

South Dakota Teacher Effectiveness Pilot

School Year 2013-14

OVERVIEW

The 2013-14 Teacher Effectiveness Pilot marks another step in South Dakota's efforts to implement comprehensive local teacher evaluation systems that focus on supporting teachers and improving student learning. This summary outlines the purpose and principles of the South Dakota Teacher Effectiveness Pilot, the accompanying research project, and provides additional information about the state-provided resources that will benefit pilot schools. The pilot will be run at the school level.

PURPOSE OF THE TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS PILOT

The South Dakota Teacher Effectiveness Pilot seeks to:

1. Assess administrative procedures, training and support systems associated with implementing teacher evaluation systems that are based upon both professional practice (teaching standards) and student growth (quantitative measures of student performance).
2. Identify best practices, challenges and opportunities associated with implementing teacher evaluation systems, with an emphasis on including student academic growth as one of the significant measures of teacher effectiveness; and
3. Inform any necessary changes to the model teacher evaluation system, which will be an option for districts to use as state and federal teacher evaluation requirements take effect in the 2014-15 school year.

PRINCIPLES OF THE TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS PILOT

All pilot schools will be asked to implement a local evaluation system based on four core principles.

PRINCIPLE 1: COMPREHENSIVE STAFF TRAINING

Pilot participants will receive training on conducting teacher evaluations that include measures of both professional practice and student growth. To ensure consistent evaluation of professional teaching practice, evaluators will undergo a certification process. In addition, pilot participants will be trained on the process of incorporating quantitative student growth data as one significant component of teacher evaluation.

PRINCIPLE 2: CONSISTENT EVALUATION CYCLE

All teachers in years one through three of employment (probationary teachers) will be evaluated during the pilot year. In addition, pilot schools will also evaluate teachers in or beyond the fourth year of employment who are scheduled to receive an evaluation in the 2013-14 school year.

PRINCIPLE 3: MULTIPLE MEASURES, INCLUDING QUANTITATIVE MEASURES OF STUDENT GROWTH

Evidence of professional practice, measured against South Dakota's Framework for Teaching, will be gathered through formal observation, and evidence of professional practice that is not observable will be gathered and documented as part of a comprehensive teacher portfolio. In addition, pilot schools will include student academic growth as one significant measure of teacher performance.

PRINCIPLE 4: SUMMATIVE TEACHER PERFORMANCE RATINGS

Pilot schools will combine two measures of teacher performance – professional practice and student growth – into a single summative performance rating. Summative ratings will differentiate overall teacher performance into one of three categories: Below Expectations, Meets Expectations or Exceeds Expectations.

INFORMING PROCESS REVISIONS THROUGH UNIVERSITY RESEARCH

In an effort to expand the state's understanding of how best to base evaluations on both professional practice and quantitative measures of student growth, pilot schools will participate in a formal research effort. Research will be designed and conducted by the University of South Dakota and is intended to provide data and insights to inform future revisions to local and state teacher evaluation policy. Pilot schools will collect baseline data for what is expected to be an ongoing research effort to monitor the impact and effectiveness of the evaluation system.

TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS PILOT SELECTION CRITERIA

The South Dakota Department of Education will recruit a diverse group of pilot participants that represent various school enrollment categories, geographic locations and school administrative structures. The Teacher Effectiveness Pilot will include 20 schools that meet the following selection criteria:

- Ten (10) schools will come from districts with student enrollment of 600 or less.
- Six (6) schools will come from districts with student enrollment between 600 and 2,000.
- Four (4) schools will come from districts with student enrollment of 2,000 or more.
- At least five (5) of the 20 schools will be located west of the Missouri River.
- At least one (1) school will have a combined principal and superintendent position.

STATE SUPPORT FOR PILOT PARTICIPANTS

Schools electing to be part of the Teacher Effectiveness Pilot will build their internal capacity to implement evaluation systems that include measures of both professional teaching practice and student growth. In addition, participating schools will receive the benefit of state-paid guidance in several areas, including:

1. State-paid training for all staff on the South Dakota Framework for Teaching (Danielson Model), provided through Teachscape;
2. State-paid training and certification for all observers, provided through Teachscape;
3. Access to South Dakota's draft Teacher Effectiveness Handbook, including recommended practices and procedures to guide district implementation;
4. State-paid regional training workshops in the summer of 2013;
5. Up to two (2) full days of in-school support, coaching and assistance, provided through East Dakota Educational Cooperative.

APPLYING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS PILOT

Schools interested in participating in the South Dakota Teacher Effectiveness Pilot should take the following steps:

1. Discuss participation with key stakeholders, including district superintendent, school principal, administrative leadership team, staff and school board (April-May).
2. Complete the application to be considered for selection as a pilot school (April-May) **by May 17**. The application can be found at the following link: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JMD2Q7Y>.
3. Schools selected for the pilot will be **notified in late May**. Following notification, pilot partners will have to return a participation agreement.