

STATE COUNCIL FOR EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS



Great teachers and
great principals matter.



AN OVERVIEW

State Council for Educator Effectiveness

Great teachers and great principals matter.

In schools, quality classroom instruction and school leadership are the strongest influencers of student achievement.

New approaches to evaluating and compensating effective teachers and principals have received considerable attention in states across the country. Colorado is no exception.

The state's landmark teacher and principal evaluation law – or Senate Bill 191 – is in the national spotlight and is expected to pave the way for other states.

It sets the stage for basing the nonprobationary status of teachers on consecutive years of demonstrated effectiveness in the classroom – not years of service.

Why now?

Teachers and principals must meet the ever-increasing demands of today's rapidly shifting society. They deserve ongoing support to address new challenges. And they deserve clear, frequent feedback on what's working in their classrooms and what's not to ensure every Colorado student is successful.

To help teachers and principals, the Council is building a powerful evaluation system founded on best practices and research that is uniquely Colorado.



*State Council for Educator Effectiveness
Council Members*

(Front row, from left)

Colin Mullaney, Cheyenne Mountain Charter Academy; Towanna Henderson, Denver Public Schools; Brenda Smith, Douglas County School District; Amie Baca-Oehlert, Adams District 12; Tracy Dorland, Denver Public Schools; Nina Lopez, Colorado Department of Education

(Back row, from left)

Bill Bregar, Pueblo County School District 70; Matt Smith, United Launch Alliance; Kerrie Dallman, Jefferson County Public Schools; Jo Ann Baxter, Moffat County School District RE-1

(Not pictured)

Margaret Crespo, Heath Middle School; Shelby Gonzales-Parker, Justice High School; Lorrie Shepard, University of Colorado – Boulder; Sandra Smyser, Eagle County Schools; Jim Smyth, Mesa County Valley School District 51

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Leading this historic effort is the State Council for Educator Effectiveness. The Council is made up of 15 members – teachers, administrators, a parent, a student, local school board members and others – who are appointed by the governor. Together they will provide recommendations to the Colorado State Board of Education on a new educator evaluation system.

A technical advisory group composed of local and national experts with deep experience working with states and districts on these issues assists the Council. Together, they are identifying multiple measures to evaluate effectiveness; balancing local control issues with state requirements; and exploring multiple measures of student growth that include test scores and other relevant data.

THE VISION

All Colorado students deserve to have an effective teacher in their classrooms and a great leader for their school. The State Council for Educator Effectiveness believes that providing teachers and principals with clear expectations for their performance, ongoing feedback and support are important components of a fair and effective evaluation system. Likewise, there is little debate about the need to identify and respond to educators who are unable to demonstrate effectiveness.

As it engages in the process of researching national and state models of teacher evaluation, the Council recognizes that an effective evaluation system implicates more than just individual teachers, principals or schools. Clarity of purpose and coordination at the state, district, school and classroom levels are critical for long-term success.

OUR WORK

Guided by state law, the Council's work focuses on four key objectives:

1. Define teacher effectiveness and principal effectiveness.
2. Establish levels of effectiveness and performance standards.
3. Develop guidelines for a fair, rigorous and transparent system to evaluate teachers and principals.
4. Recommend state policy changes to prepare, evaluate and support teachers and principals.

The Council strives to balance the diverse needs of Colorado's 178 school districts with the state requirements.

While state law sets some requirements, it leaves the definitions of educator effectiveness and the details of the new system to the Council and, ultimately, the Colorado State Board of Education. Among the most noteworthy requirements:

- Conducting performance evaluations at least once each school year
- Basing at least half of a teacher's or principal's evaluation on students' academic growth
- Considering factors such as student mobility and the numbers of students with disabilities or considered "at risk"
- Factoring in teacher effectiveness before seniority when considering district-level layoffs

The Council strives to balance the diverse needs of Colorado's 178 school districts with the state requirements. Ultimately, districts will be required to ensure their educator evaluation system complies with the state's requirements. The Colorado Department of Education will provide examples that satisfy the requirements. Districts can either review their existing system for compliance or use the state's model evaluation, rubrics and tools.

The Council's work does not end once the recommendations are presented in spring 2011. Members will monitor the new evaluation system and identify improvements based upon results of the two-year pilot period that starts during the 2011-2012 school year. The system will be rolled out in every district in fall 2013.

The Council also collaborates with the School Leadership Academy Board, the Quality Teachers Commission and other groups working on educator effectiveness to ensure that the best of the work that is already being done at a policy level is considered.

WHAT'S INFORMING THE COUNCIL'S WORK?

Several districts in Colorado have recently implemented new, cutting-edge approaches to evaluating and supporting educators, including Denver Public Schools, Douglas County School District, Eagle County Schools, Harrison 2 School District and Jefferson County Public Schools. The experience of these districts – from lessons learned to highly effective strategies – will inform the Council's recommendations and shape state and regional resources for technical assistance. Input from schools and districts has played and will continue to play an important role in shaping the Council's work.



February 2011

Council presents proposed recommendations to Colorado State Board of Education.

February – March 2011

Council solicits stakeholder reaction to the proposed recommendations.

April 2011

Council submits final recommendations to Colorado State Board of Education.

August 2011 – June 2013

Evaluation system is piloted in select districts.

October 2011

Colorado State Board of Education adopts rules for new statewide evaluation system.

November 2011

Colorado Department of Education shares with districts a resource bank of assessments, processes, tools and policies to develop evaluation systems.

February 2012

State legislators review the Colorado State Board of Education’s rules and have power to veto individual rules.

August 2013 – June 2014

New evaluation system is implemented in all districts.

STAY IN THE KNOW!

Visit the “Councils, Boards & Partners” link at www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness for in-depth information and updates. Sign up to receive the Council’s e-newsletter at scee@cde.state.co.us.



YOUR INPUT

There are many questions about how the Council’s work will unfold – and with good reason. This effort is bold, challenging and constantly evolving and improving. The Council’s commitment to supporting educators and ensuring every student has an effective teacher and principal remains unwavering.

There are opportunities at every Council meeting for public comment. Or, you can e-mail your questions and comments to scee@cde.state.co.us.

The Council also will gather public input before submitting its final recommendations to the Colorado State Board of Education. Visit the “Councils, Boards & Partners” link at www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness for more information.

In conversations with educators, parents and community members across Colorado, common questions surface, ranging from how to interpret the state law on educator effectiveness to whether districts now working on new teacher evaluation systems should put their work on hold. Some also want to know what resources the state will provide to districts. Visit the “Councils, Boards & Partners” link at www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness.