



Creating Effective Administrator Evaluations

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Background...

- At the highest levels of administration, administrators typically do not have anyone to evaluate them.
- Evaluations are important in the development of effective school leaders and resulting benefits to schools.
- There has been some debate whether a predefined evaluation process should be used or one that is tailored to individual schools boards.

Key Findings....

Summary of what works:

- The most successful evaluations are: developed by school districts to meet their needs and are tied to district goals and missions; tailored to the unique aspects of each administrative position, and; focused on the formative development of the administrator.
- Evaluations which foster personal growth for senior administration, enhance communication between different levels of administration and clarify the district's role are deemed effective.
- The more sources used to evaluate an administrator, the more likely a fair and objective evaluation will take place.

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- It's important to include the administrator in the evaluation process. Self-evaluations are insightful and foster self-reflection.
- To ensure an objective and fair evaluation, it's important that criteria are defined before the evaluation process is underway. Knowing how such criteria should be objectively measured is important for results to be impartial. As well, criteria should be based on achievements and goals for the school board, and not personality characteristics.
- Tailor the evaluation to fit the needs of the school. Each school board has different attainable goals and the evaluation criteria should reflect this.
- The evaluation process is not meant to be a criticism of administrator behavior, but an opportunity for improvement. Evaluations should be ongoing and frequent to allow time for improvement. To ensure that the evaluation process is viewed as a positive, the administrator should be given an opportunity to respond the evaluation. As well, all language in the review should be presented in a helpful and constructive manner.
- Obtaining an objective methodology is easier by using multiple measures (e.g., student achievement, peer review, observation etc.) and multiple raters.

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Research investigating effective administrator evaluations has defined objectivity as an essential factor. Further, what is being measured and how it's being measured must be based done objectively. The process should not be based on a static model; but rather reflect the unique needs of the administrator's role and the district within which they work. Finally it is recommended that the administrator take an active role in the evaluation process through personal reflection and self evaluation.

BOTTOM LINE ACTIONABLE MESSAGE



The articles summarized below were reviewed in preparation of this BLAM.

The following search terms were used to retrieve articles:

- Administrator evaluation
- Superintendent evaluation
- Educational administration evaluation

References:

This list provides information for literature and resources used in preparing this BLAM.

Peterson, David., (1989). Superintendent Evaluation. *ERIC Digest*. Series Number EA 42, 1-5.
http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed312775.html

The purpose of the paper was to outline why an evaluation should be done and important components required when conducting an evaluation. Administrators tend to be the only people not evaluated, but they should be. They should be able to get feedback and guidance. An evaluation is important because it enhances communication between the board and other members of the school system, as well as clarifying the board's role. The first step when creating an evaluation is to create a policy describing the purpose and the steps of the evaluation process. When creating an evaluation, one should use a performance appraisal system; concern with achievements and not personal characteristics, and the personal needs of the selected school board is emphasized. Objectives should be established before the evaluation process, as well as finding a way to objectively measure administrator performance. In addition, the evaluation should include self-appraisal as this is enlightening for both the administrator and the board.

McAdams, Richard., & Barilla, Margaret., (2003). Theory and practice in appraisal of school administrators. *Research for Educational Reform*. 8(1), 19-35.

The study sought to synthesize existing research on good practice in administrator appraisal, develop a template for good practice, and determine the extent to which the major elements in the model are currently being utilized in Pennsylvania school systems. The researchers found few districts even include a majority of the identified elements of good practice in their plans. Also, superintendents were especially wary of participating in the study. In terms of important evaluative components, the researchers discovered that the process should be tailored to individual goals. Goals and methodology should be determined before collecting evaluative data.

The administrative appraisal system should consist of:

- Developmental stage: identifying the purpose of the evaluation
- Preparatory stage: identifying personal goals and objectives
- Formative stage: data collection and feedback
- Summative stage: determine salary, promotion, termination, future planning etc.

As well, each district should develop its own unique system which is tailored to meet the goals of the district and the formative development of the administrator.

