

**Virtual Curriculum and Achievement Subcommittee Report
Wednesday, October 23, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.
Broadcast from the Media Arts Studio
454 Broadway, Cambridge, MA**

Called for an update and discussion of CPSD’s current initiatives to foster best practices among district evaluators with the goal of enhancing educator effectiveness and strengthening instruction in service of student learning and growth.

Subcommittee Members Present: Member Weinstein (Co-Chair), Member Harding (Co-Chair), Member Hudson

Also Present: Dr. Heather Francis, Executive Director of Academics; Dr. Chad Leith, Chief Accountability Officer

The meeting started at 5:32 pm. **Co-Chair Weinstein** welcomed the group and began the meeting by reading the call of the meeting.

He asked the Executive Secretary to do a roll call of subcommittee members present: Member Weinstein, PRESENT; Member Harding, PRESENT; Member Hudson, PRESENT

Co-Chair Weinstein discussed the meeting’s objectives and shared the agreements of the meeting’s structure which included:

- **Welcome and Agreements**
 - Speak and listen from the heart (respect)
 - Step up/step back (watch air time)
 - Progressive Stacking approach to conversation
 - Expect and accept non-closure (work in progress)
 - Bike rack (list of things that are important but should be addressed another time)
- **Format of Public comment**
 - Following the presentation, people will have three minutes each to present their comments, after which time they will be muted by the Executive Secretary. (If need be, time will be limited to two minutes per person to ensure everyone can participate.)
 - If people want to speak again, they will need for the chair to call on them and be unmuted.
 - The aim is to foster greater back-and-forth, which is valuable for subcommittee meetings

Attendees introduced themselves. Dr. Leith and Dr. Francis shared highlights of their backgrounds and their roles with the district. Dr. Leith informed that group that he would provide an overview of the current educator evaluation system and discuss steps that his team is taking to strengthen the evaluation system with the goal of supporting educators’ professional growth and improve the learning experiences of students.

Dr. Leith shared the following presentation which can be found on this [website](#).

The presentation included the following topics:

- Improving Evaluation Systems as a Strategic Objective
- Evaluation Systems as an Annual Focus Initiative
- The steps in the evaluation cycle and the educator’s active role
 - Goal Setting
 - Implementation of Plan
 - Observation & Feedback

- Formative Assessment
- Summation Evaluation
- Plan Types dependent on the evaluator
- Teacher Evaluation Rubric
- Ratings
- Sample Rubric Strands
- Summative Evaluation Ratings in SY 23-24
- CPS SY23-24 Completion Rate for Summative Evaluations
- SY23-24 Staff Survey: Coaching & Feedback
- Goals for 2024-2025
- Improving Evaluation Systems (over 100 individuals serve as evaluators)
- Priority Indicators for Observation and Feedback
- Expectations for CPS Evaluators
- Aligned Professional Learning for all CPS Evaluators
- Team Evaluations Workshop Protocol
- Upcoming Evaluations Cycle Deadlines
- New Initiatives This Year
 - Paraprofessional evaluation process and rubric
 - Expanded PEER program (peer observations)

Dr. Leith shared that DESE has provided the framework of the evaluation rubric which was recently updated in 2024. The union contracts for teachers prescribes a minimum number of observations with first-year teachers receiving a minimum of 5 observations that first year. Educators receive ratings on the four professional standards and an overall summative rating. Of the approximately 600 educators who were evaluated, the vast majority were rated proficient with 12 educators receiving a rating of needs improvement and approximately 100 received a rating of exemplary. He is focused on improving the completion rates of evaluations and the importance of providing every educator with feedback. He noted that half of the summative evaluations were completed by deadline; 20% were completed after the deadline; and 30% were not completed. He highlighted the importance of ongoing professional development around supporting teachers through the process of establishing SMARTY goals – which are strategic, measurable, ambitious, realistic, time bound, inclusive and equitable.

Dr. Leith and Dr. Francis highlighted the key decision to move the oversight of teacher evaluations from Human Resources to the Office of Accountability. They believe this will lead to an increase in high-quality and meaningful feedback that will ultimately have a real impact on student learning. The group discussed the distinction between peer mentoring and peer evaluation.

Co-Chair Harding and **Member Hudson** shared their concerns that no educators received an overall evaluation of Unsatisfactory, as well as the absence of Student Learning as an evaluation indicator. Dr. Leith highlighted the variable that educators are elevated to an administrative role within the same community that they served as an educator and are now evaluating former colleagues. Dr. Francis highlighted the factor of evaluators universally understanding the rubric. Dr. Leith underscored that the absence of the Student Learning as an evaluation indicator was result of the union contract. He noted that most educators are using data to inform their student learning goals such as i-Ready data.

Caregivers who joined the conversation shared:

- The importance of educators regularly communicating with families
- Professional development opportunities for special educators
- Student feedback as part of the evaluation process.

- Including homework as an assessment tool
- Supporting teachers of color

Dan Monahan, CEA president, underscored the importance of quality control in the evaluation process. He noted that part of a teacher's overall rating includes meeting their student learning goal and that nearly every educator is given feedback on what needs to be improved upon. He noted that the Needs Improvement rating is very significant. He highlighted the problematic nature of the evaluation completion rate.

In closing, **Co-Chair Harding** agreed that including the perspectives of students and parents in the evaluation process were important. **Co-Chair Weinstein** noted the importance of the meeting's topic and that a follow-up discussion is warranted. He thanked the presenters and caregivers.

The meeting was adjourned on the following roll call vote of subcommittee members: Member Weinstein, YAY; Member Harding, YAY; Member Hudson, ABSENT (7:10 p.m.)