

**STERLING  
PROFESSIONAL  
LEARNING  
AND  
EVALUATION PLAN  
2015**



Approved by PDEC 4/1/15  
Approved by BoE 4/8/15

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# **MISSION**

**It is the mission of the Sterling School System to develop life-long learners to become responsible citizens of the world by creating a motivating, supportive environment which fosters meaningful learning and provides for the development of each individual to his/her highest potential.**

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# **STERLING GOALS**

## **General Goal Statements**

- Goal I:** Foster and support ongoing program development to expand and improve student achievement in a positive school environment.
- Goal II:** Provide a comprehensive professional development program that supports professional expertise and proficiency.
- Goal III:** Develop and promote a variety of effective communication strategies and the dissemination of information that will support a positive Sterling Community School climate and culture.
- Goal IV:** Continue to promote effective and efficient operations, systems and management in order to realize the fiscal resources and to support school related rules, regulations and requirements.
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# PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND EVALUATION PROGRAM

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## OVERVIEW

### *INTRODUCTION*

Sterling is a rural community located in the northeastern section of Connecticut. Originally part of Voluntown, the northern section of the town separated from Voluntown and obtained town privileges from the Connecticut Assembly in May of 1794. Sterling was named in honor of a local resident, Dr. John Sterling.

The most recent data indicates that the town has approximately 3,870 residents. Of those residents, the majority is identified as white male and the median age is forty years of age. Of the residents who are age twenty-five and older, 88% have obtained a high school diploma. Of that population 23% have some college education and 25% have obtained a bachelor degree or more. The major economic sector is trade, followed by services and manufacturing. The main employer for the town is the Town of Sterling, Board of Education.

In 2007, the town built Sterling Community School. Located off of route 14 on Sterling Road, the facility houses students from preschool to grade eight. The school boasts a gymnasium, a library media center, art and music rooms and two computer labs. The majority of the classrooms are equipped with electronic white boards and has both a teaching station and computers for student use.

As of October of 2014, student enrollment for grades kindergarten through eight was four hundred and sixty-one students. Preschoolers numbered thirty-three. The Sterling Board of Education employs forty- three certified staff members, certified staff include: twenty-four classroom teachers, four special education teachers, reading and literacy coaches, teachers for music, art, library media, computer teacher, physical education and part time health. Additional certified staff members include: a speech and language pathologist, and a social worker. Administrators include: a part-time superintendent, a principal and a director of special services/early childhood education.

The Professional Learning and Evaluation plan was developed in concert with educators from Sterling and consultants from EASTCONN (the area RESC). Members of the Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development committee worked together to make the final plan meaningful for the Sterling community. The plan has been reviewed and approved by the Sterling Board of Education.

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## ***CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS ABOUT PROFESSIONAL LEARNING***

STERLING'S Professional Learning and Evaluation Program establishes high standards for the performance of teachers and administrators that ultimately lead to and are evidenced by improved student learning. Professional standards, including *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (2014)*, *Connecticut's Common Core of Leading-Connecticut School Leadership Standards (2012)*, the *Standards for Professional Learning (2012)*, and national standards for educational specialists provide the foundation for Sterling's Professional Learning and Evaluation Program.

We acknowledge that deep student learning and high achievement that transfers to enrichment of future learning, career and personal experiences later in life is built by the collaborative, interdependent work of teachers and administrators, students and families, and school districts and the communities they serve. Our program seeks to create a professional culture in our educational programs that is grounded in the following beliefs:

### ***We believe that:***

- An effective teaching and learning system must reflect and be grounded in the vision and core values of the district and its school.
- An effective teaching and learning system must strive for constant improvement in educator effectiveness and student outcomes which are standards based; so that our students possess the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in an increasingly competitive world economic environment.
- An effective teaching and learning system promotes and is sustained by a culture of collaboration and knowledge-sharing.
- An effective teaching and learning system creates coherence among the functions of supervision and evaluation of professional practice, professional learning and support, and curriculum and assessment development.
- A comprehensive evaluation process includes:
  - on-going inquiry into and reflection on practice;
  - goal-setting aligned with expectations for student learning;
  - information gathered from multiple sources of evidence;
  - analysis of data from multiple sources of evidence;
  - support structures for feedback, assistance, and professional collaboration;
  - research-based professional learning opportunities aligned with the needs of teachers.

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## ***PHILOSOPHY OF PROFESSIONAL EVALUATION***

The purpose of educator evaluation is to improve student achievement outcomes through effective instruction and support for student and educator learning. A variety of factors support the improvement of learning and instruction. The Sterling Professional Learning and Evaluation Program address all of these factors systemically. It is a comprehensive system that is based on clearly defined expectations that consist of domains of skills, knowledge, and disposition articulated in the *Common Core of Teaching (CCT) (2014)* for teacher evaluation, the *Common Core of Leading-Connecticut's Leadership Standards (2012)* for administrator evaluation, and the national standards for the evaluation of educators in special services, as well as what current research tells us about the relationship between teaching and learning.

The Professional Learning Program supports the development of educators at all stages of their careers, as it weaves together professional standards with expectations for student learning, and ongoing evaluation with access to professional learning and support. The Program's teacher observation and evaluation instrument, the *CCT Performance and Practice Continuum*, is designed to align with the processes and professional performance profiles outlined in Connecticut's Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) program, which provides differentiated professional learning for all beginning teachers. Such alignment promotes the establishment of common, consistent vocabulary and understandings about teacher practice at all levels, among administrators and teachers, throughout the district.

Sterling's Professional Learning and Evaluation Program takes into account school improvement goals, curricular goals, student learning goals, and evidence of the educators' contributions to the school as a whole. Performance expectations within our Program also include those responsibilities that we believe to be the key in promoting a positive school climate and the development of a professional learning community.

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## ***PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND EVALUATION PROGRAM GOALS***

### **1. Professionalize the profession**

- Document and share educators' best practices that result in meaningful advancement of student learning.
- Enhance expert knowledge and collective efficacy, through opportunities for educators to collaborate and develop leadership skills.
- Create new opportunities for educators to collaborate and develop leadership skills in their schools and disciplines.
- Recognize and reward excellence in teaching, administration, and exemplary contributions to Sterling Community School and programs.
- Ensure that only high-quality professionals are selected for tenure in Sterling school
- Provide a process for validating personnel decisions, including recommendations for continued employment of staff.

### **2. Improve the quality and focus of observation and evaluation**

- Establish collaborative examinations of instructional practice among administrators and teachers to develop shared understanding of the strengths and challenges within our school to improve student learning.
- Define and clarify criteria for evaluation and measurement of student learning, using research-based models for evaluation.
- Establish multiple measures to assess professional practice, such as: teacher portfolios; teacher-designed objectives, benchmarks, and assessments of student learning; teacher contributions to school/district level research on student learning and professional resources; mentoring and peer assistance; achievement of learning objectives for student growth, as measured by appropriate standardized assessments, where applicable, or other national or locally-developed curriculum benchmarks and expectations for student learning.
- Improve timeliness, consistency and the quality of feedback to those being evaluated.
- Align evaluation findings with professional learning program and support systems.

### **3. Support organizational improvement through the Professional Learning and Evaluation Program.**

- Align professional learning opportunities with the collective and individual needs of educators, based on data acquired through professional learning goal plans and observations of professional practice.
- Provide educators with multiple avenues for pursuing professional learning.
- Create formal and informal opportunities for educators to share professional learning with colleagues.

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## ***ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND EVALUATION***

### **Definition of Teacher and Evaluator**

Evaluator refers to all individuals (including school and district administrators) whose job responsibilities include supervision and evaluation of teachers. Teacher, as used in this document, shall mean all certified instructional and non-instructional persons below the rank of Administrator.

### **Superintendent's Role in the Evaluation Process**

- Arbitrate disputes.
- Allocate and provide funds and resources to implement the plan.
- Serve as liaison between Sterling's Board of Education and the evaluation process.
- Ensure that the Professional Development/Evaluation Committee receives information regarding school and program improvement and individual professional growth goals for use in planning staff development programs.
- Ensure that training opportunities support the implementation of the Program

### **Responsibility for Evaluations**

Administrators will be responsible for evaluations, including, but not limited to, personnel in the following categories:

#### ***Superintendent***

- Principal
- Director of Special Services/Early Childhood Education

#### ***Principal of Sterling Community School***

- Teachers – Grades 4 - 8
- Library Media Specialist
- Art
- Music
- Computer
- Physical Education
- Health

#### ***Director of Special Services/Early Childhood Education***

- Teachers – Grades Pk - 3
- Interventionist(s)
- Literacy Coach(es)
- Clinical Staff
- Speech and Language Pathologist

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## **Roles and Responsibilities of Evaluators and Evaluatees**

The primary purpose of educator evaluation is to strengthen individual and collective practices to improve student growth. Therefore, evaluators and evaluatees share responsibilities for the following:

- The review and understanding of *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (CCT)* and the *Performance and Practice Continuum*.
- The review and understanding of *Connecticut's Common Core of Leading (CCL)* and the *Leadership Practice Rubric*.
- The review and familiarity with applicable portions of Connecticut's Common Core State Standards, Connecticut's Frameworks of K-12 Curricular Goals and Standards, the standardized assessments (Smarter Balanced Assessments) as well as locally-developed curriculum standards.
- Adherence to established timelines.
- Completion of required components in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Sharing of professional resources and new learning about professional practice.

### **Evaluator Roles**

- Review of and familiarity with evaluatees' previous evaluations.
- Participation in collaborative conferences with evaluatees.
- Assistance with assessment of goals, student learning indicators, learning activities developed and implemented by evaluatees, and outcomes.
- Analysis and assessment of performance, making recommendations as appropriate.
- Clarification of questions, identification of resources, facilitation of peer assistance and other support as needed.

### **Evaluatee Roles**

- Reflection on previous feedback from evaluations.
- Engagement in inquiry-based professional learning opportunities.
- Participation in collaborative conferences with evaluator.
- Development, implementation, and self-assessment of goals, student learning indicators, learning activities, and outcomes.
- Request clarification of questions or assistance with identification of professional resources and/or peer assistance

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## ***IMPLEMENTATION OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND EVALUATION PROGRAM***

### **Training and Orientation of Teachers and Administrators**

During FALL 2015 and throughout the 2015-16 school year, Sterling provided to all educators orientation and update training sessions (through in-service sessions, grade level meetings, and individual conferences) that explained the processes for professional learning planning, protocols for evaluation and observation (including timelines and rubrics), and documents that were used by all staff.

Teachers and administrators new to Sterling (employed during or after the first year of implementation) are provided with copies of the Professional Learning and Evaluation Program and engage in training to ensure that they understand the elements and procedures of the Program, processes and documents. The training takes place upon employment or prior to the beginning of the school year with members of Sterling Administration.

### **New Educator Support and Induction**

In the interest of supporting all educators in the implementation of the Program and as part of the orientation to the district, a variety of general topics are addressed, including:

- School philosophy and goals
- Policies and procedures
- Assignments and responsibilities
- Facility and staffing
- Curriculum and instructional support
- Resources for professional learning
- Schedules and routines
- Support services
- TEAM

In addition, periodic meetings with school personnel will focus on domains of the *Common Core of Teaching*, *Common Core of Leading*, Common Core Standards in English and Language Arts, Mathematics, and the Content Areas, discipline policies, stakeholder communication, effective collaboration, classroom interventions, special education, evaluation and professional responsibilities.

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### **Evaluator Orientation and Support**

Understanding of Sterling's Professional Learning and Evaluation Program's features, *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (CCT)*, *Common Core of Learning (CCL)*, Common Core State Standards, Standards for Professional Learning, and the components of professional evaluation and observation program is essential to facilitating the evaluation process and promoting student growth. To that end, evaluators provided with on-going training and support in the use and application of Sterling's evaluation program. Evaluators review Program elements and procedures prior to the beginning of each school year and at other appropriate intervals, to be determined.

### **Resources for Program Implementation**

Funds to provide materials and training as well as time for Professional Learning options and collaboration necessary to support the successful achievement of the teachers' goals, objectives and implementation of the Evaluation Program are allocated annually and determined on a program and individual basis.

## ***DISPUTE RESOLUTION***

The purpose of the resolution process is to secure at the lowest possible administrative level, equitable solutions for disagreements which from time to time may arise related to the evaluation process. The right of appeal is a necessary component of the evaluation process and is available to every participant at any point in the evaluation process. As our evaluation system is designed to ensure continuous, constructive and cooperative processes among professional educators, most disagreements are expected to be worked out informally between evaluators and evaluatees.

The resolution process may be implemented when there is a question as to whether or not:

- evaluation procedures and/or guidelines have been appropriately followed;
- adequate data has been gathered to support fair and accurate decisions.

NOTE: The evaluator's judgment shall not be the focus of a dispute. The resolution process shall be conducted in accordance with the laws governing confidentiality.

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## **Procedures**

1. Within three days of articulating the dispute, the evaluatee will meet and discuss the matter with the evaluator with the objective of resolving the matter informally. The two parties have the option of choosing a facilitator who will review the areas of difference and suggest compromises or resolutions.
2. If there has been no resolution, the Superintendent shall review the recommendations of the facilitator and any additional information from the evaluator and evaluatee and shall meet with both parties as soon as possible. Within three days of the meeting, and review of all documentation and recommendations, the Superintendent will act as arbitrator and make a final decision regarding the dispute. The Superintendents decision shall be binding.
3. The evaluatee shall be entitled to Collective Bargaining representation at all levels of the process.

## **Time Limits**

1. Since it is important that appeals be processed as rapidly as possible, the number of days shall be considered maximum. The time limits specified may be extended by written agreement of both parties.
2. Days shall mean school days. Both parties may agree, however, to meet during breaks at mutually agreed upon times.
3. If an evaluatee does not initiate the appeals procedure within 5 days of acknowledged receipt of evaluation materials, the evaluatee shall be considered to have waived the right of appeal.

Failure of the evaluatee at any level to appeal to the next level within the specified time shall be deemed to be acceptance of the decision rendered at that level.

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# **TEACHER EVALUATION PLANS**

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## TEACHER EVALUATION PLAN

### ***OVERVIEW***

Sterling's Professional Learning and Evaluation Program supports an environment in which educators have the opportunity to regularly employ inquiry into and reflection on practice, to give each other feedback, and to develop teaching practices that positively affect student learning.

To help foster such an environment, we have created the Professional Learning and Evaluation Program as a district-wide system that provides multiple opportunities and options for teachers to engage in individual and collaborative activities in which they collect, analyze, and respond to data about student learning, within Sterling community and among other schools and programs. Teachers and administrators are expected to provide evidence related to the effectiveness of instructional practices and their impact on student learning. Teachers and administrators are also expected to take an active role in a cycle of inquiry into their practice, development, implementation and analysis of strategies employed to advance student growth, and reflection on effectiveness of their practice. The Program includes an additional component, Professional Assistance and Support System (PASS), for those teachers and administrators in need of additional support to meet performance expectations.

### **Standards and Indicators of Teaching Practice**

The expectations for teacher practice in Sterling's Professional Learning and Evaluation Program are defined using the six domains and their indicators from the *Common Core of Teaching* (CCT, 2014). The *Performance and Practice Continuum*, the tool used for observing and assessing teacher practice in each of the domains, reflects the spirit and specifics of the CCT, articulates components of teaching, and establishes designations of levels of practice, including: *Below Standard; Developing; Proficient; Exemplary*. The CCT (2010) and the *Performance and Practice Continuum* are provided in Appendix A of this document.

### **Core Requirements of the Evaluation Program**

Sterling's Professional Learning and Evaluation Program is aligned with the Core Requirements of the State Board-approved Guidelines for Educator Evaluation, as provided in subsection (a) of Sec. 10-151b (C.G.S.), as amended by Sec. 51 of P.A. 12-116. The following is a description of the processes and components of Sterling's program for teacher evaluation, through which the Core Requirements of the Guidelines shall be met.

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## **PROCESS AND TIMELINE OF TEACHER EVALUATION**

The annual evaluation process for a teacher will at least include, but not be limited to, the following steps, in order:

### **1. Orientation (by September 30):**

- To begin the annual evaluation process, evaluators meet with teachers, in groups and/or individually, to discuss the evaluation process and their roles and responsibilities within it. In this meeting, the following elements will be discussed and reviewed:
  1. *Performance and Practice Continuum*.
  2. School and district priorities that should be reflected in teacher performance and practice goals.
  3. SMART goal(s) related to student outcomes and achievement.
  4. Data regarding whole-school indicators of student learning.
  5. Self-assessment processes and purposes.
  6. Data collection, including types of data and processes for collection and analysis.
  7. Access to the online evaluation system

Evaluators and teachers will establish a schedule for collaboration required by the evaluation process.

### **2. Goal-setting conference (by October 30):**

- *Teacher Reflection*—In advance of the Goal Setting Conference, the teacher will examine data related to current students' performance (including, but not limited to: standardized tests, portfolios and other samples of student work appropriate to the teacher's assignment), the prior year evaluation data and survey results, previous professional learning goals, and the *Performance and Practice Continuum*. First-year beginning teachers may find it helpful to reflect on their practice goals with their mentor teacher, using the TEAM program's Module Resources and Performance Profiles, to determine a baseline for establishing goals. The teacher will draft the following goal(s):

- a) **one SMART Goal(s)** to address student learning and achievement objectives, which will comprise 45% of a teacher's summative evaluation;
- b) **one performance and practice goal**, based on data from teacher reflection and evaluator observations and review of the *Performance and Practice Continuum*;

c) **one goal aligned with a whole-school goal** determined by the school administrator based on data from **parent feedback**; and  
 d) **one goal based on whole school indicators of student learning** for the school year. The teacher may collaborate in grade-level or subject-matter teams to support the goal-setting process.

