Evaluator Training

Improving a key building block of better instruction

A Guide for States

SREB

Inside

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SREB | Educator Effectiveness

Prioritizing Evaluator Training

Constructing a Firm Foundation: A Call to Action

Across the South, educator evaluation systems have been in place anywhere from just a few years to, in some cases, over a dozen years. Just as their duration has varied, so has their quality.

In statehouses, departments of education and local school districts, debate continues about whether teacher evaluations should be used for accountability purposes, professional improvement or both. Most agree that however the results are used, educators' evaluations should be rigorous, reliable and relevant.

But data suggest that evaluations, specifically classroom observations, are not rigorous, reliable and relevant due to broad homogeneity in the feedback teachers receive. Summative ratings place virtually all educators into "outstanding" or "proficient" performance categories, and teachers receive overwhelmingly similar scores on competency domains, such as classroom management, questioning techniques and use of student data. Evaluations cannot be **rigorous** without defined expectations for what evaluators must know and be able to do, **reliable** without consistent, calibrated methods to measure performance, or **relevant** without personalized feedback that is aligned with individuals' strengths, needs and contexts.

There are likely many factors that contribute to this uniformity in scoring and feedback. During the past five years, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) conducted numerous focus groups with teachers and principals and uncovered an important trend: **administrators need more training about *what* to look for during classroom observations and *how* to develop and deliver meaningful feedback**. States and districts should ask two key questions:

1. To what extent are the people who are observing teachers able to consistently identify different skill levels based on standards of performance, and to provide teachers with the kind of individualized feedback that helps them grow?

2. What kind of training can develop better evaluators?

In this report, *evaluator training* is used to refer to the required preparation of an education professional before observing and evaluating teachers and other school-level staff.

Pre-certification programs aspire to prepare teachers to apply effective instructional practices to their daily work, and to prepare principals to recognize and develop these practices prior to entering the workforce. School districts are expected to provide instrument-specific training for evaluators to ensure a degree of quality control — but state-level policies often do not provide district and school administrators enough direction in designing and delivering evaluator training of a standard to make this possible.

Many school districts provide perfunctory training that covers policies and procedures for using an electronic platform, and basic scoring protocols. But this falls short of assuring that evaluators can recognize and develop sound instructional practices. It does not guarantee that evaluators will be fluent in a common instructional language, capable of effectively facilitating pre- and post-observation conferences, or committed to developing a school culture that values growth. High-quality evaluator training helps evaluators offer constructive feedback, discuss teaching practice in a way that is both comfortable and commonplace, guide teachers to appropriate professional learning opportunities and resources, and foster a school culture that encourages teachers to provide feedback to their peers and reflect on their own practice.

> *Virtually all school districts provide perfunctory training…but this far from assures evaluators' capability and capacity to recognize and develop sound instructional practices.*

High-quality evaluator training is not a one-time or even a several-day event. Beyond initial training sessions, ongoing learning should take place in a variety of venues and formats — including advanced training opportunities, professional collaboratives such as Professional Learning Communities and Communities of Practice, and even the development of professional growth plans for evaluators themselves.

The Southern Regional Education Board's educator effectiveness team believes that high-quality evaluator training is a key building block for creating teacher experiences with classroom observations that are rigorous, reliable and relevant — and that these types of experiences lead to improved instructional practice and, ultimately, higher student achievement. This report describes what robust evaluator training looks like, addresses the ways in which current training falls short and offers specific strategies for states and districts to close these gaps.

In recent years, designing, implementing and continuously improving current evaluation systems has required significant time, resources and commitment from everyone involved. Our team encourages states and districts to consider the recommendations outlined in this brief to ensure that teachers will experience classroom observations and feedback that contribute to improved instructional practice — and to schools with increased student growth and districts that meet systemic improvement goals.

This vision will take time and hard work. States and districts will need to plan for challenges that may arise — such as limited time and resources and the effects of teachers' and evaluators' negative prior experiences. People learning the art and science of evaluation need to know that training is hard; it takes practice and application and requires moments of vulnerability and discomfort — but the payoff is great for principals, teachers and, most important, students. High-quality evaluator training entails a collective focus that goes beyond perfunctory process to the core of what effective instruction looks like, and how to develop it as part of daily practice within a system of continuous improvement.

