



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents

FROM: Sarah J. Barzee, Ph.D., Chief Talent Officer *SB*
Talent Office

DATE: October 30, 2013

SUBJECT: Update on 2013-14 Connecticut Educator Evaluation and Support System

Dear Colleagues:

As your district is implementing the new educator evaluation and support system, the Talent Office team is working to provide you with the most up-to-date information and resources to assist you in this process. We realize that this is a challenging time with multiple initiatives coming simultaneously. Yet, implemented in a cohesive manner, this constellation of initiatives represents a profound opportunity for Connecticut to advance towards our shared goals of increased student achievement and improved outcomes.

Updates featured in this newsletter include:

- End-of-Year Data Reporting
- Guidance for Student and Educator Support Specialists (SESS)
- BloomBoard Update

End-of-Year Data Reporting

As the implementation of the new educator evaluation and support system is moving forward, we have received questions about the collection of data by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE).

In order to capture a more precise picture of the implementation of SEED, pilot districts were required to submit their evaluation data to CSDE. Pursuant to Public Act No. 12-116, Sec. 51(b)(2), *Not later than June thirtieth of each year, each superintendent shall report to the Commissioner of Education the status of the implementation of teacher evaluations, including the frequency of evaluations, aggregate evaluation ratings, the number of teachers who have not been evaluated and other requirements as determined by the Department of Education.* As the *Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation* (June 2012) provide for revision of final summative ratings through September 15, we waited to allow pilot districts ample time to reconcile and finalize summative ratings before making a request for these end-of-year reports.

In addition, as stated within the *Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation* (June 2012), *the State Department of Education or a third-party designated by the SDE will audit evaluation ratings of exemplary or below standard to validate such exemplary or below standard ratings by selecting ten districts at random annually and reviewing evaluation evidence files for a minimum of two educators rated exemplary and two educators rated below standard in those districts...including at least one classroom teacher rated exemplary and at least one teacher rated below standard per district selected.*

In order to review and analyze data for the purposes of the audit, the CSDE will request end-of-year data from all Connecticut districts and charter schools at the individual educator level. We expect that collecting of the data at this level will reduce the time districts would need to commit to the audit. The data will assist the CSDE in determining areas of strength, as well as areas in need of improvement, in Connecticut's educator evaluation and support system. This knowledge will inform ongoing development efforts designed to support educators across the career continuum, and it will also allow for long-term validation of the model. Additionally, we expect that you will be able to utilize this data at the local level to inform support and develop opportunities.

In recognition of concerns about the confidentiality of records of educator performance and evaluation, the Connecticut General Assembly recently passed legislation in July 2013 (excerpted below) to protect these records maintained or kept on file by the CSDE from being accessed via the Freedom of Information Act. As such, records of teacher performance and evaluation shall not be deemed to be public records.

Sec. 13 of Public Act 13-122 states:

Any records maintained or kept on file by the Department of Education or any local or regional board of education that are records of teacher performance and evaluation shall not be deemed to be public records and shall not be subject to the provisions of section 1-210, provided that any teacher may consent in writing to the release of such teacher's records by the department or a board of education. Such consent shall be required for each request for a release of such records. Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, records maintained or kept on file by the Department of Education or any local or regional board of education that are records of the personal misconduct of a teacher shall be deemed to be public records and shall be subject to disclosure pursuant to the provisions of subsection (a) of section 1-210. Disclosure of such records of a teacher's personal misconduct shall not require the consent of the teacher. For the purposes of this section, "teacher" includes each certified professional employee below the rank of superintendent employed by a board of education in a position requiring a certificate issued by the State Board of Education.

In spring 2014, district data managers will receive a formal request and instructions for uploading end-of-year data. We are providing you with this information at this time so that you and your educators will be aware of the requirements. If you have questions or concerns regarding this information, please contact Shannon Marimón, by email at shannon.marimon@ct.gov or by phone at 860-713-6816.

Guidance for Student and Educator Support Specialists

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is striving to support districts with the successful implementation of Connecticut's educator evaluation and support system. Educators who do not have traditional classrooms but serve a "caseload" of students may require additional consideration regarding implementation. As such, the CSDE convened a widely representative stakeholder group to explore implementation options and provide guidance for these educators.

The Student and Educator Support Specialist (SESS) workgroup developed white papers and sample Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) to provide specific guidance for the following disciplines: Teachers of English Language Learner (ELL) Educators, Social Workers, School Psychologists, Library Media Specialists, School Counselors, Speech and Language Pathologists, Mathematics and English Language Arts Coaches, Transition Coordinators and Special Education Teachers. These white papers and sample SLOs are designed to guide administrators in conducting evaluations for individuals from these specific disciplines as part of a comprehensive evaluation and support system.

It is important to note that SESS educators are only a subset of educators who serve students in non-tested grades and subjects (NTGS). Educators in these non-tested grades and subject areas are those who do not have a state assessment specific to their grade or subject area. Although World Language teachers are **not** considered Student and Educator Support Specialists (SESS), they did collaborate with their ELL colleagues, who are SESS educators, to develop a white paper to support a common understanding about moving students forward in a target language. Please note that there are separate sample SLOs featured in the guidance documents for ELL Educators and World Language Teachers. Multiple sample SLOs for various grades and subject areas are currently available on the [SEED website](#). Additional samples will be available in the coming weeks.

In addition to the white papers and sample SLOs, an adapted version of *The Common Core of Teaching (CCT) Rubric for Effective Teaching* was developed for use with some SESS educators. Specifically, this adapted rubric was identified for use with School Psychologists, Speech and Language Pathologists, Comprehensive School Counselors and School Social Workers. While these disciplines have agreed that the CCT/SESS adapted rubric may appropriately assist an evaluator in examining their practice, the groups have recommended that the CSDE consider the use of nationally developed and vetted rubrics created by their respective national organizations which adhere to national standards and align to the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching. The School Psychologist work group has included, within their guidance document, a draft rubric aligned to their national standards for review and consideration as determined appropriate by the district.

The CCT/SESS adapted rubric is available as a resource for use by Connecticut school districts. Although **not required**, the alignment of the CCT/SESS adapted rubric to the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching* will benefit evaluators as they engage in professional dialogues across all content areas. All guidance documents are currently available on the www.connecticutseed.org website.

BloomBoard Update

Although the deadline to opt into the professional learning credits within the BloomBoard marketplace for the 2013-14 academic year has passed, the CSDE recognizes that some districts are still interested in taking advantage of the prepurchased professional learning credits to be used in the BloomBoard marketplace. The CSDE, through their partnership with Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), will allocate professional learning credits in 2013-14 to all districts who are interested, regardless of whether they are using the BloomBoard system to track evaluation data. BloomBoard will work with these districts to set up access to the BloomBoard professional learning marketplace so that district evaluators and educators can use their credits to access opportunities for professional learning. CSDE has committed to funding opt-in districts with the equivalent of \$75 times the total number of certified staff within the district. This amount will be provided in a single allotment to the district. The manner of distribution within the district will be determined by the district.

The CSDE is extending this final invitation to all of those districts who may still wish to opt-in to the professional learning credits within the BloomBoard marketplace. The deadline is **November 15, 2013**. If you are interested please contact Shannon Marimon, CSDE Talent Office, via email at shannon.marimon@ct.gov or by phone at 860-713-6816.

Please do not hesitate to contact our office with questions/concerns. Thank you for your continued efforts to implement Connecticut's Educator Evaluation and Support System in your district.