- *Goal-setting conference* – No later than October 15<sup>th</sup> of the school year, the evaluator and teacher will meet to discuss the teacher’s proposed goals in order to arrive at mutual agreement about them. The goals for the year must be informed by data and evidence collected by the teacher **and** the evaluator about the teacher’s practice. The evaluator collects evidence about teacher practice to support the review and may request revisions to the proposed goals and objectives if they do not meet approval criteria.
- In year one of the implementation of the Program, teachers will be encouraged to set one year goals related to professional learning and practice. At the end of year- one, teachers may choose to set multi-year goals.

*Examples of data and evidence that may be included in the goal-setting conference:*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson Plans</li> <li>• Formative Assessment Data</li> <li>• Summative Assessment Data</li> <li>• Student Work</li> <li>• Parent Communication Logs</li> <li>• Data Team Minutes</li> <li>• Survey Data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class List</li> <li>• Standardized and Non-Standardized Data (based on the teacher’s class)</li> <li>• School-Level Data</li> <li>• <i>CCT Continuum</i></li> <li>• Reflections on past practice</li> </ul>
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### **3. Observations of practice (by November 30, January 30, and April 30)**

Evaluators will observe teacher practice in formal and informal in-class observations and non-classroom reviews of practice throughout the school year, with frequency based on the year of implementation of the plan and the teacher’s summative evaluation rating.

- **Evidence collection and review (throughout the school year):**

The teacher collects evidence about his/her practice and student learning that is relevant to the agreed-upon professional goals. The evaluator also collects evidence about teacher practice for discussion in the interim conference and summative review.

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#### **4. Mid-year conference (by February 28):**

- The evaluator and teacher will hold at least one mid-year conference. The discussion should focus on processes and progress toward meeting the goals and developing one's practice. Both the teacher and the evaluator will bring evidence about practice and student learning data to review. The teacher and evaluator will discuss the cause and effect relationship of practice to student learning data, i.e. – how practice positively impacts student learning. During the conference, both the teacher and evaluator will make explicit connections between the 40% and the 45% components of the evaluation program. If necessary, teachers and evaluators may mutually agree to revisions to strategies or approaches used and/or mid-year adjustment of SMART Goal(s) to accommodate changes (e.g., student populations, assignment). They will also discuss actions that the teacher can take and supports the evaluator can provide to promote teacher growth in his/her development areas.

#### **5. End-of-year summative review (by last day of school):**

- *Teacher self-assessment* - The teacher reviews and reflects on all information and data collected during the year related to the goals and completes a self-assessment for review by the evaluator. This self-assessment may focus specifically on the areas for development, referencing the *Performance and Practice Continuum* and established in the goal-setting conference.

The self-assessment should address all components of the evaluation plan and include what the teacher learned throughout the year supported by evidence and personal reflection. The self-assessment should also include a statement that identifies a possible future direction that is related to the year's outcomes.

- *End-of-year conference* - The evaluator and the teacher meet to discuss all evidence collected to date. The teacher and evaluator will discuss the extent to which students met the SMART Goal(s) and how the teacher's performance and practice focus contributed to student outcomes and professional growth. Following the conference, the evaluator assigns a summative rating and generates a summary report of the evaluation before the end of the school year.

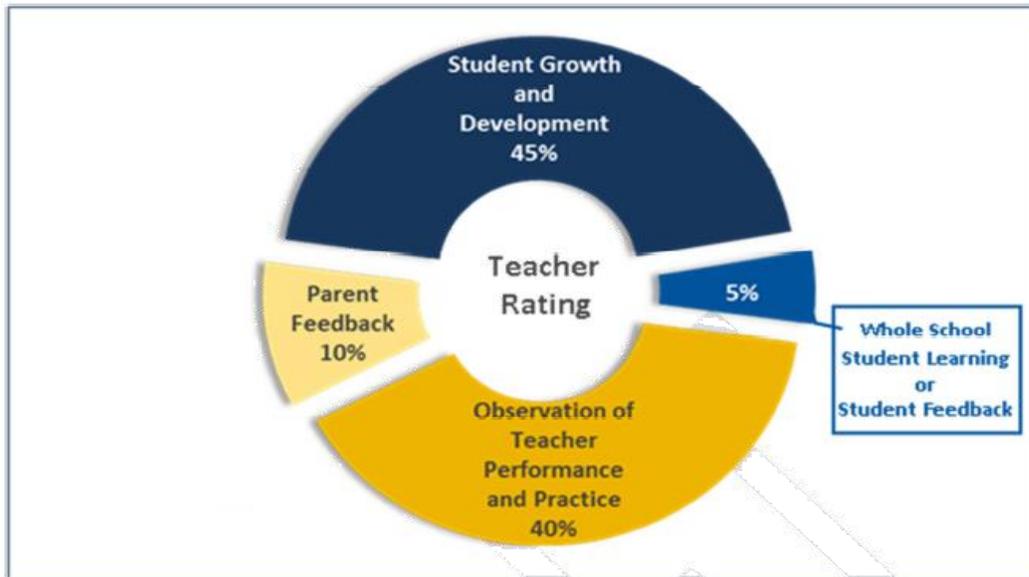
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- *Summative Rating*—The evaluator reviews submitted evidence, self-assessments, and observation data to generate category and focus area ratings. The category ratings generate the final, summative rating using the summative rating matrix. After all data, including SMARTER BALANCED assessment data, are available, the evaluator may adjust the summative rating if the SMARTER BALANCED assessment data change the student-related indicators significantly to change the final rating. Such revisions should take place as soon as SMARTER BALANCED assessment data are available.

#### **6. Summative rating revisions**

- After all data, including SMARTER BALANCED assessment data, are available, the evaluator may adjust the summative rating if the SMARTER BALANCED assessment data have a significant impact on a final rating. A final rating may be revised when SMARTER BALANCED assessment data are available.

## **COMPONENTS OF TEACHER EVALUATION AND RATING**

The Core Requirements of the CT Guidelines for Teacher Evaluation require that districts weight the components of teacher's annual summative evaluations and ratings as follows:



### **CATEGORY 1: STUDENT OUTCOMES AND ACHIEVEMENT (45%)**

Forty-five percent (45%) of a teacher's evaluation will be based on achievement of student learning outcomes defined by teacher-created SMART Goal(s) that are aligned with both standardized and non-standardized measures. Teachers are required to develop a **SMART Goal(s)** related to student growth and development.

- *SMART GOAL based on Standardized indicators (comprises 22.5% of teacher's evaluation rating).* For those teaching tested grades and subjects, SMART Goal(s) will be developed based on an analysis of results of student achievement on the appropriate SMARTER BALANCED assessment and other standardized assessments where available. If no standardized assessment is available, teachers are required to develop two SMART Goal(s) based on non-standardized measures.
  - Teachers in non-tested grades and subjects may establish common SMART Goal(s) based on student learning needs and measurable targets revealed in aggregate data from SMARTER BALANCED assessments or other standardized assessments where available
- *SMART goal based on Non-standardized indicators (comprises 22.5% of teachers evaluation rating):* For those teaching is non-tested grades and subjects and where no standardized assessment is available, SMART Goal(s) will be developed using a minimum of one non-standardized measure and a maximum of one additional standardized measure, if there is mutual agreement. Sources for the development of SMART Goal(s) based on non-standardized indicators may include:

- Benchmark assessments of student achievement of school-wide Expectations for Student Learning, measured by analytic rubrics.
  - Other benchmark assessments
  - Student portfolios of examples of work in content areas, collected over time and reviewed annually.
- SMART Goal(s) for all personnel must demonstrate alignment with school-wide student achievement priorities.

### **Goal Setting**

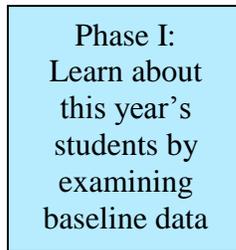
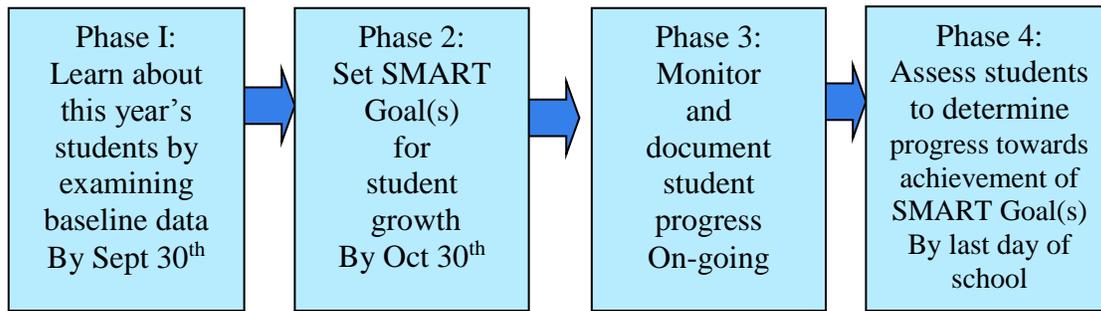
Sterling's teachers' SMART Goal(s) address the learning needs of their students and are aligned to the teacher's assignment. The student outcome related indicators will be written to meet SMART goal criteria: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound. Teachers will write one (1) SMART Goal that will address targeted areas for student growth and/or achievement.

The SMART goal will:

- Take into account the academic track record and overall needs and strengths of the students that the teacher is teaching that year
- Address the most important purposes of a teacher's assignment (determined through self-reflection and conferencing).
- Align with school, district, and state student achievement objectives.
- Take into account the students' learning needs through a review of relevant baseline data.
- Consider Public School Information System (PSIS) factors.
- Be mutually agreed upon by teacher and their evaluator.
- Be fair, valid, reliable and useful to the greatest extent possible.

### ***SMART Goal(s) and Student Progress***

The following diagram illustrates the processes involved in establishing and assessing SMART Goal(s) for student learning.



To write meaningful and relevant SMART Goal(s) that align to their teaching assignment and result from a thorough knowledge of their students, data analysis is required.

Examples of data that teachers will be required to analyze are:

- Student outcome data (academic)
- Student behavior data (absences, referrals)
- Program data (participation in school or extracurricular activities or programs)
- Perceptual data (learning styles and inventories, anecdotal records)

Teachers must learn as much as they can about the students they teach, be able to document baseline data that they have used to determine their instructional focus and be able to write SMART Goal(s) on which they will, in part, be evaluated.

Analysis of these initial pieces of data on incoming students for the year should be completed by mid-September of the academic year.

Phase 2:  
Set SMART  
Goal(s)  
for  
student

Each teacher will write a SMART Goal(s). Teachers whose students take a SMARTER BALANCED assessment will create one SMART goal based on that assessment and one SMART goal based on a non-standardized assessment. All other teachers may develop their two SMART Goal(s) based on non-standardized assessment or a standardized assessment where available and appropriate.

Each SMART goal should make clear (1) what evidence was or will be examined, (2) what level of performance is targeted, (3) what assessment/indicator will be used to measure the targeted level of performance, and (4) what proportion of students is projected to achieve the targeted performance level. SMART Goal(s) can also address student subgroups, such as high or low-performing students. It is through the Phase I examination of student data that teachers will determine what level of performance to target for which students.

Teachers will submit their SMART Goal(s) to their evaluator for review and approval. The review and approval process of the SMART Goal(s) will take place during the Goal-Setting conference, (on or before October 15). Evaluators will review and approve the SMART Goal(s) based on the following criteria, to ensure they are as fair, reliable, valid, and useful to the greatest possible extent:

- **Priority of Content:** SMART goal is deeply relevant to the teacher's assignment and addresses the most important purposes of that assignment.
- **Rigor of SMART Goal:** SMART goal is attainable, but ambitious, and represents at least one year's student growth.
- **Analysis of Student Outcome Data:** SMART goal provides specific, measurable evidence of student outcome data through analysis by the teacher and demonstrates knowledge about students' growth and development.

Phase 3:  
Monitor and  
document  
student  
progress

Once the SMART Goal(s) are approved, teachers must monitor students' progress toward achieving student learning SMART Goal(s).

Teachers may monitor and document student progress through:

- Examination of student work
- Administration of interim assessments
- Tracking of students' accomplishments and struggles

Teachers may choose to share their interim findings with colleagues during grade level collaborative time. They may also wish to keep their evaluator apprised of progress. Artifacts related to the teacher's monitoring practices should be reviewed and discussed during the Mid-Year Conference.

***Mid-year conferences***

Evaluators and teachers will review progress toward the goals/objectives at least once during the school year, using available information and data collected on student progress. This review may result in revisions to the instructional strategies or approaches the teachers use. Teachers and evaluators may mutually agree to mid-year adjustments to SMART Goal(s) to accommodate changes (e.g., student populations, assignment). The mid-year conference will take place by February 15<sup>th</sup> of the academic year.

Phase 4:  
Assess students to  
determine progress  
towards  
achievement of  
SMART Goal(s)

**End-of-year review of SMART Goal(s)/ Student Outcomes and Achievement:**

***Teacher Self-Assessment*** – The teacher reviews all information and data collected during the year and completes a self-assessment for review by the evaluator. Teachers will reflect on the SMART Goal(s) by responding to the following four statements:

- Describe the results and provide evidence for each indicator.
- Describe what you did that produced these results.
- Provide your overall assessment of whether the goal was met.
- Describe what you learned and how you will use that information going forward.

Self assessments should be brief and concise, maximum two pages.

***End -of- Year Conference*** – The teacher shall collect evidence of student progress toward meeting the student learning goals/objectives. This evidence will reflect student progress toward meeting SMART Goal(s) for learning. The evidence will be submitted to the evaluator, and the teacher and evaluator will discuss the extent to which the students met the learning goals/objectives. Following the conference, the evaluator will rate the extent of student progress toward meeting the student learning goals/objectives, based on criteria for the 4 performance level designations shown in the table below. If SMARTER BALANCED assessment data has a significant impact on a final rating, a final rating may be revised when SMARTER BALANCED assessment data are available.

Evaluators will review the evidence and the teacher’s self-assessment and assign one of four ratings to **each** SMART goal: Exceeded (4 points), Met (3 points), Partially Met (2 points), or Did Not Meet (1 point). These ratings are defined as follows:

<b>Exceeded (4)</b>	Exceeded SMART goal(s) by 10% margin or higher.
<b>Met (3)</b>	Met the SMART goal(s).
<b>Partially Met (2)</b>	Did not meet the SMART goal(s) by 10% margin.
<b>Did Not Meet (1)</b>	Did not meet the SMART Goal(s) by 11% or greater.

To arrive at a rating for each SMART goal, the evaluator will review the results from data collected as a body of evidence regarding the accomplishment of the goal and score the achievement of the SMART Goal(s) holistically.

The final rating for Category 1: Student Outcomes and Achievement rating for a teacher is the average of their two SMART goal scores. For example, if one SMART goal was Partially Met, for 2 points, and the other SMART goal was Met, for 3 points, the student growth and development rating would be 2.5  $[(2+3)/2]$ . The individual SMART goal ratings and final Student Outcomes and Achievement rating will be shared and discussed with teachers during the End-of-Year Conference.

**NOTE:** For SMART Goal(s) that include data based on SMARTER BALANCED assessments, results may not be available in time to score the SMART goal prior to the June 30 deadline. If this is the case, the teacher’s student growth and development rating will be based on the results of the SMART goal that is based on non-standardized indicators and other evidence to support the SMART goal that is based on non-standardized assessment. After all data, including SMARTER BALANCED assessment data, are available, the evaluator may adjust the final summative rating, if the SMARTER BALANCED assessment data has a significant impact on a final rating. If necessary the final rating will be revised when SMARTER BALANCED assessment data are available ~~no later than August 15.~~

***Training for Teachers and Evaluators***

Specific training will be provided to develop evaluators’ and teachers’ data literacy and creation of the two SMART Goal(s) by which teachers will be evaluated. Training sessions will support and/or enhance the abilities and skills of each teacher to communicate their goals for student learning outcomes and achievement. The content of the training will include, but not be limited to:

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***SMART Goal Criteria: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Bound***

- Data Literacy as it relates to: analyzing and interpreting assessment data, understanding root cause, and decision-making based on inferences
- Quality of measures and indicators used to determine student growth
- Alignment of SMART Goal(s) to school and/or district goals
- Writing plans that articulate the strategies and progress monitoring tools teachers will implement to achieve their SMART Goal(s)

All teachers and evaluators will be required to attend this training to ensure a standardized approach to the documentation of student learning outcomes and achievement. Should additional training be needed, it will be decided on a case-by-case basis at the school or individual level.

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## **CATEGORY 2: TEACHER PERFORMANCE AND PRACTICE (40%)**

Forty percent (40%) of a teacher's evaluation will be based on observation of teacher practice and performance, using *CCT Performance and Practice Continuum*.

### ***CCT Performance and Practice Continuum***

Sterling's observation instrument for the Professional Learning and Evaluation Program has been developed to align with *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching* (CCT) and to reflect the content of its domains and indicators. The CCT has defined for Connecticut's educators key aspects of effective teaching, correlated with student learning and achievement, that have been documented in professional literature.

*The CCT Performance and Practice Continuum*, which evaluators will use in conducting teacher observations and reviews of practice, was developed by teams of educators (including teachers, building-level administrators, central office administrators, and professional developers), who reviewed the six domains and 46 indicators that comprise the CCT, relevant research on effective instructional practices that improve student learning and achievement, and other models for observation of professional teaching practice (Danielson, 2011; Marshall, 2011; Marzano, et al., 2011 ). *The CCT Continuum* represents a distillation of each of these resources to essential elements, crucial to effective practice, that can be observed and applied in appraisals of teachers.

