UPDATE: State of the State Survey Results for Teacher and Principal Evaluation
2014

Authorizing legislation: RCW 28A.405

Teacher and Principal Evaluation Project (TPEP)
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Executive Summary

Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 6696 created new evaluation criteria for both teachers and principals united by common themes. Evaluation is now focused on continuous improvement for every educator every year.

Beginning in September 2013, every provisional teacher and principal in Washington and all those on probation are being evaluated using the revised process, which includes observations and measures of student growth. School districts began transitioning some of their experienced staff to the revised educator evaluation during 2013-14. All teachers and principals will use the revised system beginning in the 2015-16 school year.

Change takes time. Research shows that it takes two to four years for a complex initiative like educator evaluation to show impact (Fixen, Blase, Naoom, & Wallace, 2009). Consistent messaging, time for learning and practicing new skills, and monitoring progress are all critical to success. The Legislature funded school district pilot work and training and established a three-year implementation window so districts can train everyone and assure consistent communication. The 2014 survey shows Washington is well on its way to a successful statewide implementation.

Overview

As part of ongoing monitoring of the implementation process, OSPI surveyed Washington educators in November 2013 with the assistance of the American Institutes for Research (AIR). School board members, superintendents, central office leaders, principals and teachers shared their views about successes and challenges. More than 7,000 educators from 275 school districts responded. Educators from small and rural districts are slightly underrepresented.

AIR cautions that these responses represent a small percentage of the state’s teachers and principals.

Due to the low response rates, results should be interpreted with caution. Results do not necessarily reflect the conditions and perceptions of respondents across the state; nor do the views of educators within a district necessarily reflect the views of all educators within that district. Results reflect the thoughts and opinions of only those who opted to complete the survey. Nevertheless they raise some interesting points for consideration.

Another caution is that the survey was administered in November of 2013, just as the evaluation cycle was just beginning.

In 2014, the research team employed a weighting adjustment to correct for the potential lack of representativeness that resulted from low response rates within some subgroups who participated in the survey; the percentage was then calculated using weighted responses (referred to as “Weighted %”). In contrast, the percentage was calculated using original...
responses without any adjustment in 2013 (referred to as “%”). Because of the low response rate in 2014, the differences in responses across years should not be interpreted as changes in educators’ views over time across the state.

Acknowledging the limitations of the research, OSPI is pleased to report AIR’s findings and recommendations as well as OSPI’s responses.

### Table 1: Respondent position/title

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th># of Survey Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School director</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent and other district-level administrator</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal and assistant principal</td>
<td>620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher and other school-level instructional staff</td>
<td>6,063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>7,051</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Districts that did not respond at all were rural and very small, with an average student enrollment of 155. Eleven of those districts had fewer than 100 students.

### Table 2. What subjects do you teach?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary General Education</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>54.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>729</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>712</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Language</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading/Language Arts</td>
<td>551</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Education</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts (Music, Drama, Art)</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and Consumer Science</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Media Specialist</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Guidance Counselor</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Education</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Literacy</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Please specify.):</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The teacher sample is quite similar to school districts across Washington in many ways. The majority of teachers (73%) reported being evaluated under the revised teacher evaluation system and represent the breadth and depth of instructional contexts.

Table 3. Teachers’ contract status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provisional contract</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>9.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing contract</td>
<td>5,381</td>
<td>90.44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AIR’s Findings

- The majority of responding teachers were very familiar or somewhat familiar with Washington State’s revised requirements for evaluating teachers (ESSB 5895).
  - 22% of teachers reported they were “vaguely” or “not at all” familiar with the revised requirements of evaluating teachers. Most of those (70%) work in large districts. This number is a decrease from 2013, when 34% of survey respondents chose “vaguely” or “not at all” familiar.
  - 75.9% of teachers understood the instructional framework.
  - 55.9% of teachers understood the revised summative rating process for teachers.
  - As expected, teachers still being evaluated on the former system are less informed than those who have already been transitioned.

- Most educators know their district’s adopted frameworks.
  - Teachers responded accurately (97%) when asked to identify their district’s instructional framework.
  - Nearly all principals in Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) leadership framework districts (93%) and more than half of the principals in Marzano leadership districts (53%) accurately identified their district’s leadership framework.

- Most respondents had some training on the district’s selected frameworks.
  - 96% of teachers reported they had training on their instructional framework. More than 50% said they had more than four hours of training on the teacher evaluation system.
  - Most teachers without training have not yet transitioned to the revised system.
  - 91% of principals reported they had training on their leadership framework in 2014, compared to only 61% in 2013.

