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Personnel Evaluation: Get the Answers

1. Why are we changing the way we evaluate teachers?

The Georgia Department of Education last developed and implemented a statewide teacher evaluation system, the Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP), in 1989. Advances in research on teacher effectiveness and data quality improvements now enable educators to more accurately identify practices that positively affect student achievement.

2. How will the new evaluation system be different?

The current evaluation system relies primarily on classroom observations of teacher practice. The new evaluation system will still include observations, but also will include other measures of performance, both quantitative and qualitative, for a more comprehensive assessment of performance.

3. What measures of performance will be included in the new evaluation system?

The Teacher Effectiveness Measure is based on four inputs:

Qualitative (Rubrics-based) Evaluation

30% Core
60% Non-Core

Class-level Value-Added/Growth Score

50% Core
0% Non-Core

Student Achievement Gap Reduction

10% Core
0% Non-Core

Other Quantitative Measures

(such as parent and student surveys)
10% Core
40% Non-Core

4. How can student achievement results be used to evaluate a teacher's performance?

There are numerous statistical models currently being used to tie student achievement results to specific teachers, grade levels, departments and/or schools. Some use state accountability tests, such as the CRCT. Others use locally developed assessments.

5. State accountability tests are most often associated with core academic classes. How can student achievement results be used for non-core teachers, such as art, music and physical education?

Growth models measure student achievement by calculating the difference between pretest and posttest scores. These assessments do not necessarily have to be state accountability tests, but could be standards-based assessments already used by the local school system.

6. What is the difference between "growth model" and "value-added"?

These terms are sometimes used interchangeably depending on the source, but there is a difference. Both are growth models used to determine the influence of schools and/or teachers on student learning.

Growth Model - An estimate of a student's learning that is derived from the difference, gain or growth between an earlier assessment score and a later assessment score. Growth models are most commonly applied to pretest and post-test data or two years of annual test data.

Value-Added - An estimate of a teacher's or school's influence on student learning that is derived from the difference between predicted assessment scores and actual assessment scores. Individual student scores are statistically predicted based on the student's score on a prior assessment. More sophisticated value-added measures include demographic or other variables as additional prediction factors.

7. Will teacher evaluation be tied to compensation?

Yes. Georgia will eventually move to a compensation structure that more accurately reflects teacher performance. Currently, teachers are compensated based on experience and degrees earned. Experience and degrees can, but don't necessarily, affect performance. The first step must be to implement an evaluation system that differentiates levels of performance.

8. Who is involved in the development of the new evaluation system for teachers?

The Georgia Department of Education has partnered with the 26 school districts involved in Georgia's Race-to-the-Top initiatives to develop, pilot and implement the new evaluation system for teachers. From these 26 school districts, three steering committees and been established to: (1) select a value-added/growth model; (2) refine CLASS and Leader Keys, and (3) determine other appropriate quantitative measures of performance.

9. What is the time line for implementing the new evaluation system?

Refinement of CLASS Keys will continue through October 2011. Training will take place from October through December. The 26 partner districts will pilot CLASS Keys from January through May, 2012. Remaining Georgia school districts will be phased in through 2015.

10. What is the time line for tying compensation to the new evaluation system?

The State Board of Education will adopt a new performance-based state salary schedule for teachers and leaders by 2013, and plans to bring all districts on board by 2015-2016.

11. Will a teacher currently employed by a public school system in Georgia have the opportunity to opt out of the new evaluation system?

The goals for a new evaluation system are the same for all teachers regardless of experience, so the new evaluation system will be applied to all teachers. That said, it is our understanding that current teachers will have the opportunity to opt out of a pay for performance system that would tie evaluation to compensation.

12. Will the new evaluation system take into account that some teachers work at more challenging schools in terms of socioeconomics and other factors?

Many value-added growth models include demographic and other variables to predict student achievement. A benefit of using a value-added model is that it measures student achievement **growth** over time. Establishing an absolute score for all schools to achieve would not be appropriate for all schools.

13. Will the new evaluation system result in more work for administrators and teachers?

Quality performance evaluations take a considerable amount of time for both teachers and administrators. The new evaluation process will be more efficient than previous evaluation models and performance data may be collected either electronically or on paper forms. The new evaluation system will provide for a more comprehensive performance evaluation without reducing instructional or planning time.

14. How will Georgia ensure the new evaluation system is fair to all employees?

Teachers and leaders have been involved and will continue to be involved in the development process. This input will continue through the development and pilot processes. Additionally, the measurement systems will be rigorously tested to ensure they are valid, reliable, and fair.



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