

Beyond Satisfactory:
A New Teacher Evaluation System for New York

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1. Preface

We joined the Educators 4 Excellence Teacher Evaluation Policy Team because we wanted a teacher-driven, fair, and useful evaluation system to support us as teachers and help our students achieve at higher levels. Study after study indicates that a student's teacher is the most influential factor in his or her education—in short, teachers matter. Our current evaluation system fails to reflect this reality, however, and it needs an overhaul.

Over the last five months, we researched pilot programs, successful district models, and state laws across the country to determine what should and should not be included in a great teacher evaluation system. We looked at a variety of approaches and discussed how these policies would translate into practice in our own classrooms. These are the ideas of classroom teachers: they are our contribution to the conversation about what any robust teacher evaluation system should include.

2. Introduction

Our current evaluation system tells us little about our impact on student learning, and as a result, it does not serve us or our students well. In New York, as in many districts across the country, evaluations are binary: teachers can be categorized as “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory.” In practice, this system is far from useful: only about 2.5 percent of New York teachers receive an unsatisfactory rating and about 97.5 percent receive a satisfactory mark. Research and common sense show that teacher effectiveness varies greatly: some teachers can increase student achievement by many grade levels in just one school year, and other teachers are far less effective. But our teacher evaluations do not reflect these differences. Instead, they lump almost every teacher into a “satisfactory” category, regardless of a teacher's impact on student achievement. This simplistic evaluation system does a disservice to us as professionals, since we do not have the tools to develop in the absence of meaningful feedback, and to our students, who deserve the best teachers possible.

Within this limited rating system, great teachers go unrecognized, ineffective teachers are largely ignored, and everyone else is left without specific information about how to improve. Indeed, many teachers consider evaluations useless: across all districts surveyed by The New Teacher Project, “only 42 percent of teachers agree that evaluation allows accurate assessment of performance and only 43 percent of teachers agree that evaluation helps teachers improve.”¹ In New York, teachers are evaluated twice a year at most, based on one administrator observation each time, and administrators are not required to provide much feedback.

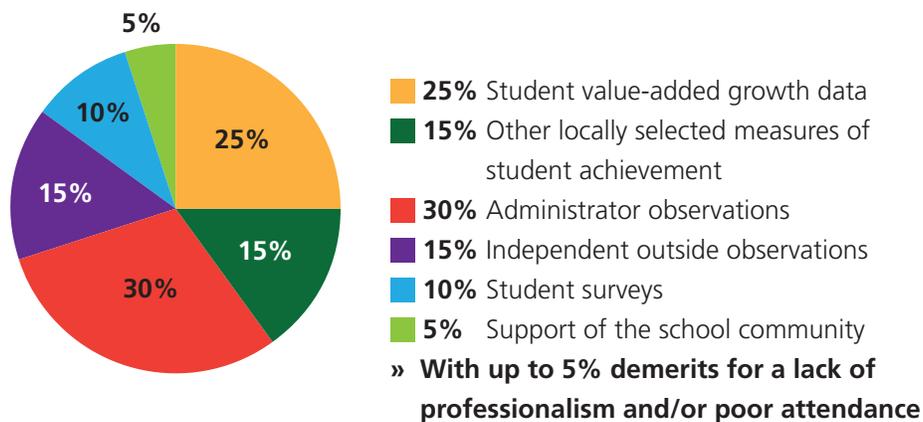
In 2010, New York passed a law to overhaul the teacher evaluation system before 2013. By law, student achievement will have to make up 40 percent of a teacher's yearly evaluation: 25 percent will be value-added data, or the amount of growth a teacher's students experience while in her classroom, and the other 15 percent will be another measure of student achievement, still left to be collectively bargained. Most of the details are yet to be finalized, but in the meantime, the New York City Department of Education and The New Teacher Project have collaborated on a pilot evaluation program that has been tested in a few city schools. Beyond the initial law, however, nothing is set in stone.

We believe the new system should be fair to teachers but also fair to students. Teachers deserve objective feedback and multiple observations to decrease bias. Students deserve classroom leaders who know their strengths and weaknesses and who are constantly improving. Of course, administrators, teachers and outside observers are all human, so an evaluation system will never be perfect, but we should not let that stop us from creating evaluations that are better suited to teacher and student needs.