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1 Washington has three adopted instructional frameworks that describe in detail what quality instruction looks like. Districts may choose CEL 5D+, Danielson or Marzano.
2 The elements of the framework combine to a total score for each educator and then one of four ratings is assigned.
3 Washington has two adopted leadership frameworks that describe in detail what quality leadership looks like. Districts may choose AWSP or Marzano. For more information, see http://tpep-wa.org
83% of district leaders reported they had training on the principal's leadership framework.

The majority of principals said they attended more than six hours of training on teacher evaluation, but only 36% had six hours of training on their own evaluation.

Some gaps in training remain.

All respondents indicated they need more training on the revised summative rating process, how to set student growth goals and how to measure progress towards student growth goals.

The majority of responding principals and superintendents understood the various components of the teacher evaluation system, but had varying levels of understanding of the principal evaluation system.

More than 80% of superintendents understood the various components of teacher evaluation.

More than 90% of principals understood the components of the teacher evaluation system, except for the summative rating process (74%) and student growth goals (71%).

Most principals (82%) and superintendents (88%) understood the leadership framework.

About half (48%) of principals understood the summative rating process for principals.

Many district leaders overestimated their employees’ understanding of the teacher/principal evaluation system.

83% of principals agreed with their district leaders about how well they understood the leadership framework.

Only 37% of principals agreed with district leaders about their understanding of how other measures of principal effectiveness will be used.

In 166 districts, leaders reported that their teachers understood the instructional framework. Their teachers agreed (76%).

Principals and superintendents reported agreeing on the important aspects of their role as an evaluator.

75% of superintendents and principals see their primary role is to communicate with their staff and develop relationships with them.

60% of superintendents and principals agreed they should provide instructional leadership and coaching.

Participants reported on a wide range of perceived outcomes that could result from the implementation of the revised evaluation systems.

Approximately half of educators are hopeful they will see better professional learning.

Principals and superintendents believe evaluation systems will improve both instructional practice and leadership practice.
• **Participants reported seeing positive outcomes early in implementation.**
  
  o More than half the teachers (52%) reported being held accountable for their performance, the assessment of teachers’ practice has improved (48%), and teachers receive more detailed feedback to improve instruction (46%).
  
  o More than half the principals (57%) reported being held accountable for their performance, the assessment of principals’ practice has improved (54%), and principals receive more detailed feedback to improve their effectiveness (45%).
  
  o 58% of principals said professional conversations are more helpful.

• **Relevant professional development opportunities are increasing, but not yet sufficient.**
  
  o Both teachers (32%) and principals (40%) report more relevant professional development opportunities are available.
  
  o Approximately half of teachers want training on the types of evidence to collect (47%) and on how student growth will be used (52%).
  
  o Educators requested more training on the how the Common Core State Standards will be incorporated into evaluations.
  
  o Principals, superintendents, and school directors requested additional training about how student growth would be used in evaluations.

Table 4. Additional training on how student growth will be used in educator evaluations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Evaluation</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>District Leader %</th>
<th>School Director %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>77.1%</td>
<td>52.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Evaluation</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>District Leader %</th>
<th>School Director %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>73.7%</td>
<td>78.2%</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• **Time is a precious resource.**
  
  o District leaders said educator collaboration time has stayed the same (40%) or increased (57%) this year, but most teachers and principals disagreed. Only 41% of teachers reported an increase in opportunities for collaboration with colleagues (necessary for Criterion 8). Principals were more optimistic (66%).
  
  o 74% of responding teachers and 54% of principals said “too much of teachers’ time is spent in evaluation meetings and other evaluation activities.”

  Open-ended teacher responses included:
  
  ▪ Time consuming
  ▪ Increased workload
  ▪ Wasted time
  ▪ Increased stress

  Principal responses included:
  
  ▪ Reduced time in conversations with teachers
  ▪ Time consuming
- Increased workload

- **Common Core State Standards connections are still not clear.**
  - 61% of teachers said their instruction incorporates Common Core and instructional frameworks.
  - 28% of teachers said their TPEP student growth goal was linked to one or more Common Core State Standards.
  - 12% of teachers did not know how Common Core impacted their instruction.
  - There was a difference between responses of teachers on the revised system. In response to the statement, “My TPEP professional goals are aimed at improving my ability to help students meet the Common Core State Standards,” more teachers in the revised system (32%) agreed than teachers in the former system (14%).
  - About half of teachers and principals agreed with their district leaders that the district offers professional learning connecting these two initiatives. Forty-two percent of teachers said TPEP/CCSS professional development opportunities have increased in the past year and 51% said thought the number of opportunities stayed the same. Forty-nine percent of principals said opportunities had increased and 56% said they stayed the same.

**Recommendations and Next Steps**

**RECOMMENDATION: More training for teachers from OSPI and their districts.** Teachers want more training about how evidence and student growth will be used in evaluations. They want to learn about the summative rating, student growth goals and the evaluation timeline, as well as more training on the district selected instructional framework, observations, and how other evidence will be used in evaluations.

