

Assessment Processes of Teachers for Performance-based Licensure

prepared for

Idaho's MOST Advisory Group
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this study of assessment processes of teachers for performance-based licensure, several state systems were analyzed. Specific school districts in these states were also studied in an effort to ascertain best practice models of teacher assessment. In addition to the assessment process, the training of evaluators was also investigated along with the expenditure for the training.

Best Practices

In an effort to determine best practices of the assessment process of teachers for performance-based licensure, state departments of education were studied to identify their teacher assessment programs. Although every state may not have its own forms and documentation, each state does provide districts with guidelines and measures to enable assessment tools to be developed within the district that are of a similar nature across a state. In view of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA) of 2001, provisions in nearly every state's assessment instrument or guidelines have been updated to meet the requirements of the Act. The component of the Act addressing the issue of teacher assessment emphasizes the quality of the teacher, and the teacher's performance is linked to improved student achievement.

The following information was found to be common in the best practice states and districts. Each state, district, and education region used these components in their assessment systems in some measure. The following sections define best practice in reference to this study.

Strategies

In a study conducted by Goldrick (2002) for the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, six strategies were identified to improve teacher evaluation. The impetus to develop strategies was the NCLBA (2001). These strategies were: 1) define teacher quality (this definition must be established before development of the evaluation); 2) focus evaluation of improving teacher practice (the evaluation should be viewed as an informational tool); 3) incorporate student learning into teacher evaluation (the evaluation should be outcome-driven); 4) create professional accountability (incorporate career ladders and professional classifications); 5) train evaluators; 6) broaden participation in evaluation design (include all stakeholders to ensure ownership) (Goldrick, 2002, p. 1). The teacher assessment systems included in this study as best practice systems were those that incorporated some or all of these six strategies. The states, districts, and regions identified as having developed best practice teacher assessment systems are:

- Connecticut
- Kentucky
- North Carolina
- Virginia
- Farmington Public Schools, Farmington, Connecticut
- Hartford Public Schools, Hartford, Connecticut
- Manchester Public Schools, Manchester, Connecticut
- New Canaan Public Schools, New Canaan, Connecticut
- Newport News Public Schools, Newport News, Virginia
- Region 15, Connecticut

Development of the Tool

In the most effective assessment tools, the teachers have a part in the development of the assessment instrument. Because of that ownership, resistance to the use of the tool and acceptance the assessment results is diminished (Newport News Public Schools, 2001). Committees comprised of educators from all levels in the district work together to create the assessment, and consequently, all groups involved in the tool's development own the end product.

Pilot testing of the instrument is the next step. In Newport News, Virginia, the assessment system was piloted at schools where faculty members volunteered for the project (Newport News Public Schools, 2001). The assessment plan was critiqued throughout the year it was piloted. The plan was revised often during its pilot test period. The ownership of the tool expanded to those schools that did not participate in the pilot test due to the fact their input on the assessment plan was considered in an effort to refine the plan.

Another critical element of an exemplary instrument is that several components of performance are necessary in an effort to make the tool objective (Flowers, Testerman, Hancock, & Algozzine, 2000). Portfolios, classroom observation by administration and peer reviewers, and documentation of a teacher's skills and methods are essential as each system strives for objectivity.

The goal of an objective assessment is important now more than ever since there is a trend for states to incorporate a performance-based licensure assessment tool into their state education plans (Goldrick, 2002). Observation sessions, conferences between the evaluator and

the evaluatee, and documentation of application of the teacher's methods and skills are valuable components to incorporate into a performance-based assessment instrument.

Training the Evaluators

The training of the evaluators is critical in the effective implementation of the tool. Communication between the evaluator and the teacher is critical to ensure there are no misunderstandings concerning administrative expectations (Flowers et al, 2000). The training needs to include not only identifying the level of skill a teacher demonstrates, but must prepare the evaluator to provide remedial assistance (Goldrick, 2002). The evaluators must also be able to provide professional and legally defensible judgments (Danielson, 1996).

The States

The states included in this study were:

- Connecticut
- Kentucky
- North Carolina
- Virginia

Connecticut provided guidelines and sample forms for their school districts. This is the state in which four districts and one education region were found to be best practice districts.

Kentucky's assessment guidelines were modeled after Connecticut and North Carolina; however, they have less rigorous requirements for the portfolio component.

North Carolina had strong state guidelines and a model of each component of their evaluation system, the Teacher Performance Assessment Instrument. This instrument has been revised and is a plan that allows for teacher performance to be evaluated in a specific, objective manner (Flowers et al, 2000).

Virginia has developed an assessment system that is composed of guidelines for the districts to adhere. Newport News Public Schools is the district representing Virginia in this study. Extensive work has been accomplished by this district towards an objective tool.

The Districts

The districts in this study are:

- Farmington Public Schools, Farmington, Connecticut
- Hartford Public Schools, Hartford, Connecticut
- Manchester Public Schools, Manchester, Connecticut

- New Canaan Public Schools, New Canaan, Connecticut
- Newport News Public Schools, Newport News, Virginia

The Region

The education region discussed in this report is from Connecticut. It is Region 15.

