State Council for Educator Effectiveness – Draft recommendations

Role of the State Model System

DRAFT March 8, 2011

Areas of agreement

- The state will develop a model teacher and principal evaluation system that follows the framework and meets the criteria identified by the Council in its recommendations.
- The creation of the state model system will:
  - Support districts and ease the burden of districts needing to create their own systems independently;
  - Create equity across the state by providing an exemplar for all districts, some of whom might not have the resources to create one themselves;
  - Be a means of collecting data during the pilot phase on the efficacy of the Council's recommendations that will be used to drive systems improvement;
  - Ensure and model the type of coherence and alignment the Council believes is needed in an effective evaluation system;
  - Provide a common language and model that can anchor professional development.
- The state model system will be piloted in multiple local sites and contexts, so that it is adaptable to the needs of districts and BOCES across the state. CDE will develop two additional variations on the state model system:
  - one in which guidelines, materials, training, professional development and technical support from CDE are tailored to the resources and needs of small districts; and
  - one in which guidelines, materials, training, professional development and technical support from CDE are tailored to the resources and needs of medium-sized districts.
- CDE shall consider the capacity of individual districts when planning and delivering technical assistance and support for the implementation of the state model system.
- All evaluation systems must meet the minimum criteria for quality identified by the State Council's recommendations and, as appropriate, technical guidelines developed by CDE.

Issues on which the Council may be unable to reach consensus

Council members currently disagree as to whether the model evaluation system should be the default system to be adopted by districts and BOCES unless specifically granted approval for alternative systems, or whether the model evaluation system should be considered as an option but not given any particular preference. The source of this disagreement stems from preferences for uniformity across districts vs. preferences for local decision-making and flexibility. The following sections reflect the main arguments made on each side.

Arguments in favor of making the state evaluation system the <u>default</u> system for districts and BOCES:

- SB 191 requires that all teachers and principals be evaluated under a rigorous and fair system. Since the state system will be designed to be rigorous and fair, this will make it easier for the state and districts to comply with the requirements of SB 191 and minimize wasted effort and uncertainty.
- Making the state system the default system will make it easier to compare educator effectiveness across districts, which has the following benefits:
  - Teachers who move from one district to another will know what to expect in terms of evaluation.
  - Decisions about nonprobationary status made in one district will be more readily accepted by other districts.
  - The state and districts will have more information on which to base decisions about policies and practices intended to improve educator effectiveness.
  - Changes prompted by technical improvements in measurement and analysis will be easier to implement if systems are similar across the state.
- The state can better monitor compliance with quality requirements and can provide more effective support to districts, since technical support efforts can be more focused.
- Districts who want to implement alternative designs are still able to do so, as long as their systems meet quality requirements.

Arguments in favor of making the state evaluation system <u>optional</u>:

- SB 191 encourages the engagement of local stakeholders in developing and implementing local evaluation systems, and making the state system optional will result in more meaningful local discussions and potentially more meaningful local evaluation systems.
- Colorado's districts vary widely in size, available central resources, and philosophical approaches, and no one system of evaluation will be able to accommodate these differences. Imposing a one-size-fits-all solution will result in wasted effort for those districts that simply cannot comply, and delay the implementation of meaningful evaluation in those areas.
- Under SB 191, every evaluation system has to use the state definition of teacher and principal effectiveness and the state teacher and principal standards, and also has to address each component of the evaluation framework. This will result in sufficient rigor and uniformity among district evaluation systems, even if details of the systems are different.
- Many districts have already devoted substantial time and effort to developing rigorous evaluation systems that fit their local contexts, and this important work should be respected and allowed to continue.

Council recommendation options:

Option 1: All districts and BOCES shall adopt the state model evaluation system (adapted as necessary to local needs as permitted by the state system) for their local evaluation system, unless they expressly apply for and are granted permission by CDE to develop and adopt a different system. Each locally developed alternative system must address each component of the state evaluation system framework and must specifically demonstrate that the requirements of the local system are consistent with the requirements of the state system in terms of reliability, validity, and rigor. The approval process for alternative systems will be developed by CDE in consultation with interested members of the Council.

Option 2: Districts and BOCES may but are not required to adopt the state model evaluation system (adapted as necessary to local needs as permitted by the state system). Districts choosing to develop their own system must comply with the mandatory elements and technical requirements outlined in the SCEE's recommendations. These include requirements that:

- The system must address all components of the state framework for evaluation
- The system must use the state definitions of effective teachers and principals, the state professional teaching and principal standards, and the state definitions of ineffective, effective, and highly effective performance in assigning educators to the appropriate performance standard.
- The system must meet technical guidelines developed by CDE to ensure consistency and fairness with respect to the calculation of student growth scores, and the combining of multiple measures.

Districts and BOCES will need to certify to CDE that their systems meet the above requirements.