

learning and leading

empowering effective educators through teacher evaluation and focused instruction

A message from MPS and MFT

After the conclusion of another school year, we wanted to take a moment to thank you – for your hard work this year and for everything you do to create a brighter future for our students.

Some of the best teachers in the country work right here in Minneapolis. We see it firsthand whenever we visit our schools. Watching a great teacher at work is always a powerful reminder that nothing matters more than what happens in our classrooms. In fact, decades of research and our experiences have shown that great teaching has a dramatic impact on students that lasts long into adulthood.

Put simply, you are the foundation of our success. When you succeed, our students succeed. If we want all our students to leave MPS on track for college or a successful career, we need to focus on a single goal: great learning in every classroom, for every student, every day. MPS and MFT are committed to making that a top priority next year and in the years to come.

What does a focus on great teaching and learning mean? First and foremost, it means doing everything we can to help you do your best work. We need to set clear, high expectations for all of us, but we also need to develop the feedback and support structures to meet

these expectations. This can only happen in an environment of mutual trust and respect, so we will continue working together to build that kind of culture in every school.

Focusing on great teaching and learning also means removing any barriers that keep you from focusing on your top priority: helping your students learn. MPS and MFT will continue working together to scale back or eliminate initiatives that are not advancing student achievement, so that you can spend all of your time on what matters most.

We understand that more work needs to be done to improve and streamline district-wide processes and systems. Our goal is to significantly improve the school environment to ensure that MPS is a great place to learn and work. We understand that system effectiveness is integral to student success and you have our commitment to keeping this as a priority moving forward. We are all responsible for improving outcomes for our students and together we need to acknowledge and act on our system-wide challenges and opportunities.

Great learning also depends on great school leadership. We need to provide training and support that deepens the quality of instructional leadership across the school district.

We have already made some strides in these areas through our work to build a better teacher evaluation system. While we are not done designing the system, this year many teachers, principals and leaders from across MPS and MFT worked together to design a system that works toward continuous improvement of teaching, learning and leadership to ensure student success in an ever-changing and complex world. We have improved this system throughout the year based on feedback from over 900 teachers who participated in an observation this year, as well as from principals. We are now ready to introduce the system district-wide this fall.

This new evaluation system is a crucial step in MPS' commitment to help you reach your full potential – so you can help even more students reach theirs. Be on the lookout for more details in the coming months. Your feedback will continue to be essential as we work to improve the new system next year and beyond.

Thank you again for your hard work this year. Have a relaxing and refreshing summer!

Sincerely,

Bernadeia H. Johnson, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Lynn Nordgren
President, MFT 59

Time to Teach, Time to Learn: Update on Workload Management

Background: The Time to Teach, Time to Learn Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was included as part of the teacher contract negotiations agreed to in the spring of 2012. This agreement outlines the steps that MPS will take to address workload issues in the coming year.

Update: A steering committee has been formed to oversee the implementation of this MOA and an initial meeting was held on May 29. Committee members include teachers, principals, MPS staff and MFT representatives.



Over the summer of 2012, work will be primarily focused on data gathering and analysis, including teacher and principal focus groups. In the fall of 2012, a series of collaborative meetings will be held with a wide range of stakeholders to develop options and make recommendations to the superintendent for changes MPS can make to positively impact workload issues. Any changes that are adopted will be implemented starting in the second semester of the 2012-13 school year.

Questions about summer focus groups?

Teachers should contact Nate Gunderson: NGunderson@mft59.org
Principals should contact Zoe Thiel: Zoe.Thiel@mpls.k12.mn.us

Focused Instruction

Focused instruction, which is sometimes called aligned or managed instruction, is an instructional process that reflects what we know to be good teaching and learning. It aligns what we teach with how we teach and what we assess in a continuous cycle. Focused instruction remains a top priority of MPS and is on track moving forward. The most effective teachers in Minneapolis Public Schools already engage in focused instruction every day, and the impact on student learning is undeniable.

Our work is to develop the necessary tools and systems for focused instruction to become standard practice in every classroom. MPS is working in close collaboration with teachers, school leaders, students and families to build the infrastructure needed to support focused instruction.

Curriculum guides

Online curriculum guides for every course will establish clear, consistent expectations for the knowledge and skills students will have at the end of a given course. Curriculum guides are not intended to be a script or supplant teachers' expertise and professional judgment. The guides will state clearly what should be taught, giving teachers more time to develop strategies for helping students uncover knowledge and skills in unique and rich ways.