The priority
States and districts make evaluator training a priority

The experience
Teachers experience observations that are rigorous, reliable and personally relevant

The effect
Improved instructional practice occurs individually and collectively

The goal
Student growth and achievement increase

Even systems that use strategies to improve evaluator training may not succeed in making every evaluator high-quality. Evaluators may not succeed in making every observation rigorous, reliable and relevant, or every teacher "outstanding" or "proficient." Nonetheless, prioritizing the components of high-quality training will create the conditions necessary for developing better instructional leadership, improving teacher practice and helping students learn more.

> *Training is hard…but the payoff is great for principals, teachers and, most important, students.*

An administrator who hears a teacher say, "You really helped me become better" during an end-of-the-year conference feels validated for all the challenging time they spent in training and for their personal continued commitment to helping teachers teach and kids learn.

Does Effective Evaluator Training Improve Instruction?

Isolating one causal factor that results in improved instruction — and subsequently, improved student performance — is difficult. Educator preparation, curriculum, school leadership, professional development, school culture and evaluation are only some of the factors that can be analyzed. Studies by Fryer (2017), Sartain and Steinberg (2015), Taylor and Tyler (2012), Heneman et al. (2006), and the Center for American Progress (2009) all came to the same conclusion: deeper, more systematic training for those who evaluate teacher performance results in better student achievement.

These studies demonstrate that the impact teachers have on student growth can increase when they receive high-quality feedback from classroom observations. High-quality feedback is most likely to occur when evaluators participate in rigorous training. **These studies and others establish strong connections between quality evaluator training, improved instructional practices and better student outcomes.**

PART 2

A Framework for Better Evaluator Training

Components of an Effective Evaluator Training Program

Many states and districts believe in the importance of proper evaluator training, but do not yet have the systems in place to provide consistent, high-quality training.

SREB proposes a framework to achieve a base-level of evaluator training that contributes to improved teaching and learning. This framework includes seven key components, each focusing on a specific, valuable evaluator skill.

States should use these seven components to plan evaluator training content. There is no minimum length for effective training — training length should be determined by the amount of time needed to thoroughly cover all seven components. The structure of training sessions is also flexible. Possibilities include:

- several days of training at the beginning of the school year to cover the standards and rubric, mid-year practice sessions and several days later in the year to reflect on application

- intensive, weeklong training sessions during the summer and follow-up days scattered throughout the school year

- meeting intermittently throughout the school year, in combination with additional training days during the summer

This proposed framework may be difficult for some jurisdictions to implement, particularly if resources are limited — but it is a worthwhile effort for states to develop creative solutions.

1 Component One: Understanding and Applying the Rubric

Many different evaluation instruments are used across the SREB region, including those developed by Charlotte Danielson, Robert Marzano, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and others. It is important that these evaluation instruments align with state or district standards for teachers' skills, knowledge and performance, and include rubrics that break the standards down into domains and indicators centered around core competencies, such as using data, exhibiting professionalism, maintaining a positive classroom environment, planning and executing effective instruction and believing all students can learn. The content of training programs should be tailored to the specific performance domains and indicators for the evaluation instrument adopted by the state or district.

In SREB states, many evaluator training programs cover rubric components and provide trainees with phrases and frequencies that can be used to determine a teacher's performance ratings. However, merely covering this content does not acknowledge the numerous decisions teachers make each day, or the nuance of the competencies they are evaluated on — nor does it develop evaluators with the level of understanding and skill needed to use the rubric as a tool for improving teachers' practice.

Spotlight on Tennessee: Aligned, In-Depth Resources

The Tennessee Department of Education uses an evaluator handbook to guide what is covered during evaluator training. The handbook does not just provide an overview of standards and domains — it serves as an in-depth resource for understanding and applying every performance indicator by:
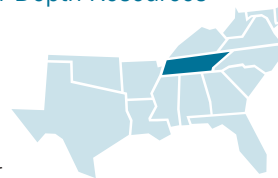
- Describing and providing concrete examples of what each indicator looks like when implemented in a classroom
- Specifying definitions and information needed to interpret indicator descriptors and apply them as evidence for teacher performance ratings
- Including tools such as templates for evidence-based observations, suggested coaching questions and applications for professional development

It is crucial for evaluator training to focus on how performance indicators are interpreted and applied to observations and feedback, rather than simply teaching what they are. Effective training programs make this distinction by prioritizing evaluators' understanding and mastery of "look fors" — teacher and student actions that embody and align with the domains and indicators laid out in an evaluation instrument. This means that states should ensure training develops the ability of evaluators to:

- **Identify and understand** what the rubric looks like and sounds like at different levels of performance.

