

WCPS Teacher Evaluation System

Purpose

In order to assure high quality employee performance and to improve the instructional programs in Washington County Public Schools, a continuous program of evaluation is maintained. The purpose of the performance evaluation is to encourage dialogue between supervisor and employee about job performance and to provide a documented means of identifying and defining strengths and weaknesses in job performance. In addition, the process provides an opportunity for communication about job requirements, work expectations, and the potential for personal and professional development. Evaluation is a collegial process whereby professional assessments of the instructional process are shared and competent personnel are developed and encouraged. Evaluation is intended to improve instruction through a constructive, positive, humanistic approach.

Process

A new WCPS teacher evaluation system was approved in August 2009 and will be implemented for the first time during the 2009-2010 school year. The new teacher evaluation system consists of two primary components: observation and evaluation. Observations and evaluations differ in that an observation relates to the analysis of a single instructional lesson. It is designed to give teachers timely and specific feedback to help affirm effective teaching practices and offer suggestions for professional growth. Observers rate each of the indicators under the domains listed on the observation form and assign each indicator a rating of satisfactory, area for growth, or unsatisfactory relative to the effectiveness of the lesson observed. All observations are conducted by certificated administrative and/or supervisory personnel.

Evaluations represent an appraisal of all pieces of information over an extended period of time, typically one year. Included in the evaluation are all observations in that time period, as well as other pertinent information related to the domains and indicators being assessed. Evaluators assign an overall rating of satisfactory or unsatisfactory on the final evaluation document. School-based administrators, with assistance from supervisors as needed, evaluate teachers.

A differentiated evaluation process is used for tenured and non-tenured teachers. Tenured teachers are evaluated as follows:

- *Standard Professional Certificate Holders* are evaluated every school year. The process includes at least one observation each semester and one evaluation each year.
- *Advanced Professional Certificate Holders* receive an evaluation at least twice during the validity period of each certificate. The first evaluation occurs during the initial year of the certificate. The process includes at least one observation each semester and one evaluation within the identified school year.

Non-tenured teachers are formally evaluated once during each semester of the school year. The process includes a minimum of two observations for each evaluation.

- 1) How are the teacher evaluation results used regarding **professional development**?

Response:

Information gathered from observations and evaluations provide evidence of teacher professional growth. Indicators that are rated by administrators and/or supervisors as areas for growth provide direction for improvement activities to be undertaken by the teacher, as well as resources that can be deployed by administrators and supervisors to support an individual teacher's growth needs. Patterns of areas for growth noted among numbers of teachers will point to school-wide or systemic needs for professional development and result in deployment of school-wide or systemic professional development initiatives.

- 2) How are the teacher evaluation results used regarding **compensation**?

Response:

Upon a successful evaluation at the end of a school year, teachers are moved to their appropriate salary schedule step, as per the negotiated agreement, and compensated accordingly. A pattern of unsatisfactory evaluations may lead to the teacher's professional certification as being rated "second class," and may result in the teacher's not receiving a salary increment based on experience (Md. Code Ann., Ed. Art. §6-103). Teachers earning satisfactory evaluations are considered for in-school leadership positions such as team leaders or department chairs, which offer additional compensation based on the WCPS Teacher Leadership Responsibilities Program. Evaluations are also considered for appointments to challenging schools, which also provide teachers with opportunities for additional compensation.

- 2) How are the teacher evaluation results used regarding **promotion**?

Response:

Evaluations are considered when teachers apply for administrative and supervisory positions.

- 4) How are the teacher evaluation results used regarding **retention and removal**?

Response:

Teacher evaluation results are used in both the retention and removal processes. Upon earning satisfactory evaluations during the probationary period, non-tenured teachers are granted tenure and may move along the corresponding salary step, as per the negotiated agreement. The evaluation results are also used to identify and provide intermediate steps for teachers who are struggling or need additional professional development. The performance evaluation data serve as the basis for decisions to recommend a teacher's placement on a performance improvement plan, a second-class certificate, or dismissal. Satisfactory evaluation results are used in making decisions to retain teachers.