

Teacher evaluation system changes

Overview

- Delaware has had a statewide educator evaluation system since the 1980s. The state's current evaluation system, the Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS) II, has been in use since 2008. It includes three versions, one for administrators, one for teachers and one for specialists.
- DPAS II for teachers and specialists is based on Charlotte Danielson's *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching (2nd Edition)*, while DPAS II for administrators is based on the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium's (ISLLC) standards for leaders.
- For all educators, DPAS II defines standards for professional practice along five components: planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, professional responsibilities and student improvement. For each of the first four components, there is a set of four appraisal criteria. Each criterion has a rubric defining "unsatisfactory," "basic," "proficient," and "distinguished" performance.
- Evidence for performance on components 1, 2, and 3 for teachers and specialists is gathered through observation by administrators trained in assessment. Evidence for performance on components 1, 2, and 3 for administrators is gathered through a survey completed by professional staff, the administrator's self-assessment on the ISLLC standards and the assessor's survey data. For the fourth component, all educators complete a professional responsibilities form, which details their professional growth, communication with students, parents, and school colleagues, and their contributions to the professional community during the review period.
- To receive a "satisfactory" rating for each of the first four components, an educator must receive a satisfactory ("basic," "proficient," or "distinguished") on at least three of the four criteria specified in the component.

Major activities/strategies

- Under Delaware's recently revised regulations, beginning in July 2011, a satisfactory rating for the fifth component (student improvement), means that the teacher has met the standard for student growth.
- Previously, assessments could result in summative ratings of "effective," "needs improvement," or "ineffective." Under the revised regulations, Delaware added a fourth summative rating of "highly effective" in July 2011. Educators must demonstrate satisfactory levels of student growth to earn "effective" or "highly effective" distinction.
- In response to a request from the Delaware State Education Association, the state in September 2011 proposed changes to how DPAS II summative ratings will occur for the 2011-2012 interim school year. Upon State Board of Education approval, below is a summary of the result of such permutations:

- Teachers will earn a “highly effective” summative rating if they earn satisfactory ratings on at least three of the first four components and exceed under Component 5’s student growth measure
- Teachers will earn an “effective” summative rating if they earn satisfactory ratings on at least two of the first four components with satisfactory or better under Component 5’s student growth
- Teachers will earn a “needs improvement” summative rating if they earn satisfactory ratings in at least three of the first four components but had unsatisfactory student growth in Component 5. Teachers can also earn this rating if they earn satisfactory or better student growth but met one or fewer of the other four components.
- Teachers will earn an “ineffective” summative rating if they have satisfactory ratings in two or fewer of the first four components and unsatisfactory student growth in Component 5.
- Receiving unsatisfactory in any component other than Component 5 will result in an improvement plan for that component. The summative rating will count toward a pattern of ineffective teaching if the teacher earns satisfactory in one or fewer of the first four components. Unsatisfactory performance on Component 5 will not lead to an improvement plan during the interim year.

Key outcomes

- A fundamental purpose of DPAS II is its link to educator development. Through direct feedback and the preparation of improvement plans, assessors are charged with helping educators improve their practice over time. This includes linking professional development opportunities to specific areas of need identified through performance appraisal, and helping educators set rigorous and specific goals for improvement.

Progress-to-date

- Delaware Department of Education staff has been working on changes to components 1 to 4 as well as crafting definitions and criteria for component 5. The role of classroom assessment needed to be revisited in components 1 to 4 because of the changes coming in component 5. This work has included consultation with DSEA, DASA and other parties with four meetings held through mid-March.
- For teachers and specialists, recommendations to date are to add: designing student assessment to component 1; using assessment in instruction to component 3; and maximizing the use of the statewide record system eSchool Plus as part of component 4. Also recommended is to incorporate professional responsibilities into ongoing discussion rather than a standalone in component 4.
- Under the state’s interim plan, up to three parts may be calculated to determine performance under Component 5: school-wide assessment measure, student cohort assessment measure and teacher-specific assessment measure. These will be combined on a 100-point scale for Component 5.

- There will be no negative consequences for educators based on the student growth component for 2011-12. Consequences related to the first four components (i.e. improvement plans) still are in effect. Rewards for “highly effective” teachers, based on all five components, will be in place for 2011-12. Specifically, there will be rewards for “highly effective” teachers in high-need schools and high-need subjects and for teacher-leaders.
- The three parts of Component 5 are:
 - School-wide assessment measure: This will be used for all teachers and specialists for 30 percent of Component 5. Each educator will receive either the DCAS reading across all grades in school or the DCAS mathematics across all grades in school, determination based on which one shows the most positive result using DCAS AYP scores.
 - Student cohort assessment measure: This will be used for all teachers and specialists for 20 percent of Component 5 and will reflect the fall-spring growth based on students’ instructional scores on the DCAS. For DCAS educators (reading and math in grades 3 to 10), the cohort is defined as all the students they teach in that content area. Non-DCAS educators will determine with their building administrator a DCAS test area for a cohort of students they work with regularly. The cohort could be specific to a grade level, subject area or a student-based cohort within a test grade/subject area. For example, a counselor may identify a subset of students with frequent absences and focus on math with that group of students.
 - Teacher-specific assessment measure: These non-DCAS measures, to be approved by the Secretary of Education, will be used for 50 percent of Component 5. The measures will tie directly to the teacher or specialist’s current teaching assignment.
- On the Component 5 100-point scale, 80 to 100 points will yield an “exceeds” rating. A teacher must be rated as “exceeds” to be considered for an overall “highly effective” rating. A score of 50-79 will be rated as “satisfactory” on this component, and a score below 50 will be rated as “unsatisfactory.”
- If no acceptable measures for Part 3 have been approved by the state, those educators will receive a 30 percent/70 percent split between Part 1 and Part 2. If no acceptable measure for Part 2 is available, then those educators will receive 30 percent/70 percent split between Part 1 and Part 3. If no acceptable measure is available for Part 2 or Part 3, those educators will receive 100 percent for Part 1.

- These percentage recommendations are for the first year of implementation only. Future years percentages could be rebalanced based on information gathered and discussion following the first year. Work also will continue to develop more measures for Part 3.
- For teacher and specialist changes, consistent training materials were developed, including documents and online courseware. Trainers (development coaches, district/charter trainers, other external trainers) were trained, calibrated and certified. Administrators also were trained, calibrated and certified.
- For administrators' changes, DSEA, DASA and other parties also were consulted. State staff will work to align the new standards in components 1 to 4 then consult with the committee.

Next steps

- Work is continuing on development of the other measures.

Related resources/initiatives

- Summative ratings FAQ and permutation chart is available online here: <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/csa/dpasii/summative2011final.shtml>
- Funded with Race to the Top dollars, development coaches will be experts in assessing performance, providing feedback, and identifying opportunities for development. They will provide coaching to assessors to improve the quality of performance appraisal and development planning, although they will not conduct performance appraisals themselves. Twelve coaches will work with five to seven schools as well as provide district-wide training.

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