Similarly, E4E's Teacher Layoff Policy Team released a set of recommendations in February 2011 about teacher layoffs, proposing an alternative to New York's current seniority-based system. They recommended that because we have such a weak teacher evaluation system, layoffs should happen on the basis of absenteeism, unsatisfactory ratings, and the Absent Teacher Reserve pool. These are stopgap recommendations, however, created in the absence of a strong evaluation system. Over the long term, we need a sustainable solution to evaluate teachers.

3. Our Recommendations

E4E's Proposed Evaluation System



Our proposed teacher evaluation system addresses what we believe are the major components of great teaching, providing checks and balances on different observers and addressing numerous aspects of great teaching. Based on these six components, teachers and their evaluators can cultivate a deep understanding of teachers' strengths and weaknesses and take actionable steps to improve their practice.

4. Measures of Student Achievement

"As well as we believe we might have executed a lesson, the true measure of success for teachers is ultimately how much our students have learned. Having meaningful metrics to gauge that transfer of knowledge empowers me as a teacher by giving me the feedback I need to grow in my career, and in turn, see my students reach their full potential."

—Jessie Callahan, first grade teacher

By law, the new evaluation system must include student achievement data as one measure of teacher effectiveness. Twenty-five percent of the evaluations will be based on value-added growth scores, and 15 percent will be based on other measures of student achievement. These other measures will be decided at a later time through collective bargaining.

Non-core subject areas, such as physical education, art, foreign languages, and technology, do not have corresponding state tests, so value-added scores do not apply to teachers in these subject areas. These teachers can still be held accountable for how much their students grow over the course of a year, however, and could still be evaluated on student growth data using other tools. Establishing beginning-of-the-year pre-tests and end-of-the-year post-tests in non-core

subject areas, for example, could standardize how student growth is measured. If tests are not available, evaluations could include one of two options. One possibility is that the other 60 percent of the evaluation system could be expanded proportionally to make up 100 percent, meaning that non-core subject area teachers would be evaluated solely through administrator observation, independent outside observations, student surveys, and support of the school community. One other option might be for teachers to sit down with their administrators at the beginning of the year and decide together on yearly goals, to be supported with an agreed-upon set of data.

5. Observations

We recommend that 45 percent of the evaluation system be based on observations by multiple observers. Only through observations—watching student behaviors and teacher actions—can we describe areas of strength and potential growth in each classroom. Without this component in an evaluation, it is impossible to provide teachers with meaningful feedback to improve their practice.

Done right, observations can cultivate a collaborative, team-oriented culture in every school. Unfortunately, under the current system, in many schools, evaluations are simply once-a-year intrusions by an administrator. Once-a-year observations do not accurately portray typical instruction in a classroom, and a wider scope of observations is fairer to teachers and more accurately represents their teaching practice. Introducing observation rubrics early in the year can help create a strong sense of shared language so that teachers can reflect on their own practice in relation to how they will be evaluated. Observations should be a welcomed, fluid, aspect of our everyday teaching by peers, outside observers, and administrators who share the same language about positive teacher actions and resulting student behaviors.

Prior to implementing an evaluation system that contains observations, a mandatory, standardized training program that teaches all observers how to conduct rubric-based observations and how to score these observations is essential. The training program should teach observers how to provide useful feedback based on their observations. Finally, the training should culminate with performance assessments to guarantee that all observers can accurately observe, score, and provide feedback. Without an effective training system in place observations will not provide useful feedback to teachers and will vary from school-to-school making them less valid.

a. PEER OBSERVATIONS

We recommend that peer evaluations should be encouraged, at a minimum of 3 per year, but they should not have any weight in a summative evaluation.

“As a classroom teacher, I want to be part of a school with an open-door philosophy. I want to be able to walk into a colleague’s room at any time and have any teacher do the same for me. The teachers at my school are my allies - I need their help and they need mine so that we all become the best teachers we can be for our students.”

