingerprinting, and ensuring minimum qualifications have been met or initial and professional licenses. The work group recommends reviewing and revising the state’s licensure system using the following guiding principles:

- Initial licensure should be a strong indicator of likely effectiveness. (Learn from the work of the Stanford Teacher Assessment Project and other similar efforts to improve the assessments used to evaluate and license new teachers.)
- Professional licensure should be an indicator of demonstrated effectiveness.
- The licensure system should be compatible with the objectives and approaches of the state’s educator evaluation system, as outlined in SB 10-191 and articulated in state rules. Licensure should be aligned with the state’s educator effectiveness definitions, quality standards, and performance standards.
- The process of attaining and/or renewing a license should be valuable and should support increased effectiveness.
- The system of processing license requests should be user-friendly, timely, responsive, and reflective of current technology.

To revamp the state’s licensure system, the work group recommends that the state review data from other state licensure systems, other professions that use licensure systems, and from districts like Denver Public Schools that are piloting the use of effectiveness data to make licensure decisions.

In addition, the work group recommends critical examination of the following questions:

- What are the objectives of the state in granting initial licenses? How high of a bar does the state wish to set before granting an initial license?
- What are the objectives of the state in granting first-time professional licenses? How high of a bar does the state wish to set before granting a professional license for the first time? Some states use

this as an opportunity to screen out candidates who have not demonstrated effectiveness. They place high stakes on the granting of professional licenses.

- What are the objectives of the state in requiring renewal of licenses? Are the six credit hours required for renewal (and the minimum criteria that governs these hours) yielding more effective educators? Some states have eliminated their renewal process, focusing instead on a higher-stakes initial granting of a professional license and deferring to strong local evaluation systems to drive ongoing professional development thereafter.

In addition, the state's licensure data system is out-of-date, hampering the state's ability to mine the system for meaningful and useful data that could inform statewide recruitment and retention initiatives. The work group recommends that the State Board of Education incorporate in its overall review of licensure an analysis of the current licensure data system and provide recommendations for modernizing the system to enable monitoring of licensure data and to connect/inform the state's educator effectiveness metrics.

Recommendation 3:

Revise and strengthen the state's educator preparation program approval process to increase the effectiveness of new educators.

Update the State Board of Education's educator standards and competencies that form the basis of the approval of educator preparation programs. The state has established performance-based standards for the licensing of educator candidates that reflect the knowledge and skills required of beginning educators. In addition, the state has defined teacher competencies for endorsement areas (e.g., by content areas, elementary level, secondary level, etc.). These standards and competencies drive the content of both institution of higher education-based and alternative educator preparation programs and form the basis of the granting of initial licenses to new educators. The standards and competencies are authorized by state statute (C.R.S. 22-2-109(5) (a), 22-2-109(6), 22-60.4-303) and defined in state rules (CCR 2260.5-R4-5.00, CCR 2260.5-R-6.00; CCR 2260.5 R 8.00).

The work group recommends that these standards and competencies be updated to align to Colorado's new postsecondary and workforce readiness academic standards and to the quality and performance standards for teachers and principals that will be recommended by the State Council and eventually acted upon by the State Board of Education. The work group believes that the standards and competencies that guide the content of educator preparation program and initial licensure should be tightly aligned with, if not the same as, those that guide educator evaluation and ongoing development.

Revise the CCHE statute (C.R.S. 23-1-121) regarding the approval of educator preparation programs to ensure alignment with any changes made to State Board program review and to bring parity in the review of public and private institutions of higher education. In addition to the standards set by the State Board of Education, the state has established statutory performance measures for the approval and reauthorization of teacher and administrator preparation programs at institutions of higher education. Teacher preparation programs at public institutions of higher education are reviewed for their admission systems, ongoing screening and counseling, integration of theory and practice into their coursework, 800 hours of field-based experience, and ongoing assessment of candidates' content knowledge and pedagogical skill. CCHE review of new teacher preparation programs at private institutions of higher education is limited to verifying the existence of 800 hours of field-based experience. CCHE review of principal and administrator preparation programs at public institutions is limited to checking for inclusion of principles of business management and budgeting practices and analysis of student assessment data and its use in planning for student instruction. CCHE has no authority to review principal and administrator preparation programs at private institutions of higher education.

Participate in and review leading models for educator preparation that focus on candidate effectiveness. Use the learning from this work to inform the revision of the state’s educator preparation program approval process. The Colorado Department of Education and Colorado Department of Higher Education have joined NCATE’s Alliance for Clinical Teacher Preparation. Participation in this alliance will provide useful information on the efficacy of preparing teachers in clinically-based settings. In addition, the Colorado Department of Education has granted a waiver to the University of Colorado at Boulder and Denver to establish an outcomes model for educator preparation. Many alternative preparation programs are experimenting with residency and fellow models that focus on job-embedded training. Work with these institutions and programs to monitor the progress of their outcomes, identify criteria of successful programs, and inform the revision of the state’s educator preparation program approval process.