Banks, Patricia., (2007). Changing the subject of your evaluation. *The School Administrator*, 6(64), 1-5. <http://www.aasa.org/SchoolAdministratorArticle.aspx?id=6664>

The purpose of the paper was to investigate the components that create an objective evaluation process and the importance of objectivity over subjectivity. Currently, there is a conspiracy of silence which needs to be eliminated to make the evaluation process transparent and allow public access to the information. The typical superintendent evaluation process is not transparent because of school board members' inclinations to treat this subjective, personnel matter as personal and confidential. What is required is a change of subject; transform the evaluation process from one that focuses principally on the administrator as an individual to one that focuses on the performance of the district.

McGrath, Mary Jo., (2007). The case of the messy desk. *The School Administrator*, 6(64), 1-5. <http://www.aasa.org/SchoolAdministratorArticle.aspx?id=6676>

The purpose of the paper was to emphasize the importance of constructive administrator feedback primarily by stressing objective evaluation of the structure within which the individual has to work. The current attitude is that evaluations are a passive process in which forms are filled out and an executive summary is done with the administrator once a year. Superintendents want to be evaluated because they want to know how the board feels about the job they're doing, suggestions for growth in areas the board thinks are important, and they want to give the board status reports on the projects they're working on. Focusing on individual performance rather than the system within which they work is a questionable practice. To truly engender growth feedback must take the form of reflective information focused on learning, improving and enhancing the system and consequently the individual as well.

The constructive communication feedback tool known as the McGraith FICA standard is a useful 'system of thinking' for evaluators. Evaluators should consider

- Facts: consider background information, current facts and relevant history
- Impact: the implications of budgeting, staffing, and the community
- Context: variables to consider, either anticipated or unanticipated
- Action: rational for recommendation, stating how the above information was processed to arrive at the recommendation

Lunenburg, Fred., & Ornstein, Allan., (2008). Educational Administration: Concepts and practices. Pages: 316-323
http://books.google.ca/books?id=ghDJXgwYPX8C&pg=PA318&lpg=PA318&dq=peer+evaluation+educational+admin&source=bl&ots=OaHgPNgLCf&sig=SEF_mnJl6ND64MOi9Fsnl26VsPE&hl=en&ei=yyrsTPOIKNqP4gaJz_2ZAQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=5&ved=0CDMQ6AEwBA#v=onepage&q&f=false

The text outlines how to undertake a successful evaluation and certain components that should be integrated in the process. The evaluation should focus on performance and not personalities. Also, it's important to emphasize the collaborative nature of the evaluation; administrators should have an opportunity to respond to feedback. Using self-selected peers in an ongoing process is essential for continued improvement. In terms of self-evaluation, the administrator should develop a portfolio which would allow the individual to

outline their personal and professional growth strategies, as well as being enlightening. The portfolio is harder to evaluate objectively compared to using set standards, but the process can be enlightening.

The evaluation system should include:

- a focus on school improvement
- be performance based
- include the evaluated individual's input
- be agreed upon by involved stakeholders
- be relevant to the administrator's functions and tasks
- be in line with local expectations and goals
- promote communications and collaboration among all administrators
- promote growth and leadership
- clearly define assessment procedures
- ensure frequency of assessment and feedback
- hold administrators accountable and reward effective leaders

Additional Resources:

Di Paola, Michael., (2007). Revisiting superintendent evaluation. *The School Administrator*, 6(64), 1-4. <http://www.aasa.org/SchoolAdministratorArticle.aspx?id=6672>

Glass, Thomas., (2007). Superintendent evaluation: What AASA's study discovered. *The School Administrator*, 6(64), 1-4.
<http://www.aasa.org/SchoolAdministratorArticle.aspx?id=6674>

Using Multi-Raters in Superintendent Evaluation by Richard P. Santeusano
<http://aasa.org/SchoolAdministratorArticle.aspx?id=15600>

Tools

Administrator Evaluation containing links to pdf files for The Iowa Standards for School Leaders (ISSL)

http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1447&Itemid=2448