

Evaluating Teachers and Principals: Developing Fair, Valid, and Reliable Systems

Define the Construct

Effectiveness for teachers includes demonstrating a positive impact on student outcomes over time and demonstrating teacher practices and behaviors linked to those outcomes, including high expectations for students; planning and preparation; instructional expertise; classroom management; assessing student learning; reflection on teaching practices; and demonstration of leadership in schools. For school leaders, effectiveness includes demonstrating a positive impact on staff development, school planning, and student outcomes over time, and demonstrating leadership practices and behaviors linked to those outcomes.

Deploy Multiple Indicators

Collecting feedback and evidence from multiple indicators over time is important because there is no single measure that can capture a teacher or principal's contribution to student learning and growth. Effectiveness is indicated a great deal by an educator's ability to improve student learning. Student test data can be utilized to determine student growth, achievement, achievement gap-closing, and educator value-add over a given period of time.

Develop a Clear Composite Rating

A decision needs to be made on how to combine the various indicators that measure educator effectiveness into a composite measure that represents overall performance. The intent of this is to create the most valid and reliable rating of educator effectiveness by using all of the available information. Each piece of data is given different amounts of emphasis and then they are combined to form a single composite score. A suggested approach to finding the right balance in creating a composite score is to engage stakeholders and experts in a modified standard-setting process.

Clarify Differentiated Performance Levels

An addition of multiple indicators and a focus on student outcomes make it much more likely that ratings will clearly distinguish levels of performance. In order to account for measures of professional practice, a rubric is required that distinguishes performance levels. The standards, known as performance level descriptors, must be specific enough to provide useful performance information to educators, and general enough to describe educator practice across a broad spectrum of grade levels and subjects.

Build Strong Data Analysis and Reporting Tools

After creating a system of multiple indicators and performance levels that result in a single, composite educator rating, it is important to think about how the data will be used to support and enhance educator development. Data analysis and reporting tools are needed to generate ongoing effectiveness ratings and provide clear feedback to educators on their performance and areas for development.

Improve Instructional and Leadership Practice

With a comprehensive view and solid information regarding educator effectiveness systems, districts can align individualized educator professional development plans with school and district goals.

Burling, K. (n.d.). *Evaluating teachers and principals: Developing fair, valid, and reliable systems*. Center for Educator Effectiveness: Pearson Assessments.

