Executive Summary

MISSOURI'S EDUCATOR EVALUATION SYSTEM
Executive Summary

A substantial body of research establishes the teacher as the most significant factor in a student’s learning, followed next by effective leadership. Improving students’ learning requires the improvement of effective practice of those teaching in classrooms and providing leadership in schools. As such, Missouri’s Educator Evaluation System focuses on the formative development of teachers and leaders.

Theory of Action: Increase Student Performance

The Theory of Action for Missouri’s Educator Evaluation System, developed by hundreds of educators across the state, is founded on the belief that improving educator practice improves student performance.

- The evaluation system provides accurate, reliable data identifying growth opportunities in educator performance, allowing focused feedback and learning to be applied, which generates growth.
- Focused feedback and learning address specific growth opportunities, and improved educator performance is validated and replicated.
- Improved educator performance is validated and replicated, and an aligned and effective system produces improved student performance.

Getting it Right: Two Key Outcomes

Accomplishing Missouri’s Theory of Action requires two important outcomes. First, effective evaluation must address improvement throughout the career of all educators at all levels of the system. Second, it must offer a level of precision capable of guiding improvement and still remain manageable.

- **Outcome 1**
  The Educator Evaluation System must be systemic to address the improvement of effective practice of all educators – from preparation through retirement and from the boardroom to the classroom.

- **Outcome 2**
  The Educator Evaluation System must be precise to ensure the accurate identification of areas of strength and opportunities to improve and at the same time be manageable.
As a systemic process, the Educator Evaluation System employs a developmental sequence defining a professional continuum that articulates how the knowledge and skills of educators mature and strengthen. The professional continuum identifies expectations of performance at the candidate level (pre-service) and at four levels of performance for the teacher and leader and superintendent.

### The Professional Continuum of the Missouri Teacher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>New Teacher</th>
<th>Developing Teacher</th>
<th>Proficient Teacher</th>
<th>Distinguished Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This level describes the performance expected of a potential teacher preparing to enter the profession and who is enrolled in an approved educator-preparation program at a college, university or state-approved alternate pathway. Content knowledge and teaching skills are developed through a progression of planned classroom and supervised clinical experiences.</td>
<td>This level describes the performance expected of new teachers as they enter the profession in a new assignment. The base knowledge and skills are applied as they begin to teach and advance student growth and achievement in classrooms of their own.</td>
<td>This level describes the performance expected of teachers early in their assignment as the teaching, content, knowledge and skills that they possess continue to develop as they encounter new experiences and expectations in the classroom, school, district and community while advancing student growth and achievement.</td>
<td>This level describes the performance expected of career, professional teachers who continue to advance their knowledge and skills while consistently advancing student growth and achievement.</td>
<td>This level describes the career, professional teacher whose performance exceeds proficiency and who contributes to the profession and larger community while consistently advancing student growth and achievement. The distinguished teacher serves as a leader in the school, district and profession.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Professional Frames of the Educator

The Teacher, Leader and Superintendent Standards and quality indicators draw evidence from three professional frames at each level of the Professional Continuum. This reflects the research base on educator development as well as feedback from Missouri educators on how to make the standards meaningful to teachers and leaders.

The three frames are professional commitment, professional practice and professional impact. These frames, which together constitute a determination of educator effect, organize data sources to facilitate the improvement of effective practice of teachers and leaders.

Establishing a reliable determination of educator effect requires the use of multiple criteria. Research from the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) Project confirms that a combination of measures has the greatest potential for a reliable assessment of performance. Data sources specific to each of the three professional frames provides a reliable process to establish current levels of practice, accurately promote and document growth, and determine overall educator effect.
Growth Guides

The Educator Evaluation System uses Growth Guides to inform improvement in practice. Each Quality Indicator for teacher, leader and superintendent is articulated across a Growth Guide and evidenced by data sources from the three professional frames. This provides a valid assessment of status and clear direction for growth.

Example: Teacher Growth Guide

Standard 1: Content knowledge, including varied perspectives, aligned with appropriate instruction.

The teacher understands the central concepts, structures, and tools of inquiry of the discipline(s) and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful and engaging for students.

