

State Council for Educator Effectiveness – Draft recommendations
Guidelines for CDE Implementation: Role of the State Model System

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Senate Bill 10-191 requires the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to create an online resource bank with tools and other resources that local school districts can use to implement new performance evaluation systems. As part of its recommendations for CDE implementation, the State Council for Educator Effectiveness (“the Council”) recommends that such a resource bank include a complete exemplar of a high-quality performance evaluation system that local districts can use. Because the system will be developed and improved over time, the Council believes that such development and improvement should reflect the following:

- Districts and educators across the state have expressed strong interest in being provided exemplars of teacher and principal evaluation systems.
- Local investment and ownership is more likely to be achieved if local evaluation systems reflect local choices and empower a sense of agency.
- Consistency and comparability are important long-term ideals of the system. There should be no surprises. Principals and teachers should have a clear and understandable set of expectations of what it means to be “effective”. Students should have the assurance that the system will provide effective educators and support the improvement of ineffective educators.
- The pilot period should be leveraged as an opportunity to study and refine the system itself, thereby making it more valuable and attractive over time.
- A statewide model system should build upon innovation and promising practices developed by districts across the state.
- A statewide model system should be as good as or better than any locally-developed system so that districts want to use the system.
- A statewide model system should be easily adaptable for use in districts of varying size.

The State Council for Educator Effectiveness offers the following recommendations:

- CDE, in consultation with an ongoing advisory group from the State Council, shall develop one model teacher and principal evaluation system that follows the framework and meets the criteria identified by the Council in its recommendations (i.e., shalls and mayss). At least three versions of the model system will be developed to ensure that districts of varying size can implement systems that are comparable to the state model and also consistent with their needs and resources. One version will be created with the intent of meeting the needs and capacities of large districts, a second geared towards small districts, and a third aimed at medium-sized districts.

- The creation of the state model system shall:
 - Support districts by providing an exemplar system, rather than expecting each district to develop a system independently;
 - Enable the state to create a high quality system by collecting and analyzing feedback and information during the pilot phase on the efficacy of the Council’s recommendations that will be used to drive systems improvement;
 - Facilitate the ability to identify and disseminate professional development and instructional supports directly aligned to the identified needs of educators.

- CDE, with ongoing support from the State Council, shall develop a method to fully leverage the initial 4 years of pilot and implementation (2011-2015) as an opportunity to learn and improve the system by, among other things:
 - Identifying and capturing the critical elements of local implementation and training.
 - Identifying and capturing innovative practices that local districts are developing and using that can improve the state model system.
 - Assessing the interest among districts to utilize a statewide model system.
 - Identifying the critical state supports needed for districts to implement high quality systems statewide.
 - Identifying barriers to strong local implementation.
 - Identify the unique needs of districts of varying size, demographics and geographic location.
 - Providing useful information to school districts about how they can use the system to improve student achievement and educator performance.

During the four year process, Districts and BOCES may adopt one of the three state model evaluation system variations or develop their own local system. Districts choosing to develop or adapt their own system must ensure that their performance evaluation systems incorporate the mandatory elements and technical requirements outlined in the SCEE’s recommendations (“the Critical Elements”). The Critical Elements reflect the minimum attributes of a system that is reliable, valid, transparent and coherent. As a result, the Council recommends that waivers not be granted for Critical Elements.

- In 2013 and 2015, CDE, in consultation with an on-going advisory group from the State Council, shall evaluate the data and feedback received during the four-year window in order to propose a long-term solution to the question of using the statewide model systems as either a default or a resource. The goal is to ensure that value and quality of the statewide system builds on the best of what local districts have done, and is as good as or better than any locally developed system. The Council proposes that a recommendation be made to the State Board of Education at that time as to whether or not the quality of the state model system supports an expectation that all school districts use it.