




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents

FROM: Sarah Barzee, Ph.D., Interim Chief Talent Officer 
Talent Office

DATE: August 12, 2013

SUBJECT: Update on Connecticut's Educator Evaluation and Support System

Greetings!

We look forward to seeing many of you at this week's Commissioner's Back-to-School meeting on Wednesday, August 14, 2013. We plan to provide you with many updates at that time; however, we have a number of items we want to address more immediately.

This newsletter provides important updates from the CSDE Talent Office to support district planning for implementation of CSDE-approved educator evaluation and support plans during the 2013-14 school year.

Updates featured in this newsletter include:

- 2013 SEED Handbook
- Clarification on Required Observation Protocol for Year One of Implementation
- CSDE-Sponsored Training Opportunities
- BloomBoard Training Opportunities

2013 SEED Handbook

In our most recent newsletter, we provided a summary of State Board of Education-approved changes to the System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) state model for 2013-14. We are pleased to announce that the 2013 SEED Handbook is now available. As previously noted, the process for revising this version involved numerous stakeholders, and we owe a great debt of appreciation to the 2012-13 pilot districts. For your convenience, we are attaching the summary of changes in both the teacher and administrator models. As well, we are attaching a Word version of the 2013 SEED Handbook for your reference. A PDF version is now available on the SEED website at www.connecticutseed.org.

If you have any questions regarding the SEED revisions, please reach out to the CSDE Talent Office at sde.seed@ct.gov or by phone at 860-713-6820.

Clarification on Required Observation Protocol for Year 1 of Implementation

We have heard from the field that there is a desire for further clarification on the required number of observations for teachers in *Year One* of implementation. While most districts outlined a plan for long-term expectations based on a teacher's previous year's rating or years of experience, it may not have been explicit how a district would approach setting a baseline rating.

In order to be in alignment with the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation (June 2012), all districts must meet the minimum requirement (the equivalent of the *Proficient/Exemplary* rating), which requires that a teacher “shall receive a combination of at least three formal 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. 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 one exception is for **first or second year teachers** who “shall receive at least three in-class formal observations. Two of the three observations must include a pre-conference, and all of the observations must include a post-conference with timely written and verbal feedback.”

Please note, the Guidelines do not define a “formal” versus “informal” observation/review of practice. This definition should be determined at the district level.

This clarification does not require any additional action on the part of districts who have received plan approval. If you have any questions regarding this component of the evaluation and support system or wish to discuss your district plan in greater detail, please reach out to the CSDE Talent Office at sde.seed@ct.gov or by phone at 860-713-6820.

CSDE-Sponsored Training Opportunities

Based on feedback and demand, the RESCs and CAS have been adding additional evaluator trainings throughout the month of September 2013.

The full, most updated schedule of trainings is available on the SEED website:
http://www.connecticutseed.org/?page_id=134&ai lec=action:month|exact_date:1372651200

Please note that while it is mandatory that any evaluator be trained prior to conducting evaluation, it is NOT mandatory to participate in a state-sponsored training. Districts may have already conducted in-district trainings over the course of the year or may have plans to conduct their own in-district training over the summer or in the fall in accordance with their state-approved evaluation and support plan.

BloomBoard Training Opportunities

BloomBoard has also expanded its training program to include a larger number of in-person, application-based training sessions for evaluators/observers from all Connecticut "opt-in" districts throughout August and September 2013. These trainings are available across a wide range of times and locations and will be available at no cost to districts.

The full list of BloomBoard trainings and information on registration is available on the BloomBoard website: <http://www.bloomboard.com/cttraining>.

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Attachments: •Summary of Changes to SEED: Administrator Model
•Summary of Changes to SEED: Teacher Model
•2013 SEED Handbook (Word version)