Benchmark assessments

Common benchmark assessments aligned to the teaching and learning happening in classrooms will focus on each unit's long-term learning targets and are designed

to provide quick feedback. Students will demonstrate knowledge and skills in multiple ways, such as selected response, constructed response and performance tasks. A committee of principals, teachers and other staff will evaluate the school district's assessment portfolio in the spring of 2012 to determine whether some required assessments will be discontinued or utilized within focused instruction.

Common interventions

MPS literacy and math content teams will endorse specific intervention strategies and programs that have proven to be effective. Providing effective strategies and accessible interventions will help teachers determine what should be done when students face specific learning challenges. Developing common interventions will positively impact student learning and decrease the use of ineffective interventions.

Targeted professional development

Over the next year, we will be working to align the Standards of Effective Instruction with elements of focused instruction. When teachers need support in an area of their professional practice, now they will be able to access the appropriate resources or professional development opportunities. Professional development will be coherent and focused on the areas of greatest need: where data reveals gaps in students' mastery of learning targets.

Technology Supporting

Educator Effectiveness

New student data system

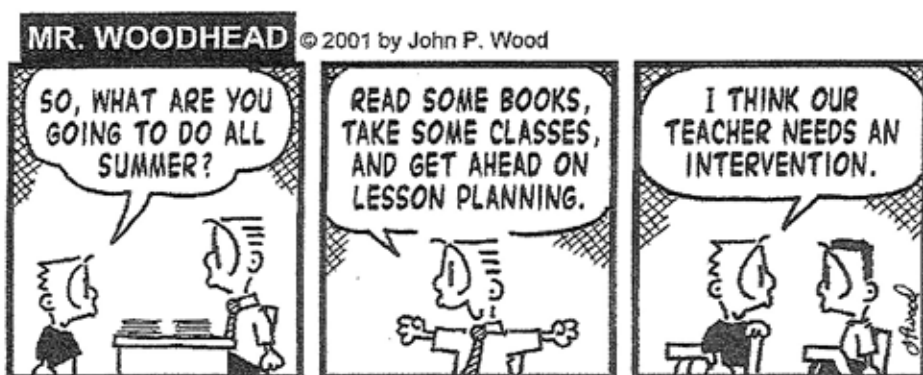
In summer 2012, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) website will be replaced by a new, updated system called Classroom for Success, which will provide comprehensive student data and information in a clear format. Classroom for Success will offer dramatically simplified data entry, enhanced reports and data display, continuously updated data dashboards to help monitor key information and a modernized look and feel.

eCompass for teacher evaluation

eCompass, the IT system currently used for professional development plans, transcripts and course registration, will be used to facilitate the teacher observation process starting in the fall of 2012. Teachers and principals will receive training in August on using eCompass for observations.

eCompass will be updated over the summer to allow users to login with their MPS username and password. Course creation will also be streamlined and better coordinated. We are excited to move from a paper-based observation system to this electronic system.

A Little Light Reading...



John P. Wood is a social studies teacher at Lake Harriet - Upper Campus.



Details: teacher observations

Review of Multiple Measures

MPS is developing a multiple measure model. No single measure can tell the full story about a teacher's performance, so schools should consider all the information at their disposal.

Incorporating multiple measures into the evaluation system produces a **fairer, more accurate understanding** of a teacher's impact on student learning and provides a **foundational understanding** of practice that supports teacher growth and development.

MPS will begin observing all classroom teachers in the fall of 2012 with the intent to give teachers more useful feedback on performance than ever before. We are grateful to the more than 900 teachers who collaborated with us in developing and implementing the new observation model throughout the 2011-12 school year. With their help, we feel confident that our comprehensive model can be used on a consistent basis throughout the school district.

We commend the more than 260 principals, assistant principals, coaches, teachers, mentors and instructional leaders who spent a great deal of time mastering the observation process. All certified observers were required to participate in a minimum of four days of training with rigorous ongoing pro-

fessional development. They also were required to pass a test before earning certification.

The observation model accomplishes several things:

- Provides numerous opportunities for teachers to participate in dialogue about practice
- Offers both consistency of observers and variety of observers
- Provides consistency across MPS
- Allows observers to provide frequent, concrete feedback to teachers about their performance against a clear, detailed performance rubric
- Informs professional development needs
- Is part of the multiple measures used in teachers' annual overall evaluation

MPS' model will use three observation types...