The *CCT Continuum* addresses several principles which are essential components of effective teacher performance and practice. These principles are explicitly embedded in the *Continuum* as observable practices, and teachers and evaluators are required to reflect on these practices during pre- and post-observation conferences and self evaluations. The overarching principles of the *CCT Performance and Practice Continuum* are:

- *Diversity* as enrichment of educational opportunities for all students;
- *Differentiation* as a necessity for success and equal opportunities for all students;
- Purposeful use of *technology* as access to learning for all students;
- *Collaboration* as essential to producing high levels of learning for all students;
- *Data collection and analysis* as essential to informing effective planning, instruction, and assessment practices that enhance student learning;
- *Professional learning* as integral to improved student outcomes.

Key attributes of teacher performance and practice outlined in the CCT are reflected in the descriptors of the Indicators within the *CCT Continuum*, so that evaluators and teachers may understand how these attributes apply in practice, observations, and evaluation. Teacher lesson plans and associated documentation, pre-observation, post-observation, and teacher self-reflection forms and related conversations, as well as

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non-classroom reviews of practice, such as communication with families, collaboration with colleagues, participation in data teams, professional learning presentations by faculty members, participation in mentoring, participation in the special education process, all provide rich data related to the CCT standards and the effectiveness of teachers' performance and practice.

In employing the CCT as its foundation, the *CCT Performance and Practice Continuum* maintains consistency with Connecticut's TEAM program of mentorship and professional development of new teachers. TEAM's Performance Profiles, which also describe attributes of effective teaching practice along a continuum for each of its professional growth modules, apply the CCT indicators as the focus for new teacher reflection on their practice and development of differentiated professional growth plans. The Continuum and TEAM both rely on rich professional discussion about and reflection on professional practice to advance teacher effectiveness and student learning. Therefore, consistency between these two programs makes it possible for all educators to acquire common understandings and language about teaching and learning, with the intent of enriching collaboration, communication, and community to pave the way for school improvement and success for all students.

### ***Teacher Goal Setting for Performance and Practice***

In preparation for instructional planning and Goal-Setting Conferences with evaluators, teachers will analyze their student data and use the *CCT Continuum* to reflect on their own practices and their impact on student performance. Based on that reflection, teachers will develop a performance and practice goal to guide their own professional learning and improvements in practice that will ultimately promote student growth and achievement of student outcome goals. Teacher practice goals will not be evaluated, but should result in improvements in teacher knowledge and skills which will be evidenced in observations of teacher performance and practice.

### ***Data Gathering Process***

Sterling evaluators will use the *CCT Continuum* to guide data collection from three sources: teacher conferences, classroom observations and reviews of practice. Over the course of the school year, evaluators will gather evidence for all Indicators and Domains of the *CCT Continuum* which will allow teachers to demonstrate: the context for their work; their ability to improve student learning and performance; their ability to engage in reflective practice to improve their own knowledge and skills; how they exercise leadership skills within their classrooms, school and district.

### ***Observation of Teacher Practice***

Observations, both formal and informal, provide valuable information to all professional staff about instructional practice. Data collected through observations allow administrators to understand more about the nature of learning and instruction in our school, and feedback from observation provides individual teachers with insights regarding the impact of their management, planning, instruction, and assessment practices on student growth. Annually, administrators will engage in professional learning opportunities, including online options and collaborative sessions, which will develop their skills in effective observation, providing meaningful, useful feedback, and engaging in productive professional conversations with teachers.

Evaluators use a combination of formal and informal, announced and unannounced observations to:

- Gather evidence of and facilitate professional conversation regarding the quality of teacher practice;
- Provide constructive oral and written feedback of observations that is timely and useful for educators;
- Provide information for the on-going calibration of evaluators and evaluation practices in the district.

<b>Data-Informed Observation of Teacher Performance and Practice (40%)</b>		
<b>SOURCES OF DATA</b>	<b>EXAMPLES OF DATA</b>	<b>IMPORTANCE OF DATA</b>
Conferences	Data related to all 4 domains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversation and artifacts that reveal the teacher has an understanding of, content, students, strategies, and use of data</li> <li>• Teacher’s use of data to inform instruction, analyze student performance and set appropriate learning goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides opportunities for teachers to demonstrate cause and effect thinking.</li> <li>• Provides opportunities for evaluator learning in content; systems effectiveness; priorities for professional learning</li> <li>• Provides context for observations and evaluation</li> </ul>
In-class formal observations	Data related to Domains 2-4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-student, student-student conversations, interactions, activities related to learning goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides evidence of teacher’s ability to improve student learning and promote growth</li> </ul>
Non-classroom reviews of practice	Data related to Domain 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher reflection, as evidenced in pre- and post-conference data.</li> <li>• Engagement in professional development opportunities, and leadership opportunities</li> <li>• Collaboration with colleagues</li> <li>• Teacher-family interactions</li> <li>• Ethical decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides evidence of teacher as learner, as reflective practitioner and teacher as leader.</li> </ul>

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Evaluators may differentiate the number of observations based on experience, prior ratings, needs and goals of individual teachers.

In addition to formal conferences for goal-setting and performance review and in-class formal observations, informal observations of teachers by evaluators will occur periodically. Observations are for the purpose of helping teachers to gain insights about their professional practice and its impact on student learning. Formal and informal observation of teachers is considered a normal part of the evaluation process. More importantly, observation is essential for establishing a culture of continuous learning for educators and for understanding the nature, scope and quality of student learning in the school as a whole. In addition to in-class observations, non-classroom reviews of practice will be conducted. Examples of non-classroom observations or reviews of practice include but are not limited to: observations of data team meetings, observations of coaching/mentoring other teachers, review of lesson plans or other teaching artifacts. The Professional Learning and Evaluation Program also establishes opportunities for teachers to participate in informal, non-evaluative observations of teacher practice for the following purposes: to enhance awareness of teaching and learning practices in the school; to create opportunities for problem-based professional learning projects and action research to improve student learning; and to enhance collaboration among teachers and administrators in advancing the vision and mission of the school.

- In the first year of implementation of the Plan, all teachers will receive three in-class formal observations. Each of the observations will include a pre-conference and a post-conference with timely written and verbal feedback. One informal unannounced in-class observation and at least one non-classroom review of practice will be conducted for all teachers.
- In subsequent years, teachers who are entering their first, second or third year of teaching will receive three in-class formal observations. Each of the observations will include a pre-conference and a post-conference with timely written and verbal feedback. One informal unannounced in-class observation and at least one non-classroom review of practice will be conducted for all teachers.
- In subsequent years, teachers who have prior teaching experience but are new to Sterling will receive three in-class formal observations; until the teacher receives tenure status. Each of the observations will include a pre-conference and a post-conference with timely written and verbal feedback. One informal unannounced in-class observation and at least one non-classroom review of practice will be conducted for all teachers.

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- In subsequent years, teachers entering their fourth year or more of teaching and who have received a performance evaluation designation of *Below Standard or Developing* shall receive a number of observations appropriate to their individual development plan, but no fewer than three in-class formal observations. Each of the observations will include a pre-conference and a post-conference with timely written and verbal feedback.
  - In subsequent years, teachers entering their fourth year or more of teaching and who have received a performance evaluation designation of *Proficient or Exemplary* will receive a combination of at least three observations/reviews of practice, one of which must be a formal in-class observation. The exact combination shall be mutually agreed upon by the teacher and evaluator at the beginning of the evaluation process.

## OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Performance Designation/Category	Number of Observations	Conferencing and Feedback
<p><b><u>CATEGORY 1:</u></b> <i>Teachers entering their 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> year of teaching</i></p>	<p><b><u>Formal observations:</u></b> Three (3) in-class formal observations <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Pre-conference requirement:</u></b> Each formal observation requires a pre-conference <b><u>Post-conference requirement:</u></b> Each formal observation requires a post-conference</p>
	<p><b><u>Informal observations:</u></b> One (1) in-class informal unannounced observation <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Feedback requirement:</u></b> Feedback for the informal observation will be verbal and/or written</p>
	<p><b><u>Review of Practice:</u></b> Every year in the evaluation cycle teacher must receive at least one (1) review of practice <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Feedback requirement:</u></b> Feedback for the review of practice will be verbal and/or written</p>
<p><b><u>CATEGORY 2:</u></b> <i>Experienced teachers NEW to Sterling Community School (until they become tenured)</i></p>	<p><b><u>Formal observations:</u></b> Three (3) in-class formal observations <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Pre-conference requirement:</u></b> Each formal observation requires a pre-conference <b><u>Post-conference requirement:</u></b> Each formal observation requires a post-conference</p>
	<p><b><u>Informal observations:</u></b> One (1) in-class informal unannounced observation <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Feedback requirement:</u></b> Feedback for the informal observation will be verbal and/or written</p>
	<p><b><u>Review of Practice:</u></b> Every year in the evaluation cycle teacher must receive at least one (1) review of practice on a mutually agreed upon area of practice <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Feedback requirement:</u></b> Feedback for the review of practice will be verbal and/or written</p>
<p><b><u>CATEGORY 3:</u></b> <i>Sterling Community School teachers entering their 4<sup>th</sup> or more years of teaching and designated as “Proficient or Exemplary”</i> <i><u>Note: This category of teachers is evaluated on a rotation cycle for formal observations.</u></i></p>	<p><b><u>Formal observations:</u></b> Every <b>THIRD</b> year in the evaluation cycle teacher must receive one (1) in-class formal observation <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Pre-conference requirement:</u></b> Each formal observation requires a pre-conference <b><u>Post-conference requirement:</u></b> Each formal observation requires a post-conference.</p>
	<p><b><u>Review of Practice:</u></b> Every year in the evaluation cycle teacher must receive at least one (1) review of practice on a mutually agreed upon area of practice <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Feedback requirement:</u></b> Feedback for the review of practice will be verbal and/or written</p>
<p><b><u>CATEGORY 4:</u></b> <i>Any teacher designated as “Below Standard or Developing”</i></p>	<p><b><u>Formal observations:</u></b> Three (3) in-class formal observations <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Pre-conference requirement:</u></b> Each formal observation requires a pre-conference <b><u>Post-conference requirement:</u></b> Each formal observation requires a post-conference</p>
	<p><b><u>Informal observations:</u></b> One (1) in-class informal unannounced observation <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Feedback requirement:</u></b> Feedback for the informal observation will be verbal and/or written</p>
	<p><b><u>Review of Practice:</u></b> Every year in the evaluation cycle teacher must receive at least one (1) review of practice on a mutually agreed upon area of practice <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Feedback requirement:</u></b> Feedback for the review of practice will be verbal and/or written</p>

## Evaluation Ratings for Performance and Practice

Evaluation ratings will be assigned at the end of each school year. After gathering and analyzing evidence for all Indicators within each of the Domains 2-4, evaluators will use the *CCT Continuum* to initially assign ratings of *Below Standard*, *Developing*, *Proficient* or *Exemplary*. Ratings will be made at the Domain level only.

Once Domain ratings have been assigned, evaluators will use the <i>Rating Guidelines for Observation of Teacher Performance and Practice</i> to assign a rating. <b>Ratings Guidelines for Observation of Teacher Performance and Practice</b>	
Rating	Criteria
<b><i>Exemplary</i></b>	Substantially exceeding indicators of performance
<b><i>Proficient</i></b>	Meeting indicators of performance
<b><i>Developing</i></b>	Meeting some indicators of performance but not others
<b><i>Below Standard</i></b>	Not meeting indicators of performance

### 2.1: 4-Level Matrix Rating System

(1) Annual summative evaluations provide each teacher with a summative rating aligned to one of four performance evaluation designators: Exemplary, Proficient, Developing and Below Standard.

The term “performance” in the above shall mean “progress as defined by specified indicators”. Such indicators shall be mutually agreed upon, as applicable. Such progress shall be demonstrated by evidence. The SDE will work with PEAC to identify best practices as well as issues regarding the implementation of the 4-level Matrix Rating System for further discussion.

## **EVALUATOR TRAINING AND PROFICIENCY**

Formal observations of classroom practice are guided by the Domains and Indicators of the *CCT Performance and Practice Continuum*. Evaluators participate in extensive training and are required to be proficient in the use of the *Continuum* for educator evaluation. Training is conducted annually (at a minimum) to ensure consistency, compliance, and high-quality application of the *Continuum* in observations and evaluations. Formal observations include pre- and post-conferences that provide opportunities for deep professional conversations that allow evaluators and teachers to set goals, allow administrators to gain insight into the teacher's progress in addressing issues and working toward their goals, and share evidence each has gathered during the year.

In the first year of implementation of Sterling's Professional Learning and Evaluation Program, all evaluators will be required to participate in the initial training and successfully complete online proficiency activities. Evaluators will also attend additional support sessions during the school year. To ensure consistency and fairness in the evaluation process, all evaluators must meet the proficiency standard prior to conducting teacher observations. Components will include the following:

1. Training that will focus on:
  - using the *CCT Performance and Practice Continuum* for data collection, analysis and evaluation
  - introducing participants to the online practice and proficiency system.
2. Online practice to be completed independently or as a collaborative learning activity at the school or district level
3. Online proficiency comprised of two proficiency activities requiring evaluators to demonstrate their ability to: recognize bias; identify evidence from classroom observations, conferences and non-classroom reviews of practice that is appropriate to specific *CCT Performance and Practice Continuum* Indicators and Domains; gather and analyze a comprehensive set of data to assign appropriate ratings at the Domain level.
4. Follow-up face-to-face training to:
  - debrief on proficiency as needed and enhance evaluator conferencing and feedback skills

In the first year of implementation, evaluators will also participate in support sessions during the school year to enhance evaluator conferencing and feedback skills.

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After the first year of implementation, all evaluators new to Sterling will be required to participate in the training, proficiency and support sessions described above.

All Sterling evaluators will be required to demonstrate proficiency in the use of the *CCT Continuum* for educator evaluation bi-annually. Any evaluator who does not initially demonstrate proficiency will be provided with additional practice and coaching opportunities as needed and will be required to successfully complete online proficiency activities. In the second year of proficiency, evaluators will be required to calibrate their ability to appropriately apply the CCT Continuum by participating in district update/calibration sessions.

### **CATEGORY 3. PARENT FEEDBACK (10%)**

Ten percent (10%) of a teacher's evaluation shall be based on parent feedback, including data from surveys and focus group discussions.

Sterling Community School strives to meet the needs of all of the students all of the time. To gain insight into what parents perceive about our ability to accomplish this, a school-wide parent survey will be used, which will allow for Sterling Community School to collect and analyze parent feedback data that will be used for continuous improvement. Surveys will be administered one time per year. The survey data will be used by teachers as baseline data for the following academic year. Analysis of survey data will be conducted on a school-wide basis, with all certified staff engaged in the analysis, and will result in one school-wide goal to which all certified staff will be held accountable.

Once the school-wide parent feedback goal has been determined by the administrator, teachers will identify the strategies they will implement to achieve the school-wide goal.

Teacher ratings will be determined by using a 4-level performance matrix. Ratings will be based on evidence of teacher's implementation of strategies to address areas of need as identified by the survey results.

Examples of surveys that may be used by Sterling are attached in the Appendix.

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#### **CATEGORY 4. WHOLE-SCHOOL STUDENT LEARNING INDICATORS (5%)**

Five percent (5%) of a teacher's evaluation shall be based on whole-school student learning indicators.

Sterling Community School will define and communicate a Whole School Learning Indicator that is based on aggregate rating for multiple student learning indicators established by administration's evaluation rating (Administrator's 45%). Certified staff will be asked to articulate in writing the strategies they will use in their instructional practice to contribute to the achievement of the Whole School Learning Indicator.

Teachers' efforts and actions taken towards achievement of the Whole School Learning Indicator will be discussed during the pre-, mid-year, and post-conferences. Teachers will be expected to bring artifacts from their practice that support and provide evidence of their contributions to the attainment of this indicator.

Teacher's rating in this area will be determined by the administrator's performance rating multiple student learning indicators that comprise 45% of an administrator's evaluation.

#### **SUMMATIVE TEACHER EVALUATION RATING:**

Each teacher shall annually receive a summative rating in one of four levels:

- ***Exemplary*** – Substantially exceeding indicators of performance
- ***Proficient*** – Meeting indicators of performance
- ***Developing*** – Meeting some indicators of performance but not others
- ***Below standard*** – Not meeting indicators of performance

*Exemplary* ratings are reserved for performance that significantly exceeds proficiency and could serve as a model for teachers. Few teachers are expected to demonstrate *Exemplary* performance on more than a small number of indicators.

*Proficient* represents fully satisfactory performance. It is the rigorous standard expected for experienced teachers.

A rating of *Developing* means that performance is meeting proficiency in some indicators but not others. Improvement is necessary and expected.

A rating of *Below Standard* indicates performance that is below proficient on all components or unacceptably low on one or more indicators.

## ***Determining Summative Ratings***

The process for determining summative evaluation ratings has three steps:

1. determining a practice rating,
2. determining an outcomes rating and
3. combining the two into an overall rating.

### **A. PRACTICE: Teacher Performance and Practice (40%) + Parent Feedback (10%) = 50%**

The practice rating derives from a teacher's performance on the five domains of the *CCT Performance and Practice Continuum* and the parent feedback target. Evaluators record a rating for the domains that generates an overall rating for teacher practice. The Parent Feedback rating is combined with the Teacher Practice rating and the evaluator uses the matrix to determine an overall Teacher Performance and Practice Rating.

### **B. OUTCOMES: Student Outcome and Achievement (45%) + Whole-School Student Learning Indicators (5%) = 50%**

SMART Goal(s) SMART Goal(s) SMART Goal(s)

45% Student Growth Component

(c) One half (22.5%) of the indicators of student outcome and achievement used as evidence of whether goals/objectives are met shall not be determined by a single, isolated standardized test score, but shall be determined through the comparison of data across assessments administered over time, including the state test for those teaching tested grades and subjects or another standardized indicator for other grades and subjects where available.

A state test can be used only if there are interim assessments that lead to that test, and such interim assessments shall be included in the overall score for those teaching tested grades and subjects.

Those without an available standardized indicator will select, through mutual agreement, subject to the local dispute-resolution procedure as described in section 1.3, additional non-standardized indicator.