—Michael Loeb, special education teacher

Rationale

Every teacher should be required to complete at least three observations of other teachers in their school over the course of the year. Peer observations will help teachers learn the rubrics that will be used in their own evaluations and will normalize the observation process: when every teacher in a school uses observation forms to observe peers, an observer in the back of the classroom is more common and less intimidating. Peer, administrator, and outside observers will all use the same evaluation rubric, so teachers and administrators will discuss performance using a shared language. By encouraging teachers to observe others, they will be able to provide helpful feedback for their colleagues, and grow as professionals themselves.

We believe it is important to observe our colleagues and provide feedback, but a peer teacher should not factor into a colleague's summative score that is used in personnel decisions. Summative evaluations will not include peer observation feedback; however, a teacher's completion of at least three peer evaluations should be considered in his score in the "support of school community" part of the final evaluation.

What it looks like

Teachers should be granted an extra class period three times throughout the year to complete an observation of a colleague. Teachers must request the observation period one week in advance and complete a formal observation feedback form within 48 hours to give to the teacher who was observed.

b. ADMINISTRATOR OBSERVATIONS

We recommend that principal observations account for 30 percent of our evaluation system.

"By giving clear feedback and establishing specific teacher goals to work on between observations the process becomes both collaborative and ongoing. When observations become a way to support teachers, rather than 'gotcha' moments, students, teachers, and administrators all win."

—Blake Unger-Dvorchik, middle school math teacher

Rationale

Principals and assistant principals are the instructional and administrative leaders in a school. As in any other profession, the leadership team at a school should play a major role in evaluating and guiding the professional development of their staff, so that they can provide meaningful feedback to support school-wide development. Prior to observing teachers, administrators should receive extensive training in how to plan, administer, and debrief observations. The administrator evaluation should use the same rubric that peers use to maintain consistency and encourage communication about areas where a teacher wants further development.

What it looks like

Administrators should evaluate each teacher three times a year. The evaluations will fall in the beginning, middle, and end of the year, and the summative evaluation score will be a combination of all three evaluations. We suggest that the first

observation should be announced, with a pre- and post-observation conference, while the second and third evaluations should be unannounced with only a post-observation conference. The post-observation conferences should take place within one week of the observed lesson. As teachers, we understand the value of administrators not announcing their observations; for feedback to be helpful, it needs to be generated from a teacher's typical, day-to-day pedagogy. Additionally, we suggest that if teachers consent, observers videotape the lessons they observe so they can later discuss the lesson with teachers and point out specific teacher actions, allowing teachers to get immediate feedback.

c. OUTSIDE MASTER OBSERVERS

We recommend that “Outside Master Observer” evaluations account for 15 percent of the evaluation system.

“As a classroom teacher and a graduate student supervisor, I’ve been both the observed and observer. I know that a fresh, experienced pair of eyes from an outside observer can reveal how we’re teaching in the moment and possibilities for our practice in the future.”

—Barbara Gsovski, early childhood teacher.

Rationale

Many teachers discount or even fear observation, assuming their administrators lack either the experience or content knowledge to assess them fairly and accurately. Although administrators should still be able to identify teachers' strengths and areas of improvement and play a major role in the professional development of teachers, it is important to provide a check on the accuracy and consistency of teacher evaluations across a district.

To this end, we believe that a certified outside master observer should observe each teacher twice a year. Master observers should be former teachers within the district with at least six years of teaching experience. Once hired, master observers would only observe teachers in an area that matches their teaching experience (early elementary, upper elementary, middle school subject area, high school subject area).² Master observers will also provide meaningful feedback in post-observation conferences that can help teachers grow and improve their practice.

Because outside observers will have extensive training to identify where a teacher falls within an observation rubric, schools across the district will norm expectations for how effective teachers teach—and build a foundation for future teacher-led professional development from those great teachers.

What it looks like

The master observer will observe the teacher twice each school year. The first observation will be announced to give the teacher a chance to meet the observer prior to the observation. The teacher and observer will set goals that they can discuss after the second observation later in the year. Later in the year, when the second observation occurs, the teacher will already have a working relationship with the observer and therefore will not need an announced visit. After the observations, rubric scores will be posted in a secure online location at least 48 hours prior to the post-observation conference.

