**Fact Sheet #6 - Performance Standard 6: Teacher/Staff Evaluation**

**TEACHER/STAFF EVALUATION**

The leader fairly and consistently evaluates school personnel in accordance with state and district guidelines and provides them with timely and constructive feedback focused on improved student learning.

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**What does teacher/staff evaluation mean?**

In general terms, teacher/staff evaluation is “the ability to judge and evaluate teacher (staff - added) effectiveness.”

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**What does research say about teacher/staff evaluation?**

The two major purposes of teacher/staff evaluation are professional growth and performance accountability. Though viewed by some as mutually exclusive, Stronge argues that:

there is room in evaluation systems for both accountability and performance improvement purposes. Indeed, evaluation systems that reflect both accountability and personal growth dimensions are not only desirable, but also necessary for evaluation to productively serve the needs of individuals and the community at large.

The National Education Policy Center advocates an evaluation system that targets both continual improvement of the teaching staff and timely dismissal of teachers who cannot or will not improve. An effective system meets both of these objectives.

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**Good Practices.** If teacher evaluation is to benefit teachers, leaders must consider ways to improve the evaluation process so that it is marked by quality characteristics. These characteristics include: positive climate, clear communications, teachers/staff and leaders committed to the evaluation, and practices that are technically sound.

One of these characteristics is a positive climate. A positive climate is one characterized by mutual trust. Evaluation “conducted in an environment that fosters mutual trust between evaluator (representing the institution) and evaluatees holds the greatest potential for benefiting both parties.”

A second characteristic is clear communication between teachers and leaders during the evaluative process. Two-way communications, where both parties are encouraged and able to share ideas and interpretations, fosters mutual understanding. Mutual understanding leads to evaluations focused on growth and accountability.

Leaders and teachers committed to teacher evaluation is a third quality characteristic that can improve a teacher evaluation process. When leaders are committed to the teacher evaluation system and prioritize their commitment, the evaluation process becomes a vehicle for teacher growth and improvement. Everyone benefits from this commitment.

Since effective teachers impact student achievement, a teacher evaluation system that improves teacher effectiveness can serve as a tool for increasing student achievement. Leaders can demonstrate this priority by setting aside time and focusing attention on the evaluative process and by allocating resources that support the evaluation system and teacher improvement practices.

Finally, leaders should ensure their evaluative practices are technically sound. This means leaders participate in training to build knowledge and understanding of the teacher/staff evaluation system. They commit to the process.
Research related to these quality characteristics is summarized:

- Teachers/staff who participate more fully in the evaluation conference are more satisfied with both the conference and the leader than those who participate less.\(^8\)
- More trustworthy relationships are built by leaders who balance caring and high expectations than relationships characterized by high caring and low expectations or low caring and high expectations. Balance is key.\(^9\)
- Teacher involvement at every level of the evaluation process is a requirement for an effective evaluation system.\(^10\)

**Documentation.** Multiple data sources inform understanding in every context. Teacher/staff evaluation is no different. Using multiple data sources or measurement tools increases information about teacher/staff effectiveness and thus provides a more fully rounded picture of teacher/staff levels of competency. Moreover, the use of different measurement tools can offset weaknesses found in others. Evaluation tools that are used without proper training can impact the validity of an evaluation.\(^11\)

Teacher observation is the measurement tool used most often by leaders during the teacher evaluation process. A study of measurement tools by Goe, Bell, and Little identified both strengths and weaknesses. Observations are feasible and can provide useful information. However, observations provide limited information because of the narrow focus on instructional delivery and classroom management. The whole of teachers’ work—e.g., instructional planning, student assessment, professional development—is left unexamined.\(^12\) The National Education Policy Center advocates multiple measures to include: classroom observation, instructional artifacts, portfolios, teacher self-reports, student surveys, and value-added assessment.\(^13\) Though each has strengths and weaknesses, when combined, they can provide a holistic view of teacher/staff performance. This, in turn, provides the leader with both quantitative and qualitative data to fully inform the evaluation product.

**District Guidelines.** Effective school leaders understand the district guidelines of the personnel evaluation system. The following are research findings related to evaluation:

- School leaders affect student learning primarily by hiring and supporting high-quality teachers and staff.\(^14\)
- Effective leaders hire, support, and retain good teachers while removing less-effective teachers.\(^15\)
- School leaders’ abilities in performing evaluation affect the ability to remove teachers due to incompetence.\(^16\)
- Remediating or removing low-performing teachers is the responsibility of the school leader.\(^17\)
- Effective leaders continue to document deficiencies while working to help struggling teachers so that they have the necessary documentation should dis-missal become necessary.\(^18\)

**Sample Performance Indicators for the Professional Knowledge of Leaders**

- Has a thorough understanding of the teacher and staff evaluation systems and understands the important role evaluation plays in teacher development.
- Provides support, resources, and remediation for teachers and staff to improve job performance.
- Documents deficiencies and proficiencies and provides timely formal and informal feedback on strengths and weaknesses.
- Evaluates performance of personnel using multiple sources consistent with district...
policies and maintains accurate evaluation records.

- Makes recommendations related to promotion and retention consistent with established policies and procedures and with student learning as a primary consideration.

- Involves teachers and staff in designing and implementing Professional Development Plans.

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## Leader Self-Assessment Checklist
### Performance Standard 6: Teacher/Staff Evaluation

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<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fosters mutual trust between the evaluator and the teacher being evaluated.</td>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td>Level III</td>
<td>Level II</td>
<td>Level I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourages two-way communications where both parties share ideas and interpretations.</td>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td>Level III</td>
<td>Level II</td>
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<td>Focuses on growth and accountability.</td>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td>Level III</td>
<td>Level II</td>
<td>Level I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participates in both formal and informal conferences.</td>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td>Level III</td>
<td>Level II</td>
<td>Level I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uses multiple data sources to document standards.</td>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td>Level III</td>
<td>Level II</td>
<td>Level I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conducts walkthroughs and formative observations.</td>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td>Level III</td>
<td>Level II</td>
<td>Level I</td>
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<td>Offers feedback following observations.</td>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td>Level III</td>
<td>Level II</td>
<td>Level I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uses evaluation as a means to remediate or remove low-performing or unsatisfactory teachers.</td>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td>Level III</td>
<td>Level II</td>
<td>Level I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Documentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adheres to district guidelines regarding teacher evaluation.</td>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td>Level III</td>
<td>Level II</td>
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<tr>
<td>Documents adherence to designated standards.</td>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td>Level III</td>
<td>Level II</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintains objectivity during the evaluation process.</td>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td>Level III</td>
<td>Level II</td>
<td>Level I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describes existing deficiencies clearly.</td>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td>Level III</td>
<td>Level II</td>
<td>Level I</td>
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<td>Legal Considerations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offers remediation actions for identified deficiencies.</td>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td>Level III</td>
<td>Level II</td>
<td>Level I</td>
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