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Metropolitan School District of

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP

"Superior Schools in a Supportive Community"

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MSDWT Evaluator Brief
November 7, 2014

Evaluator Training Follow-Up

I would like to again thank Mary Beth Borkowski for her excellent session on Differentiated Instruction. While we won't be able to address the entire topic of Differentiation in a one hour session, we did leave with some important take-aways:

Content: In what ways do we observe teachers using a variety of complexities of content, as well as formats of content, for our students – based on *assessed* student needs?

Process: In what ways do we observe teachers varying student activities and instructional strategies based on *assessed* student needs?

Product: In what ways do we observe teachers varying the ways students display knowledge, skills, and understanding – based on *assessed* student needs?

Many of the resources shared by Mary Beth should help you provide instructional leadership on the topic of Differentiation.

Teacher Evaluation Guidance: Use of Artifacts

Attached, you will find a document you may share directly with teachers. It is also found on the Teacher Evaluation webpage.

We attempted to address many of the questions we have received from teachers and evaluators regarding the use of artifacts. While this document is not exhaustive, it should provide consistent talking points on the topic.

Scoring Performance Indicators during an Observation

I continue to receive questions about the restriction in SFS that allows one score per Performance Indicator per Observation.

While it is true that teachers may perform at different levels at different times during an observation, this approach requires the evaluator to assign an overall score for a chosen Indicator, considering all of the highs and lows. The score needs to answer the question: Considering all of the things observed today, what score would I give the teacher on this Performance Indicator?

In order to make it clearer to the teacher that the score is an overall impression of performance on a Performance Indicator, you may find it helpful to type a list of your scored Performance Indicators at the bottom of the scripting box, place the cursor next to the typed Indicators, and click the desired rating.

There is an example below:

2.3   (2.3.E)

2.5   (2.5.E)

2.6   (2.6.HE)

2.8   (2.8.E)

Thank you for another great week and for your attendance and participation in this week's training.

MSDWT Teacher Evaluation Guidance
Use of Artifacts

1. What is the purpose of artifacts?

The primary purpose of artifacts is to provide the evaluator with evidence, not yet observed, of teachers' work toward meeting the expectations of a given Performance Indicator.

Additionally, artifacts may be useful in providing the evaluator a deeper look or a more extensive look into teachers' progress toward meeting the expectations of a given Performance Indicator.

Teachers should be careful to avoid assuming that Performance Indicators have not or will not be observed. Uploading a large amount of artifacts to address a Performance Indicator that will eventually be scored in observations is not an efficient use of time in this process. It may be wise to discuss, with the primary evaluator, the anticipated artifacts and Performance Indicators that will be needed and to determine the best time of the semester or year to provide artifacts.

2. How many artifacts are needed?

Usually 1 or 2 artifacts are sufficient to give the evaluator enough information to provide the teacher with a rating.

The evaluator may request more or different artifacts than those already uploaded by a teacher. However, a small number of artifacts should still suffice, even if requested by the evaluator.

It is important for teachers to understand that quantity does not necessarily equal quality when it comes to artifacts. Uploading additional artifacts or a large number of artifacts will not necessarily translate into a higher score.

3. Will all artifacts be scored?

Not necessarily.

If an evaluator asks for a specific artifact, the artifact should be reviewed, and in most cases, scored. However, if a teacher adds additional artifacts, the evaluator may or may not choose to review and score those artifacts.

If artifacts are included in materials as a required part of a formal Plan of Assistance, and the artifacts are specifically requested as part of the Plan of Assistance, the artifacts should be reviewed, and in many cases, scored.

4. Can teachers upload artifacts to domains of which the teacher believes the current scores are too low?

As stated in item #1, the primary purpose is to fill gaps in areas that have not been observed.

Teachers can certainly add artifacts at any time. Each time a change or addition is made to a teacher's file in Standard for Success, the evaluator is notified. However, as stated in item #3, the evaluator has the discretion to review and score the artifacts.

5. What are the criteria used when evaluating artifacts?

Each Performance Indicator in the rubric contains examples of both Observable and Documented evidence. While not exhaustive, the lists do provide both the types of evidence that are meaningful and the definitions of Highly Effective through Ineffective.

On occasion, the rubric may state identical language in both the Highly Effective and Effective columns. In these cases, the definitions of quality (the Highly Effective and Effective boxes) will provide guidance to the evaluator when assigning a score.

6. How much should artifacts weigh in final scores?

Most of Domain II (Effective Instruction) and parts of Domain I and III is and are observable on some level. Therefore, in those cases, the list of Observable Evidence should provide the primary context for the rating.

In some Performance Indicators, such as those related to planning, equal weight may be appropriate as it is possible to observe quality planning in action as well as see and review effective lesson plans.

Because student achievement is the primary goal of all classrooms, artifacts that display student proficiency, growth, and learning are extremely valuable and relevant when considering the appropriate rating.

Evaluators apply professional judgment when scoring each Performance Indicator at the time of the Summative Evaluation. If artifacts supply the only evidence, obviously, the judgment will be based solely on the artifact. In all other cases, evaluators will consider all pieces of evidence in totality to determine the rating. It is very difficult, at the moment the final score is applied, to place a percentage of weight that one piece of evidence has over another.

7. Should teachers create artifacts solely for the purpose providing documented evidence?

It is possible that the creation of artifacts is the best way teachers can provide evidence(s). Pictures, video, new approaches to planning, or new assessments, may be created by teachers as a response to observations.

The evaluation process does not mandate teachers create new artifacts, and it is not the goal of the administration to require additional work for the sake of providing evidence through artifacts. The evaluator will make observations of classrooms and artifacts, and provide feedback to the teacher. If the teacher believes the best way for the evaluator to have a clearer picture of effectiveness is through a newly created artifact, the teacher may certainly share it with the evaluator (see item #4).

8. **When is the best time to submit artifacts?**

Some Performance Indicators, such as those related to planning, often require artifacts. It is advised that teachers upload artifacts throughout the year as to avoid a rush at the end.

Evaluators should also communicate, as early as possible, if artifacts are necessary because there are Performance Indicators missing scores.

Both evaluators and teachers can track the scoring of each Performance Indicator in Standard for Success. It is a shared responsibility between the teacher and evaluator to communicate.

9. **Is it possible that artifacts are unique to a building or department?**

Yes.

If a building or department chooses to emphasize a teaching practice or methodology, artifacts may be unique or specific to a location or subject/grade level.

10. **Should all artifacts be uploaded or is a binder of paper artifacts required?**

Evaluators should provide a system or a clear expectation to teachers regarding the preferred type of artifacts (electronic or paper). Teachers may upload artifacts to SFS at any time. However, if the evaluator has set an expectation of a binder, the binder will be the method that is considered for scoring Performance Indicators.

Evaluators may also expect a blend of paper artifacts and uploaded artifacts. Again, the expectation should be clearly communicated and understood by all parties. Time is too valuable to be spent unnecessarily uploading or turning in artifacts.

11. **What should a teacher do if he/she believes artifacts should be considered or if there is a disagreement with the score a Performance Indicator received based on an artifact?**

Teachers should approach evaluators with concerns regarding artifacts, just as evaluators are approached for any other concern. Professional dialogue is important and face to face communication is often the best way to sort through differences, even if the result is not agreeable to either or both parties.

Observations and evaluations in SFS are open for a period of time for teacher comments and ongoing communication with evaluators. The best, most appropriate way to document professional disagreement with a score or with observation feedback is through SFS.