An effective evaluation should encourage classroom professionals to improve teacher practice (Black, 2000). The evaluation should provide the basis for a dialogue between the teacher and the administrator concerning the performance of the teacher. It should include a measure of the interaction between teacher and student, the end product of which is student learning. The growth of the teacher should be based on and motivated by the evaluation. The evaluation is a tool used to improve the quality of the teacher and consequently the learning that takes place in the classroom (Wenglinsky, 2002). The information derived from the evaluation is used as a building block for the teacher to improve and increase skills and knowledge. All stakeholders win in this situation. Teachers identify what strengths they can build on, and areas that need reinforcement and attention to improve their practice. Students benefit from the evaluation by being a member of an improved learning environment. Administrators have an objective tool that indicates not only the proficiency of the teacher, but also the achievement of the class, school, and district as a whole, and provides an accurate accountability measurement. The local Board of Education is well informed on the progress of their district, as are not only the parents, but also all members of the community. An effective evaluation can also be a reference of student achievement that provides objective evidence for the state to examine that addresses accountability and progress of the district.

INTRODUCTION

Idaho's MOST has contracted with the Intermountain Center for Education Effectiveness to conduct a study addressing the issue of assessment of teachers for performance-based licensure. The study was to identify those states, districts, and regions that have an assessment system that is deemed a best practice system. In this study, five states have been identified as being best practice states along with five school districts and one education region.

As education reform continues, all components of the system are undergoing change. Curriculum, assessment methods, and theories on accountability are continually being reviewed and revised. In this standards-based environment teacher evaluations are being reconsidered as well, and accordingly are being altered to align with current policy. Teacher evaluations are undergoing a transformation to not only accommodate a standards-based environment linked with student achievement, but also to more accurately evaluate the performance of a teacher.

Because education involves more than "teaching academic subjects and often extends beyond the measurable," an effective evaluation has traditionally been difficult to develop (Ramirez, 2001). Evaluations in the past have been "ineffective in their primary functions of improving educator practice and accountability" (American Federation of Teachers, 2001; Solomon and Podgursky, 2000).

Often, feedback has been lacking in the evaluation instrument. This has left the teacher uninformed as to which areas may have needed improvement and which areas were seen as exemplary. These evaluations were once a year observations, and consequently did not allow for an accurate depiction of learning that took place throughout the entire year. This did not allow for improvement of practice for the individual or for an accountability measurement. The states and districts identified in this study have addressed the issues of feedback, objectivity, and intervention strategies to improve teaching practice. They have also incorporated some or all of the six strategies identified in the best practice definition for this report

METHODOLOGY

The states, districts, and one education region contacted were determined as best practice states and districts (as defined in the Executive Summary) addressing the issue of assessment processes of teachers for performance-based licensure. State agencies from Connecticut, Kentucky, and North Carolina were contacted to ascertain what type of teacher assessment process was used in each state. School districts in Connecticut and Virginia were contacted in an effort to obtain copies of their assessment models. The National Governor's Association and The American Association of School Administrators were contacted for information on this topic. Contact was made via the web sites, email, and telephone.

The following states were contacted concerning their teacher assessment models through their web site, email, or telephone:

- Connecticut
- Kentucky
- North Carolina
- Virginia

The following school districts were contacted via email and telephone:

- Farmington Public Schools, Farmington, Connecticut
- Hartford Public Schools, Hartford, Connecticut
- New Canaan Public Schools, New Canaan, Connecticut
- Newport News Public Schools, Newport News, Virginia

Education Region 15 in the state of Connecticut is also discussed in this report.

Studies and reports relevant to teacher performance-based assessment and evaluator training were obtained from:

- The National Governor's Center for Best Practices (NGA)
- ERIC Digest
- The University of North Carolina at Charlotte
- The American Association of School Administrators

FINDINGS

Overview

Development of the Tool

An assessment of teachers that focuses on performance-based licensure has many benefits for all stakeholders. Because it provides constructive, objective feedback, a teacher has a basis to improve upon and a guide with which to move forward. This is due to the use of comprehensive standards and rubrics. It also utilizes multiple data sources, and presents authentic samples of teaching work (Danielson, 2000).

The research indicated the most effective performance-based evaluations were those that were developed and formulated with not only administrators, but with teachers as well. In Douglas County Colorado a committee of teachers was formed to help shape the constructs of the evaluation. The superintendent there stated it was imperative for teachers to be involved in the formulation of the evaluation to ensure teacher buy-in of the instrument (American Association of School Administrators, 2000). (NOTE: Douglas County Colorado School District was not studied in this report due to the fact their evaluation focuses on a merit pay issue, not a licensure issue.)

In a study conducted by Goldrick (2002) for the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, six strategies were identified to improve teacher evaluation. The impetus to develop strategies was the NCLBA (2001). These strategies are: 1) define teacher quality (this definition must be established before development of the evaluation); 2) focus evaluation of improving teacher practice (the evaluation should be viewed as an informational tool); 3) incorporate student learning into teacher evaluation (the evaluation should be outcome-driven); 4) create professional accountability (incorporate career ladders and professional classifications); 5) train evaluators; 6) broaden participation in evaluation design (include all stakeholders to ensure ownership) (p. 1).

In the formation and development of a teacher assessment, several questions must be addressed by the district. Who is involved in the development of the evaluation? Who will be eligible to participate? Will participation be voluntary? What role will the administrators play? Who will be the evaluators? Will training be needed for the evaluators? What type of system will work best in the district's situation? What will be the cost of the system? Who will fund it: the state, the district, or a combination of the two?

Historically, teacher evaluation was a personnel action, not to be used as a tool for improving instruction. It measured the behavior of the teacher not the outcomes of the instruction. Across the country this focus of teacher evaluations is changing. In an effort to comply with the “highly qualified teacher” component of the NCLBA (2001), evaluations have to measure more than they ever have before. Administrators must have defensible evaluations in addition to the high objectivity component needed.