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Note:

*a. Prior to the 2015-16 academic year, the SDE will work with PEAC to examine and evolve the system of standardized and non-standardized student learning indicators, including the use of interim assessments that lead to the state test to measure growth over time.*

For the other half (22.5%) of the indicators of student outcome and achievement, there may be:

- a. A maximum of one additional standardized indicator, if there is mutual agreement, subject to the local dispute resolution procedure as described in section 1.3.
- b. A minimum of one non-standardized indicator.

**C. FINAL SUMMATIVE: Practice (50%) + Outcomes (50%) = 100%**

The Summative rating combines the practice and outcomes ratings using the matrix. If the two areas in any Matrix are highly discrepant (e.g., a rating of *Exemplary* for Teacher Practice and a rating of *Below Standard* for Student Outcomes), then the evaluator and the evaluatee will re-examine the data and/or gather additional information in order to determine the rating for the Matrix.

*If upon re-examination of the data, the ratings do not change, the evaluator will use the Matrix to determine the rating.*

		<b>Practice Rating</b>			
		<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Below Standard</i>
<b>Outcomes Rating</b>	<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Developing</i>
	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Below Standard</i>
	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Below Standard</i>
	<i>Below Standard</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Below Standard</i>	<i>Below Standard</i>

In accordance with the CT Guidelines for Educator Evaluation, STERLING’S Professional Learning and Evaluation Plan employs a 4-level matrix rating system, as follows:

Annual summative evaluations must provide each teacher with a summative rating aligned to one of four performance evaluation designations: *Exemplary*, *Proficient*, *Developing* and *Below Standard*.

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In order to determine summative rating designations for each teacher, evaluators will:

- A. Rate teacher performance in each of the four Categories:
  - Student Outcomes and Achievement;
  - Observations of Teacher Performance and Practice;
  - Parent Feedback, and
  - Whole-School Student Learning Indicators.
- B. Combine the Student Outcomes and Achievement (Category 1, above) and Whole-School Student Learning Indicator rating (Category 4, above) into a single rating, taking into account their relative weights. This will represent an overall **Outcomes Rating** of *Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, or Below Standard*.
- C. Combine the Observations of Teacher Performance and Practice rating (Category 2, above) and the Parent Feedback rating (Category 3, above) into a single rating, taking into account their relative weights; this will represent an overall **Practice Rating** of *Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, or Below Standard*.
- D. Combine the **Outcomes Rating** and **Practice Rating** into a **Final Rating**. In undertaking this step, teachers will be assigned a summative rating category of *Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, or Below Standard*.

## **DEFINITION OF TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS AND INEFFECTIVENESS**

Teacher effectiveness will be based upon a pattern of summative teacher ratings collected over time. In order to be deemed effective, teachers will need to have a summative rating of Proficient or Exemplary. Teachers are required to be effective within two years of being evaluated using this plan. Teachers who are not deemed effective by these criteria will be identified as ineffective.

Any teacher having a summative rating of Developing or Below Standard after one year of being evaluated with this plan may be placed on an individual improvement plan. PASS is a 3 tiered approach to teacher support.

After one year of participating in PASS, a teacher receiving such support will be expected to have a summative rating of Proficient or Exemplary. Teachers who do not receive a summative rating of Proficient or Exemplary after one year of participation in PASS may be placed on the **PASS Improvement and Remediation Plan** for 30 days. After 30 days, the teacher may be placed on the **PASS Intensive Remediation Plan** for 60 days.

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## TEACHER PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT SYSTEM (PASS)

Teachers who receive a summative evaluation rating of Developing or Below Standard may work with their local association president (or designee) in the development of a PASS plan, in collaboration with the evaluator (or designee). The plan will be created prior to the beginning of the next school year. The PASS process will identify areas of improvement needed and will include supports that Sterling will provide to address the performance areas identified as in need of improvement. A teacher's successful completion of participation in PASS is determined by a summative final rating of Proficient or Exemplary at the conclusion of the school year.

The plan must include the following components:

1. *Areas of Improvement*: Identify area of needed improvement
2. *Rationale for Areas of Improvement*: Evidence from observations that indicates an area needing improvement.
3. *Domain*: List domain rated *Developing or Below Standard*
4. *Indicators for Effective Teaching*: Identify exemplary practices in the area identified as needing improvement
5. *Improvement Strategies to be Implemented*: Provide strategies that the teacher can implement to show improvement in any domain rated *Developing or Below Standard*
6. *Tasks to Complete*: Specific tasks the teacher will complete that will improve the domain.
7. *Support and Resources*: List of supports and resources the teacher can use to improve, e.g. professional learning opportunities, peer observation, colleague mentor, books, etc.
8. *Indicators of Progress*: How the teacher will show progress towards *Proficient/Exemplary* in identified domain(s) through observations, data, evidence.

The plan will be designed and written in a collaborative manner, which focuses on the development of a professional learning community supporting colleagues within this level. The teacher, local association president or designee, and evaluator or designee will sign the plan. Copies will be distributed to all those who will be involved in the implementation of the plan as well as the Principal and the Superintendent. The contents of the plan will be confidential.

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### **PASS Improvement and Remediation Plan (30 Days)**

The PASS Remediation Plan is a further step in the attempt to provide a teacher with the support, supervision, and resources needed to foster positive growth in situations when an individual is having considerable difficulty implementing the professional responsibilities of teaching. Based on a determination by the appropriate administrator, the administrator and/or evaluator will help the teacher outline specific goals and objectives with timelines, resources, and evaluative criteria. The evaluator and/or teacher may draw upon whatever personnel and resources are needed to implement the plan and are deemed reasonable by the evaluator. Consistent supervision and, at minimum, a weekly observation followed by timely feedback, will be provided by the evaluator. This intervention will operate for a period of time that the evaluator determines to be appropriate, but will normally conclude within 30 school days. At the end of the intervention period, the evaluator will issue a recommendation. If the teacher demonstrates that he/she is *Proficient* or better, the evaluator will designate placement of that teacher to a normal plan. In situations when progress is unacceptable, the teacher will move into Intensive Remediation Plan. Specific written reports of the intervention plan with reports of observations and a final determination on progress will become part of the teacher's personnel file.

### **PASS Intensive Remediation Plan (60 Days)**

The PASS Intensive Remediation Plan is the final attempt and is implemented after the Improvement and Remediation Plan if necessary, and based on the judgment of the administrator, to provide the help necessary to meet the requirements of the position. The teacher, evaluator, and/or another appropriate administrator will develop a plan that includes specific goals, timelines, resources, and evaluative criteria. The teacher may choose to include their bargaining representative. The evaluator and/or the teacher may draw upon whatever personnel and resources are needed to implement the plan and are deemed reasonable by the evaluator. The plan will be in operation for a period of time that the evaluator determines to be appropriate, but will normally conclude after 60 school days. Weekly observations followed by feedback will be provided during this phase. At the conclusion of this phase, the evaluator will make a recommendation as to whether the intensive supervision will be terminated or extended. If the teacher demonstrates that he/she is *Proficient* or better, the evaluator will designate placement of that teacher on the normal plan. If the teacher's performance is below *Proficient*, the administrator will recommend termination of that teacher's employment to the superintendent.

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## **EVALUATION-BASED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

As our core values indicate, Sterling believes that the primary purpose for professional learning is school improvement as measured by the success of every student. We also believe that professional learning must focus on creating meaningful experiences for all staff members. Designing evaluation-based professional learning is a dynamic process. Working with program goals and data from the educator evaluation process, professional learning is planned to strengthen instruction around identified student growth needs or other areas of identified educator needs.

We recognize that educators as well as students learn in different ways and have different learning needs at different points in their career. Effective professional learning, therefore, must be highly personalized and provide for a variety of experiences, including learning teams, study groups, individual study, as well as opportunities for conducting research and collaborating with colleagues on content-based pedagogical activities.

Sterling's evaluation-based professional learning design has as its foundation the *Standards for Professional Learning* (Learning Forward, 2011). Each of the tenets of Sterling's Professional Learning and Evaluation Program is aligned with at least one, and often several, of the seven *Standards for Professional Learning*, as follows.

### **TENETS OF THE STERLING PLAN: ALIGNING STANDARDS AND PROCESSES:**

- ***Evaluation is a teacher-centered process:*** We believe that, for evaluation to improve professional practice, it is essential to “make evaluation a task managed by a teacher, and not a thing done to a worker” (Peterson, 2000, p. 5).
  - Teacher reflection on aspects of their instructional practice and its effect on student achievement, on other facets of responsibility to the school community, and on their professional contributions to their field is critical to improved practice for both veteran and novice teachers. [*Standards: Learning Communities; Data; Outcomes*]
    - Educator self-reflection represents the initiation and culmination of the cycle of professional practice and procedures for evaluation.
    - Teachers collect and assemble relevant data related to student outcomes and their professional contributions, and determine how their data can be used in evaluation.

- **Organizational culture matters:** The framework and outcomes of systems for the evaluation of teachers must reflect an understanding of the culture of the school as a learning organization (see Schein, 2010; Senge, 2012).
  - It is vitally important to examine the core beliefs that underpin organizational processes such as professional learning and evaluation, as well as teachers' and administrators' perception of their roles and effectiveness, to effect positive changes in student learning, growth, and achievement. Further, it is important to evolve the role of principals and administrators from the sole judges and evaluators of teachers and teaching to emphasize their role as instructional leaders who collaborate with teachers.
    - Evaluators and teachers support each other in the pursuit of individual and collective professional growth and student success through rich professional conferences and conversations. [*Standards: Leadership; Resources*]
    - The school's core beliefs about student learning are the foundation for evaluation and support systems, and provide a focus for individual and collaborative reflections on personal practice and organizational functioning. [*Standards: Learning Communities; Implementation*]
    - Teachers and administrators collaborate to observe instructional practices in their school and to analyze data on instruction and student performance. [*Standards: Data; Outcomes*]
    - Teachers and administrators collaborate to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning. [*Standards: Leadership; Learning Communities; Implementation; Learning Designs*]
  
- **Evaluation and professional learning must be differentiated to increase organizational effectiveness:** There is a growing body of research that demonstrates that individual and collective teacher efficacy (defined by Bandura, 1997, as "the group's shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given levels of attainments"), is positively associated with and predictive of student achievement (Allinder, 1995; Goddard, et al., 2000; Moolenaar, et al., 2012; Tschannen-Moran and Barr, 2004)
  - The needs of veteran and novice teachers are different, and evaluation-based professional learning is to be designed to meet those needs, inspire and motivate individual and collective efficacy, and build leadership capacity in the school and the district (see Peterson, 2000). [*Standards: Learning Design; Leadership; Resources*]

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- The development of such structures as career ladders, personal professional portfolios, and opportunities are provided for teachers to share their learning from professional activities, findings from their own research or from research-based practices they have applied, classroom-level and professional accomplishments and/or challenges. [*Standards: Data; Outcomes: Learning Communities; Leadership*]

Sterling will provide opportunities for educator career development and professional growth based on the results of the evaluation. Educators with an evaluation of *Proficient or Exemplary* will be able to participate in opportunities to further their professional growth, including attendance at conferences and other professional learning opportunities.

For educators rated *Proficient or Exemplary*, the following career development and professional growth opportunities would be available: observation of peers; mentoring/coaching early-career educators or educators new to Sterling; participating in development of educator Professional Assistance and Support System plans for peers whose performance is *Developing or Below Standard*; leading Data Teams and School Improvement Committees; and, targeted professional development based on areas of need.

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## EDUCATION SPECIALIST EVALUATION PLAN

STERLING's Professional Learning and Evaluation Plan provide both the structure and flexibility required to guide education specialists and evaluators in understanding their roles in enhancing student learning and assessing their professional practices. The goal of the Education Specialist Evaluation Plan is to support these specialists in their professional growth toward the aim of improved student outcomes.

The Plan aligns the professional standards for education specialists with outcomes for learning in evaluation of practice, while recognizing the unique responsibilities of each education specialist.

### ***Goals of the Education Specialist Professional Learning and Evaluation Plan:***

- improve learner outcomes through meaningful evaluation of practice of education specialists, aligned with professional learning;
- improve school-wide learning goal outcomes through effective collaboration among educators;
- improve the quality of instruction by ensuring accountability for learner outcomes and educational specialist effectiveness,
- provide professional assistance and support for education specialists when and where necessary.

### ***Who are Education Specialists***

Education Specialists include non-teaching, non-administrative education professionals who provide a variety of services to students, teachers, and parents. Specialists include nurses, school psychologists, social workers, speech and language pathologist, and others with specialized training who offer a broad range of services.

### Education Specialist Position Categories:

- Pupil Personnel services: school counselors, school nurses, school psychologists, social workers
- Instructional Support services: , interventionist, literacy coaches
- Related Services: occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech and language pathologists

### ***Who Evaluates Education Specialists?***

Sterling administrators and the director of special services/early childhood education are responsible for Education Specialists evaluations, including, but not limited to, personnel in the following categories:

#### Administrators

- Nurses

#### Director of Special Services

- Interventionist(s)
- Literacy coach(es)
- Speech and Language Pathologist
- Clinical Staff

### ***Performance Standards***

It is expected that education specialists and their evaluators will be knowledgeable about the professional standards for each specialist they will evaluate. Those standards form the basis for goal-setting, assessment of professional practice, and alignment of professional learning opportunities with the needs of education specialists. In observations of practice, evaluators will use the domains and indicators outlined in Sterling's CCT Performance and Practice Continuum that has been adapted for evaluation of education specialists.

### ***Links to Professional Standards Documents:***

Links to standards and other informational documents related to the professional practice requirements of education specialists are provided as reference for education specialists and evaluators:

School Counselors: ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (2010):

<http://www.schoolcounselor.org/files/EthicalStandards2010.pdf>

School Social Workers: NASW Standards for School Social Work Services (2012):

<http://www.naswdc.org/practice/standards/NASWSchoolSocialWorkStandards.pdf>

School Psychologists: NASP Professional Standards (2010):

<http://www.nasponline.org/standards/2010standards.aspx>

Occupational Therapists: AOTA Standards of Practice

<http://www.aota.org/about/core/36194.aspx>

Physical Therapists: APTA Code of Ethics (2012)

[http://www.apta.org/uploadedFiles/APTAorg/About\\_Us/Policies/HOD/Ethics/Cod eofEthics.pdf](http://www.apta.org/uploadedFiles/APTAorg/About_Us/Policies/HOD/Ethics/Cod eofEthics.pdf)

APTA SIG: Pediatric Site: References for School-Based Practice of Physical Therapy:

[http://www.pediatricapta.org/pdfs/References%20for%20SB%20SIG1\\_23.pdf](http://www.pediatricapta.org/pdfs/References%20for%20SB%20SIG1_23.pdf)

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## **EDUCATION SPECIALIST EVALUATION PROCESS**

The process for the evaluation of education specialists is consistent with that of Sterling's teacher and administrative evaluation processes, and includes the following characteristics:

- a focus on the relationship between professional performance and its impact on educational outcomes;
- evaluation of education specialist performance based on analysis of data from multiple sources;
- observations and reviews of practice that promote professional growth,
- a support system for providing assistance when needed

The annual evaluation process for an education specialist will at least include, but not be limited to, the following steps, in order:

### **1. Orientation – (by September 30):**

To begin the annual evaluation process, evaluators meet with education specialists, in groups and/or individually, to discuss the evaluation process and their roles and responsibilities within it. In this meeting, they will review and discuss the following:

- *Performance and Practice Continuum for Education Specialists.*
- School and district priorities that should be reflected in specialists' performance and practice goals.
- SMART Goal(s) related to learner outcomes.
- Data regarding whole-school indicators of student learning
- Self-assessment processes and purposes.
- Data collection, including types of data and processes for collection and analysis.
- Access to the online evaluation system

Evaluators and Specialists will establish a schedule for collaboration requested by the evaluation process.

### **2. Goal-setting Conference – (by October 30):**

- *Education Specialist Reflection*—In advance of the Goal Setting Conference, the education specialist will examine data related to current students' needs and performance data (including, but not limited to: data from various criterion- and norm-referenced assessments, IEPs, etc.), the prior year evaluation and survey results, previous professional learning goals, and the professional standards for their area of practice and *Performance and Practice Continuum*. The educational specialists will draft the following goals, specific to their assignments:

**For education specialists:**

- **one SMART Goal(s)** to address student outcomes and achievement objectives, which will comprise 45% of the education specialist summative evaluation;
- **one professional practice goal**, based on data from education specialist reflections and evaluator observations, which will comprise 40% of their evaluation;
- **one goal for improving outcomes based on data from parent feedback**, determined by the school administrator, for which specialists will indicate their strategies for achieving this school-wide goal, which will comprise 10% of their evaluation; and
- **one goal based on whole school indicators of student learning** for the school year, which will comprise 5% of their evaluation. The education specialist may collaborate with other educators or teams to support the goal-setting process.
  - *Goal-setting conference* – No later than October 30<sup>th</sup> of the school year, the evaluator and education specialist will meet to discuss the specialist’s proposed goals in order to arrive at mutual agreement about them. The goals for the year must be informed by data and evidence collected by the specialist **and** evaluator about the specialist’s practice. The evaluator collects evidence about specialist practice to support the review and may request revisions to the proposed goals and objectives if they do not meet approval criteria.
  - In year one of the implementation of the Program, education specialists will be encouraged to set one year goals related to professional learning and practice. At the end of year one, specialists may choose to set multi-year goals.