6. Rubrics

“Just as students need to know our expectations in order to meet the goals we set, teachers need clearly defined benchmarks for how to improve their practice. By norming around clear, thoughtful and comprehensive rubrics delineating the proven habits of good teaching, teachers can identify their strengths and weaknesses and take steps to improve their instruction.”

—Grace Snodgrass, middle school ELA teacher

To ensure fair, consistent evaluations, teachers and administrators must be trained to use common rubrics before observations begin. An effective instructional rubric used for observation gives a comprehensive assessment of the “here and now” of how students and teachers are interacting during a class period. Ideally, an outsider would be able to reconstruct what happened in the classroom at that time based on the rubric notes from the observation.

Observations should focus on three main criteria:

1. Observable teacher behaviors that have been demonstrated to impact student learning. For example, open-ended questions are more effective at improving student learning than closed questions.
2. Student behaviors in response to specific teacher behaviors and overall student engagement.
3. Teacher language that is specific and appropriate to the grade level and content according to taxonomy, such as Bloom’s. For example, kindergarten teachers should use different language than high school biology teachers.

Teachers often believe that there is a checklist of behaviors that an observer looks for and that we “pass or fail.” Instead, the observation process should be collaborative, using rubrics that teachers understand and have seen ahead of time, so that they are invested in the process and can use feedback to improve. In addition to their use in observations, rubrics will be helpful for teachers to use for their own personal development in the classroom throughout the year.

Different sets of rubrics will be needed to assess different types of practice, because teachers meet the needs of kindergartners and high school students quite differently. Currently, some rubrics have been developed that have begun to meet that need. Existing rubrics include the IMPACT rubrics for special education and high school subject areas, the CLASS rubric for Early Elementary grades, the PLATO for English Language Arts, and the MQI for mathematics are some examples. In addition, observers should know about special education accommodations happening in a classroom so they can determine how well a teacher is implementing them. We recommend that teachers be included in the committees that select rubrics for each grade level and subject.

7. Student Survey Data

We recommend that 10 percent of the evaluation be based on student survey data.

“For a system that aims to serve students, young people’s interests are far too often pushed aside. Students’ voices should be at the forefront of the education debate today, especially when it comes to determining the effectiveness of their teacher.”

—Sarah Tierney, fifth grade teacher

Rationale

The presence of effective teachers and supportive classroom environments can be determined, in part, by the perceptions of the students that interact with them, and student survey data should be included in evaluations. Administrators might, at best, see five percent of the lessons a teacher delivers each year, students see virtually 100 percent and can provide valuable input on the teacher’s entire body of work for the year. Student surveys offer teachers immediate and qualitative feedback, recognize the importance of student voice, and are easy to implement to direct future instruction. A recent MET Project study showed that student survey data was strongly correlated with value-added student growth data.³ In the study, teachers with strong value-added scores also tended to receive high praise from students, and vice versa. Surveys are possible even among early elementary students, who can take the surveys orally. The survey questions also reflect the observation rubrics, meaning that student feedback can combine with classroom observations and give an even more accurate picture of ongoing teacher behaviors. In isolated cases, students could skew their responses to retaliate against teachers or give high marks to teachers who they like, regardless of whether those teachers are helping them learn, but neither of these dynamics appeared in the MET study, and there are ways to identify bad faith responses. However, because data on the correlation between student perceptions and teacher effectiveness is in a nascent stage, we believe that 10 percent is an appropriate weight for this category.

What it looks like

The MET Project’s age-appropriate surveys asked students to what extent they agreed with a series of age-appropriate statements that fell into seven categories based on teachers’ ability to care, control, clarify, challenge, captivate, confer, and consolidate in the classroom. For example, some students were asked to respond to the following statement: “If I don’t understand something, my teacher explains it another way.” Students indicated their level of agreement with each statement and responded anonymously. Given the current success of the MET Project’s surveys, an identical or similar style of survey would be suitable. Students indicated their level of agreement with each statement and responded anonymously. Given the current success of the MET Project’s surveys, an identical or similar style of survey would be suitable.

8. Support of School Community

We recommend that 5 percent of the evaluation system be based on teachers' support of the school community as measured in a rubric.