The states and districts studied in this report had focused their evaluations on assessing teachers for performance-based licensure. The stakeholders were aware of the need of the building of an instrument that can continually be revised and updated (Newport News Public Schools, 2001; North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2001). States are designing performance-based licensure assessments that measure a teacher’s subject knowledge and teaching skills. This updated type of assessment tool is timely in that many states are also creating tiered professional designations (Goldrick, 2002).

Another component was the need to include all stakeholders in the development of the tool to ensure ownership and diminish resistance. The necessity of teachers being actively involved in the formation of the evaluation was cited as critical to its effectiveness (Darling-Hammond, 2002). The more teachers were involved in the formulation and development of performance evaluation tools and ownership takes place, the more effective and efficient the instruments became. In this practice of joint development of the evaluation tool, teachers are allowed to set goals that align with district goals. They are able to identify areas of strength and areas that may need attention. The collective effort of all stakeholders results in a positive learning environment that will provide a higher quality of education for students.

The Danielson Framework

Newport News, Virginia, grounds their teacher assessment system on the framework defined in Charlotte Danielson’s book *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* (1996). Danielson’s framework’s primary basis is the Praxis III system for assessors, and accommodates application for the assessment of both experienced and novice teachers. In her framework, 22 components of teaching activity are divided into four domains of teaching responsibility.

Danielson cites the fact that teachers make over 3,000 decisions per day (1996). Because of this, she views the teaching profession as being similar to not one, but several other

professions: business management, human relations, and theatre arts. This results in many intellectual, physical, and emotional demands of the job. In light of this complexity, the careful development of an assessment tool must include the training of the assessors.

This framework has many uses: a roadmap for novices; a guide for experienced professionals; a structure for focusing improvement efforts; and a guide for communication with the larger community. This framework is a departure in that traditionally frameworks were developed for candidate teachers. The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) developed components that complemented those developed by the nation Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). The National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) and the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) have also proposed competencies to guide colleges in the design and ongoing revisions of their teacher education programs.

The Danielson Framework provides a structure to not only assess teacher's skills and methods, but also provides a guide to organize intervention strategies. This framework has been the basis for teacher assessment systems in many states, including Connecticut, North Carolina, and Virginia.

Summary

The research shows that an assessment should not be based on one item data. Multiple sources not only improve the quality of the tool, but also provide a more complete picture of the teacher's true performance. The assessment tool should also provide explicit criteria, have assessors trained, and there must be communication with all parties involved.

Findings of the States and Districts

The following sections specifically describe what some of the best practice states and districts are developing for teacher assessment tools. The models described in this report have forms for the assessment, agendas for training assessors, and rubrics for scoring the evaluation located in the appendix. The states considered are:

- Connecticut
- Kentucky
- North Carolina
- Virginia

The districts researched for this study are:

- Farmington Public Schools, Farmington, Connecticut
- Hartford Public Schools, Hartford, Connecticut
- Manchester Public Schools, Manchester, Connecticut
- New Canaan Public Schools, New Canaan, Connecticut
- Newport News Public Schools, Newport News, Virginia

The discussions of the districts are included in each state section.

Connecticut

This discussion of teacher assessment systems in Connecticut will focus not on the state overall, but on four districts and one education region. All of these education systems base their assessment plans on the state guidelines found in Appendix A page 32.

Farmington Public Schools

The Farmington Public Schools teacher assessment is based on the state of Connecticut's guidelines and founded in the mission and belief statements of the district. It is based on these district beliefs: professional practice, data-driven decision making, use of collaboration, knowledge of standards, the role of effort, and a differentiated approach to evaluation (Farmington Public Schools, 2001, p. 5).

The core of the assessment is the teaching standards derived from the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (2002): knowledge (of students, content, pedagogy); application of knowledge (classroom environment, planning, instructing, and assessing and adjustment); and professional practice (professional and ethical, reflection and continuous learning, and leadership and collaboration) (Farmington Public Schools, 2001, p. 6 - 8).

There are three phases of the Farmington evaluation and professional development plan. The overview of these phases can be found in Appendix B page 40. These phases are the induction phase, the accomplished teacher phase, and the professional intervention phase.

The induction phase. The Induction Phase is for all teachers new to the Farmington district, regardless of teaching experience, in an effort to familiarize the new teachers with the Farmington district expectations. There are three levels in this phase that offer support and structure configurations. Induction Phase Year One familiarizes the new teacher with the policies, practices, and professional expectations of the district (p. 10 – 11). Induction Phase Year Two introduces the teacher to the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) Program portfolio process to enable them to meet the standards set by the Connecticut State Department of Education and the Farmington Teaching Standards. Induction Phase Year Three and Four are designed to assist and guide those teachers that have not yet met the standards and expectations defined by the district and state. This involves a summative assessment.

Accomplished teacher phase. In this phase the teachers work as members of a team and focus on student learning needs. This is a performance indicator and is assessed on basis of the progress of the team (p. 12). There are pre – and post – observation conferences. There are four formal observations during the year.

Professional Intervention phase. The teachers, who have demonstrated mastery of Farmington teaching standards, develop a professional growth plan on a team basis. The assessor facilitates, guides, and supports the individual teacher and the team. This is a summative assessment (p.13).

Hartford Public Schools

The Hartford Public Schools' teacher assessment system is composed of four phases. They are the professional appraisal phase, the professional learning phase, the professional growth phase, and the professional intervention phase. An overview of these phases is found in Appendix C page 57. This program was piloted by schools on a volunteer basis, and is continually revised as the need arises.

The professional appraisal phase. This phase familiarizes teachers new to the Hartford School system with the expectations of the district (Hartford Public Schools, 2001, p. 21). Teachers included in this phase are: 1st thru 4th year new teachers; certified non-tenured teachers; new staff from out of state; tenured staff who have low performance; and tenured staff who

desire to transfer to a new level or new certification. Data is generated that will enable the teacher to certify, gain tenure, or continue a contract. It is also a reassessment process for non-tenured teachers who have not completed professional intervention for a year.