*Example of data that may be included in the goal-setting conference:*

<b>Education Specialist</b>	<b>Evaluator</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialist Products or Artifacts</li> <li>• Data on Learning or Achievement of Learners</li> <li>• Lesson, intervention, treatment, or action plans and records</li> <li>• Artifacts from work of Learners</li> <li>• Client Communication Logs</li> <li>• Data Team Minutes</li> <li>• Journals/notes documenting reflections on practice</li> <li>• Schedule of meetings/conferences</li> <li>• Survey Data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardized and Non-Standardized Data (based on the education specialist’s role and caseload)</li> <li>• School-, District- or Agency-Level Data</li> <li>• Observation data based on <i>CCT Performance and Practice Continuum</i> and professional standards documents</li> </ul>

### **3. Observations of practice (by November 30, January 30, and April 30)**

Evaluators will observe education specialists' practice in formal and informal in-class observations or non-classroom reviews of practice throughout the school year, with the frequency schedule based on the year of implementation of the plan or the specialist's previous year's summative evaluation rating, where available.

#### **Evidence collection and review (throughout school year):**

The education specialist collects evidence about his/her practice and outcomes related to the SMART Goal(s) that are relevant to the agreed-upon professional goals. The evaluator also collects evidence about specialist practice for discussion in the interim conference and summative review.

### **4. Mid-year conference (by February 28)**

The evaluator and specialist will hold at least one mid-year conference. The conference should focus on processes and progress toward meeting the goals established in the goal-setting conference. Both the specialist and the evaluator will bring evidence about practice, learning and/or outcomes data to be reviewed at this conference. During this conference, the specialist and evaluator will discuss the cause and effect relationship of practice to outcomes data, e.g. – how practice positively impacts student achievement, how practice affects agency-related outcomes. The conference will allow both the specialist and evaluator to make explicit connections between the practice and practice component and the SMART goal component of the evaluation program. If necessary, specialists and evaluators may mutually agree to revisions to strategies or approaches used and/or mid-year adjustment of SMART Goal(s) to accommodate changes (e.g., student populations, assignment). They will also discuss actions that the specialist can take and support the evaluator can provide to promote the specialist's growth in his/her development areas.

### **5. End-of-year summative review (last day of school):**

- *Education specialist self-assessment* - The specialist reviews and reflects on all information and data collected during the year related to the goals and completes a self-assessment for review by the evaluator. This self-assessment may focus specifically on the areas for development established in the goal-setting conference.
- *End-of-year conference* - The evaluator and the education specialist meet to discuss all evidence collected to date. Following the conference, the evaluator assigns a summative rating and generates a summary report of the evaluation before the end of the school year.

- *Rating*—The evaluator reviews submitted evidence, self-assessments, and observation data to generate category and focus area ratings. The category ratings generate the final, summative rating.

#### **6. Summative rating revisions:**

- After all data, including SMARTER BALANCED assessment data, are available, the evaluator may adjust the summative rating for education specialist who have students who participate in standardized testing and who are directly responsible for designing instruction. If the SMARTER BALANCED assessment data may have a significant impact on a final rating, a final rating may be revised when SMARTER BALANCED assessment data are available.

### **COMPONENTS OF EDUCATION SPECIALIST EVALUATION\***

\* Components of education specialists' evaluation will reflect the instructions for corresponding categories in the Teacher Evaluation Plan.

#### **CATEGORY 1: STUDENT OUTCOMES AND ACHIEVEMENT (45%)**

**Two SMART Goal(s)**, addressing student outcomes and achievement objectives which will comprise 45% of the education specialist summative evaluation;

Forty-five percent (45%) of a specialist's evaluation will be based on achievement of student learning outcomes defined by specialist-created SMART Goal(s) that are aligned with to both standardized and non-standardized measures. Education specialists are required to develop **two SMART Goal(s)** related to the growth and development of students assigned to their caseloads.

- *Standardized SMART GOAL (comprises 22.5% of specialist's evaluation rating)*. For those assigned to students who will take SMARTER BALANCED assessments in tested grades and subjects, and for those who have direct instructional responsibility SMART Goal(s) will be developed based on an analysis of results of student achievement on the appropriate SMARTER BALANCED assessment and other standardized assessments where available. Student IEP goals may also be reflected in SMART Goal(s) where applicable.
- Specialists may also base the standardized SMART goal on other standardized, norm- or criterion-referenced tests, where applicable and available.
  - Specialists who are not assigned to students in tested grades or subjects, or who do not have direct instructional responsibility, may establish common SMART Goal(s) based on student learning needs and targets revealed in aggregate data from SMARTER BALANCED assessments or outcomes data, and/or other standardized assessments where available.

- *Non-standardized SMART goal (comprises 22.5% of specialist's evaluation rating):*  
Sources for the development of SMART Goal(s) based on non-standardized indicators may include:
  - Benchmark assessments of student achievement of school-wide Expectations for Student Learning, measured by analytic rubrics.
  - Other benchmark assessments.
  - Student portfolios of examples of work in content areas, collected over time and reviewed annually.
- SMART Goal(s) for all personnel must demonstrate alignment with school-wide student achievement priorities.

### ***Goal Setting***

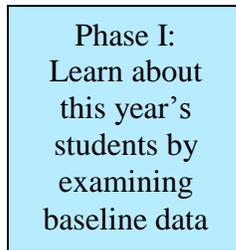
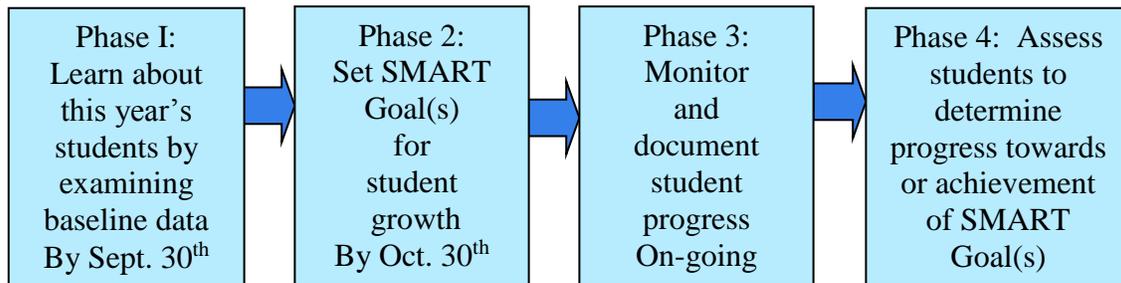
Sterling specialist's SMART Goal(s) address the learning needs of their students and are aligned to the specialist's assignment and, where applicable, to IEP goals and objectives. The student outcome related indicators will be written to meet SMART goal criteria, i.e. Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound. Education specialists will write two (2) SMART Goal(s) that will address targeted areas for student growth and/or achievement.

Each SMART goal will:

- Take into account the overall needs and strengths of the students assigned to the education specialist that year/semester.
- Address the most important purposes of a specialist's assignment through self-reflection.
- Align with school, district, and state student achievement objectives.
- Take into account students' learning needs through a review of relevant baseline data.
- Consider Public School Information System (PSIS) factors.
- Be mutually agreed upon by specialist and their evaluator.
- Be fair, valid, reliable and useful to the greatest extent possible.

### ***SMART Goal(s) and Student Progress***

The following diagram illustrates the processes involved in establishing and assessing SMART Goal(s) for student learning.



To write meaningful and relevant SMART Goal(s) that align to the specialist's assignment and result from a thorough knowledge of their students, data analysis is required.

Examples of data that specialists will be required to analyze are:

- Student outcome data (academic, IEPs)
- Student Behavior data (absences, referrals, IEPs, etc.)
- Program data (interventions, participation in programs, etc.)
- Perceptual data (learning inventories, anecdotal records)

Specialists must learn as much as they can about the students, be able to document baseline data that they have used to determine their instructional focus and be able to write SMART Goal(s) on which they will, in part, be evaluated.

Analysis of these initial pieces of data on incoming students for the year should be completed by mid-September of the academic year.

Phase 2:  
Set SMART  
Goal(s)  
for  
student

Each specialist will write TWO SMART Goal(s). Specialists whose students take a SMARTER BALANCED assessment and who have direct instructional responsibility, will create one SMART goal based on that assessment and one SMART goal based on a non-standardized assessment; all other specialists may develop their two SMART Goal(s) based on non-standardized assessments.

Each SMART goal should make clear (1) what evidence was or will be examined, (2) what level of performance is targeted, and (3) what proportion of students is projected to achieve the targeted performance level. It is through the Phase I examination of student data that specialists will determine what level of performance to target for which students.

Education specialists will submit their SMART goal(s) to their evaluator for review and approval. The review and approval process of the SMART goal will take place during the Goal-Setting conference, (on or before October 30). Evaluators will review and approve the SMART Goal(s) based on the following criteria, to ensure they are as fair, reliable, valid, and useful to the greatest possible extent:

- ***Priority of Content:*** SMART goal is deeply relevant to the education specialist's assignment and address a large proportion of his/her targeted student population.
- ***Rigor of SMART Goal:*** SMART goal is obtainable, but ambitious, and represents appropriate growth.
- ***Analysis of Student Outcome Data:*** SMART goal provides specific, measurable evidence of student outcome data analysis and demonstrates knowledge about students' growth and development.

Phase 3:  
Monitor and  
document  
student  
progress

Once SMART Goal(s) are approved, specialists must monitor students' progress toward achieving student learning SMART Goal(s).

Specialists may monitor and document student progress through:

- Examination of student work
- Administration of various assessments
- Tracking of students' accomplishments and struggles

Specialists may choose to share their interim findings with teacher and specialists colleagues during collaborative time. They may also wish to keep their evaluator apprised of progress. Artifacts related to the specialist's monitoring practices can be reviewed and discussed during the Mid-Year Conference.

**Mid-year conference:**

Education specialists and teachers will review progress toward the goals/objectives at least once during the school year, using available information and data collected on student progress. This review may result in revisions to the instructional strategies or approaches specialists use. Specialists and evaluators may mutually agree to mid-year adjustments to SMART Goal(s) to accommodate changes (e.g., student populations, assignment). The Mid-Year Conference will take place by February 28<sup>th</sup> of the academic year.

Phase 4:  
Assess students to  
determine progress  
towards or  
achievement of  
SMART Goal(s)

**End-of-year review of SMART Goal(s)/ Student Outcomes and Achievement:**

***Education Specialist Self-Assessment*** – The specialist reviews all information and data collected during the year and completes a self-assessment for review by the evaluator. Specialists will reflect on the SMART Goal(s) by responding to the following five statements:

- Describe the results and provide evidence for each indicator.
- Describe what you did that produced these results.
- Provide your overall assessment of whether the goal was met.
- Describe what you learned and how you will use that information going forward.
- Self-assessments should be brief and concise, maximum two pages.

***End of Year Conference*** – The specialist will collect evidence of student progress toward meeting the student learning goals/objectives. This evidence will reflect student progress toward meeting SMART Goal(s) for learning. The evidence will be submitted to the evaluator, and the specialist and evaluator will discuss the extent to which the students met the learning goals/objectives. Following the conference, the evaluator will rate the extent of student progress toward meeting the student learning goals/objectives, based on criteria for the 4 performance level designations shown in the table below. If SMARTER BALANCED assessment data has a significant impact on a final rating, a final rating may be revised when SMARTER BALANCED assessment data are available.

Evaluators will review the evidence and the specialist's self-assessment and assign one of four ratings **to each** SMART goal: Exceeded (4 points), Met (3 points), Partially Met (2 points), or Did Not Meet (1 point). These ratings are defined as follows:

<b>Exceeded (4)</b>	Exceeded SMART goal(s) by 10% margin or higher.
<b>Met (3)</b>	Met the SMART goal(s).
<b>Partially Met (2)</b>	Did not meet the SMART goal(s) by 10% margin.
<b>Did Not Meet (1)</b>	Did not meet the SMART Goal(s) by 11% or greater.

To arrive at a rating for each SMART goal, the evaluator will review the results from data collected as a body of evidence regarding the accomplishment of the goal and score the achievement of the SMART Goal(s) holistically.

The final rating for Category 1: Student Outcomes and Achievement rating for a specialist is the average of their two SMART goal scores. For example, if one SMART goal was Partially Met, for 2 points, and the other SMART goal was Met, for 3 points, the student growth and development rating would be 2.5  $[(2+3)/2]$ . The individual SMART goal ratings and final Student Outcomes and Achievement rating will be shared and discussed with specialists during the End-of-Year Conference.

**NOTE:** For SMART Goal(s) that include data based on SMARTER BALANCED assessments results may not be available in time to score the SMART goal prior to the June 30 deadline. If this is the case, the specialist’s student growth and development rating will be based only on the results of the SMART goal that is based on non-standardized indicators.

***Training for Education Specialists and Evaluators***

Specific training will be provided to develop evaluators’ and specialist’s data literacy and creation of the two SMART Goal(s) by which specialists will be evaluated. Training sessions will support and/or enhance the abilities and skills of each specialist to communicate their goals for student learning outcomes and achievement. The content of the training will include, but not be limited to:

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### ***SMART Goal Criteria: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Bound***

- Data Literacy as it relates to: analyzing and interpreting assessment data, understanding root cause, and decision-making based on inferences
- Quality of measures and indicators used to determine student growth
- Alignment of SMART Goal(s) to school and/or district goals
- Writing plans that articulate the strategies and progress monitoring tools teachers will implement to achieve their SMART Goal(s)

All specialists and evaluators will be required to attend this training to ensure a standardized approach to the documentation of student learning outcomes and achievement. Should additional training be needed, it will be decided on a case-by-case basis at the school or individual level.

### **CATEGORY 2: PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE (40%)**

**A professional practice goal**, based on data from education specialist reflection and evaluator observations, will comprise 40% of their evaluation

#### ***CCT Performance and Practice Continuum***

Sterling's observation instrument for the Professional Learning and Evaluation Program has been developed to align with *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (CCT)* and to reflect the content of its domains and indicators. The CCT has defined for Connecticut's educators key aspects of effective teaching, correlated with student learning and achievement, that have been evidenced in professional literature.

The *CCT Performance and Practice Continuum*, which evaluators will use in conducting teacher and education specialist observations and reviews of practice, was developed by teams of educators (including teachers, building-level administrators, central office administrators, and professional developers), who reviewed the six domains and 46 indicators that comprise the CCT, relevant research on effective instructional practices that improve student learning and achievement, and other models for observation of professional teaching practice (Danielson, 2011; Marshall, 2011; Marzano, et al., 2011 ). The *CCT Continuum* represent a distillation of each of these resources to essential elements, crucial to effective practice, that can be observed and applied in appraisals of teachers and education specialists.

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The *CCT Continuum* has also been adapted for use in observation of the professional practice of education specialists. This adapted version addresses several principles which are essential components of effective education specialist performance and practice. These principles are explicitly embedded in the adapted *Continuum* as observable practices, and specialists and evaluators are required to reflect on these practices during pre- and post-observation conferences and self evaluations. The overarching principles of Sterling's *Performance and Practice Continuum* are:

- *Diversity* as enrichment of educational opportunities for all students;
- *Differentiation* as a necessity for success and equal opportunities for all students;
- Purposeful use of *technology* as access to learning for all students;
- *Collaboration* as essential to producing high levels of learning for all students;
- *Data collection and analysis* as essential to informing effective planning, instruction, and assessment practices that enhance student learning;
- *Professional learning* as integral to improved student outcomes.

Key attributes of education specialist performance and practice outlined in the CCT are reflected in the descriptors of the Indicators within the *CCT Continuum for Education Specialists*, so that evaluators and specialists may understand how these attributes apply in practice, observations, and evaluation. Education specialists lesson plans, interventions, action plans, and associated documentation, pre-observation, post-observation, and specialist self-reflection forms and related conversations, as well as reviews of practice, such as communication with families, collaboration with colleagues, participation in data teams, professional learning presentations by faculty members, participation in mentoring, PPTs and action research, all provide rich data related to the CCT standards and the effectiveness of education specialists' performance and practice.

In employing the CCT as its foundation, *Performance and Practice Continuum for Education Specialists* maintains consistency with the *CCT Performance and Practice Continuum* that is employed in the teacher evaluation. Both versions of the *Continuum* rely on rich professional discussion about and reflection on professional practice to advance educator effectiveness and student learning. Therefore, consistency among professional language and concepts regarding instructional practices makes it possible for all educators to acquire common understandings and language about teaching and learning, with the intent of enriching collaboration, communication, and community to pave the way for school improvement and success for all students.

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### ***Education Specialist Goal Setting for Performance and Practice***

In preparation for instructional planning and Goal-Setting Conferences with evaluators, specialists will analyze their student data and use the *CCT Continuum* to reflect on their own practices and their impact on student performance. Based on that reflection, specialists will develop a performance and practice goal to guide their own professional learning and improvements in practice that will ultimately promote student growth and achievement of student outcome goals. Education specialist practice goals will not be evaluated, but should result in improvements in specialist knowledge and skills which will be evidenced in observations of performance and practice.

### ***Data Gathering Process***

Sterling evaluators may use the *CCT Continuum* to guide data collection from three sources: conferences with specialists, classroom observations and reviews of practice. Over the course of the school year, evaluators will gather evidence for all Indicators and Domains of the *CCT Continuum* which will allow specialists to demonstrate: the context for their work; their ability to improve student learning and/or performance and outcomes; their ability to engage in reflective practice to improve their own knowledge and skills; how they exercise leadership skills within their classrooms, schools and district.

### ***Observation of Education Specialist Practice***

Observations, both formal and informal, provide valuable information to all professional staff about instructional practice. Data collected through observations allow administrators to understand more about the nature of learning and instruction in our school, and feedback from observation provides individual educators with insights regarding the impact of their management, planning, instruction, and assessment practices on student growth. Annually, administration will engage in professional learning opportunities, including online options and collaborative sessions that will develop their skills in effective observation providing meaningful, useful feedback, and engaging in productive professional conversations with educators.

Evaluators and instructional leaders use a combination of formal and informal, announced and unannounced observations to:

- Gather evidence of and facilitate professional conversation regarding the quality of educator practice;
- Provide constructive oral and written feedback of observations that is timely and useful for educators;
- Provide information for the on-going calibration of evaluators and evaluation practices in the district.

