Educator evaluation strengthens, supports and enhances professional growth opportunities for teachers and administrators based on individual strengths and needs, with the ultimate goal of improving student learning. The following guidance reflects these values. As districts grapple with the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 on their schools and communities, ODE is committed to helping districts in their efforts to provide the support and feedback educators need to be successful in the dynamic and unpredictable learning environment of the upcoming school year.

Collaboration will be more important than ever before. A collaborative process involving teachers and administrators results in meaningful evaluations and a stronger evaluation system. It is important to note that as districts consider adjustments to their systems of educator evaluation and support they must ensure, as required by statute and rule, that any changes are the result of collaboration between teachers, administrators and local bargaining units (ORS 342.850(2)(a); SB 290; and OAR 581-022-2410).

ODE has provided general guidance to districts regarding the requirements for educator evaluation for the 2021-22 school year. This companion document is designed to provide additional guidance regarding the cycle of evaluation when the majority of teaching and learning are taking place in a virtual environment, including considerations for conducting observations and the collection of evidence. As Charlotte Danielson notes in The Framework for Remote Teaching, "Teachers need support, not scores." What leads to growth is self-assessment, reflection on practice, and professional conversation, which will be more important than ever during a year when the mode of teaching and leading may change quickly and multiple times.

ODE wishes to explicitly acknowledge the Oregon Education Association for serving as a key partner and consultant on educator evaluation in Oregon in general, and on this document in particular. We also wish to acknowledge that this guidance has been informed by conversations with educators and administrators across Oregon, along with leaders of several virtual schools. We appreciate their partnership.

Guiding Principles

OAR 581-022-2410 describes the requirements for teacher and administrator evaluation and support in Oregon. While the requirements in this rule remain in effect for the 2021-22 school year, ODE encourages districts to consider the following guiding principles adapted from the *Ready Schools, Safe Learners Resiliency Framework*:

- **Ensure safety and wellness.** Educators, like their students, are experiencing intense levels of stress and anxiety as they enter this school year. Adjustments to evaluation that build trust and emphasize collaboration can promote staff wellness, reduce burnout and help teachers and administrators support student well-being.

- **Center well-being**. Acknowledge the physical and mental health impacts of this past year, make space for reflection and connection, and center evaluation practices on strengthening professional growth.

- **Cultivate connection and relationship.** Take a collaborative stance regarding evaluation to create space for partnership between educators and evaluators. Help educators connect to resources as well as one another as they navigate a school year that will be like no other.

- **Prioritize equity.** Recognize the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Latino/a/x, Pacific Islander communities; students experiencing disabilities; students living in rural areas; and students and families navigating poverty and houselessness. Prioritize standards of professional practice that help educators center equity in their classrooms and the students they serve.

- **Innovate.** Returning to school is an opportunity to improve teaching and learning by iterating on new instructional strategies, rethinking learning environments, and investing in creative approaches to address unfinished learning.

Cycle of Evaluation

As many Oregon districts have developed completely virtual options for students, questions follow regarding what evaluation looks like in a virtual environment. While it is true that some aspects of *how* evaluation and support are provided may need to change, *what* is evaluated remains the same. Regardless of whether a school is providing in-person instruction or implementing virtual instructional models, the cycle of evaluation is as follows:
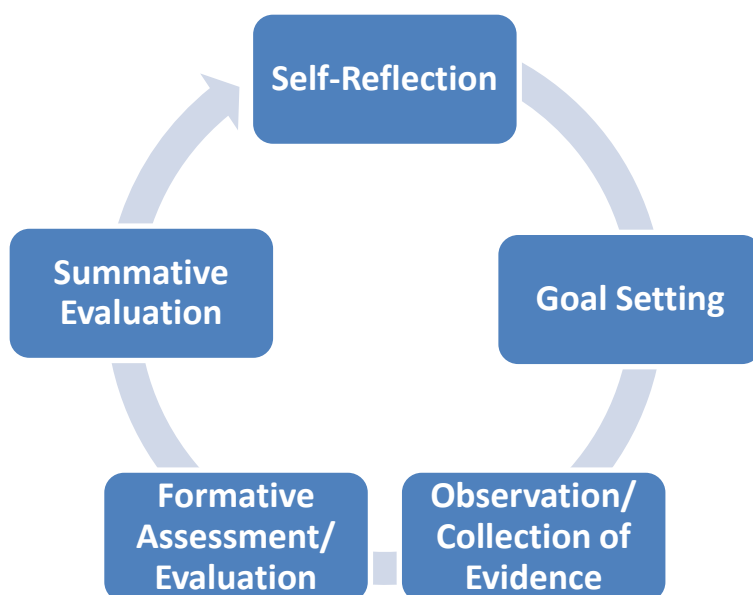
Self-Reflection

Goal Setting

Observation/ Collection of Evidence

Formative Assessment/ Evaluation

Summative Evaluation

During **Self-Reflection** the educator conducts an assessment of their practice against performance standards.

When **Goal Setting** the educator, in collaboration with the evaluator, uses data to identify and set one professional practice and two student learning goals.

Observation and Collection of Evidence is an ongoing process during which the educator and evaluator collect evidence of educator practice using multiple measures. This process goes hand in hand with **Formative Assessment** in which the educator and evaluator periodically review progress toward goals and performance against standards.