1 Full Observation

- **Every classroom teacher will have one full observation in 2012-13.** School administrators will perform full observations.
- 30-40 minute pre-conference, full lesson observation on the full rubric, 30-60 minute post-conference
- Gives teachers a broad overview of their practice and allows MPS to better understand areas of excellence and areas for further development district-wide

2 Focused Observation

- **Every classroom teacher will have one focused observation in 2012-13.** *Secondary observers** will perform focused observations.
- 10-30 minute pre-conference, full lesson observation on a focused area of the rubric selected by the teacher, 20-40 minute post-conference
- Gives teachers an opportunity to dive deep into a very specific part of the rubric of their choice

3 Short Observation

- **Every classroom teacher will have three short observations in 2012-13.** School administrators will perform two short observations & secondary observers will perform one short observation.
- 15-20 minute walk-through observation, 10-20 minute post-conference; these observations are unannounced
- Gives teachers quick and timely feedback for implementation

*Secondary observers are observers who are not responsible for a teacher's evaluation. Secondary observers must be Standard of Effective Instruction certified. The following individuals are considered secondary observers: teachers who become certified, professional assistance and review mentors, instructional specialists, instructional leaders and school district program facilitators who are certified.

If you are a teacher who is interested in becoming a secondary observer, please contact Elise Maxwell at Elise.Maxwell@mpls.k12.mn.us or 612.668.0179.



Observation vs. Evaluation

Observation: Collecting evidence of a teacher's instructional practice for purposes of continuous growth and development.

Evaluation: Providing a summative report based on multiple measures.

Details: new teacher evaluation measures

Based on feedback from the Teacher Evaluation Think Tank and Advisory Group, as well as state law requirements, MPS will pilot two new teacher evaluation measures in 2012-13. These measures are **value-added reports** for teachers in tested grades and subjects and **student surveys**. Along with observations, these measures will provide various forms of feedback to help support and develop teacher practice. During the 2012-13 pilot year, only teachers will be able to see their individual value-added and student survey reports.

Value-Added Reports

“Value-added” refers to statistical efforts to isolate the impact of a teacher on his or her students’ achievement by controlling for variables outside of the control of the teacher. Value-added reports adjust for each student’s starting point coming into the class and compare each student’s performance at the end of the year to that of other MPS students with similar prior test scores and demographics. When a teacher’s students outperform other students who have similar prior achievement, characteristics and classmates, it constitutes positive student growth or value-added.

MPS is partnering with the University of Wisconsin’s Value-Added Research Center (VARC), which is nationally recognized in the field of value-added measurement. Our Research, Evaluation and Assessment Department is working with VARC to refine the MPS model and to disseminate value-added reports for schools and for individual teachers.

In the fall of 2012, MPS will provide individual value-added reports for teachers of students in grades and subjects that use MCA-II, NWEA’s MAP and/or MPS early childhood assessments. These reports will be based on student learning for the 2011-12 school year. For 2012-13, classroom-level value-added data will only be shared with individual teachers. Administrators will have access to school-level results but will not be able to see individual teacher results.

The teacher evaluation team will provide site-based professional development on value-added modeling and how to use school-level and teacher-level value-added reports to support growth and development.



Student Surveys

Student surveys allow students to share their experiences of classroom life and teacher practice. Surveys provide data that can drive reflection, professional development and growth at the teacher and school level.

Starting in the fall of 2012, MPS will partner with the Tripod Project to survey students about teaching effectiveness. Tripod was founded a decade ago by Dr. Ronald Ferguson of Harvard University and is a research-based, classroom-level data collection, analysis and reporting system that measures classroom effectiveness. Tripod student survey assessments are designed to capture key dimensions of classroom life and teaching practice as students experience them, firsthand in real time.

MPS will survey students in the winter and spring of 2012-13 and will provide the classroom-level reports directly to teachers only. Administrators will have access to school-level student survey results but will not be able to see individual teacher results.

Additional information and information sessions about student surveys will be provided in the fall of 2012.



More details? Visit the MPS website at <http://staff.mpls.k12.mn.us/Pages/TeacherEvaluationSystem.aspx>

Professional Development Opportunities

Summer Standards of Effective Instruction and Focused Instruction Professional Development

The below sessions are directly related to the Standards of Effective Instruction (SOEI) and focused instruction (FI). Additional related sessions can be found on eCompass.