- **Interpret and apply** a level of deep understanding to their practice when collecting evidence during observations, and when discussing feedback and student learning implications with teachers.

Planning and implementing this component of SREB's proposed framework for high-quality evaluator training calls for significant time and effort from both system leaders and evaluators.

Taking a Look at Wait Time: A "Look For" Example

Most evaluation rubrics include a domain related to effective instruction with an indicator about *questioning*. One example of a questioning "look for" that an evaluator may use to gauge teacher performance on this indicator is the use of wait time.

Wait time is when a teacher poses a question and then provides a designated time for students to think before selecting students to share their answers, while still maintaining appropriate pacing. Wait time can be used with individual students, small groups and the whole class. This practice has important implications for student learning — it provides a greater number of students with a safe opportunity to think and is likely to improve the quality of their answers.

High-quality training develops evaluators' understanding of what wait time looks like at various levels of teacher performance — and helps evaluators master application skills, such as using wait time as evidence for scoring and providing teacher feedback that connects to important implications for student learning.

You can access *wait time* resources and videos at SREB.org/Evaluator Training.

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2 **Component Two:** Rating the Observation

Although calibrating ratings between multiple observers can ensure inter-rater reliability, using multiple observers is often not feasible for school districts. This makes it especially important for the primary rater to "get it right." Evaluator training programs can make sure this happens by focusing on three main skills:

1. **Documenting Evidence:** Depending on the evaluation instrument used, there are various approaches to writing up observations and evaluations. Check-list formats are efficient but convey little information. Evaluators should instead document concrete, observable evidence. This limits the potential for bias, helps evaluators to justify their claims and provides teachers with objective feedback — making post-observation conferences more comfortable, structured and useful.

2. **Drawing Connections:** An evaluator's ability to document concrete, observable evidence builds a foundation for interpreting the implications of teacher actions on student learning. Effective evaluators understand and articulate the relationships between actual teaching practices and student learning. For example, an evaluator may document the questions a teacher asks during a lesson and then draw connections between the types of questions and students' engagement and acquisition of abstract concepts.

Spotlight on Mississippi: Time to Practice

Studies show that observing a lesson with colleagues followed by debriefing together improves evaluator performance. Some states and districts allot valuable time during training for participants to observe live classes or videos together, followed by individual scoring and group debriefing.

New, centralized evaluator training in Mississippi includes videos of instructional lessons. Participants are tasked with using the state's rubric to individually rate elements of a lesson, followed by engaging in a structured debrief with colleagues at their table.

3. **Developing a Schedule:** School administrators have busy daily schedules. It's no easy task to designate and follow through with time for conducting observations and completing subsequent paperwork and feedback conversations. Valuable evaluator training does not underestimate this challenge and includes mechanisms for idea-sharing on how to structure observation activities within normal weekly and monthly schedules.

Spotlight on Arkansas: Experiential Knowledge

In Arkansas, the Leadership Quest Program provides multiple tiers of support to principals in five regions across the state. Sessions are held continuously throughout the year. During these sessions, principals regularly have opportunities to share their expertise with each other. They discuss specific daily challenges regarding scheduling, and share ideas and strategies for practical solutions.
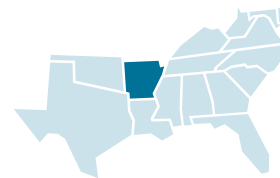
3 Component Three: Facilitating Conferences

High-quality evaluator training addresses the knowledge and skills administrators should possess to facilitate effective pre- and post-observation conferences. An increasing number of states and districts are using evaluations to encourage teacher growth. The importance of providing useful feedback is moving toward center stage.

