



FORUMS FEEDBACK: EDUCATOR EVALUATION AND SUPPORT GUIDELINES

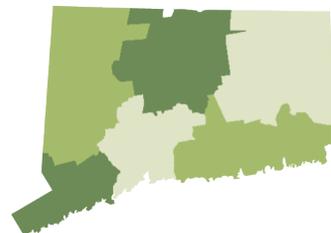
December 2021

Introduction

In the fall of 2021, the RESC Alliance facilitated a series of virtual forums with the purpose of soliciting input from all stakeholders on the current Guidelines for Educator Evaluation. Participants in the forums engaged in guided conversations and had the opportunity to voice their feedback through an online survey platform.

This report summarizes the forum process and the data collected and concludes with a list of recommendations for the Performance Evaluation Advisory Committee for consideration in their review of the Guidelines.

RESC Alliance
CONNECTICUT ALLIANCE OF REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTERS



Forums

Date and Time	Hosted by:	Targeted Audience	# of participants
10/25 3:30 - 4:30	EdAdvance	Teachers	5
10/26 4:00 - 5:00	EASTCONN	Central Office Admin	15
11/3 3:30-4:30	ACES (Lisa Gregory - Milestones Behavioral Services)	Approved Private Special Education Schools	12
11/4 4:00 - 5:00	LEARN	Teachers	22
11/9 4:00-5:00	CES	Student Services & Service Delivery	11
11/15 5:00-6:00	LEARN CABE	Members of Boards of Education	8
11/17 3:30-4:30	CREC/EASTCONN (Darcy Fiano-CTES)	Building Level Admin	42

Format of the Forum

[Forum Slide Deck](#)

Thought Exchange Survey

Through this online platform, participants confidentially shared their thoughts and objectively rated each other's responses and ideas. People accessed the platform multiple times. As a result, people from different forums were able to see and rate the entries from other forums.

The conversations that took place during the forums was the opportunity to participants to think collectively before using the Thought Exchange to express their ideas individually.

Publicity

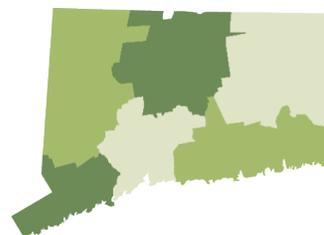
Forums were advertised via flyer and shared through:

- SDE Superintendents' Digest
- All RESC mailing lists for Curriculum Council and various Round Tables
- CEA and AFT

Participant Data

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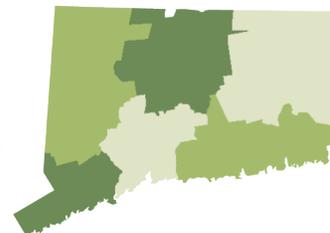
Role	Representation
Teacher	24%
Building Administrator	24%
Central Office Administrator	14%
Student Service Provider	6%
Instructional Coach	3%
Member of BOE	5%
Other	18%

Grade Level	Representation
Early Elementary	5%
Elementary	18%
Middle Grades	11%
High School Grades	17%
PreK - 12	49%

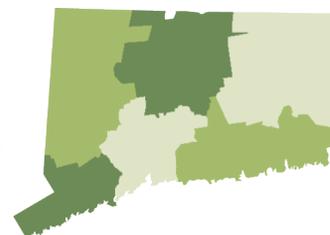
Feedback Themes

Emerging Themes in Order of Importance to Respondents

1. Composition of Summative Ratings
2. Allowing for More Teacher Choice
3. Implementation Inconsistencies (This category represents feedback from the forums on what the guidelines should allow, that the Guidelines already allow.)
4. Desire for Educator Evaluation and Support (EES) to be a Growth Model
5. Individualization according to Educator Role



THEME	ACTIONABLE FEEDBACK
Composition of Summative Ratings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow for teachers to show their professional growth beyond quantitative student data. • Adjust the prescribed weightings. Depending on educator role, the components are more or less important (i.e. stakeholder feedback – 10%) • Have summative ratings be more holistic • Each educator should have more than one person evaluating them
Allowing for More Teacher Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow teachers to choose areas of growth from the CCT to learn about, reflect upon, and be evaluated on • Allow teachers to select areas for professional learning rather than it being proscribed by the district or an evaluator
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more training for administrators to ensure that evaluations are conducted with fidelity • Implement a coaching model, rather than evaluation • Teachers should be able to collaborate on goal setting and as a PLC • Allow teachers to use artifacts to share the non-lesson observable aspects of the job • Focus should be on feedback and growth support of teachers
Desire for EES to be a Growth Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shift the emphasis to teacher growth versus simply student growth • Implement a coaching model • Less focus on summative ratings
Individualization according to Educator Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create rubrics for all roles within the teaching position • Allow for flexibility in how student progress is assessed, and instructional practices used based on the content and student in the room • Allow for the flexibility for teacher and evaluator to make the guidelines for observation and artifacts together
Nature of Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow for less formal observations and interactions to be used in evaluation process • Allow teachers to invite evaluators to specific classes for specific lessons • Short observations and narrow feedback • Allow video observation • More informal observations rather than a few formal observations
Non-Themed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a whole child approach that looks at growth beyond academia • Honor the Portrait of a Graduate work as another area for student growth – not just content • Allow for the use of teacher portfolios in lieu of observations