The teacher meets with the assessor and decides on performance objectives for the year (this is done in the fall). There are pre – and post – conferences and a minimum of two 30-minute classroom observations, or the length of a complete lesson. Informal observations will also take place during the year. If at any time during the year the assessor feels the teacher needs intervention, the teacher will be directed to the professional intervention.

Profession learning phase. This phase is for tenured teachers and tenured transfers and lasts one year (p. 25). This prepares the teacher for the self-directed professional growth phase. The teacher participates in a planning meeting in the fall, a progress/modification conference in February, a year end evaluation conference where the teacher is recommended to remain in this phase for another year, or is directed to move on to another phase.

Professional growth phase. This phase is for tenured teachers who have demonstrated competence in the required standards. It is a self-directed evaluation plan encouraging peer collaboration, research, curriculum development, and leadership activities (p. 28). This entails a three-year planning cycle for a long-term project. It includes progress/modification conferences, year-end assessment, and utilizes a summative assessment tool that involves sharing of best practices.

Teachers that successfully complete this phase with an “accomplished” or “competent” rating (p. 31), have the option of continuing with their current professional growth plan, or beginning a new one. Again, any teacher that demonstrates unsatisfactory performance is directed to the professional intervention phase.

Professional intervention phase. This phase provides guided assistance to those teachers that are having difficulty in meeting performance standards. Any teacher at any time during the school year may be directed to this phase. Documented evidence is used to help determine strategies to improve performance. A timeline is set up and conferences are conducted to ensure progress.

Manchester Public Schools

A teacher professional growth and evaluation plan designed by the Manchester public Schools ties school improvement, instructional improvement, professional development, and

teacher evaluation together resulting in performance-based assessment tool. This instrument has practical application for both beginning and tenured teachers. This district applied the important principle (if the assessment tool is to be effective) of tying the assessment instrument to the school mission and beliefs.

The assessment plan's foundation is the State of Connecticut Common Core of Teaching, and Common Core of Learning (Kishimoto, 2002), State of Connecticut and Manchester School District Standards, and the School Improvement Plans and the Principles of Learning. Due to this foundation, teachers are encouraged to engage in action research in the classroom that merges data collection and analysis with professional development and instructional strategies.

There are four phases in this plan: the induction phase, the continuous professional growth phase, the collaborative support phase, and the extended evaluation phase. Improvement of skills and abilities takes place through collaboration with peers and administrators. An overview of the plan along with a timeline is found in Appendix D page 75.

In each phase, a *Walk Through* is conducted. This is defined as a tour through the school's learning areas, using the standards that align with the specific phase (Manchester Public Schools, 2001, p. 7). Principals received training for this process from the Principals' Institute through the Danforth Foundation. The purpose of the Walk Through is to focus the teacher on the core functions of the school: instruction and learning.

The induction phase. Mentoring and participation in Connecticut's BEST combine as integral components of this phase. There are formal observations and feedback to further professional growth, and application of improved teaching skills and methods. Pre – and post – conferences are held and a summative evaluation is conducted. Four formal Walk Throughs are conducted each year. Seminars are also provided to further growth. These components are during the first two years of teaching.

Years three and four continue the formal observations and add a component of guided professional growth plans. Pre – and post – conferences are held and teachers again receive a summative evaluation report. Four formal Walk Throughs are conducted.

Continuous professional growth phase. In this phase collaboration with peers is emphasized. Formal observations are conducted as necessary, and Walk Throughs are still conducted. Professional growth conferences occur at this phase, and peer sharing takes place. A summative assessment is made. This phase is for tenured teachers.

Collaborative support phase. The teacher gains additional mentoring, modeling, and coaching as needed.

Extended Evaluation phase. This phase is to provide additional support and resources for teachers having difficulty meeting the set standards.

The Manchester Teacher Professional Growth and Evaluation Committee meet regularly to collect data addressing the effectiveness of the plan. At this time the committee also updates and makes any necessary changes in an effort to make the assessment instrument more effective.

New Canaan Public Schools

The purpose of the New Canaan Public Schools teacher assessment tool is to “guide teachers and administrators in understanding . . . the defined procedures” (New Canaan Public Schools, 2001, p.6). This district believes an effective teacher should possess a broad array of knowledge, skills, competencies, and attitudes. The district uses the standards and criteria set for self-assessment and evaluation of teachers from Connecticut’s Common Core of Teaching model. The nature of assessment is determined by the experience of the teacher. Four levels of assessment are defined: Induction I, Induction II, professional growth cycle, and structured assistance. The Professional Evaluation and Growth System Summary is found in Appendix E page 77.

Induction I. This is designed for non-tenured teachers in their first and second years of teaching. This level includes goal setting, at least 3 formal observations per year, pre – and post – conferences, informal observations, and an annual summative conference with the assessor (p.7).

Induction II. Designed for non-tenured teachers in their third and fourth years of teaching and those previously tenured in Connecticut, it also includes goal setting. In addition, informal observations take place and there are two alternatives of evaluation. Alternative A is a standard evaluation (p. 8), and Alternative B involves peer collaboration on a project.

Professional growth cycle. This level is designed for tenured teachers. It includes goal setting, a standard evaluation, development through professional growth options, informal observations, and a summative assessment/conference.

Structured assistance. This level is for non-tenured and tenured teachers that are having difficulty meeting performance standards. A timeline is established to meet the identified goals in areas of needed improvement, peer support is available, additional observations are made by the assessor, and mentoring is available.