“Our work is far from over when the final bell rings at the end of the day. From providing tutoring to struggling students, to coaching teams and leading after-school clubs, many teachers take on additional roles as the pillars of the school community. Teachers should be recognized for the work that they do to create the positive, nurturing, inclusive school environment that students need.”

—Tori Furstenau, middle school humanities teacher

Rationale

Beyond classroom observations and student achievement data, evaluations should account for the less tangible aspects of a teacher's contributions to a school. A teacher may score well on her classroom observations, for example, but make little contact with her students' families. On the flip side, classroom observations and student achievement data would not account for a teacher's highly successful after school program, though the program may contribute strongly to building a positive school culture. Strengthening the broader school community can contribute to increased student learning in many hard-to-quantify ways, and such contributions should factor into the evaluation system. Because measurement of this area is subjective and “involvement in school community” is not required of teachers by contract, this portion of the evaluation should not account for more than five percent.

What it looks like

In the process of designing our evaluation system, we looked at several models in use around the country. The “Commitment to School Community” category of Washington D.C.'s IMPACT model was particularly useful in designing our own criteria for Support of School Community.⁴ The most effective way to gauge a teacher's contribution to school community is to allow administrators to judge their teachers based on a district-wide rubric that lays out specific expectations for teacher involvement. Administrators are the ideal evaluator in this situation because they have a holistic view of a teacher's engagement with the school. The following five components should be included in the rubric:

- Support of school initiatives
- Support of Special Education and English Language Learner programs
- Effective use of data
- Collaboration with families
- Collaboration with colleagues.

These components will be scored on a four-point rubric and averaged to create a teacher's Support of School Community score.

9. Professionalism and Attendance

We recommend that the evaluation system require a minimum standard of professionalism and attendance. If not met, teachers could lose up to five percent from their evaluation score.

“Teachers are professionals: we work hard and we take our careers seriously. High standards for attendance and workplace behavior should be a baseline expectation for all teachers so that we can take our profession forward.”

—Abby Terrell, sixth grade special education teacher

Rationale

One of the foremost goals of an evaluation system is to ensure a sense of professionalism. Educators are professionals and should conduct themselves according to high standards, and evaluations can help maintain that sense of professionalism. As teachers, we see these standards as basic expectations of our work, and not as an additional area of assessment. Therefore, points should not be awarded for professionalism and attendance, but rather a failure to meet these expectations should result in a deduction of points from the overall score.

What it looks like

Similar to the Support of School Community category, professionalism and attendance should be assessed by a school's administration, with requirements from the district contract as a measure. If teachers are absent more than the allowed number of sick days, for example, they should lose points on the evaluation.⁵

10. Conclusion

Our current evaluation system is a formality, a bureaucratic process that tells teachers and administrators almost nothing about how to improve classroom effectiveness. By law, it must change to incorporate student achievement data by 2013, but changes to it must include the input of classroom teachers.

Value-added data and other measures of teacher impact on student academic growth are imperfect, but they are important to include as one component in teacher evaluations so that teachers can be held accountable on their ability to give students a great education. In the state's new system, value added growth data will make up 40 percent of the evaluations, with 25 percent coming from state tests and 15 percent coming from another measure. Although the Regents recently decided that state tests could make up all 40 percent, we recommend that districts use different tests alongside New York State tests. Ideally, the tests would be classroom-based and show student growth over the course of one year. We look forward to being a part of the continued conversation about what the other 60 percent of the evaluations should look like.

After many months of research and debate, we recommend this framework because it will give teachers information about their own strengths and weaknesses in the classroom and help them continue to develop. To cut down on observer bias, multiple people should observe teachers before they receive a summative evaluation score. At the same time, observation rubrics should become a part of the fabric of a school: in addition to principals and outside master observers, teachers should use rubrics while observing peers. When teachers and administrators use the same language to talk about what

happens in a classroom, teachers are much more likely to increase their effectiveness—and students are much more likely to make learning gains.

A better system will require work on everyone's part; figuring out the details and implementing observations in districts across the state will be complicated. But the work will be worth it to professionalize teaching and make sure that students have reflective, ever-improving teachers.