Administrators may differentiate the number of observations based on experience, prior ratings, needs and goals of individual education specialists.

In addition to formal conferences for goal-setting and performance review and formal observations, informal observations of education specialists by evaluators will occur periodically. Observations are for the purpose of helping specialists to gain insights about

<b>Data-Informed Observation of Education Specialist Performance and Practice (40%)</b>		
<b>SOURCES OF DATA</b>	<b>EXAMPLES OF DATA</b>	<b>IMPORTANCE OF DATA</b>
Conferences	Data related to all 4 domains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversation and artifacts that reveal the specialist has an understanding of, content, students, strategies, and use of data</li> <li>• Specialist’s use of data to inform instruction, analyze student performance and set appropriate goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides opportunities for specialists to demonstrate cause and effect thinking.</li> <li>• Provides opportunities for evaluator learning in content; systems effectiveness; priorities for professional learning</li> <li>• Provides context for observations and evaluation</li> </ul>
Observations	Data related to Domains 2- 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialist-student, student-student conversations, interactions, activities related to learning goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides evidence of specialist’s ability to improve student learning and promote growth</li> </ul>
Non-classroom reviews of practice  Documentation Log	Data related to Domain 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialist reflection, as evidenced in pre- and post-conference data.</li> <li>• Engagement in professional development opportunities, involvement in leadership roles</li> <li>• Collaboration with colleagues</li> <li>• Specialist-family interactions</li> <li>• Ethical decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides evidence of specialist as learner, as reflective practitioner and teacher as leader.</li> </ul>

their professional practice and its impact on student learning. Formal and informal observation of specialists is considered a normal part of the evaluator’s job responsibilities. More importantly, observation is essential for establishing a culture of continuous learning for educators and for understanding the nature, scope and quality of student learning in a school as a whole.

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In addition to in-class observations, where applicable, non-classroom reviews of practice will be conducted. Examples of non-classroom observations or reviews of practice include but are not limited to: observations of data team meetings, observations of coaching/mentoring of other teachers, review of plans or other artifacts. The Professional Learning and Evaluation Program also establishes opportunities for specialists to participate in informal, non-evaluative observations of practice for the following purposes: to enhance awareness of teaching and learning practices in the school; to create opportunities for problem-based professional learning projects and action research to improve student learning; and to enhance collaboration among education specialists and teachers and administrators in advancing the vision and mission of the school.

- In the first year of implementation of the Plan, all education specialists will receive three formal observations. Each of the three observations will include a pre-conference and a post-conference with timely written and verbal feedback. One informal unannounced observation and at least one review of practice will be conducted for all specialists.
- In subsequent years, education specialists who are entering their first, second or third year will receive three formal observations. Each of the three observations will include a pre-conference and a post-conference with timely written and verbal feedback. One informal unannounced observation and at least one review of practice will be conducted for all specialists.
- In subsequent years, education specialists who have prior experience but are new to Sterling will receive three formal observations; until the specialist receives tenure status. Each of the three observations will include a pre-conference and a post-conference with timely written and verbal feedback. One informal unannounced observation and at least one review of practice will be conducted for all specialists.
- In subsequent years, education specialists entering their fourth or more year and who have received a performance evaluation designation of *Below Standard* or *Developing* shall receive a number of observations appropriate to their individual development plan, but no fewer than three formal observations. Each of the three observations will include a pre-conference and a post-conference with timely written and verbal feedback.
- In subsequent years, education specialists entering their fourth or more year and who have received a performance evaluation designation of *Proficient* or *Exemplary* will receive a combination of at least three observations/reviews of practice, one of which must be a formal observation. The exact combination shall be mutually agreed upon by the specialist and evaluator at the beginning of the evaluation process.

**OBSERVATION SCHEDULE**

Performance Designation/Category	Number of Observations	Conferencing and Feedback
<p><b><u>CATEGORY 1:</u></b> <i>Teachers entering their 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> year of teaching</i></p>	<p><b><u>Formal observations:</u></b> Three (3) in-class formal observations <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Pre-conference requirement:</u></b> Each formal observation requires a pre-conference <b><u>Post-conference requirement:</u></b> Each formal observation requires a post-conference</p>
	<p><b><u>Informal observations:</u></b> One (1) in-class informal unannounced observation <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Feedback requirement:</u></b> Feedback for the informal observation will be verbal and/or written</p>
	<p><b><u>Review of Practice:</u></b> Every year in the evaluation cycle teacher must receive at least one (1) review of practice on a mutually agreed upon area of practice <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Feedback requirement:</u></b> Feedback for the review of practice will be verbal and/or written</p>
<p><b><u>CATEGORY 2:</u></b> <i>Experienced teachers NEW to Sterling Community School (until they become tenured)</i></p>	<p><b><u>Formal observations:</u></b> Three (3) in-class formal observations <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Pre-conference requirement:</u></b> Each formal observation requires a pre-conference <b><u>Post-conference requirement:</u></b> Each formal observation requires a post-conference</p>
	<p><b><u>Informal observations:</u></b> One (1) in-class informal unannounced observation <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Feedback requirement:</u></b> Feedback for the informal observation will be verbal and/or written</p>
	<p><b><u>Review of Practice:</u></b> Every year in the evaluation cycle teacher must receive at least one (1) review of practice on a mutually agreed upon area of practice <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Feedback requirement:</u></b> Feedback for the review of practice will be verbal and/or written</p>
<p><b><u>CATEGORY 3:</u></b> <i>Sterling Community School teachers entering their 4<sup>th</sup> or more years of teaching and designated as “Proficient or Exemplary”</i> <i><u>Note: This category of teachers is evaluated on a rotation cycle for formal observations.</u></i></p>	<p><b><u>Formal observations:</u></b> Every <b>THIRD</b> year in the evaluation cycle teacher must receive one (1) in-class formal observation <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Pre-conference requirement:</u></b> Each formal observation requires a pre-conference <b><u>Post-conference requirement:</u></b> Each formal observation requires a post-conference</p>
	<p><b><u>Review of Practice:</u></b> Every year in the evaluation cycle teacher must receive at least one (1) review of practice on a mutually agreed upon area of practice <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Feedback requirement:</u></b> Feedback for the review of practice will be verbal and/or written</p>
<p><b><u>CATEGORY 4:</u></b> <i>Any teacher designated as “Below Standard or Developing”</i></p>	<p><b><u>Formal observations:</u></b> Three (3) in-class formal observations <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Pre-conference requirement:</u></b> Each formal observation requires a pre-conference <b><u>Post-conference requirement:</u></b> Each formal observation requires a post-conference</p>
	<p><b><u>Informal observations:</u></b> One (1) in-class informal unannounced observation <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Feedback requirement:</u></b> Feedback for the informal observation will be verbal and/or written</p>
	<p><b><u>Review of Practice:</u></b> Every year in the evaluation cycle teacher must receive at least one (1) review of practice on a mutually agreed upon area of practice <b><u>Completion date:</u></b> May 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Feedback requirement:</u></b> Feedback for the review of practice will be verbal and/or written</p>

## ***Evaluation Ratings for Performance and Practice***

Evaluation ratings will be assigned at the end of each school year. After gathering and analyzing evidence for all Indicators within each of the Domains 2-6, evaluators will use the *CCT Continuum* to initially assign ratings of *Below Standard*, *Developing*, *Proficient* or *Exemplary*. Ratings will be made at the Domain level only.

Once Domain ratings have been assigned, evaluators will use the *Rating Guidelines for Observation of Education Specialist Performance and Practice* to assign a rating.

<b>Ratings Guidelines for Observation of Education Specialist Performance and Practice</b>	
<b>Rating</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
<b>Exemplary</b>	Substantially exceeding indicators of performance
<b>Proficient</b>	Meeting indicators of performance
<b>Developing</b>	Meeting some indicators of performance but not others
<b>Below Standard</b>	Not meeting indicators of performance

### **2.1: 4-Level Matrix Rating System**

(1) Annual summative evaluations provide each teacher with a summative rating aligned to one of four performance evaluation designators: Exemplary, Proficient, Developing and Below Standard.

The term “performance” in the above shall mean “progress as defined by specified indicators.” Such indicators shall be mutually agreed upon, as applicable. Such progress shall be demonstrated by evidence. The SDE will work with PEAC to identify best practices as well as issues regarding the implementation of the 4-level Matrix Rating System for further discussion.

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## **EVALUATOR TRAINING AND PROFICIENCY**

Formal observations of practice are guided by the Domains and Indicators of the *CCT Performance and Practice Continuum*. Evaluators participate in extensive training and are required to be proficient in the use of the *Continuum* for educator evaluation. Training is conducted annually (at a minimum) to ensure consistency, compliance, and high-quality application of the *Continuum* in observations and evaluations. Formal observations include pre- and post-conferences that provide opportunities for deep professional conversations that allow evaluators and educators to set goals, allow administrators to gain insight into the educator's progress in addressing issues and working toward their goals, and share evidence each has gathered during the year.

In the first year of implementation of Sterling's Professional Learning and Evaluation Program, all evaluators will be required to participate in the initial training and successfully complete online proficiency activities. Evaluators will also attend additional support sessions during the school year. To ensure consistency and fairness in the evaluation process, all evaluators must meet the proficiency standard prior to conducting teacher observations. Components will include the following:

1. Training that will focus on:
  - using the *CCT Performance and Practice Continuum* for data collection, analysis and evaluation
  - introducing participants to the online practice and proficiency system.
2. Online practice to be completed independently or as a collaborative learning activity at the school or district level
3. On-line proficiency comprised of two proficiency activities requiring evaluators to demonstrate their ability to: recognize bias; identify evidence from observations, conferences and non-classroom reviews of practice that is appropriate to specific *CCT Performance and Practice Continuum* Indicators and Domains; gather and analyze a comprehensive set of data to assign appropriate ratings at the Domain.
4. Follow-up face-to-face training to:
  - enhance evaluator conferencing and feedback skills
  - debrief on proficiency as needed

In the first year of implementation, evaluators will also participate in support sessions during the school year: Facilitated conversation in preparation for Mid Year Conferences and End of Year Conferences.

After the first year of implementation, all evaluators new to Sterling will be required to participate in the training, proficiency and supports sessions described above.

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All Sterling evaluators will be required to demonstrate proficiency in the use of the *CCT Continuum* for educator evaluation bi-annually. Any evaluator who does not initially demonstrate proficiency will be provided with additional practice and coaching opportunities as needed and will be required to successfully complete online proficiency activities. In the second year of proficiency, evaluators will be required to calibrate their ability to appropriately apply the *CCT Continuum* by participating in district update/calibration sessions.

### **CATEGORY 3. PARENT FEEDBACK (10%)**

Ten percent (10%) of a specialist's evaluation shall be based on parent feedback, including data from surveys and may also include focus group data.

Sterling Community School strives to meet the needs of all of the students all of the time. To gain insight into what parents perceive about our ability to accomplish this, a school-wide parent survey will be used, which will allow for Sterling Community School to collect and analyze parent feedback data that will be used for continuous improvement. Surveys will be administered one time per year. The survey data will be used by teachers as baseline data for the following academic year. Analysis of survey data will be conducted on a school-wide basis, with all certified staff engaged in the analysis, and will result in one school-wide goal to which all certified staff will be held accountable.

Once the school-wide parent feedback goal has been determined by the administrator, education specialists will identify the strategies they will implement to achieve the school-wide goal.

### **CATEGORY 4. WHOLE-SCHOOL STUDENT LEARNING INDICATORS (5%)**

Five percent (5%) of a specialist's evaluation shall be based on whole-school student learning indicators or student feedback.

Sterling Community School will define and communicate a Whole School Learning Indicator that is based on the school performance index (SPI) to which all certified staff will be held accountable. Certified staff will be asked to articulate in writing how they will, through their instructional practice, contribute to the achievement of the Whole School Learning Indicator.

Education Specialists' efforts and actions taken towards achievement of the Whole School Learning Indicator will be discussed during the pre-, mid-year, and post-conferences. Specialists will be expected to bring artifacts from their practice that support and provide evidence of their contributions to the attainment of this indicator.

## SUMMATIVE EDUCATION SPECIALIST EVALUATION RATING:

Each education specialist will receive an annual summative rating in one of four levels:

- **Exemplary** – Substantially exceeding indicators of performance
- **Proficient** – Meeting indicators of performance
- **Developing** – Meeting some indicators of performance but not others
- **Below standard** – Not meeting indicators of performance

*Exemplary* ratings are reserved for performance that significantly exceeds proficiency and could serve as a model for education specialists district-wide or even statewide. Few education specialists are expected to demonstrate *Exemplary* performance on more than a small number of indicators.

*Proficient* represents fully satisfactory performance. It is the rigorous standard expected for experienced specialists.

A rating of *Developing* means that performance is meeting proficiency in some indicators but not others. Improvement is necessary and expected.

A rating of *Below Standard* indicates performance that is below proficient on all components or unacceptably low on one or more indicators.

### ***Determining Summative Ratings***

The process for determining summative evaluation ratings has three steps: (a) determining a practice rating, (b) determining an outcomes rating and (c) combining the two into an overall rating.

### **A. PRACTICE: Education Specialist Performance and Practice (40%) + Parent Feedback (10%) = 50%**

The practice rating derives from a specialist's performance on the five domains of the *CCT Performance and Practice Continuum* and the parent feedback target. Evaluators record a rating for the domains that generates an overall rating for specialist practice. The Parent Feedback rating is combined with the Education Specialist Practice rating and the evaluator uses the matrix to determine an overall Education Specialist Performance & Practice Rating.

**B. OUTCOMES: Student Outcome and Achievement (45%) + Whole-School Student Learning Indicators (5%) = 50%**

The outcomes rating derive from the two student outcome and achievement measures – 2 SMART Goal(s) – and whole-school learning indicators outcomes. As shown in the Summative Rating Form, evaluators record a rating for the SMART Goal(s) agreed to in the beginning of the year. The Whole-School Student Learning Indicator Rating is combined with the SMART Goal(s) rating and the evaluator uses the matrix to determine an overall Outcomes Rating

**C. FINAL SUMMATIVE: Practice (50%) + Outcomes (50%) = 100%**

The Summative rating combines the practice and outcomes ratings using the matrix below.

<i>Education Specialist Practice Rating</i>					
		<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Below Standard</i>
<i>Education Specialist Outcomes Rating</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Developing</i>
	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Below Standard</i>
	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Below Standard</i>
	<i>Below Standard</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Below Standard</i>	<i>Below Standard</i>

In accordance with The CT Guidelines for Educator Evaluation, Sterling’s Professional Learning and Evaluation Plan employs a 4-level matrix rating system, as follows:

Annual summative evaluations must provide each education specialist with a summative rating aligned to one of four performance evaluation designations: *Exemplary*, *Proficient*, *Developing* and *Below Standard*.

In order to determine summative rating designations for each education specialist, Sterling evaluators will:

- A. Rate specialist's performance in each of the four Categories:
  - Student Outcomes and Achievement;
  - Observations of Performance and Practice;
  - Parent Feedback, and
  - Whole-School Student Learning Indicators.
- B. Combine the Student Outcomes and Achievement (Category 1, above) and Whole-School Student Learning Indicator rating (Category 4, above) into a single rating, taking into account their relative weights. This will represent an overall **Outcomes Rating** of *Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, or Below Standard*.
- C. Combine the Observations of Performance and Practice rating (Category 2, above) and the Parent Feedback rating (Category 3, above) into a single rating, taking into account their relative weights; this will represent an overall **Practice Rating** of *Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, or Below Standard*.
- D. Combine the **Outcomes Rating** and **Practice Rating** into a **final rating**. In undertaking this step, education specialists will be assigned a summative rating category of *Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, or Below Standard*.

### **EDUCATION SPECIALISTS PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT PLAN (PASS)**

Education specialists who receive a summative evaluation rating of *Developing* or *Below Standard* will be required to work with their evaluator to design an education specialist's performance remediation plan. The plan will be created within 30 days after the completion of the summative evaluation rating conference. The education specialist's performance remediation plan will identify areas of needed improvement and include supports that Sterling will provide to address the performance areas identified as needing improvement. After the development of the PASS education specialist performance remediation plan, the specialist and evaluator will collaborate to determine the target completion date. The specialist must receive a summative evaluation rating of *Proficient* within a year of the development of PASS Administrator Performance Remediation Plan.

The plan must include the following components:

- *Areas of Improvement*: Identify area of needed improvement
- *Rationale for Areas of Improvement*: Evidence from observations that show an area needing improvement.
- *Performance Expectation*: List performance expectation rated *Developing* or *Below Standard*
- *Indicators for Effective Leading*: Identify exemplary practices in the area identified as needing improvement

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- *Improvement Strategies to be Implemented:* Provide strategies that the specialist can implement to show improvement in performance expectations rated *Developing or Below Standard*
  - *Tasks to Complete:* Specific tasks the specialist will complete that will improve the performance expectation.
  - *Support and Resources:* List of supports and resources the specialist can use to improve, e.g. professional learning opportunities, peer observation, colleague mentor, books, etc.
  - *Indicators of Progress:* How the specialist will show progress towards *Proficient/exemplary* in domain through observations, data, evidence.

The plan will be designed and written in a collaborative manner, which focused on the development of a professional learning community supporting colleagues within this level. The education specialist and evaluator will sign the plan. Copies will be distributed to all those who will be involved in the implementation of the plan as well as the Principal and the Superintendent. The contents of the plan will be confidential.

For educators rated *Exemplary*, the following career development and professional growth opportunities would be available: observation of peers; mentoring/coaching early-career educators or educators new to Sterling; participating in development of educator Professional Assistance and Support System plans for peers whose performance is developing or below standard; leading Professional Learning Communities for their peers; and, targeted professional development based on areas of need.

