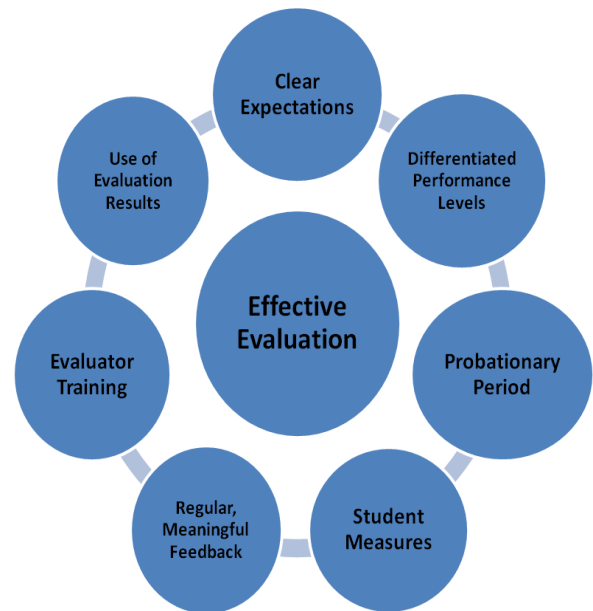


## Essential Principles of Effective Evaluation

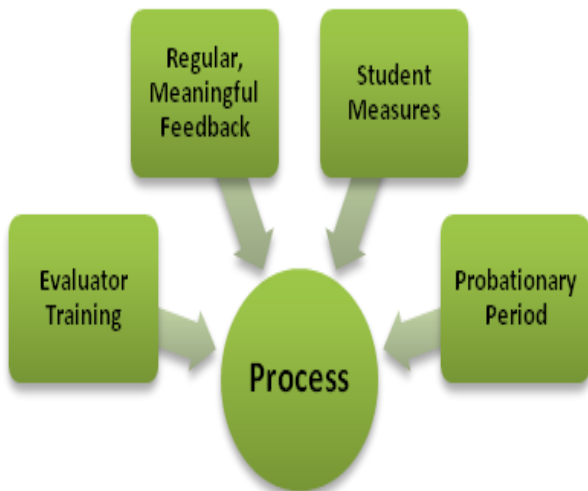
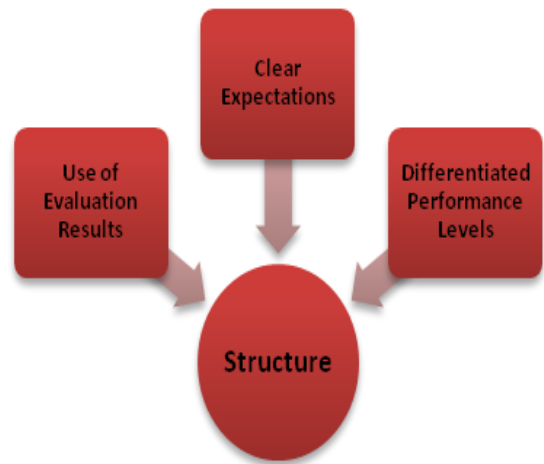
The growth and learning of children is the primary responsibility of those who teach in our classrooms and lead our schools. Student growth and learning can be observed and measured. Educators, in partnership with students, parents and community, are accountable for ensuring the improvement of student achievement. Effective educator evaluation systems promote the improvement of professional practice resulting in the improvement of student performance.

An effective evaluation system includes the following research-based essential principles:

- Measures educator performance against research-based, proven performance targets associated with the improvement of student performance
- Uses multiple ratings to differentiate levels of performance
- Highlights a probationary period of adequate duration to ensure sufficient induction and socialization support for new teachers and leaders
- Uses measures of growth in student learning as a significant contributing factor in the evaluation of professional practice at all levels and ensures that a proficient or a distinguished rating cannot be received in educator performance if student growth is low
- Provides ongoing, timely, deliberate and meaningful feedback on performance relative to research-based targets
- Requires standardized, initial and periodic training for evaluators to ensure reliability and accuracy
- Utilizes the results and data to inform decisions regarding personnel, employment determinations and policy regarding employment



Three of the seven principles primarily address the structure of the evaluation process while the other four of the seven address its implementation, or the process used in the evaluation process. The use of research-based expectations and targets, differentiated development levels and creating policy and basing employment decisions on evaluation results focuses on components of the structure of the evaluation system.



The other four principles reflect the research about how the process of educator evaluation is implemented. This includes support for novice educators during the probationary period, how measures of growth in student learning are incorporated into the evaluation of educators as a significant, contributing factor, the inclusion of regular and meaningful feedback to all educators for the improvement of practice, and the systematic initial and periodic training of those doing the evaluation as well as for those being evaluated.