Next Steps: The Legislature provided $10 million for 2013–14 and $5 million for 2014–15 so teachers can begin to understand the specific elements of their instructional framework. OSPI and the TPEP Steering Committee will seek additional funding to support continued educator learning during the next several years.

**RECOMMENDATION: More training for principals on principal evaluation.** Most principals reported receiving six or more hours of training on the teacher evaluation systems; however, only one-third reported receiving similar levels of training on their own evaluation system. Principals need more support.

Next Steps: OSPI will use TPEP funds provided by the 2014 Legislature to assure AWSP will provide training to principals about their own evaluation. This year principals spent the year learning to evaluate teachers. In 2014-15, they will be able to concentrate more on their role as the educator being evaluated.
**RECOMMENDATION: More training for school directors.** School directors reported varying levels of understanding of the components of educator evaluation systems. Since Boards set the direction for district investments, training can build members’ knowledge base so they can be more effective as they set policy direction for districts.

Next Steps: The TPEP Steering Committee will work with new leadership at Washington State School Directors’ Association (WSSDA) to urge local trainings and support statewide events.

**RECOMMENDATION: Assess level of understanding of teachers and principals.** Teachers and principals did not agree with evaluators’ perceptions about their own evaluation. District leaders should regularly assess employees to determine the extent of the knowledge. That data should guide professional learning.

Next Steps: The TPEP Steering Committee will work with AWSP and Washington Education Association (WEA) to create new sources of data about implementation. The ESDs have formed four workgroups to tackle specific issues in 2014-15. In small teams, they will work on less expensive strategies for rater agreement, methods for sharing resources across the state, creating student growth exemplars and connecting TPEP and Common Core. These are challenges mentioned frequently in surveys – the task of the workgroups is to provide some strategies that can lead to success.

**RECOMMENDATION: Better communication on teacher and principal evaluation.** What principals and teachers reported hearing from district leaders was very different from what district leaders said they were communicating to educators. District leaders should reevaluate communication efforts.

Next Steps: The TPEP Steering Committee will discuss the implications of this study and encourage districts to be more thoughtful about how and when they communicate with employees.

**RECOMMENDATION: Support the culture shift in the primary role of evaluators as instructional leaders or coaches.** Three-fifths of principals and superintendents stated that they provide instructional leadership or coaching to those they evaluate. The majority did not agree that the level of feedback or professional conversations would improve with the implementation of the revised evaluation systems. Many principals and superintendents need support from OSPI in making this cultural shift about their role as coach.

Next Steps: OSPI is launching a new effort to increase the skills of evaluators to hold challenging conversations. Learning-focused Supervision (LFS) training will commence in Yakima on June 24. Thirty LFS trainers will be available statewide as of July 1, 2015.

**RECOMMENDATION: Further study on the effect and outcomes of the evaluation system.** Many teachers and principals perceive that the revised system will have a positive impact on professional learning or professional practice.
Next Steps: The University of Washington/Seattle will conduct targeted surveys across the state in 2014–15. Future research could determine potential impact of system changes on educator practice (e.g., teachers, principals) and student performance. OSPI will analyze student growth goals and perceptions about the process from 1000 teachers who responded to a survey in May 2014. The goal will be to uncover significant trends in successful support and to create exemplars that can help inform discussions between evaluators and evaluatees.

**RECOMMENDATION: Develop additional trainings and resources making connections between TPEP and Common Core.** Educators reported that they did not fully understand the connections between Common Core and teacher evaluations.

Next Steps: The ESDs and OSPI will partner in 2014–15 to create a series of learning opportunities that explicitly link TPEP with Common Core. The TPEP Teacher Training Fund (iGrants 664) can support district teams in their learning on this topic.

**Conclusion**

The Legislature appropriated $3.9 million dollars to fund implementation in 2014-15. The TPEP Steering Committee will work with its member organizations and others to create the supports districts need for successful implementation of the principal and teacher evaluation system. The Association of Washington School Principals Association and the OSPI will train teachers and principals. The ESDs will create new materials and new trainings to support district leaders.

Beginning in 2014-15, the University of Washington will monitor implementation using a representative sample of districts and the opinions, suggestions and support needs of the educators who work in those districts. OSPI will continue to monitor what districts choose to fund with the $5 million in Teacher Training Funds to assure that all professional learning is linked to statewide goals as well as local needs.

Educators responding to this survey clearly said that principals often have to choose between managing a building and leading instructional change. All educator groups are trying to figure out how to make time for learning and practicing the revised evaluation system, while still serving students. The first year of implementation went very well. Teachers and principals are learning quickly. Statewide consistency and deep understanding are goals for the future.

Incremental improvement is expected through the transition years. By the 2016-17 school year, most educators should be comfortable with the revised evaluation process. However, educators new to Washington will always require training.
References


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