## **EVALUATION-BASED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

As our core values indicate, Sterling believes that the primary purpose for professional learning is school improvement as measured by the success of every student. We also believe that professional learning must focus on creating meaningful experiences for all staff members. Designing evaluation-based professional learning is a dynamic process. Working with program goals and data from the educator evaluation process, professional learning is planned to strengthen instruction around identified student growth needs or other areas of identified educator needs.

We recognize that educators as well as students learn in different ways and have different learning needs at different points in their career. Effective professional learning, therefore, must be highly personalized and provide for a variety of experiences, including learning teams, study groups, individual study, etc. as well as opportunities for conducting research and collaborating with colleagues on content-based pedagogical activities.

Sterling's evaluation-based professional learning design has as its foundation the *Standards for Professional Learning* (Learning Forward, 2011). Each of the tenets of Sterling's Professional Learning and Evaluation Program is aligned with at least one, and often several, of the seven *Standards for Professional Learning*, as follows.

Point for District Consideration: To inform the Professional Development/Evaluation Committee development process

### **TENETS OF THE STERLING PLAN: ALIGNING STANDARDS AND PROCESSES:**

- ***Evaluation is an educator-centered process:*** We believe that, for evaluation to improve professional practice, it is essential to “make evaluation a task managed by an educator and not a thing done to a worker” (Peterson, 2000, p. 5).
  - Educator reflection on aspects of their instructional practice and its effect on student achievement, on other facets of responsibility to the school community, and on their professional contributions to their field is critical to improved practice for both veteran and novice educators. [*Standards: Learning Communities; Data; Outcomes*]
    - Educator self-reflection represents the initiation and culmination of the cycle of professional practice and procedures for evaluation.
    - Educators collect and assemble relevant data related to student outcomes and their professional contributions, and determine how their data can be used in evaluation.

- **Organizational culture matters:** The framework and outcomes of systems for the evaluation of educators must reflect an understanding of the culture of the school as a learning organization (see Schein, 2010; Senge, 2012).
  - It is vitally important to examine the core beliefs that underpin organizational processes such as professional learning and evaluation, as well as education specialists and administrators’ perception of their roles and effectiveness, to effect positive changes in student learning, growth, and achievement. Further, it is important to evolve the role of principals and administrators from the sole judges and evaluators of educators and teaching to emphasize their role as instructional leaders who collaborate with all educators.
    - Educators support each other in the pursuit of individual and collective professional growth and student success through rich professional conferences and conversations. [*Standards: Leadership; Resources*]
    - The school’s core beliefs about student learning are the foundation for evaluation and support systems, and provide a focus for individual and collaborative reflections on personal practice and organizational functioning. [*Standards: Learning Communities; Implementation*]
    - Educators collaborate to observe instructional practices in their school and to analyze data on instruction and student performance. [*Standards: Data; Outcomes*]
    - Educators collaborate to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning. [*Standards: Leadership; Learning Communities; Implementation; Learning Designs*]
  
- **Evaluation and professional learning must be differentiated to increase organizational effectiveness:** There is a growing body of research that demonstrates that individual and collective educator efficacy (defined by Bandura, 1997, as “the group’s shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given levels of attainments”), is positively associated with and predictive of student achievement (Allinder, 1995; Goddard, et al., 2000; Moolenaar, et al., 2012; Tschannen-Moran and Barr, 2004)
  - The needs of veteran and novice educators are different, and evaluation-based professional learning is to be designed to meet those needs, inspire and motivate individual and collective efficacy, and build leadership capacity in schools and districts (see Peterson, 2000). [*Standards: Learning Design; Leadership; Resources*]
  - The development of such structures as career ladders, personal professional portfolios, and opportunities are provided for educators to share their learning from professional activities, findings from their own research or from research-based practices they have applied, classroom-level and professional accomplishments and/or challenges. [*Standards: Data; Outcomes: Learning Communities; Leadership*]

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## **CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH**

Sterling will provide opportunities for educator career development and professional growth based on the results of the evaluation. Educators with an evaluation of *Proficient* or *Exemplary* will be able to participate in opportunities to further their professional growth, including attendance at conferences and other professional learning opportunities.

For educators rated *Proficient* and/or *Exemplary*, the following career development and professional growth opportunities would be available: observation of peers; mentoring/coaching early-career educators or educators new to Sterling; participating in development of educator Professional Assistance and Support System plans for peers whose performance is *Developing* or *Below Standard*; leading Professional Learning Communities for their peers; and, targeted professional development based on areas of need.

Points for District Consideration: To inform the Professional Development/Evaluation Committee development process.

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# **ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION PLAN**

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## ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION PLAN

### **OVERVIEW**

Sterling's Administrator Evaluation Plan means to develop a shared understanding of leader effectiveness. Sterling's administrator evaluation and support plan defines administrator effectiveness in terms of (1) administrator practice (the actions taken by administrators that have been shown to impact key aspects of school life); (2) the results that come from this leadership (teacher effectiveness and student achievement); and (3) the perceptions of the administrator's leadership among key stakeholders in the community.

The plan describes four levels of performance for administrators and focuses on the practices and outcomes of **Proficient** administrators. These administrators can be characterized as:

- Meeting expectations as an instructional leader
- Meeting expectations in at least 2 other areas of practice
- Meeting 1 target related to stakeholder feedback
- Meeting state accountability growth targets on tests of core academic subjects
- Meeting and making progress on 2 SMART Goal(s) aligned to school and district priorities
- Having more than 60% of teachers proficient on the student growth portion of their evaluation

This document describes the administrator evaluation plan, beginning with a set of underlying core design principles. The plan then describe the four components on which administrators are evaluated – leadership practice, stakeholder feedback, student learning and teacher effectiveness – before describing the process of evaluation and, finally, the steps evaluators take to reach a summative rating for an administrator.

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## COMPONENTS OF THE ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION PLAN

The evaluation of administrators, as well as supports for their on-going growth and development, are based on four categories:

### **CATEGORY #1: LEADERSHIP PRACTICE (40%)**

An assessment of an administrator's leadership practice, by direct observation of practice and the collection of other evidence, is 40% of an administrator's summative rating.

Leadership practice is described in the *Common Core of Leading: Connecticut School Leadership Standards*, adopted by the Connecticut State Board of Education in June of 2012, which use the national *Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC)* standards as their foundation and define effective administrative practice through six performance expectations. (see Appendix B)

All six of these performance expectations contribute to successful schools, but research shows that some have a bigger impact than others. In particular, improving teaching and learning is at the core of what effective educational leaders do. As such, **Performance Expectation 2 (Teaching and Learning) for administrators will be weighted twice as much as** any other Performance Expectation. The other Performance Expectations must have a weighting of at least 5% of the overall evaluation.

These weightings will be consistent for all principals and other Sterling administrators.

In order to arrive at these ratings, administrators are measured against the *Leader Evaluation Rubric* (see Appendix B) which describes leadership actions across four performance levels for each of the six performance expectations and associated elements. The four performance levels are:

- *Exemplary*: The *Exemplary Level* focuses on the concepts of developing capacity for action and leadership beyond the individual leader. Collaboration and involvement from a wide range of staff, students and stakeholders is prioritized as appropriate in distinguishing *Exemplary* performance from *Proficient* performance.
- *Proficient*: The rubric is anchored at the *Proficient Level* using the indicator language from the *Connecticut School Leadership Standards*. The specific indicator language is highlighted in **bold** at the *Proficient Level*.
- *Developing*: The *Developing Level* focuses on leaders with a general knowledge of leadership practices but most of those practices do not necessarily lead to positive results.

- *Below Standard*: The *Below Standard Level* focuses on a limited understanding of leadership practices and general inaction on the part of the leader.

Two key concepts, indicated by bullets, are often included as indicators. Each of the concepts demonstrates a continuum of performance across the row, from *Below Standard* to *Exemplary*.

**Assigning ratings for each Performance Expectation:** Performance indicators provide examples of observable, tangible behavior that indicate the degree to which administrators are meeting each Performance Expectation. Evaluators and administrators will review performance and complete evaluation at the Performance Expectation level, NOT at the Element level. Additionally, it is important to document an administrator's performance on each Performance Expectation with evidence generated from multiple performance indicators, but not necessarily all performance indicators. As part of the evaluation process, evaluators and administrators should identify a few specific areas for on-going support and growth.

### **Leadership Practice Summative Rating**

Summative ratings are based on the preponderance of evidence for each performance expectation in the *Connecticut School Leadership Standards*. Evaluators collect written evidence about and observe the administrator's leadership practice across the six performance expectations described in the rubric. Specific attention is paid to leadership performance areas identified as needing development.

This is accomplished through the following steps, undertaken by the administrator being evaluated and by the evaluator completing the evaluation:

The administrator and evaluator meet for a *Goal-Setting Conference* by the **August 1** to identify focus areas for development of the administrator's leadership practice.

1. The administrator being evaluated collects evidence about his/her practice and the evaluator collects evidence about administrator practice with particular focus on the identified focus areas for development. Evaluators of principals must conduct at least two school site observations for any principal and will conduct at least four school site observations for principals who are new to their district, school, the profession, or who have received ratings of *Developing* or *Below Standard*. Evaluators of other Sterling administrators will conduct at least two observations and/or reviews of practice.
2. The administrator being evaluated and the evaluator hold a Mid-Year Formative Conference by **January 30** with a focused discussion of progress toward proficiency in the focus areas identified as needing development.

3. By **May 30**, the administrator being evaluated reviews all information and data collected during the year and completes a summative self-assessment for review by the evaluator, identifying areas of strength and continued growth as well as progress on their focus areas.
4. By **June 30**, the evaluator and the administrator being evaluated meet to discuss all evidence collected. Following the conference, the evaluator uses the preponderance of evidence to assign a summative rating of *Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, or Below Standard* for each performance expectation. Then the evaluator assigns a total practice rating based on the criteria in the Leadership Practice Matrix and generates a summary report of the evaluation by **June 30**.

### **Orientation and Training Programs**

When necessary, Sterling will provide training sessions for all administrators being evaluated so that they will understand the evaluation system, the processes, and the timelines for their evaluation. Special attention will be given to the *Common Core of Leading Performance Expectations* and the *Leadership Practice Rubric*, so that all administrators fully understand Performance Expectations and the requirement for being a *Proficient* administrator. Additional sessions will be provided throughout the academic year that will provide Sterling administrators with access to resources and opportunity to connect with colleagues to deepen their understanding of the Evaluation Program.

When necessary, Sterling will provide all evaluators of administrators with training focused on the administrator evaluation system. Training will include an in-depth overview and orientation of the four categories that are part of the plan, the process and timeline for plan implementation, the process for arriving at a summative evaluation, and use of *My Learning Plan OASYS*. Training will be provided on using the *Leadership Practice Rubric*, so that evaluators are thoroughly familiar with the language, expectations, and examples of evidence required for administrator proficiency. Additional training will be provided to all evaluators in conducting effective observations and providing high-quality feedback. Additional days of training will be provided on the three other categories in the plan and in the use of *My Learning Plan OASYS*.

**Administrators:**

**Leadership Practice Matrix (40%)**

<b>Exemplary (4)</b>	<b>Proficient (3)</b>	<b>Developing (2)</b>	<b>Below Standard (1)</b>
<i>Exemplary</i> on Teaching and Learning	At least <i>Proficient</i> on Teaching and Learning	At least <i>Developing</i> on Teaching and Learning	<i>Below Standard</i> on Teaching and Learning
<i>Exemplary</i> on at least 2 other performance expectations	At least <i>Proficient</i> on at least 3 other performance expectations	At least <i>Developing</i> on at least 3 other performance expectations	or
No rating below <i>Proficient</i> on any performance expectation	No rating below <i>Developing</i> on any		<i>Below Standard</i> on at least 3 other performance expectations

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## **CATEGORY #2: STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK (10%)**

Feedback from stakeholders assessed by administration of a survey with measures that align to the *Connecticut Leadership Standards* is 10% of an administrator's summative rating.

To gain insight into what stakeholders perceive about the administrators' effectiveness, for each administrative role, the stakeholders surveyed will be those in the best position to provide meaningful feedback. Stakeholders solicited for feedback will include teachers and parents, but may include other stakeholders (e.g., other staff, community members, students, etc.).

The survey instrument to be used was developed by Victoria Bernhardt, *Education for the Future*, Executive Director. These surveys, used both nationally and internationally, have been subjected to a rigorous vetting process that has found them to be fair, reliable, valid, and useful.

The surveys will be administered on-line and allow for anonymous responses, all Sterling administrators will collect and analyze stakeholder feedback data that will be used for continuous improvement. Surveys will be administered one time per year. The survey data will be used by administrators as baseline data for the following academic year.

Once the stakeholder feedback goal has been determined by the administrator, the administrator will identify the strategies he/she will implement to meet the target

Examples of surveys, developed by *Education for the Future* that will be used by Sterling are attached in the Appendix D.

### **ARRIVING AT A STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK SUMMATIVE RATING**

Ratings will reflect the degree to which an administrator makes growth on feedback measures, using data from the prior year as a baseline for setting a growth target.

Exceptions to this include:

- Administrators with high ratings already, in which case, the rating should reflect the degree to which measures remain high
- Administrators new to the role, in which case, the rating should be based on a reasonable target, using district averages or averages of schools in similar situations

This is accomplished in the following steps, undertaken by the administrator being evaluated and reviewed by the evaluator:

- Review baseline data on selected measures,
- Set 1 target for growth on a selected measure (or performance on a selected measure when growth is not feasible to assess or performance is already high)
- Once a year, administer surveys to relevant stakeholders
- Aggregate data and determine whether the administrator achieved the established target
- Assign a rating, using this scale:

<b>Exemplary (4)</b>	<b>Proficient (3)</b>	<b>Developing (2)</b>	<b>Below Standard (1)</b>
Exceeded target	Met target	Made progress but did not meet target	Made little or no progress against target

**CATEGORY #3: SMART GOAL(S) (45%)**

Student learning is assessed in equal weight by: (a) performance and progress on the academic learning measures in the state’s accountability system for schools using the School Performance Index (SPI) and (b) performance and growth on two locally-determined measures, (SMART Goal(s)). Each of these measures will have a weight of 22.5% and together they will account for 45% of the administrator’s evaluation.

**State Assessments (SPI)**

1. School Performance Index (SPI) progress – changes from year to year in student achievement on standardized assessments.
2. SPI progress for student subgroups – changes from year to year in student achievement for subgroups on-standardized assessments

Evaluation ratings for principals on these state test measures are generated as follows:

**Step 1:** SPI Ratings and Progress are applied to give the administrator a score between 1 and 4 for each category, using the table below:

	<b>Exemplary (4)</b>	<b>Proficient (3)</b>	<b>Developing (2)</b>	<b>Below Standard (1)</b>
<b>SPI Progress</b>	>125% of target progress	100-125% of target progress	50-99% of target progress	<50% of target progress
<b>Subgroup SPI Progress</b>	Meets performance targets for all subgroups that have SPI <88  OR  all subgroups have SPI > 88  OR  The school does not have any subgroups of sufficient size	Meets performance targets for 50% or more of sub-groups that have SPI <88	Meets performance targets for at least one sub-group that has SPI <88	Does not meet performance target for any subgroup that has SPI <88

**Step 2:** The scores in each category are combined; resulting in an overall state test rating that is scored on the following scale:

<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Below Standard</b>
>3.5	Between 2.5 and 3.5	Between 1.5 and 2.4	Less than 1.5

All protections related to the assignment of school accountability ratings (e.g., the minimum number of days a student must be enrolled in order for that student's scores to be included in an accountability measure) shall apply to the use of SMARTER BALANCED assessment data for administrator evaluation.

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## LOCALLY-DETERMINED MEASURES – SMART GOAL(S)

Administrators establish two SMART Goal(s) on measures they select. In selecting measures, certain parameters apply:

- All measures must align to Common Core State Standards. In instances where there are no such standards that apply to a subject/grade level or an administrators' assignment, Sterling will use research-based learning standards appropriate for that administrators' assignment (i.e., Standards for Professional Learning, American School Counselors Association, etc).
- At least one of the measures will focus on student outcomes from subjects and/or grades not assessed on state-administered assessment

Administrators have broad discretion in selecting indicators, including, but not limited to:

- Student performance or growth on SMARTER BALANCED assessments and/or district-adopted assessments not included in the state accountability measures (e.g., commercial content area assessments).
- Students' performance or growth on school- or classroom-developed assessments in subjects and grade levels for which there are not available SMARTER BALANCED assessments.

The process for selecting measures and creating SMART Goal(s) will strike a balance between alignment to student learning priorities and a focus on the most significant school-level student learning needs. To do so, it is critical that the process unfold in this way:

- First, establish student learning priorities for a given school year based on available data.
- The administrator uses available data to craft an improvement plan for the school. This is done in collaboration with the School Improvement Committees and the School Governance Council and includes a manageable set of clear student learning targets.
- The administrator chooses student learning priorities for her/his own evaluation that are (a) aligned to Sterling priorities (unless the school is already doing well against those priorities) and (b) aligned with the School Improvement Plan. The administrator chooses measures that best assess the priorities and develops clear and measurable goals for the chosen assessments/indicators.

- The administrator shares the SMART Goal(s) with her/his evaluator, informing them of a conversation designed to ensure that:
  - The SMART Goal(s) are attainable.
  - There is adequate data that can be collected to make a fair judgment about whether the administrator met the established SMART Goal(s).
  - The SMART Goal(s) are based on a review of student characteristics (e.g., mobility, attendance, demographic and learning characteristics) relevant to the assessment of the administrator against the objective.
  - The professional resources are appropriate to supporting the administrator in meeting the performance targets.
- The administrator being evaluated and the evaluator collect interim data on the SMART Goal(s) to inform a mid-year conversation (which is an opportunity to assess progress and, as needed, adjust targets) and summative data to inform summative ratings.