Top Thoughts - Overall

1. **Professional learning cycles where a teacher identifies some element of practice they want to improve, develops new learning, and reflects on the outcomes.** This turns evaluation into a grow process for teachers and not a compliance exercise.
2. **Teachers should be able to select an area of growth important to their specific needs each year.** Each year, mostly in k-5, student needs vary. A professional would know what the needs are and what area of focus would benefit that educator/class.
3. **Allow for tracking of student progress without standardized tests.** Difficult to see progress via standardized tests for many populations including students with IEPs.
4. **Provide a variety of ways where teachers can highlight their growth beyond quantitative student data.** We emphasize as educators that students can show growth beyond test scores so we should afford the same opportunities to our teachers.
5. **Allow teachers to choose focus areas within their own practice based on reflection and evidence of need.** Creates relevance and a sense of commitment to improvement.

Top Thoughts: Elementary Teachers

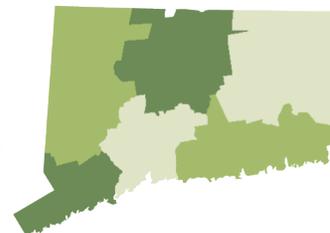
1. **Evaluate teaching best practice versus student achievement** Student achievement does not always reflect ability of a teacher to teach.
2. **Provide effective administration training to ensure evaluations are conducted with fidelity and without bias.** Provides level playing field for teachers.
3. **Get rid of IAGDs as solely data driven pieces of information. Allow for a more holistic approach to measure teacher performance by interactions.**

Top Thoughts: Secondary Teachers

1. **Evaluation by someone who is familiar with our content/subject area.** Follow up and determination of what processes need to be adapted in real time. Feedback to help grow your practice.
2. **Remove standardized assessments as an indicator.** A standardized assessment is a snapshot in time. It may not be reflective of the instruction that has occurred or what a child has learned.
3. **Flexibility:** Education jobs are all very different and our evaluations should reflect that.

Top Thoughts: Central Office Administrators

1. **Allow teachers to choose focus areas within their own practice based on reflection and evidence of need.** Creates relevance and a sense of commitment to improvement.
2. **A focus on short cycles of improvement using formative assessments and instructional changes aligned to them instead of summative/interim assessments.** Research indicates that formative assessment is the most impactful form of assessment on student learning.
3. **Observations on Targeted Indicators.** The CCT is broad and teachers and admins should be able to target areas for growth and observations with more directed feedback in that area.



Top Thoughts: Building Administrators

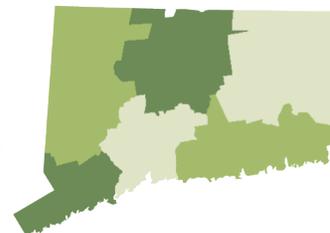
1. **While unpopular with educators, video observation of their instruction (without using it as a rating tool).** Actual video monitoring would inform administration on what practices are being utilized. It would make it easier to develop instructional supports.
2. **A coaching model where teachers are supported in risk taking.** Teachers are afraid to take risks in their practice because of the ratings system. This stops the ability of admins to support their growth
3. **Allow administrators to take on more of a role as coach than evaluator.** It's important for us to feel like a team and coaching model facilitates that.

Administrator Evaluation

On November 17, 2021, Diane Dugas from EASTCONN facilitated a forum that focused specifically on the Administrator Evaluation and Support program. It came to the attention of the RESC Alliance that the forums were heavily focused on teacher evaluation even though the forum were designed and marketed to solicit feedback on both teacher and administrator evaluation. Therefore, Diane recommended and volunteered to facilitate a feedback forum specifically on the process for administrators. This feedback was not captured adequately by the Thought Exchange.

Actionable Feedback

- Differentiate between central office and building level administrators
- Support the individualization of evaluation by role
- Ensure there is a way to honor the continued focus on SEL
- Allow choice to demonstrate the standards in a variety of ways:
 - Inquiry Cycles
 - Action research
 - Portfolios
 - Peer observation
- Consider multiyear goals
- Consider supporting districts with a unified platform that matched the process
- Support professional learning for all administrators
- Look at leadership standards that embed language connected to Connecticut Reimagine, SEL and Inquiry



Conclusion and Recommendations

Through a close read of the data collected from the forums and the Thought Exchange survey, as directed by the Department of Education, we have the following recommendations.

1. Investigate the option of video observations
[Best Foot Forward - Center for Education Policy Research, Harvard University](#)
2. Be more specific in the guidelines to encourage a coaching model of evaluation.
3. Interdistrict trainings and calibration could create more consistency in implementation within the guidelines.
4. Consider how districts can be held accountable for implementing their evaluation plans that have been approved by the state.
5. Build into the guidelines the flexibility for individualization (both practice and student data) that will allow for the maximum relevance for all educator roles.
6. Include the development of Social Emotional Skills in measurements of student progress.