Quality Indicator 1: Content knowledge and academic language

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<th>New</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Distinguished</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1N1) The new teacher…</td>
<td>1D1) The developing teacher also…</td>
<td>1P1) The proficient teacher also…</td>
<td>1S1) The distinguished teacher also…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knows and can demonstrate breadth and depth of content knowledge and communicates the meaning of academic language.</td>
<td>Delivers accurate content learning experiences using supplemental resources and incorporates academic language into learning activities.</td>
<td>Infuses new information into instructional units and lessons displaying solid knowledge of the important concepts of the discipline.</td>
<td>Has mastery of taught subjects and continually infuses new research-based content knowledge into instruction.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence of Commitment</th>
<th>Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>Evidence of Impact</th>
<th>Professional Frames</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is well prepared to guide students to a deeper understanding of content.</td>
<td>Instruction reflects mastery of content knowledge.</td>
<td>Students are generally familiar with academic language.</td>
<td>Score = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of Practice</td>
<td>Instruction indicates an appreciation of the complexity and ever evolving nature of the content.</td>
<td>Students are able to use academic language.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of Impact</td>
<td>Students accurately use academic language related to their discipline.</td>
<td>Students communicate effectively using academic language from a variety of sources.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of Commitment</td>
<td>Use of supplemental primary sources that are aligned to local standards.</td>
<td>Instructional focus is on the most important concepts of the content and includes new content as appropriate.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of Practice</td>
<td>Continually expands knowledge base on content and infuses into content.</td>
<td>Continually seeks out new information and applies it to learning in their classroom.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of Impact</td>
<td>Continually expands knowledge base on content and infuses into content.</td>
<td>Continually seeks out new information and applies it to learning in their classroom.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of Practice</td>
<td>Instructional focus is on the most important concepts of the content and includes new content as appropriate.</td>
<td>Continually expands knowledge base on content and infuses into content.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of Impact</td>
<td>Students accurately use academic language related to their discipline.</td>
<td>Students communicate effectively using academic language from a variety of sources.</td>
<td>7</td>
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Growth Guides articulate discrete, independent measurable elements of performance across the professional continuum for the nine Teacher Standards, six Leader Standards, and the seven Superintendent Standards. These measurable elements are described within 36 Quality Indicators for the teacher, 13 Quality Indicators for the leader, and 16 for superintendent.

As a part of the evaluation process, specific indicators are chosen to be assessed based on the priorities articulated in district and building improvement plans. The Growth Guides for those selected indicators provide a numerical rating that serves as both a baseline assessment and a final assessment. Targeted professional learning and regular feedback on performance between the two assessments impact the change that occurs in practice. The numerical ratings provide a measure of both status of performance and growth in performance.
Essential Principles of Effective Evaluation

Contemporary research suggests seven essential principles when creating an effective evaluation system. These are the foundation on which Missouri’s Educator Evaluation System has been created.

The system:

- Establishes clear expectations of performance based on the research of national standards and aligned to legislation (Missouri Senate Bill 291) directing districts to set teaching standards.
- Measures performance across differentiated levels from pre-service on through four levels at the practitioner level.
- Highlights the probationary period as a time of intensive support.
- Includes student performance measures to ensure the impact of student learning.
- Identifies feedback as a critical component for improving effective practice.
- Acknowledges evaluator training as a highly significant factor for reliably evaluating performance.
- Maintains that evaluation results drive employment decisions and policy.

Feedback from the Field

The national research and experts guided the efforts of a large group of Missouri stakeholders responsible for the creation of the teacher, leader and superintendent standards, quality indicators, professional continuum, growth guides and evaluation protocols. This initial group included twenty-seven organization partners, thirty-two school districts and twenty-five educator preparation programs.

The growth guides have undergone preliminary field testing through partnerships with 174 pilot project districts throughout the state. The initial review of indicator language has resulted in more concise, reliable and valid language with a focus on discrete and measureable elements of performance. The field testing will continue in a full-scale pilot project through the school year 2012-2013.
The first version of the Educator Evaluation System was presented to the State Board of Education in June 2012, and the initial rollout of the system will take place at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s annual Cooperative Conference for School Administrators in July 2012. To learn more and to audit the effectiveness of their local system, school districts across the state will participate in regional training sessions in Fall 2012.

Based on further feedback through the 2012-2013 pilot project, the Educator Evaluation System will be further refined with a release of a second version in the summer of 2013.

Conclusion

Improving students’ learning requires the improvement of effective practice of those teaching in classrooms and providing leadership in schools. Missouri’s Educator Evaluation System has been designed and created by many of the state’s finest educators with a goal of improving effective practice to create environments where students can accelerate learning and experience academic success.