Observations conducted in the New Canaan district are carried out on a formal basis lasting 30 minutes, and an informal basis that are spontaneous and have no time constraints. The written evaluation is made available to the teacher within 10 days of the observation. Data provided by the teacher as additional evidence of learning is encouraged as part of the assessment process.

Region 15

This region has developed four phases in their teacher assessment plan. The specifics of each phase are identified, and a timeline is provided for each phase as well. The four phases are: induction phase, developmental phase, growth phase, and intensive supervision phase. An overview of the four phases can be found in Appendix F page 89.

Induction phase. This involves non-tenured teachers with an initial certificate. Pre and post – conferences are conducted. A minimum of three formal observations will be conducted per year. Informal observations will be conducted as needed. A mentor will be assigned. A summative evaluation is used.

Developmental phase. This phase is designed for non-tenured teachers with a Provisional or Professional certificate. It is a one-year professional growth plan determined by the teacher and administrator. There are a minimum of three formal observations, and informal observations as necessary. Again, a summative assessment is used.

Growth phase. The growth phase is used for tenured teachers who have consistently demonstrated competence. It is a one to four years professional growth plan determined by the teacher and administrator. No more than three formal observations will be conducted in a year, however no formal observation is required. Normally, two formal observations will be conducted during the four-year cycle. At the conclusion of each year, the teacher writes a summative evaluation of the growth plan. The assessor writes a summative evaluation at the completion of year four.

Intensive supervision phase. This phase is designed for those teachers having difficulty consistently demonstrating satisfactory growth. Guidance, supervision, and staff support are provided in an effort to help the teacher develop a higher level of proficiency. Both the informal and formal observations are determined and scheduled during the planning meeting. Two summative evaluations are completed per year, in February and June.

Kentucky

Kentucky focuses its evaluation efforts on novice teachers. This state is included in this study due to the assessors involved in this evaluation process. The assessors are a support team comprised of the school administrator, resource teachers, and teacher educators. The first year teachers are required by the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board to meet its nine teaching standards.

These first year teachers are observed on three occasions by the support team. They also develop a Professional Development Plan, and create a portfolio to demonstrate their competence. While it is not an extensive portfolio, it does provide the intern with opportunities to explain their decisions regarding instruction, assessment, and refinements. It is accumulative in that it defines a year's development and growth, while concurrently providing evidence of professional development and a professional development growth plan.

Cost

The State funds this evaluation process. Kentucky allocates approximately \$2,000 per first year teacher. The mentors involved in the process are compensated with \$1,400 per year being assigned to one first teacher. Three thousand mentors are used annually in the support of beginning teachers (based on figures from 2002) (Southeast Center for Teaching Quality, 2002).

North Carolina

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) utilizes the Teacher Performance Assessment Instrument (TPAI) to evaluate their teachers. Its initial implementation was in 1985, and has been in an on-going revision process since then. The NCDPI is specific in that no one is to administer the assessment unless the principal (or other authorized personnel) have "received the proper training in its use" (Flowers, Testerman, Hancock, & Algozzine, 2000). The TPAI is comprised of seven components. They are (p.3):

1. Modifications of Indicators
2. Rating Scale
3. Observation
4. Pre – Conference Interview Protocol
5. Post – Conference
6. Formal Observation Data Analysis
7. Data are collected from the Individual Growth Plan (IGP)

TPAI Components

Modifications of Indicators

The modifications of the TPAI indicators are a reflection of the changes education has gone through since the conception of the TPAI in 1985. These modifications also mirror current research. The changes were authored by Lynn Bradshaw (as cited in Flowers et al, 2000). The eight indicators are (p. 4):

1. Management of instruction time
2. Management of Student Behavior
3. Instructional Presentation
4. Instructional Monitoring of Student Performance
5. Instructional Feedback
6. Facilitating Instruction
7. Communicating within the Educational Environment
8. Performing Non – Instructional Duties

The modifications of indicators can be found in Appendix G page 92.

Rating Scale

The original rating scale was a 6-point scale. The change to a 4-point scale for experienced teachers is identical to the scale used for beginning teachers. The ratings are: 4 – Above Standard; 3 – At Standard; 2 – Below Standard; 1 – Unsatisfactory.

Observations

Observations are the most legally defensible evaluations (Stiggins, 1986 as cited by Flowers et al, 2000). Flowers et al, cite observation as the most authentic method of evaluation of a teacher's skills (p. 8). North Carolina utilizes two forms of observation: the TPAI Full Review, and the TPAI – R Snapshot. Flowers et al, identify three summative evaluations a year: the TPAI – R Snapshot, the TPAI Full Review, and the concluding observation another TPAI – R Snapshot. The definitions of these two types of observations follow.

TPAI Full Review. This is a planned observation that requires a pre – and post – conference, the time frame is an entire class period, and evaluators are not required to use a the identified form.

TPAI – R Snapshot. This observation is spontaneous and unannounced. There is no time limit involved, and a pre – conference is not required. There is a long or short form option. A post – conference is only required if the teacher scores “below standard,” or “unsatisfactory.”

Pre – Conference Interview Protocol

This conference should be scheduled two days before the observation takes place. The post – conference should be scheduled two days after the observation takes place. There are responsibilities that both the evaluator and the teacher must complete before the observation takes place (Flowers et al, 2000, p. 9). These responsibilities are:

Evaluator

1. Scheduling the conference
2. Identifying the location of the conference
3. Provide the teacher with the evaluation forms and procedures
4. Allow the teacher to ask questions to clarify expectations.

