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Using Self-Evaluation as a Possible Source of Evidence in Teacher Evaluation

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Updated by the Ohio Department of Education, July 2021

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June 2016 *Updated by the Ohio Department of Education, July 2021*

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3894_06/16

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Ohio Revised Code 3319.112 (D)(4) directs the Ohio Department of Education to provide "guidance to districts on how information from student surveys, student portfolios, peer review evaluations, teacher self-evaluations and other components determined appropriate by the district may be used as part of the evaluation process."

This document provides guidance regarding teacher self-evaluations, which are teacher-driven collections of artifacts and professional reflections to demonstrate mastery of instruction. The Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession, as well as many of the teaching frameworks currently being used in Ohio, and across the country, highlight the importance of the self-reflective practice as part of what highly effective educators do on a regular basis. Ohio's educator evaluation system presently includes a self-assessment process. However, this process does not require a systematic reflection on both teaching practices and evidence or artifacts that teachers collect as a part of that reflection. This document aims to clearly define how districts might structure the teacher self-evaluation process to include these types of artifacts and to consider the strength of the artifacts and a teacher's reflection on those artifacts.

Specifically, this document addresses how self-evaluations are used in teacher evaluation systems around the country, the benefits and limitations of their use, and steps for the design of a system that might include teacher self-evaluation as a possible source of evidence in the educator evaluation system.

Use of Self-Evaluation in the Teacher Evaluation System

It is recommended that if self-evaluations are included as a possible source of evidence in teacher evaluations, districts should utilize the two-step process outlined below:

- **Step 1: Plan.** At the beginning of the year, as part of the Professional Growth Plan or Improvement Plan process a teacher completes the Teacher Self-Assessment. Using this optional tool as part of a multi-step process toward a self-evaluation outcome would require additional steps:

  - Use past evaluations and incorporate that information into the Self-Assessment to identify strengths and areas for growth and use this as the basis for creating a professional growth plan.

  - Use the Professional Growth Plan or Improvement Plan, which details specific practices or strategies identified to support professional growth.

  - Work with evaluators to identify a timeline for the collection of artifacts and the final submission of the documentation.

  - Identify specific artifacts to be collected during the school year that will support the teacher's work to reach his or her professional growth goals. Artifacts should be aligned by the teacher to the Ohio Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric 2.0. Artifacts might include but are not limited to:

    » Journal articles that are annotated by the teacher that address Professional Growth Plan or Improvement Plan goal(s) and/or identified focus area(s)
    » Lesson plans that show the implementation of new strategies
    » Meeting notes from working with a teacher, peer-coach or administrator
    » Revisions made to assessments or classwork that reflect shifts in teacher practice
    » Student data that reflects growth based on changes to teacher practice and includes teacher reflections about such changes

> » Reflections/annotations to lesson plans that identify new thinking or changes to teacher practice

- **Step 2: Implement.** During the school year, a teacher will take the following actions:
  - Participate in professional learning activities that are designed to directly support areas for growth as identified in the planning stage. These activities might include but are not limited to:
    > » Attending workshops that address research driven instructional practices
    > » Reading journal articles that relate to the subject area or pedagogical needs of the teacher
    > » Attending professional learning committee (PLCs) meetings that are focused on specific practices aligned to the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession
    > » Completing action-research projects that focus on changes in teaching practice and their impact on student outcomes
  - Collect artifacts and documents that support work toward professional goals.
  - Summarize experiences based on the strength of the evidence as it directly aligns to the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession
  - Review the self-reflection and artifacts during the final evaluation conference.

Self-Evaluation Used in Practice

A review of state policies did not identify any examples of the use of teacher self- evaluation as a stand-alone measure in teacher evaluation systems. Rather, in many evaluation and professional development systems, teacher self-evaluation or reflection is just one component of broader measures or of the goal-setting process. As is true in some Ohio systems, at the beginning of the year, teachers are asked to complete a Self-Assessment to reflect on their own skills in a range of professional practices, generally tied to the teaching standards, in order to inform goal setting for professional development for the upcoming year. In some systems, the self-evaluation process is ongoing, with teachers conducting self-evaluation at predetermined times throughout the year. Some of these systems ask that the teacher provide evidence on which the reflection is based, or to support the finding of the reflection.

Lesson plans, unit plans, or both might, for example, be used in the self- evaluation as evidence of a teacher's engagement in planning and preparation. A teacher's self- evaluation might be focused on how the lesson plan or unit plan reflects his or her ability to address multiple learners within the classroom. This would be in contrast to a portfolio where the evidence might be more focused on student work and student outcomes. Similarly, districts might ask teachers to self-evaluate their increased use of formative assessments in the planning of activities to create a measurable outcome. This would not be based on how students did on those assessments per se, but rather on how a teacher chose to adjust instruction to meet the needs of the students based on the results of the formative assessment process. Specific best practices for self-evaluation are discussed later in this guidance document.

Self-evaluation may be used as evidence for the following components of teacher performance taken from the Ohio Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric 2.0.