### Essential Principle 1: Research-Based and Proven Performance Targets

To ensure that student performance continually improves through the work of excellent teachers and leaders, an evaluation system must use measurement of clearly articulated, research-based and proven performance targets. These targets align to appropriate state and/or national standards and include evidence linked to the impact of student performance. Clear language reduces subjectivity and provides direction for improvement. Practices must be aligned to Senate Bill 291 passed by the Missouri Legislature in June 2010 which directs districts to adopt local teaching standards which include:

- *students actively participate and are successful in the learning process;*
- *various forms of assessment are used to monitor and manage student learning;*
- *the teacher is prepared and knowledgeable of the content and effectively maintains students' on-task behavior;*
- *the teacher uses professional communication and interaction with the school community;*
- *the teacher keeps current on instructional knowledge and seeks and explores changes in teaching behaviors that will improve student performance; and*
- *the teacher acts as a responsible professional in the overall mission of the school.*

**Differentiated  
Performance  
Levels**

**Essential Principle 2: Differentiated Levels of Performance**

Increasing effective practice requires opportunities for growth. Achieving growth, given the complexity of educator practice, will require clear statements of differentiated levels of performance across a professional continuum capable of determining growth and improvement. Effective differentiation includes a minimum of three levels and each is precise enough to allow for discrete, independent, measureable elements which reliably describe current practice as well as a clear direction for growth. Levels must be characterized by performance as opposed to years of service and should move beyond sorting and classifying to ensuring opportunities for the improvement of effective practice.

**Probationary  
Period**

**Essential Principle 3: Probationary Period for New Educators**

Missouri statute indicates that the first five years of teaching is a probationary period for new teachers. This time period provides for the accurate and appropriate accumulation of performance data on the practice of the novice educator. Mentoring for teachers is required within the first two years. Principals, special education directors and career education directors also receive two years of mentoring and superintendents one year of mentoring. During the probationary period, intensive induction and socialization support, aligned to the state's teacher mentor standards and a component of an overall, comprehensive induction process, must be provided. This confidential and non-evaluative support is focused on essential principles of particular significance for the novice practitioner at a critical time of growth and development.

**Student  
Measures**

**Essential Principle 4: Use of Measures of Student Growth in Learning**

Missouri educators have as their ultimate goal the improvement of student performance. As such, they are held accountable for this improvement. Multiple measures of growth in student learning, a positive change in student achievement between two or more points in time, should be included as a significant contributing factor in the evaluation process. Measures of growth in student learning that provide multiple years of comparable student data may include, but are not limited, to: common, benchmark and formative and summative district-generated assessments; peer reviewed performance assessments; mutually developed student learning objectives by evaluator and teacher; student work samples such as presentations, papers, projects, portfolios; individualized student growth objectives defined by the teacher; valid, reliable, timely and meaningful information from standardized testing; as well as state assessments where available.

### **Essential Principle 5: Ongoing, Deliberate, Meaningful and Timely Feedback**

A collaborative culture enabling professional conversations about educator practice supports and promotes growth. Deliberate and timely feedback that is delivered effectively as a part of those professional conversations and is meaningful encourages formative development. Feedback is valuable for any teacher or leader at any stage of their career and should be provided formally, informally or both each year. It is provided using multiple sources of evidence from a variety of different measures, including the use and analysis of student data, in close proximity to the data gathering process. Information and data that is provided through meaningful feedback may include but is not limited to:

- *observations focused on professional practice and the extent of student learning;*
- *analysis of the improvement of student performance;*
- *survey results from students, families, and community members;*
- *new learning and its application to improve the overall performance of students;*
- *self-reflection on practice;*
- *analysis of artifacts including lesson plans, professional development plans, supplemental resources, participation in coursework, improvement plans; and*
- *evidence of educators as responsible professionals supporting the overall mission, vision and goals of the school and district.*

### **Essential Principle 6: Standardized and Periodic Training for Evaluators**

Reliable and valid measures of performance are an essential factor in ensuring that annual growth for teachers and leaders results in growth for students. Evaluators who collect these measures of evidence and provide feedback must be highly trained to ensure that ratings are fair, accurate and reliable. To ensure ongoing reliability, evaluators should be trained both initially and periodically. Evaluators demonstrating skills aligned to minimum quality assurance standards established by districts and/or the state may include master teachers and peers as well as other external, trained third party people from within or outside the district that assist in the overall responsibility of moving staff to increased levels of effective practice. Evaluator training may include topics such as:

- *conducting effective classroom observations and walk-throughs focused on the quality of instruction;*
- *assessing student data and the analysis of artifacts;*
- *interpreting survey information; and*
- *effectively providing clear, constructive, timely and meaningful feedback.*

## Essential Principle 7: Evaluation Results to inform Personnel Employment Determinations, Decisions, and Policy

Ratings of educator effectiveness should guide district decisions regarding determinations, recognition, development, interventions and policies that impact the extent of student learning in the system. As a result of the evaluation system, districts are empowered to recognize and utilize highly effective educators to improve student learning. Highly effective educators may serve their system in ways such as:

- *mentors, peer observers, coaches and as a resource for less effective educators;*
- *contributing through key leadership roles;*
- *assisting with the challenges of high need students in high need locations; and*
- *assuming other critical additional duties that contribute to a school system's overall success.*

Ineffective educators are those demonstrating sustained periods lacking desired growth as documented by unsatisfactory evaluations. These educators receive targeted interventions and support to encourage ongoing formative development. Established timelines should be articulated through local policy and provide further clarification in terms of duration of interventions and the nature of additional support. If sustained demonstration of unacceptable performance occurs, a local dismissal protocol should be enacted.