Teacher

1. Ask questions to ensure clarification
2. Organize materials before the conference

Pre – conference questions should be discussed between the evaluator and the teacher. In Appendix G is a list of pre – conference questions and the form.

A pre – conference scoring rubric was developed for use with the TPAI. It is used after the conference has concluded. It is used to score any evidence the teacher provided. The evaluator is advised to take notes during this conference. The rubric is found in Appendix G.

Post Observation Conference

This conference should ideally be held within two days after the observation. A location is agreed upon and the evaluator and the teacher meet. The evaluator brings the notes, but not the evaluation form, from the observation to this meeting. The teacher is allowed to respond to the notes of the evaluator, and to clarify any misunderstandings.

Formal Observation Data Analysis

The Formal Observation Data Analysis (FODA) is utilized on all beginning teachers and all teachers, regardless of experience, if they score below “at standard.” Experienced teachers that score “at standard,” or “above standard” no longer need to have a FODA evaluation.

Individual Growth Plan

This final component is utilized to collect information demonstrating alignment of teaching efforts to the school goals and system. Although the Individual Growth Plan (IGP) will vary from teacher to teacher due to the different roles they have in the school, the evaluations must be consistent. IGPs are required by the state of North Carolina as part of the process of license renewal. The IGP forms and matrix used in the pilot study of this process are found in Appendix G. These instruments were developed in an effort to provide a structured system to afford immediate feedback to the teacher. Districts in the state are not required to use these forms, but must develop a system that will provide immediate feedback to the teacher in a manner similar to the state's model.

The procedure of application of the IGP begins with the teacher receiving a copy of the IGP system and goals, the form, the scoring rubric, and an opportunity to clarify any unclear components. This procedure includes three conferences: initial, mid-year (peer review), and end-of-year. The teacher may attach any supporting evidence or documentation and does not necessarily have to use the provided form only. Assistance may be given to the teacher as required. An orientation and these three conferences are the four steps completed during the summative evaluation year. The following gives an overview of each of the conferences required.

Initial conference. The teacher's "strategies, expected outcomes/goals and personal assessment" are evaluated at this time by the principal or the principal's designee (Flowers et al, 2000, p.11). Outcomes should be measurable, specific, and relevant to the school and /or teacher's job. Assistance in writing goals is available to the teacher. The scoring rubric is used to rate each outcome. The teacher will be required to modify the IGP if a score of "below standard" or "unsatisfactory" is given.

Mid-year conference (peer review). Experienced teachers are required to document progress toward identified goals. This conference provides a venue for a peer-to-peer committee review of the teacher's progress and to interact with recommendations and suggestions. A teacher on the action plan will have a one-on-one evaluation with the principal or the principal's designee. Guidance will be provided at this time if needed. Again the scoring rubric is used to rate each outcome.

End-of-year conference. This conference is to evaluate the progress achieved for the past year and to identify the focus for next year. The scoring rubric is used to rate each outcome.

Training

The training of the evaluators, i.e., the principals or their designees, is provided by the state. This training confirms an understanding of the instruments of evaluation to be used, when they are used, and interventions to be applied when necessary. It is impressed upon the participants the legality issue of evaluation. The evaluation tools are explained and the participants have an opportunity to ask questions and use documents representative of a teacher's classroom situation. Appendix G contains the training schedule and trainer notes.

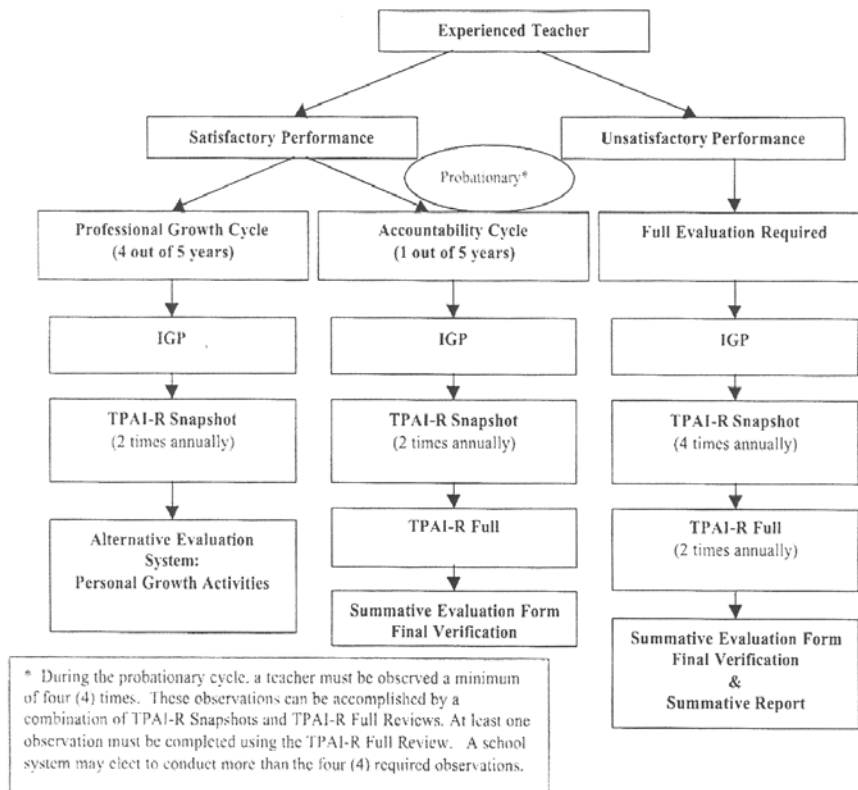
Summary

In North Carolina, since it is recommended to have a summative evaluation once every five years, the state believes it would be advantageous to have a summative evaluation coincide with the teacher's IGP cycle and license renewal. This would be a cycle of five years with a summative evaluation taking place once during the cycle. This would apply only to experienced teachers that have a history of satisfactory performance. In Appendix G a diagram of a suggested evaluation cycle.