ORGANIZATIONAL AREA: PROFESSIONALISM					
Domains	**Components**				
		Ineffective	**Developing**	**Skilled**	**Accomplished**
PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES (Standard 6: Collaboration and Communication, Standard 7: Professional Responsibility and Growth) *Possible Sources of Evidence:* Professional Growth Plan or Improvement Plan, pre-conference, post-conference, artifacts, self-assessment, peer review	**Communication and collaboration with families** Element 6.1 Element 6.2	The teacher does not communicate with students and families.	The teacher inconsistently or unsuccessfully uses communication and engagement strategies with students and families. These do not contribute adequately to student learning, well-being and development.	The teacher uses effective and appropriate communication and engagement strategies with students and families, resulting in partnerships that contribute to student learning, well-being and development.	The teacher uses multiple effective and appropriate communication and engagement strategies with individual students and families. These ongoing strategies promote two-way communication, active participation and partnerships that contribute to each student's learning, well-being and development.
	Communication and collaboration with colleagues Element 6.3	The teacher does not communicate and/or collaborate with colleagues.	The teacher inconsistently or unsuccessfully communicates and/or collaborates with colleagues, resulting in limited improvement of professional practice.	The teacher effectively communicates and collaborates with colleagues to examine instructional practice and analyze patterns in student work and student data to identify and implement targeted strategies for improving professional practice.	The teacher initiates effective communication and collaboration with colleagues outside the classroom, resulting in improvements in student learning, individual practice, school practice and/or the teaching profession.
	District policies and professional responsibilities Element 7.1	The teacher demonstrates a lack of understanding and regard for district policies, state and federal regulations, and the Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators.	The teacher demonstrates minimal understanding of district policies, state and federal regulations, and the Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators.	The teacher demonstrates understanding by following district policies, state and federal regulations, and the Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators.	The teacher demonstrates understanding by following district policies, state and federal regulations, and the Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators. The teacher exemplifies effective leadership characteristics beyond the classroom. The teacher helps shape policy at the school, district or state level.
	Professional learning Element 7.2 Element 7.3	The teacher sets short-term and long-term professional goals but fails to monitor progress or take action to meet the goals.	The teacher sets and monitors short-term and long-term professional goals but fails to take appropriate action to meet the goals.	The teacher sets short-term and long-term professional goals and monitors progress in meeting them based on self-reflection and data analysis. The teacher takes appropriate action to meet the goals.	The teacher consistently pursues best practices and sets, monitors and reflects on progress toward meeting short-term and long-term professional goals based on data analysis to improve student learning. The teacher takes appropriate action to meet the goals. The teacher collaborates with colleagues and others to share best practices.

Summary of Recommendations on Using Self-Evaluations as Evidence in Teacher Evaluations

The following is a summary of guidance, best practices and recommendations that districts can choose to implement when using self-evaluation as a possible source of evidence in the OTES 2.0 system:

- Clearly communicate expectations among educators to ensure consistency across the district. Tailor the design of the self-evaluation process and the tools to meet the district's needs and conditions in the following ways:

- If there are components of the teaching standards that reflect building and/or district priorities, those components might be highlighted in the self-evaluation process. For example, if planning and preparation are a priority in the district, teacher self-evaluations can be focused around this district priority. For teachers who are not new to the district, consider using past observations or other past performance data as the basis for at least some of the areas that teachers reflect on for their self-evaluations. Consider the following practices when designing a local self-evaluation process:

  - Communicate clearly how evidence provided through the self-evaluation process will be used in teacher evaluations. Provide examples and exemplar self-evaluations that can be used as models.

  - Include guidance around aligning artifacts to the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession as well as additional training on the standards.

  - Involve principals and other evaluators early in the design process. Create opportunities for ongoing training and collaboration among administrators and teachers.

  - Consider the teacher association's role in designing and communicating about the system. Successful collaborations can enhance stakeholder support and build trust in the system.

Resources

A number of states have built teacher self-evaluations into their evaluation systems. The National Board for Professional Teacher Standards also includes self-evaluation in its requirements for board certification. The following highlights examples of implementation of self-evaluations:

New York State has multiple resources for districts seeking to incorporate teacher self-evaluation into teacher evaluations. Resources include the following:

  a. A teacher evaluation rubric can be found at http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/teachers-leaders/practicerubrics/Docs/marshall-teacher-rubric-jan-2014.pdf

  b. A teacher self-assessment guidance document can be found at http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/teachers-leaders/practicerubrics/Docs/SilverStrongSelfAssessmentRubric.pdf

The Kentucky State Department of Education has resources available that include information on the self-evaluation process, which is part of their Professional Growth and Effectiveness System. These resources can be found at http://education.ky.gov/teachers/PGES/TPGES/Pages/TPGES-Self-Reflection-and-Professional-Growth-Planning.aspx

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has resources on its use of teacher self-evaluation, which can be found at http://www.nbpts.org/

References

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3894_06/16