Focused Instruction

This session is to gain an understanding of the focused instruction system. Teachers will learn to use the curriculum guides and benchmark assessments, learn how to access these materials electronically and have time to collaboratively plan.

Who: K, 3, 6, 9; PE K-8; Fine Arts K, 3, 6, 9; and other teachers and administrators who work with these grade levels.

Location: North High School

Select a session:

Session 2: August 6 & 7

Time: 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Standards of Effective Instruction (SOEI) 101

This session will explore the revised forms and SOEI rubric including the domains, indicators and elements. Teachers will discuss the process of formal observations, what one should expect and how to prepare.

Who: Interested teachers

Location: North High School

Select a date: August 8, 9, 10

Time: 8:30 -11:30 a.m. or 12:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Standards of Effective Instruction (SOEI) Certification Training for New Observers

This session will train new observers on the SOEI for certification.

Who: New administrators, instructional specialists, instructional leaders, PAR mentors, secondary observers

Location: TBD

Select a session:

Session 1: June 21, 22, 28 & 29

Session 2: July 16, 17, 18 & 19

Session 3: August 27, 28, 29, 30

Time: 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Standards of Effective Instruction (SOEI) Follow-Up Evidence/Accuracy Training

This session will provide additional support for observers who are not yet certified or conditionally certified in evidence and/or accuracy.

Who: Observers who went through the SOEI certification and are not yet certified or conditionally certified in evidence and/or accuracy

Location: TBD

Select a date: June 28, 29; July 18, 19

Time: 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. or 12:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Standards of Effective Instruction (SOEI) & IT Component of SOEI

This session is for administrators to receive follow-up training. Administrators will also learn about the teacher evaluation system and how to utilize the IT component for observations.

Who: Administrators

Location: Davis Center

Select a session: *Session 1:* August 8 & 9

Time: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Classroom for Success & Standards of Effective Instruction (SOEI) Systems

These sessions will prepare educators to effectively utilize the Classroom for Success system. Educators will also learn about the teacher evaluation system and how to utilize the IT component for observations.

Who: All site-based educators

Location: TBD

Select a date: August 15, 16, 21, 22, 23

Time: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Focused Instruction Make-Up Session

This session is to gain an understanding of the focused instruction system. Teachers will learn to use the curriculum guides and benchmark assessments and learn how to access these materials electronically.

Who: All K, 3, 6, 9; PE K-8; and Fine Arts K, 3, 6, 9 teachers who did not attend focused instruction sessions in June and August

Location: Davis Center

Select a date: August 24

Time: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Standards of Effective Instruction (SOEI) Renewal & IT Component of SOEI

This session is for secondary observers to receive follow-up training. Secondary observers will learn about the teacher evaluation system and how to utilize the IT component for observations.

Who: Non-classroom certified secondary observers (PAR mentors, instructional leaders, etc.)

Location: Davis Center

Select a session:

Session 1: August 27 & 28

Time: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

More details? Review all the professional development opportunities and register on eCompass at <http://ecompass.truenorthlogic.org>

Teacher Evaluation Engagement: Your voice is critical in designing a professional and supportive teacher evaluation system at MPS.

Teacher Evaluation Advisory Group (TEAG)	Office Hours	Survey
This group of 30 teachers meets monthly to advise MPS on the design and implementation of the teacher evaluation system. Openings are available for 2012-13.	The teacher evaluation team will host office hours at several MPS sites in 2012-13. A member of the team will be available at a school every other week to speak with teachers and listen to feedback and input.	After each observation, teachers have the opportunity to fill out a survey to provide anonymous feedback about the observation process.

To join TEAG, schedule office hours at your site or share a new idea, contact Elise Maxwell at Elise.Maxwell@mpls.k12.mn.us or 612.668.0179.

Principal Evaluation Revision

Strong school leadership is a priority for MPS and is critical to enhancing student achievement. In 2008, MPS launched a principal and assistant principal evaluation system. For 2012-13, MPS and leaders of the Principals' Forum are collaborating to revise the process. This revision will address the changing nature of the principal and assistant principal roles, align the process with the teacher evaluation system and incorporate requirements of the new state law.



Thank you for all your hard work. Have a wonderful summer!



Look inside for...



MINNEAPOLIS
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Urban Education. Global Citizens.

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