11. Process

On November 11, 2010, fifteen educators convened for the first time to begin a five-month research and proposal process. They represent a wide range of teaching experience in subject and grade levels across all New York City boroughs, and met to form Educators 4 Excellence's Teacher Evaluation Policy Team. The Policy Team was given the task of devising an ideal yet practical teacher evaluation system that would reflect the variation of teacher effectiveness throughout the district and provide teachers with targeted feedback that would encourage professional growth.

The process began with a thorough review of city and state teacher evaluation systems implemented across the country, as well as relevant teacher effectiveness research. After reviewing these evaluation systems and researching which metrics are linked with teacher effectiveness, the policy team analyzed each system's strengths and weaknesses. To include the voices of E4E's broader membership, the policy team conducted both in-person and online surveys for ideas and suggestions. The results from these surveys were incorporated into the final set of recommendations as outlined in this paper.

12. What is E4E?

***Educators 4 Excellence** is an organization of current and former education professionals who seek to provide an independent voice in the education policy debate—a voice that elevates the profession and drives positive student outcomes. Launched in March 2010 by two NYC teachers, Evan Stone and Sydney Morris, E4E represents over 2,500 educators who are united around the [E4E Declaration of Teachers' Principles and Beliefs](#). E4E members work to become informed about education policy, join a growing network of like-minded teachers, and take action on behalf of their students.*

13. The E4E Teacher Evaluation Policy Team

Josh Adland teaches middle school in Harlem.

David Braslow taught high school math in Harlem.

Ruben Brosbe teaches third grade in the Bronx.

Jessica Callahan taught first grade in Brooklyn.

Victoria Furstenau teaches sixth grade humanities in Brooklyn.

Barbara Gsovski is a remediation specialist in Harlem.

Michael Loeb teaches math, ELA, and social studies to middle school students with special needs in the Bronx.

Jonathan Shaw teaches sixth grade in the Bronx.

Grace Snodgrass teaches sixth, seventh, and eighth grade ELA in the Bronx.

Abby Terrell teaches sixth grade special education in Manhattan.

Sarah Tierney teaches fifth grade ELA and social studies in the Bronx.

Blake Unger Dvorchik teaches seventh grade mathematics and is his school's data specialist in the Bronx.

Craig Wallace taught high school math in Washington DC.

Iyasha Williams teaches high school science in the Bronx.

Appendix: Charts and Rubrics

CHART: OUTSIDE MASTER OBSERVER EXPERTISE AREAS

- a. Early education (pre-kindergarten through second grade)
- b. Upper elementary (third grade through fifth grade)
- c. Middle school based on subject areas (social studies, science, language arts, mathematics)
- d. High school based on subject areas (social studies, science, language arts, mathematics)
- e. Special education in classrooms where applicable.
- f. Where possible, there would alignment between observers and teachers in the areas of the arts, physical education, foreign language, etc.

SCHEDULE OF OBSERVATION

Observer	Date Range	Pre/Post conference
Administrator (announced)	First day of school through October	Pre and post conference
Outside Observer (announced)	November through December	Pre and post conference
Administrator	January through February	Post conference only
Outside Observer	March through April	Post conference only
Administrator	May through June	Post conference only

EXAMPLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY RUBRIC

Support of School Initiatives (e.g. instructional initiatives from the school's Comprehensive Education Plan and logistical initiatives such as dress code and fire drills.)

1—Needs Improvement	2—Developing	3—Effective	4—Exemplary
Does not support school-wide instructional or logistical initiatives.	Provides partial or passive support of school-wide instructional and logistical initiatives.	Integrates instructional and logistical initiatives fully into their teaching practice.	Vocally supports instructional and logistical initiatives, and/or helps to create or refine them, as well as fully implementing them in their teaching practice.

Rationale for rating:

Data that support the rating:

Effective Use of Data

1—Needs Improvement	2—Developing	3—Effective	4—Exemplary
Does not use student work to inform instruction, and/or grading is severely out of date.	Clearly articulates students' strengths and weaknesses but does not consistently use them to inform instruction.	Uses students' performance on summative assessments (tests and projects) to regularly inform instruction.	Uses students' performance on formative (classwork, exit slips) and summative (tests and projects) assessments to inform instruction on a daily basis.