Monitor and report on the effectiveness of educator preparation program graduates. Use this data to inform the educator preparation program reauthorization process. Implement SB 10-36 which requires the Colorado Department of Education, in collaboration with educator preparation programs and the Department of Higher Education, to prepare an annual report analyzing educator preparation program effectiveness. Work with educator preparation program providers and school districts to determine the method of monitoring and reporting that is most informative and useful to drive and support program improvement and ultimately increased graduate effectiveness. Learn from such states such as Louisiana that are already gathering and reporting educator preparation graduate effectiveness. Use the learning from this work to inform revisions to the state’s educator preparation program reauthorization process. In addition, use program effectiveness data to inform program reauthorization. Assist districts in using educator preparation program effectiveness data to inform decision making on new hires and to prioritize candidates from more effective providers. Provide support to potential enrollees in educator preparation programs in using educator preparation program effectiveness data to guide enrollment decisions.

**Recommendation 4:
Strengthen the requirements for review and approval of induction programs.**

Over the past decade, Colorado’s educator workforce has changed, shifting from a seasoned workforce to a new and less-experienced workforce. In addition over half of Colorado’s educators are prepared out-of-state. Induction programs play a critical role in helping new educators gain the skills and experience they need to be effective. They also have the potential to ensure that educators who are prepared out-of-state receive training and support in Colorado-specific expectations and methods (e.g., the Colorado academic standards and Colorado growth model). The State Board of Education is required to review and approve all induction programs. Programs are to be reviewed on a five year cycle. The rules governing this process are broad and lack a focus on program outcomes. In addition, due to limited resources and capacity at the state department of education, the program review is largely conducted via paper, with spotty follow-up by the state at the five-year mark.

The work group believes that the review and approval of induction programs is a critical lever that the State Board of Education has to help improve educator effectiveness. The work group recommends that the State Board establish a process to review and revise the rules governing induction program review. The State Board should consider setting clear program criteria with a strong focus on the demonstrated effectiveness of induction program graduates. The program criteria should align with the state’s educator effectiveness definitions, quality standards, performance standards, and evaluation system. The program criteria should be research-based and should take into consideration educators’ needs as reported in the TELL Colorado survey.

Recommendation 5:**Increase the impact of professional development funded by state and federal sources.**

CDE administers a range of state and federal programs that provide funds to support local professional development for specific purposes related to policy/program goals. Many of the programs are administered separately and for the purpose of specific program goals. This can result in fragmented and disconnected professional development at the local level. Limited capacity at the state level makes it difficult to monitor use of funds and track impact on educator effectiveness and student growth. The work group believes there is potential at the state level to transform professional development so that it enables greater educator effectiveness and results in improved student outcomes. To ensure professional development is of high quality, coherent, differentiated, aligned with performance evaluation results, and likely to result in improved student outcomes, the work group makes the following recommendations for State Council consideration:

- Establish shared, statewide standards of quality professional development that CDE applies to all grant programs that fund local professional development for teachers and leaders. In establishing these standards, CDE should consult national standards that are based on research, informed by professional practice, and focused on increasing student outcomes.
- Require grantees to provide evidence of the impact of their professional development on educator effectiveness and student growth.
- Prioritize the use of state and federal program funds (within the confines of each program's allowable uses) to support effective implementation of the state's priority reform initiatives, including SB 191. (This will help focus funding to support the state's reform efforts and will minimize fragmentation and competing programs in the field.)
- Educate the field about the availability of state and federal funds to support professional development (especially pertaining to educator recruitment, preparation, evaluation, support, and retention).
- Revisit minimum criteria for professional development for renewal of professional licenses for both teachers and leaders (see section on later section on licensure).

The work group also noted that staff members at the Colorado Department of Education provide a range of professional development for educators. The work group recommends that the state:

- Conduct an inventory of the range and scope of professional development provided to the field.
- Provide a single source via the CDE website for information on CDE-provided professional development activities.
- Ensure that CDE-provided professional development models the statewide definition of quality professional development and is evaluated for its impact on educator effectiveness and student growth. Decisions on continuing / discontinuing specific offerings should be contingent on outcome data.
- Focus CDE-provided professional development on the key reform priorities of the state.

The work group recommends CDE and the Department of Higher Education (DHE) collaborate to cultivate partnerships between districts, boards of cooperative educational services, and educator preparation programs at institutions of higher education.

- School districts and institutions of higher education in the same region should partner with one another, not only to improve the preparation of new educators, but to provide professional development aligned with the identified needs of local districts.

Recommendation 6:

Leverage and encourage district use of existing policies and programs that support districts' use of evaluation data for making decisions in such areas as compensation, promotion, retention, removal, and professional development.

In a review of relevant statutes and related federal programs, the work group identified several existing policies/programs that currently support districts' use of evaluation data for decisions in areas such as compensation, promotion, retention, removal, and professional development. The work group recommends that the State Council highlight these provisions to underscore the flexibility available to districts in these areas.