The TPAI – R and the IGP are instruments of accountability that are required annually for all experienced teachers. Summative data collected during the formative evaluation is used to screen performance. The experienced teacher can be put back on the summative evaluation cycle any time the teacher's performance is seen to have problems.

The TPAI – R Full Review is administered at least once during a five-year cycle with the exception being the decline of an experienced teacher's performance as evidenced with a rating of "below standard" or "unsatisfactory." Figure 1* below lists the evaluation cycles and data requirements for an experienced teacher.

Figure 1
Cycle and Data Requirement for the Experienced Teacher Evaluation



*Provided with permission from the Public Schools of North Carolina, April 25, 2003.

The first year this plan is implemented, all experienced teachers begin the process with a formative evaluation. This is the time to train teachers and administrators on the summative evaluation plan. A dialogue is developed that clarifies administration expectations and teacher perceptions. A checklist of evaluation activities is found in Appendix G.

Virginia

Newport News Public Schools (NNPS) began revising their teacher assessment process in 1995. To assure stakeholder buy-in, a committee of educators was formed that drafted the teacher performance standards. These standards were then presented to the schools in the district for critique. Meetings were then held to provide information to the teachers addressing the specific items of the assessment tool. The committee also responded to any questions the teachers had.

A pilot test was conducted in August of 1995 (Newport News Public Schools, 2001) with five schools participating. Each school received training from Center for Leadership in School Reform consultants. This section of the pilot test lasted one year during which time each school focused on one aspect of the assessment process. A few of the aspects focused on were “designing a performance rubric, and the design and assessment of teachers’ work” (p. i).

In the second year of the pilot test, the teachers from all five schools used the formative assessment process, and volunteer teachers (along with their administrators) field-tested the summative process. The experiences of those involved in the pilot test were related in an on-going basis, to those faculty members from the non-participating schools in informational meetings presented by the Staff Development Department.

The participants of the field test reported two major ideas as a result of using the instrument:

- All agreed the levels of professional reflection and dialogue with colleagues concerning education of students were greatly enhanced.
- The amount of documentation, the large number of possible indicators of performance, and the vagueness of the assessment rubric were awkward and complicated to execute.

In addition, the teachers involved in the pilot test were concerned about resistance to the system from their colleagues who had not been involved in the test. The lack of specificity in the system could create confusion in implementation of the process.

In May and June of 1997, a committee of educators met and made revisions in the proposed assessment system. This committee was formed of representatives from both the field-test and non-field test schools. They had three goals to accomplish: a) retain the valuable aspects developed, b) simplify and streamline the assessment process, and c) provide accountability for performance (Newport News Public Schools, 2001,p. i). Assessment specialist Charlotte Danielson assisted in these efforts. Adaptations of sections from her book, *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* (1996), were assimilated into the existing assessment system.

Further field testing was conducted that included all forty-five schools in the district. Twenty schools used both the formative and summative assessment process from the revised system. The other 25 schools in the district implemented the formative process only. It is important to note that all assessors and selected lead members from each school received training

in the summer and throughout the school year to expedite implementation of the system. Data was collected on a quarterly basis and used in determining the effectiveness of the instrument, and in the ongoing effort of revision of the instrument.

In 1998 a committee comprised of 29 NNPS educators met again with Danielson in a revision process. The final proposal submitted to the local Board of Education included the original five standards of teaching, but without the unnecessary procedures and paperwork. The Newport News Public Schools' Teacher Performance Assessment system was adopted in July 1998 (Newport News Public Schools, 2001, p. i). Training began in August for the assessors, coaches, and lead members of schools to begin district-wide implementation.

Data was collected district-wide for the first two years. A committee comprised of 24 educators was formed in March 2001 to analyze both the data collected and results of a survey conducted. They then made revision recommendations to the administration and the Board of Education. Although training and consistency issues remain, it was felt the present instrument serves the professional needs of the teachers.

There were six sections in the Teacher Performance Assessment System developed by Newport News Public Schools. They are: a) Knowledge Work, b) Summative Assessment, c) Instructional Mentoring, d) Formative Assessment, e) The Framework for the Teacher Performance Assessment System, and f) Plan of Action: Intervention for Less-than-Satisfactory Teacher Performance. The instrument was characterized by (Teacher Performance Assessment Handbook, 2001, p.1.1):

- Formative and summative assessment processes
- Self-directed professional development for the teachers
- Clear criteria and standards aligned with the district's mission and beliefs
- Clear procedures for evaluation
- Adequate training for all participants

As teachers strive for improve student achievement, 10 design qualities were emphasized as well as the 5 standards of teaching. The 10 design qualities were: 1) product focus, 2) clear and compelling product standards, 3) protection from adverse consequences for initial failure, 4) affirmation of performance, 5) affiliation, 6) novelty and variety, 7) choice 8)authenticity, 9) knowledge: organization, and 10) knowledge: content and substance (Appendix H). The five standards of teaching are: 1) teachers support the mission of NNPS, 2) teachers focus on the 10

design qualities, 3) teachers continually monitor the engagement of student learning, 4) teachers manage resources to enhance instruction, and 5) teachers demonstrate leadership patterns. These five standards were used as a guide for the assessment system.