Rationale for rating:

Data that support the rating:

Collaboration with Families

1—Needs Improvement	2—Developing	3—Effective	4—Exemplary
Rarely interacts with families except on mandated parent-teacher conference dates.	Has monthly conversations with families about students' behavioral and academic progress.	Has frequent conversations with families about students' academic progress, including strengths, weaknesses, and goal setting.	Includes families in the learning process. Creates an atmosphere where families know how to provide additional support for students at home.

Rationale for rating:

Data that support the rating:

Collaboration with Colleagues

1—Needs Improvement	2—Developing	3—Effective	4—Exemplary
Does not attend meetings or common planning time.	Participates minimally in meetings and common planning time.	Actively participates in meetings and consistently plans with other teachers to inform instruction (when applicable).	Actively participates in meetings and consistently plans with other teachers to inform instruction (when applicable). Works with teachers across disciplines to support struggling students and challenge excelling students.

Rationale for rating:

Data that support the rating:

Averaged Score: _____

ALTERNATE SUPPORT OF SCHOOL COMMUNITY RUBRIC

Support of School Community

1. Support of School Initiatives

- a. Teacher demonstrates clear evidence of his/her supporting school-wide instructional initiatives clearly defined in the school's Comprehensive Education Plan.
- b. Supports logistical initiatives based on the school leadership's targets for improvement, e.g. dress code, hallway transitions, assemblies and fire drills.

2. Support of Special Education and English Language Learner Programs

- a. If the teacher does not interact with these populations, either take it out of the weighting or expand one of the other criteria.
- b. IEP compliance, including the provision of special accommodations
- c. Collaborates with and shares information/data with Special Ed/ELL teachers/providers/social workers.

3. Effective Use of Data

- a. Demonstrates actionable understanding of students' current strengths and weaknesses based on current student work.
- b. Maintenance of up to date records (attendance, grades).

4. Collaboration with Families

- a. Demonstrates active effort to engage students' families.
- b. Keeps families abreast of students' progress, behavior and grades.

5. Collaboration with Colleagues

- a. Actively attends meetings.
- b. Effectively communicates with colleagues to create, implement and refine best instructional practices.
- c. Provides support for students by discussing them in an inter-curricular manner.

Endnotes

- ¹ Daniel Weisberg et al., "The Widget Effect," The New Teacher Project, 2009, available at <http://widgeteffect.org/downloads/TheWidgetEffect.pdf>.
- ² Although we believe using trained outside master observers would be far better for teachers than relying on peers or administrators only, we realize they may be cost-prohibitive. One less costly alternative would be to hire a smaller number of outside observers to spot-check administrator observations as a form of inter-rater reliability. Peer observations could be a substitute but would likely result in evaluation inflation, because most teachers are reluctant to give their peers low ratings. We strongly recommend observations from someone beyond the administrator, however, whether they are from a department chair, a grade leader, or an assistant principal.
- ³ Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, "Learning about Teaching: Initial Findings from the Measures of Effective Teaching Project," Dec. 2010, available at <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/college-ready-education/Documents/preliminary-findings-research-paper.pdf>.
- ⁴ DC Public Schools IMPACT Guidebooks, Group 1: General Education Teachers with Individual Student Value Added Data, p.38-43. Available at [www.dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/In+the+Classroom/Ensuring+Teacher+Success/IMPACT+\(Performance+Assessment\)/IMPACT+Guidebooks](http://www.dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/In+the+Classroom/Ensuring+Teacher+Success/IMPACT+(Performance+Assessment)/IMPACT+Guidebooks)
- ⁵ Taking another cue from Washington, DC's IMPACT model, teachers should be evaluated on these standards twice a year on a three-point scale (meets standard, slightly below standard, or significantly below standard). The twice-yearly evaluations should then be averaged to produce a summative evaluation at year's end. A teacher meeting standards in all categories would have no points deducted from their overall score, whereas a teacher with all or part of their summative Professionalism and Attendance evaluation not meeting standards would have points deducted from their overall evaluation.