

SAMPLE LANGUAGE

SECTION 1.**INTRODUCTION**

Educators in CT are committed to ensuring that students achieve and develop 21st century skills that will enable them to become lifelong learners and productive citizens in a global world. This is a shared responsibility among students, teachers, administrators, parents, the community, local boards of education, the state board of education, and local and state governments. Effective teachers are among the most important school-level factors in student learning and effective leadership is an essential component of any successful school.

To help ensure higher student performance, every board of education must have in place a collaboratively-developed, well-designed, research-based educator evaluation and professional growth system for educators at every level – teachers, student educator support specialists, building-based administrators, and central office administrators.

The CEA Public Schools Educator Professional Development & Evaluation system (EPDE) is the structure through which teachers and administrators are supported to enhance their professional practices. As educators grow through the holistic processes used, students will benefit from enriched instruction, learn to take greater ownership for their learning, and develop and refine social skills needed to be productive workers and citizens.

CONTEXT OF THE EPDE SYSTEM

Every three years, the CEA Public Schools Board of Education conducts an in-depth analysis of the status of the district schools, and planning process for school improvement. Such a study is conducted by a District Improvement Committee, composed of administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, high school students, and board members. This committee studies information obtained from state tests; other national assessments given to students in a variety of grades (e.g., DRA, AP exams); district benchmark assessments (which give more specific diagnostic information than other exams); the KEYS survey administered by the CEA Teachers Association (measuring every school's performance on 42 indicators of an effective school); and extensive focus group discussions with teachers, administrators, and parents.

From the information gathered, the District Improvement Committee sets primary goals for student learning and school improvement for the next 3 year period; the goals for the 2013-2016 school years are as follows:

1. Students will improve their use of the literacy skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.
2. Schools will begin using a model of collaborative leadership to develop school improvement plans, with a focus on curriculum, instruction, and professional growth.
3. Educators will continue their work in aligning curriculum with the Common Core State Standards, preparing for the Smarter Balanced Consortium Assessments, and assuring that educators, students, and parents are well informed about the impending changes.

Other district and school goals may be developed, depending on need, but the primary goals set the focus that links to educator evaluation and professional growth.

DISTRICT PRINCIPLES AND VISION FOR EDUCATOR EVALUATION

CEA Public Schools began the process of revising the Professional Development and Evaluation (PDE) System, for which they established a vision statement, by establishing a new Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC). This committee is composed of administrators (both central office and school based) and teachers, each selected by their respective bargaining units. The superintendent or his designee is a non-voting member of the committee, who co-chairs the committee with a teacher selected by the teacher members on the committee. (See the Professional Growth section of the plan for additional details.)

Prior to drafting a vision statement, the PDEC reviewed several documents that would help them expand their knowledge about best practices in evaluation and what would be appropriate for CEA's educators. These documents included:

1. Several research studies and articles from experts in evaluation and professional growth;
2. The Connecticut Common Core Standards;
3. Connecticut Common Core of Teaching, adopted February 2010, (Connecticut Framework for Teaching);
4. Connecticut Common Core of Leading: Connecticut Leadership Standards, adopted June 2012; and
5. National Pupil Personnel Standards documents.

The Committee also asked all teachers and administrators to complete an on-line survey about their experiences in the district with evaluation and professional growth (including the district's TEAM program), and reviewed the survey results in light of the current written plan. From this, the Committee drafted a set of principles on which the PDE system would be designed; this was sent to educators in the district for review, discussion, and comments.

As a result of the above process, the CEA Public Schools established the following Principles for Educator Professional Development & Evaluation, on which the system is based:

1. The primary purpose of evaluation is to strengthen individual and collective practices in order to improve student learning and growth.
2. Effective educator evaluation is based on the appropriate Connecticut and/or national professional association standards.
3. Professional development serves a variety of purposes within the district, and is planned and implemented accordingly.
4. Professional development and evaluation of educators links directly to the knowledge and skill applicable to one's position or role in the district.
5. Professional growth and evaluation processes will vary, depending on the educator's role in the district, years of experience in his or her role, level of knowledge and skill, and other factors mutually agreed upon by the educator and evaluator.
6. Professional growth plans will be developed at the district, school, and individual levels, taking into account needs identified through evaluation. Professional growth will reflect the needs of

individuals and groups of educators and will address the needs of teachers along the career continuum.

7. Any weaknesses identified in an educator's performance will be the focus of a support plan developed collaboratively by the educator and his or her evaluator. All support plans will provide the resources and time needed to help the educator improve. If weaknesses persist, the evaluation will be used as a basis for employment decisions.
8. Evaluation will include opportunities for formative, summative and self evaluation.
9. Within a framework of required elements, the CEA Public Schools evaluation plan will be developed collaboratively by teachers and administrators and approved by the Board of Education.
10. The PDE system will include a process for resolving disputes in cases in which the educator and the evaluator disagree on any aspect of the evaluation or professional growth process.
11. CEA Public Schools will review the PDE system on a yearly basis, making adjustments and revisions as appropriate, based on current research, best practice, and a practical process for monitoring implementation.

These principles led to the creation of the following vision statement for the Educator Professional Development & Evaluation system:

The primary goal of the educator evaluation and growth process is to strengthen individual and collective practices so as to increase all aspects of student growth and development. Using evaluation processes that promote collaboration and are based on research results in shared ownership for professional growth, renewal, and sound employment decisions.