NNPS, too, bases their assessment system on the Educational Testing Services (ETS) procedures as described in *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* (Danielson, 1996). The domains and components of the Framework (Danielson, 1996) and the Newport News standards of teaching were meshed to form the Teacher Performance Assessment system. The components of the system are compiled in the *Teacher Performance Assessment Handbook* (NNPS, 2001). This handbook is separated into sections such as knowledge work, summative assessment, instructional mentoring, formative assessment, and the framework for the teacher performance assessment system. These sections are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Knowledge work. This is a conceptual approach to education. It entails authentic tasks based on world experience that engages the student in thinking, discussing, constructing meaning, and questioning. Appendix H details the 10 components of the design.

Summative assessment. The summative process involves the following nine steps (Teacher Performance Assessment Handbook, 2001, p. 3.1):

1. Administrator reviews job performance expectations with teachers.
2. Teacher completes self-assessment; teacher and administrator hold conference.
3. Administrative finalization of support teams and notification of teachers.
4. Teacher meets with support team.
5. Teacher gathers evidence to document professional performance.
6. Administrator completes formal observations.
7. Teacher prepares for final summative conference.
8. Teacher and administrator hold the final summative conference
9. Administrator completes summative assessment.

There is a sample timeline found in Appendix H page 116. Also found in Appendix H, is an example of a summative assessment worksheet is found that includes competent level rubrics. Also found in this appendix is the option form, the agendas for the initial summative conference, pre-observation conference, post-observation conference, and final conference; the meeting log;

the review of evidence questions; classroom observation record sheet; and the summative assessment report.

Instructional mentoring. This context, instructional mentoring provides a “common language for talking about teaching,” a formative assessment process, defined levels of performance, and structured events to develop knowledge and skills (Teacher Performance Assessment Handbook, 2001, p. 4.1).

Formative assessment. The formative assessment involves the following six steps:

1. Self-assessment and teacher-administrator conference.
2. Administrative finalization of formative support teams and notification of teachers. (There are three types: coach-advise, collegial friends, and school-district cohort.)
3. With assistance of support team, teacher designs growth plan.
4. Teacher implements growth plan. (The self-directed professional growth plan form is found in Appendix H.)
5. Teacher reflects on progress towards goal.
6. Teacher documents professional growth.

In Appendix H will be found a sample timeline. The formative assessment worksheet inclusive of competent level rubrics is also found in Appendix H.

Framework. The purpose of the Framework (Danielson, 1996) is to provide additional information when teachers complete their professional growth plan. This is the same Framework that was identified and discussed beginning on page 8 of this report.

This teacher performance evaluation model is in an on-going state of revision as more efficient and productive ideas are developed. Important in this model is the training that takes place for all participants: the evaluators (assessors) and the evaluatees (teachers). The training is provided by the consultants of the Center for Leadership in School Reform.

Training

The cost of training has many factors that should be considered. The geographic location of the district, the size of the district, the assessment training method, the participant’s role in the assessment (i.e., train the trainer, assessee, assessor), whether the assessment training is conducted by the state or a private entity. The number of organizations providing the training in a geographic area can also affect the cost of the training system.

The expenditure can be affected by the number of participants involved in the assessment training. Several small districts could combine and obtain the training in a more cost-effective manner. Education Region V in Idaho, has combined to purchase a three-day workshop for training on a teacher evaluation system. It will include 30 participants at the cost of approximately \$300 per individual. This fee includes the three-day workshop, a workbook, a resource manual, a reference card, the book *Teacher Evaluation to Enhance Professional Practice* (Danielson, 1996), Components of Professional Practice, training forms, one complete Forms set, and a clipboard. This is conducted by a private company that carries out such workshops across the country.

In each of the states identified in this study, the need for basic development training is consistent for all and would be parallel the needs of Idaho districts. The difference would be in the local economic situation of each district and the population of the district. The average costs incurred in one geographic region do not necessarily correlate with another region's specific needs or expenditures.

Summary

As the implementation of NCLBA (2001) continues, more and more states are revising their teacher assessment systems to reflect the changes in the education environment. Data systems are being refined to better track student learning and the value-added impact teachers have on it. Because of this change in evaluation perspective, the assessment tools needed to effectively assess teachers have changed the focus of the instrument from one of behaviors to one of outcomes. Another important component that is critical is that assessors must be trained to make the tool effective in measurement. This in turn will enable stakeholders to use the tool as a means to improve instruction and raise student achievement.

The six strategies identified, 1) define teacher quality (this definition must be established before development of the evaluation); 2) focus evaluation of improving teacher practice (the evaluation should be viewed as an informational tool); 3) incorporate student learning into teacher evaluation (the evaluation should be outcome-driven); 4) create professional accountability (incorporate career ladders and professional classifications); 5) train evaluators; 6) broaden participation in evaluation design (include all stakeholders to ensure ownership) (Goldrick, 2002, p. 1), are a foundation for states and/or districts to being the development of

their teacher assessment plan. From this jumping off point, states can (and have) develop teacher assessment instruments that are tied to licensure and student achievement.

The research indicates the success of the assessment instruments begins in the development of the tool. The involvement of all stakeholders in the content of the assessment is critical. The pilot test, conducted on a voluntary basis, is the next step. Revision after the pilot test is third, and again, all stakeholders have representation in the revision process. The final point to implement is that the instrument, from conception, must be flexible enough to allow continual revision.

Mr. Cody Claver, principal at Taylorview Junior High School, Idaho Falls Idaho, and a certified Education Testing Service *Pathwise* trainer, stated when developing an effective assessment ensure that “it is a *quality* assessment, it includes professional development, and it is based on identified evidence” (personal communication April 28, 2003). Mr. Claver emphasized the importance of these components to ensure the assessment instrument is an objective measure of teacher performance.

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