The **Summative Evaluation** is designed to be the culmination of multiple formative observations, reflections and professional conversations.

Shifting to a Virtual Environment

Although evaluation in a virtual setting will be new to many districts, there are schools both within Oregon and across the nation that have extensive experience with this process. ODE staff spoke with leaders of several virtual schools when developing this guidance, and learned from these conversations that the process is not significantly different.

- **Self – Evaluation:** Virtual leaders indicated that their school has a rubric aligned to the standards of professional practice and responsibility against which they ask educators to self-assess. This is done individually by teachers and shared electronically with the evaluator.

- **Goal Setting:** Educators in virtual schools set both professional practice goals and student learning goals. These goals are based on data and discussed, along with the educator's self-reflection, during the initial professional conversation. For more information on the flexibility and guidance being provided by ODE for the 2020-21 school year regarding goal setting, please consult [Educator Evaluation Guidance for 2021-22: SLG Goals](#).

- **Observation and Evidence:** Evaluators in virtual schools use an electronic method for collecting and storing evidence. Both educators and evaluators have access to shared documents where observation notes are kept and additional artifacts added. Additional recommendations regarding observations and evidence collection are included in the next section of this guidance.

- **Formative Assessment:** Evaluators hold professional conversations at least twice annually with educators as well as providing both formal and informal feedback. Methods include both scheduled professional conversations after formal observations, as well as feedback emailed after informal walkthroughs.

Recommendations from Virtual School Leaders

Leaders from the Oregon Virtual Academy, Baker Web Academy and the Idaho Virtual Academy took time to share their experience in support of this guidance. When asked what advice they had to offer districts beginning this process, one virtual school leader said "Don't overthink it. You have all the pieces you need already. The biggest change that is required is a shift in thinking about how to 'see' evidence."

- Conduct both formal (scheduled and recorded) and informal (impromptu walkthroughs) observations. Recorded observations afford more flexibility for evaluators, decrease pressure for the educator and can also be used for self-reflection purposes.

- The core "look-fors" in virtual observations are the same as those in brick and mortar schools:
    - What is the learning environment like?
    - What are the objectives of the lesson?
    - What is the level of teacher questioning?
    - How does the teacher ensure student engagement?

- Examine your existing evaluation tool/rubric with an eye to the question "What would evidence of practice look like in a virtual setting?"
    - For example, Domain 2 within the Danielson Framework for Teaching focuses on Classroom Environment. When thinking about evidence in this Domain the question to ask could be "What is the virtual experience like for students?" Evidence could include not just observations of synchronous instruction, but the educator's use of the district's digital platform and/or Learning Management System, community-building efforts, establishing routines and etiquette for online learning and ensuring students are able to access and understand assigned work.

- Consider using The [National Standards for Quality Online Learning](#) as a resource. The explanations and examples included for each indicator can provide valuable insight when examining your evaluation tool and developing look-for prompts.

- As educators and evaluators navigate this new process together, collaboration is key. Welcome teachers to submit evidence they believe demonstrates mastery in their practice.

Recommendations from Research

The Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University conducted a randomized control trial to investigate the impact of video technology on classroom observation. Their report [Leveraging Video for Learning](#) details the resulting findings on five ways to use video: self-reflection, peer collaboration, virtual coaching, evaluation, and video libraries. The key recommendations for the use of video for evaluation are as follows:

1. **Let teachers choose videos for observation**. When teachers put their best foot forward, they are able to showcase their best work. Research shows that this approach increases perceptions of fairness in an observation.

2. **Use video observations in tandem with in-person observations**. Administrators' presence in classrooms is important for many reasons; video can help shift the quality and focus of principal time in classrooms. Since the two need not be mutually exclusive, consider what types of evidence are best collected by video compared to in-person.

3. **Consider involving normed external observers** to create more administrator capacity, increase the reliability of the final evaluation score, and give teachers more content-specific feedback about their practice.

4. **Ensure familiarity with working technology first**. Nobody should worry about a poor evaluation because a camera was not working.

Additional Considerations

Recording Instruction - As described in Leveraging Video for Learning, when used well video technology "can accelerate the process of opening up instruction to observation and feedback." However, recording instruction raises privacy concerns for educators and students that must be addressed. As a result, the use of recorded observations should be mutually agreed upon by teachers, administrators and local bargaining units. It bears repeating that revisions to the evaluation system are required, by statute and rule, to be collaborative.

Professional Learning – In any evaluation system it is critical that all involved – teachers and administrators – receive professional learning and training on the tools, procedures, and protocols that have been agreed upon for use. The same is true for any revisions made to accommodate the circumstances that observation under Comprehensive Distance Learning may require.

Resources

- The Framework for Remote Teaching (The Danielson Group)
- National Standards for Quality Online Learning (Quality Matters and Virtual Learning Leadership Alliance)
- Leveraging Video for Learning (Center for Education Policy Research, Harvard)
- Oregon Framework for Teacher and Administrator Evaluation and Support Systems (ODE)
- Guidance for Educator Evaluations for 2021-22 (ODE)
- Educator Evaluation Guidance for 2021-22: SLG Goals (ODE)

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