Compensation: State statute currently allows districts the flexibility to adopt either a salary schedule (based at least in part on teacher's education, prior experience, and experience in district) or a teacher salary policy, based on the level of performance demonstrated by each teacher or a combination of the salary schedule and policy (C.R.S. 22-63-401).

Alternative compensation grants: Created in state statute in 2008, this program provides funding to districts to support the design and implementation of alternative teacher compensation plans. Criteria, at a minimum, must include requirements that (1) the plan be designed and developed collaboratively with teachers through the district-adopted procedures for setting compensation, administrators, parents and the local board, (2) the plan must be open to all teachers who meet the established performance criteria without regard to grade level, subject area or assignment, and (3) the district must seek a sustainable source of new revenue to fund the plan on an ongoing basis. Nine districts received grants (Colorado Springs District 11, Lake County R-1, Weld RE-8, Ellicott, Florence RE-2, Eagle County, Jefferson County, Pueblo School District, and CSI). These grants are no longer funded. The work group encourages the State Council to recommend state funding of this program, as it provides districts with funds to connect and align their work on performance evaluation to their compensation systems.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act - Title IIA: Preparing, training and recruiting high quality teachers and principals: The state administers Title IIA funds. Allowable uses of these funds include: (1) recruiting, hiring, and retaining highly qualified teachers and principals using monetary incentives, recruiting teachers to teach special needs children, teacher mentoring, and induction and support for new teachers and principals; (2) programs and activities designed to improve the quality of the teaching force, such as tenure reform or merit pay programs; (3) teacher advancement initiatives that emphasize multiple career paths and pay differentiation; (4) professional development activities that improve the knowledge of teachers and principals, focusing on content knowledge and classroom practices and effective instructional practices that involve collaborative groups of teachers and administrators and/or address the needs of students with different learning styles; (5) providing training on improving student behavior and identifying early and appropriate interventions, involving parents in their children's education, and using data and assessments; and (6) professional development programs that improve the quality of principals and superintendents.

Recruitment and retention grants: The state administers this federal grant program which is available to all districts that accept federal Title I and/or Title IIA dollars. Districts may choose to apply for one or both of the following focus areas: **(1) teacher quality**, which includes conducting a needs assessment on staffing, planning and/or implementing a research-based teacher mentoring and induction program, creating/developing a definition and/or data analysis of "effective teacher," redesigning a teacher evaluation process that includes the identification of necessary supports for individual teachers, planning and/or implementing strategies to recruit, hire, and retain highly qualified teachers, or providing supports to help get teachers or Title I paraprofessionals highly qualified; and **(2) quality leadership**, which includes planning and/or implementing a research-based principal mentoring and induction program, planning and/or implementing strategies to recruit, hire, and retain highly qualified principals,

planning and/or implementing a mentoring program for “up and coming” leaders (teacher leaders), and planning and/or implementing a mentoring program for superintendents.

Recommendation 7:

Provide staffing and identify stable funding sources for the School Leadership Academy.

The Colorado Department of Education lacks staff and funding for the support and advancement of the state’s education leaders. While the School Leadership Academy has been established by statute with a clear charge to advance education leadership, the lack of funding to provide staff support (and thus structural leadership) at CDE and to implement the legislation is hampering the state’s ability to provide needed support to education leaders across the state. The education research documents the importance of education leaders in improving the effectiveness of their teachers and schools. It is critical that the state fully support its education leaders, especially given the magnitude of critical reform initiatives facing Colorado’s superintendents, principals, and administrators.

Recommendation 8:

Integrate educator effectiveness into the statewide system of accountability and support.

Incorporate educator effectiveness metrics into the state’s school and district performance frameworks. Support districts in examining educator effectiveness (and the overall quality of their human capital system) as a component of their unified planning process. Integrate a review of district and school human capital systems as part of the state’s Comprehensive Assessment of District Improvement and School Support Team reviews.

Recommendation 9:

Align educator recognition to effectiveness definitions and educator quality standards.

Recognition can play a role in encouraging the retention of the state’s most effective educators. The Colorado Department of Education administers a range of recognition programs for educators across the state (e.g., Teach of the Year Award, Online Teacher of the Year Award, Presidential Awards for Excellence in Math and Science, Title I Distinguished Principal Award, etc.). Each program has its own award criteria with varying emphasis on educators’ contributions to increased student learning. The work group recommends that the State Board review the criteria and processes for granting awards to ensure alignment with the state’s definitions of effectiveness, quality standards, performance standards, and educator evaluation system. All award recipients should be rated as highly effective with documented increases in student growth.

Recommendation 10:

Survey districts and monitor early implementation to identify needed resources to support implementation of the state’s educator evaluation system.

Build this data collection into the beta-testing, pilot, and roll out phases of the implementation process. In addition, use the TELL survey and other statewide surveys to identify needed supports. Needs may include funding to improve data systems, funding to support assessment development in non-tested subjects, funding to local districts for implementation, increased principal autonomy to select teachers, setting up of regional support systems or a way to group districts that are taking similar approaches, etc.