Based on this process, administrators receive a rating for this portion using the Sterling Administrator Evaluation Summative Rating Form:

To arrive at an overall student learning rating, the ratings for the state assessment and the locally-determined ratings are plotted on this matrix:

		Assessment-SPI (22.5%)			
		Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Below Standard
Locally-determined portion SMART Goal(s) (22.5%)	Exemplary	Exemplary	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing
	Proficient	Exemplary	Proficient	Proficient	Developing
	Developing	Proficient	Proficient	Developing	Below Standard
	Below Standard	Developing	Developing	Below Standard	Below Standard

**CATEGORY #4: TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS (5%)**

Teacher effectiveness, as measured by an aggregation of teachers' SMART Goal(s), is 5% of an administrator's evaluation.

Improving teacher effectiveness is central to an administrator’s role in driving improved student learning outcomes. That is why, in addition to measuring the actions that administrators take to increase teacher effectiveness, from hiring and placement to ongoing professional development to feedback on performance, the administrator evaluation model also assesses the outcomes of all of that work.

As part of Sterling’s teacher evaluation plan, teachers are assessed in part on their accomplishment of their SMART Goal(s). This is the basis for assessing administrators’ contribution to teacher effectiveness outcomes.

<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Below Standard</b>
>80% of teachers are rated <i>proficient</i> or <i>exemplary</i> on the student growth portion of their evaluation	>60% of teachers are rated <i>proficient</i> or <i>exemplary</i> on the student growth portion of their evaluation	>40% of teachers are rated <i>proficient</i> or <i>exemplary</i> on the student growth portion of their evaluation	<40% of teachers are rated <i>proficient</i> or <i>exemplary</i> on the student growth portion of their evaluation

## **ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION PROCESS**

This section describes the process by which administrators and their evaluators collect evidence about practice and results over the course of a year, culminating with a final rating and recommendations for continued improvement. We describe an annual cycle for administrators and evaluators to follow and believe that this sequence of events lends well to a meaningful and doable process.

### ***OVERVIEW***

Each administrator participates in the evaluation process as a cycle of continuous improvement. The cycle is the centerpiece of state guidelines designed to have all educators play a more active, engaged role in their professional growth and development. For every administrator, evaluation begins with goal-setting for the school year, setting the stage for implementation of a goal-driven plan. The cycle continues with a Mid-year conference, followed by continued implementation. The latter part of the process offers administrators a chance to self-assess and reflect on progress to date, a step that informs the summative evaluation. Evidence from the summative evaluation and self-assessment become important sources of information for the administrator's subsequent goal setting, as the cycle continues into the subsequent year.

### **SCHOOL YEAR: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND EVIDENCE COLLECTION**

<b>JULY</b>	<b>AUGUST</b>	<b>JANUARY</b>	<b>MAY</b>	<b>JUNE</b>
Orientation and context setting	Goal setting and plan development	Mid-year conference	Self-assessment	Preliminary summative rating to be finalized in August

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### ***Step 1: Orientation and Context-Setting by July 30***

To begin the process, the administrator needs five things to be in place:

1. Student learning data are available for review by the administrator and the state has assigned the school a School Performance Index (SPI) rating.
2. Stakeholder survey data are available for review by the administrator.
3. The superintendent has communicated his/her student learning priorities for the year.
4. The administrator has developed a School Improvement Plan that includes student learning goals.
5. The evaluator has provided the administrator with this document in order to orient her/him to the evaluation process.

### ***Step 2: Goal-Setting and Plan Development by August 15***

Before a school year starts, administrators will:

1. identify a target for growth on the SPI,
2. identify two SMART Goal(s) and
3. identify one stakeholder feedback target.

Choosing from among the elements of the *Connecticut School Leadership Standards* administrators will then identify the two specific areas of focus for their practice ***that will help them accomplish*** their SPI targets, their SMART Goal(s), and their stakeholder feedback target,. Administrators will identify these two specific focus areas of growth in order to facilitate a professional conversation about their leadership practice with their evaluator. What is critical is that the administrator connects improvement in the practice focus areas to the growth in SPI, the SMART Goal(s) and the stakeholder feedback target, creating a logical progression from practice to outcomes.

Next, the administrator and the evaluator meet in August to discuss and agree on the selected outcome goals and practice focus areas.

The evaluator and administrator also discuss the appropriate resources and professional development needs to support the administrator in accomplishing the goals. Together, these components: the goals, the practice areas and the resources and supports, comprise an individual's evaluation plan. In the event of any disagreement, the evaluator has the authority and responsibility to finalize the goals, supports and sources of evidence to be used.

The goal-setting form is to be completed by the administrator being evaluated. The focus areas, goals, activities, outcomes, and time line will be reviewed by the administrator's evaluator prior to the beginning work on the goals. The evaluator may suggest additional goals as appropriate.

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The evaluator will establish a schedule of school visits with the administrator to collect evidence and observe the administrator's work. The first visit will take place near the beginning of the school year to ground the evaluator in the school context and the administrator's evaluation plan. Subsequent visits will be planned at 2 to 3 month intervals.

**A note on the frequency of school site observations:**

- 2 observations for each administrator.
- 4 observations for any administrator new to Sterling, or for any administrator who has received ratings of *Developing* or *Below Standard*.

**Step 3: Mid-year Conference:** Midway through the school year there will be a formal check-in to review progress. In preparation for meeting:

- The administrator analyzes available student achievement data and considers progress toward outcome goals.
- The evaluator reviews observation and feedback forms to identify key themes for discussion.

The administrator being evaluated and the evaluator hold a Mid-year conference, with explicit discussion of progress toward student learning targets, as well as any areas of performance related to standards of performance and practice. The meeting is also an opportunity to discuss any changes in the context (e.g., a large influx of new students) that could impact accomplishment of outcome goals; goals may be changed at this point.

**Step 4: Self-Assessment:** By **May 30**, the administrator being evaluated completes a self-assessment on his/her practice on all 18 elements of the *Connecticut Leadership Standards*. For each element, the administrator being evaluated determines whether he/she:

- Needs to grow and improve practice on this element;
  - Has some strengths on this element but needs to continue to grow and improve;
  - Is consistently effective on this element; or
- Can empower others to be effective on this element.

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The administrator being evaluated will also review the focus areas and determine if they consider themselves on track or not.

The administrator being evaluated submits their self-assessment to their evaluator.

**Step 5: Summative Review and Rating:** The administrator being evaluated and the evaluator meet by May 30 to discuss the administrator's self-assessment and all evidence collected over the course of the year. This meeting serves as an opportunity to convey strengths, growth areas, and their probable rating. After the meeting, the evaluator assigns a rating, based on all available evidence (see next section for rating methodology).

The evaluator completes the summative evaluation report, shares it with the administrator, and adds it to the administrator's personnel file with any written comments attached that the administrator requests to be added within two weeks of receipt of the report.

Summative ratings must be completed for all administrators by June 30 of a given school year. Should SMARTER BALANCED test data not be available at the time of a final rating, a rating must be completed based on evidence that is available. When the summative rating for an administrator may be significantly impacted by test data or teacher effectiveness ratings, the evaluator may recalculate the administrator's summative rating when the data is available and submit the adjusted rating. If possible, this adjustment should take place before the start of the new school year so that prior year results can inform goal setting in the new school year.

### **SUMMATIVE ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION RATING**

Each administrator shall annually receive a summative rating in one of four levels:

1. **Exemplary:** Exceeding indicators of performance
2. **Proficient:** Meeting indicators of performance
3. **Developing:** Meeting some indicators of performance but not others
4. **Below standard:** Not meeting indicators of performance

*Proficient* represents fully satisfactory performance. It is the rigorous standard expected for most experienced administrators. Specifically, proficient administrators can be characterized as:

- Meeting expectations as an instructional leader
- Meeting expectations in at least 2 other areas of practice
- Meeting and making progress on 1 target related to stakeholder feedback
- Meeting state accountability growth targets on tests of core academic subjects

- Meeting and making progress on 2 SMART Goal(s) aligned to school and district priorities
- Having more than 60% of teachers proficient on the student growth portion of their evaluation

Supporting administrators to reach proficiency is at the very heart of this evaluation model.

*Exemplary* ratings are reserved for performance that significantly exceeds proficiency and could serve as a model for leaders district-wide or even statewide. Few administrators are expected to demonstrate *Exemplary* performance on more than a small number of practice elements.

A rating of *Developing* means that performance is meeting proficiency in some components but not others. Improvement is necessary and expected and two consecutive years at the *Developing* level is, for an experienced administrator, a cause for concern. On the other hand, for administrators in their first year, performance rated *Developing* is expected. If, by the end of three years, performance is still *Developing*, there is cause for concern.

**A rating of *Below Standard* indicates performance that is below proficient on all components or unacceptably low on one or more components.**

### ***Determining Summative Ratings***

The process for determining summative evaluation ratings has three steps: (a) determining a practice rating, (b) determining an outcomes rating and (c) combining the two into an overall rating.

#### **A. PRACTICE: Leadership Practice (40%) + Stakeholder Feedback (10%) = 50%**

The practice rating derives from an administrator's performance on the six performance expectations of the leader evaluation rubric and the stakeholder feedback target. As shown in the Summative Rating Form in evaluators record a rating for the performance expectations that generates an overall rating for leadership practice. The Stakeholder Feedback rating is combined with the Leadership Practice rating and the evaluator uses the matrix to determine an overall Practice Rating.

**B. OUTCOMES: SMART Goal(s) (45%) + Teacher Effectiveness (5%) = 50%**

The outcomes rating derive from the two student learning measures – SPI and SMART Goal(s) – and teacher effectiveness outcomes. As shown in the Summative Rating Form in, state reports provide an assessment rating and evaluators record a rating for the SMART Goal(s) agreed to in the beginning of the year. These two combine to form the basis of the overall SMART Goal(s) rating. The Teacher Effectiveness rating is combined with the SMART Goal(s) rating and the evaluator uses the matrix to determine an overall Outcomes Rating.

**C. FINAL SUMMATIVE: Practice (50%) + Outcomes (50%) = 100%**

The Summative rating combines the practice and outcomes ratings using the matrix below.

*If the two areas in any Matrix are highly discrepant (e.g., a rating of exemplary for Administrator Practice and a rating of below standard for Administrator Outcomes), then the evaluator and the evaluatee will re-examine the data and/or gather additional information in order to determine the rating for the Matrix.*

*If upon re-examination of the data, the ratings do not change, the evaluator will use the Matrix to determine the rating*

Administrator Practice Rating					
		Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Below Standard
Administrator Outcomes Rating	Exemplary	Exemplary	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing
	Proficient	Exemplary	Proficient	Proficient	Developing
	Developing	Proficient	Proficient	Developing	Below Standard
	Below Standard	Developing	Developing	Below Standard	Below Standard

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### ***Definition of Effectiveness and Ineffectiveness***

Administrator effectiveness will be based upon a pattern of summative administrator ratings collected over time. All administrators will need to have a rating of *Proficient or Exemplary* within 2 years of the implementation of the program. Any administrator not rated *Proficient or Exemplary* will be placed on an individual improvement and remediation plan. **(See Professional Assistance and Support System, or PASS, below)**

After the first 2 years of implementation of the program, administrators will be required to have no more than one summative rating of *Developing* during the 2 year period and a summative rating of *Proficient or Exemplary* in the other year.

Administrators receiving a rating of *Developing or Below Standard* in any year will be placed on an individual administrator improvement and remediation plan (Professional Assistance and Support System, or PASS). After one year of the Plan implementation, the administrator must have a summative rating of *Proficient or Exemplary* to be considered effective.

### **PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT PLAN (PASS)**

Administrators who receive a summative evaluation rating of *Developing or Below Standard* will be required to work with their evaluator to design an administrator performance remediation plan. The plan will be created within 30 days after the completion of the summative evaluation rating conference. The administrator performance remediation plan will identify areas of needed improvement and include supports that Sterling will provide to address the performance areas identified as needing improvement. After the development of the PASS Administrator Performance Remediation plan, the administrator and evaluator will collaborate to determine the target completion date. Administrators must receive a summative evaluation rating of *Proficient* within a year of the development of his/her PASS Administrator Performance Remediation Plan.

The plan must include the following components:

1. *Areas of Improvement*: Identify area of needed improvement
2. *Rationale for Areas of Improvement*: Evidence from observations that show an area needing improvement.
3. *Performance Expectation*: List performance expectation rated *Developing or Below Standard*
4. *Indicators for Effective Leading*: Identify exemplary practices in the area identified as needing improvement
5. *Improvement Strategies to be Implemented*: Provide strategies the administrator can implement to show improvement in performance expectations rated *Developing or Below Standard*

6. **Tasks to Complete:** Specific tasks the administrator will complete that will improve the performance expectation.
7. **Support and Resources:** List of supports and resources the administrator can use to improve, e.g. professional learning opportunities, peer observation, colleague mentor, books, etc.
8. **Indicators of Progress:** How the administrator will show progress towards proficient/exemplar in domain through observations, data, evidence, etc.

The plan will be designed and written in a collaborative manner, which focused on the development of a professional learning community supporting colleagues within this level. The administrator and evaluator will sign the plan. Copies will be distributed to all those who will be involved in the implementation of the plan. The contents of the plan will be confidential.

For educators rated *Exemplary*, the following career development and professional growth opportunities would be available: observation of peers; mentoring/coaching early-career educators or educators new to Sterling; participating in development of educator Professional Assistance and Support System plans for peers whose performance is developing or below standard; leading Professional Learning Communities for their peers; and, targeted professional development based on areas of need.

### **EVALUATION-BASED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

As our core values indicate, Sterling believes that the primary purpose for professional learning is school improvement as measured by the success of every student. We also believe that professional learning must focus on creating meaningful experiences for all staff members. Designing evaluation-based professional learning is a dynamic process. Working with program goals and data from the educator evaluation process, professional learning is planned to strengthen instruction around identified student growth needs or other areas of identified educator needs.

We recognize that educators as well as students learn in different ways and have different learning needs at different points in their career. Effective professional learning, therefore, must be highly personalized and provide for a variety of experiences, including learning teams, study groups, individual study, as well as opportunities for conducting research and collaborating with colleagues on content-based pedagogical activities.

Sterling's evaluation-based professional learning design has as its foundation the *Standards for Professional Learning* (Learning Forward, 2011). Each of the tenets of Sterling's Professional Learning and Evaluation Program is aligned with at least one, and often several, of the seven *Standards for Professional Learning*, as follows.

## **TENETS OF THE STERLING PLAN: ALIGNING STANDARDS AND PROCESSES:**

- ***Evaluation is an educator-centered process:*** We believe that, for evaluation to improve professional practice, it is essential to “make evaluation a task managed by an educator, and not a thing done to a worker” (Peterson, 2000, p. 5).
  - Administrator reflection on aspects of their leadership practice and its effect on student achievement and teacher effectiveness, on other facets of responsibility to the school community, and on their professional contributions to their field is critical to improved practice for both veteran and novice teachers. [*Standards: Learning Communities; Data; Outcomes*]
    - Administrator self-reflection represents the initiation and culmination of the cycle of professional practice and procedures for evaluation.
    - Administrators collect and assemble relevant data related to student outcomes and their professional contributions, and determine how their data can be used in evaluation.
  
- ***Organizational culture matters:*** The framework and outcomes of systems for the evaluation of administrators must reflect an understanding of the culture of schools as learning organization (see Schein, 2010; Senge, 2012).
  - It is vitally important to examine the core beliefs that underpin organizational processes such as professional learning and evaluation, as well as teachers’ and administrators’ perception of their roles and effectiveness, to effect positive changes in student learning, growth, and achievement. Further, it is important to evolve the role of principals and administrators from the sole judges and evaluators of teachers and teaching to emphasize their role as instructional leaders who collaborate with teachers.
    - Evaluators and administrators support each other in the pursuit of individual and collective professional growth and student success through rich professional conferences and conversations. [*Standards: Leadership; Resources*]
    - The school’s core beliefs about student learning are the foundation for evaluation and support systems, and provide a focus for individual and collaborative reflections on personal practice and organizational functioning. [*Standards: Learning Communities; Implementation*]
    - Teachers and administrators collaborate to observe instructional practices in their school and to analyze data on instruction and student performance. [*Standards: Data; Outcomes*]
    - Teachers and administrators collaborate to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning. [*Standards: Leadership; Learning Communities; Implementation; Learning Designs*]

- ***Evaluation and professional learning must be differentiated to increase organizational effectiveness:*** There is a growing body of research that demonstrates that individual and collective educator efficacy (defined by Bandura, 1997, as “the group’s shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given levels of attainments”), is positively associated with and predictive of student achievement (Allinder, 1995; Goddard, et al., 2000; Moolenaar, et al., 2012; Tschannen-Moran and Barr, 2004)
  - The needs of veteran and novice administrators are different, and evaluation-based professional learning is be designed to meet those needs, inspire and motivate individual and collective efficacy, and build leadership capacity in the school and district (see Peterson, 2000). [*Standards: Learning Design; Leadership; Resources*]
  - The development of such structures as career ladders, personal professional portfolios, and opportunities are provided for administrators to share their learning from professional activities, findings from their own research or from research-based practices they have applied, classroom-level and professional accomplishments and/or challenges. [*Standards: Data; Outcomes: Learning Communities; Leadership*]

## **CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH**

Sterling will provide opportunities for administrator career development and professional growth based on the results of the evaluation. Administrators with an evaluation of *Proficient or Exemplary* will be able to participate in opportunities to further their professional growth, including attending conferences and other professional learning opportunities.

For administrators rated *Proficient or Exemplary*, the following career development and professional growth opportunities would be available: observation of peers; mentoring/coaching early-career administrators or administrators new to Sterling; participating in development of administrator improvement and remediation plans for peers whose performance is *Developing or Below Standard*; leading Professional Learning Communities for their peers; and, targeted professional development based on areas of need.

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