

SUPPORTING Improved Evaluations for All Educators

Overview of Evaluation Requirements and Timeline for Specialized Service Professionals

To ensure every child in Colorado has access to great educators who are supported in their professional growth new evaluation requirements under Senate Bill 10-191 are intended to provide meaningful, annual evaluations for *all* licensed personnel including principals, teachers and other education professionals who are licensed by the state.

Evaluation requirements and optional state model systems are in place for teacher and principal evaluations (statewide implementation in 2013-14 school year). A critical next step is to ensure that specialized service professionals, currently referred to as “other licensed personnel” in law and State Board of Education rules, are also evaluated annually and supported in their ongoing professional growth.

In their work to help implement S.B. 10-191, the State Council for Educator Effectiveness (SCEE) has identified nine categories of specialized service professionals and is outlining high quality professional practices specific to each group. The overall intent is to ensure that specialized service professionals’ evaluations provide meaningful and actionable feedback allowing for continuous improvement of practice.

Who is considered a specialized service professional?

Currently, there are nine categories of specialized service professionals:

- School audiologists
- School psychologists
- School nurses
- School physical therapists
- School occupational therapists
- School counselors
- School social workers
- School speech language pathologists
- School orientation and mobility specialists

Professionals who provide direct instruction or instructional support to students are considered teachers rather than a specialized service professional. This includes special education teachers, early childhood teachers, English language learners teachers, online teachers, elementary “specials” teachers, alternative education teachers, librarians, interventionists, and career and technical education teachers. The current teacher evaluation system for these individuals is being reviewed by groups of educators in the Colorado State Model Evaluation System pilot and feedback is being collected.

Timeline for Specialized Service Professionals Work

2012-2013

- Make recommendations on specialized service professionals to State Council for Educator Effectiveness and the State Board of Education

2013-2014

- Develop and pilot evaluation system for specialized service professionals

2014-2015

- Statewide roll out of model system for evaluating specialized service professionals
- Hold harmless year (a final rating of partially effective or ineffective will not count towards the loss of non-probationary status)

What specialized service professional work has been done?

In 2012, the SCEE and the Colorado Department of Education formed nine work groups with experts from the field from each professional group to make recommendations regarding the evaluation of specialized service professionals. Each work group was charged with identifying how their licensed category aligns to the statewide Quality Standards for teachers and what changes, if any, need to be made to ensure their evaluations are meaningful and provide feedback to inform their practice.

The process for creating specialized service professionals standards and elements (the components that will make up the rubrics) included asking work groups to seek alignment for all Quality Standards. After much cross-group deliberation, the work groups created a common set of standards and elements which will guide the creation of unique professional practices for each professional group. Standard and element recommendations for professional practices were made to the SCEE from the work groups and will move through the State Board of Education in the spring and fall of 2013 and legislature for approval in 2014.

What's next?

In 2013, professional practice rubrics will be created for each of the specialized service professionals groups. These rubrics will measure each group's professional practices, which accounts for 50 percent of their evaluation. Recommendations and guidance on student outcomes (the other 50 percent of the evaluation) will also be provided, including possible outcomes measures. For specialized service professionals, the term student outcomes doesn't necessarily mean student academic growth like it does in teacher and principal evaluations. Rather, student outcomes may be defined as increasing access to learning since these professionals are typically focused on non-academic factors that affect overall student well-being. For example, a school nurse may administer medication to a student with ADHD to help the student take full advantage of the instruction in the classroom. The nurse's professional actions directly impact the student's well-being, which in turn will positively affect the student's ability to learn in the classroom.

A pilot for specialized service professional evaluation systems is planned for the 2013-14 school year and statewide implementation is planned for the 2014-15 school year. The first year of implementation will be a hold harmless year meaning that a final rating of partially effective or ineffective will not count towards the loss of non-probationary status.

Where can I learn more?

- To view frequently asked questions regarding specialized service professionals, visit: www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/FAQs.asp#Other_Licensed_Professionals
- To learn about the Colorado State Model Evaluation System for teachers, visit: www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/SMES-Teacher.asp
- To learn more about the State Council for Educator Effectiveness and access resources, visit: www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/Partner-SCEE.asp