Pre-observation conferences may include time to review and revise lesson plans, practice management techniques, anticipate areas of student confusion and discuss desired lesson outcomes. Certain evaluator competencies are needed to effectively facilitate the various elements of post-conferences, such as:

- **Encouraging Reflection:** Good evaluators guide teachers through reflecting on their practice. This may require probing questions such as *"How did you scaffold content to improve students' understanding?"* or *"What would you do differently?"*

- **Addressing Challenges:** There may be times when a teacher is struggling to use effective instructional practices, is hesitant to engage in self-reflection, or is simply having a bad day. High-quality training prepares evaluators for holding difficult, even courageous, conversations.

- **Providing Feedback:** Evaluators should use specific examples from the instructional delivery they observed to generate feedback that is bite-sized, balances strength and improvement areas, and is useful for teachers' daily practice.

- **Planning Ahead:** Evaluators who facilitate the most productive conferences come prepared and think ahead. They provide teachers with suggestions for professional development opportunities and resources that align with feedback. They help teachers practice a specific action step, or design and revise upcoming lessons accordingly. They collaborate with teachers to create timelines for following up.

Developing these competencies is a complex process. Skillful evaluators identify specific effective and ineffective practices that were observed during a lesson; highly-skilled evaluators go a step further, guiding teachers through self-reflection processes; even more expertise is required to provide actionable improvement steps. Empathetically managing human elements (teachers' feelings, needs and abilities) is no easy task. Cultivating evaluators' understanding of effective instructional practices without training them how to share them is like doctors performing surgery without instruments — the knowledge they possess ceases to make an impact if they are unable to apply it when it matters.

4 Component Four: Assessing Observer Competency

Simply participating in a training course does not guarantee mastery. High-quality evaluator training programs recognize this by including clear protocols for gauging what participants know and their ability to apply that knowledge to their practice.

Trainees should conduct a real-time observation of a teacher and submit their notes and reflections for review. Training facilitators should assess the participants' work, including their final ratings, narratives, documented evidence, connections to student learning, and any work they completed to facilitate the conference, such as teacher self-reflection probes, feedback and suggested action steps.

Extend

To place trainers and participants in the same room, trainers can accompany participants into classrooms or participants can record videos of the lesson they observe.

Scale-down

If the cost of having trainers review participants' observation skills exceeds resource availability, utilizing online videos will ensure all participants still observe and plan for an actual teacher.

High-quality evaluator training programs include clear protocols for gauging what participants know and their ability to apply that knowledge to their practice.

Training programs should also include contingency plans for participants whose submitted evaluation work does not meet qualifying standards. This could include retaking the course or working with the trainer to create a professional growth plan for the areas they need additional practice in.

5 Component Five: Including District Leaders and Teachers in the Process

Explicitly and implicitly, local superintendents help set the tone for how teacher evaluation and growth systems are perceived in their school district — so the extent to which they value and prioritize evaluator training is powerful.

States should require that local superintendents attend evaluator training so they understand exactly what principals are being trained in and how they are being trained. By attending training alongside principals, district leaders will be better able to lead by example, develop their own skills as evaluators and model these skills when they conduct administrators' evaluations. This also allows administrators to experience the benefits that the key components of high-quality evaluator training provide.

Additionally, high-quality training programs develop the abilities of evaluators and teachers to understand and engage in practices that lead to effective instruction for students. Parallel training programs for teachers should be intentionally designed and implemented to work in conjunction with evaluator trainings. Benefits of a parallel training structure include:

- **Teachers develop valuable insights.**
  Transparency about what observers will look for in classrooms, and how observation procedures and timelines will operate, can build understanding and buy-in among teachers. When teachers have insights about evaluation protocols and observer roles, they can hold themselves and their administrators accountable for doing their part.

- **Schools operate with a sense of shared responsibility.**
  Opportunities for all professional staff to use a common lens to recognize effective teaching and a common language to discuss it create collective ownership among administrators and teachers. School staff share a vision and understanding of what good instruction looks like, its benefits and, most important, what actions they need to take to make sure it occurs.

- **Teachers and students are empowered.**
  Greater transparency and shared responsibility empowers teachers to take an active role in advocating for their own professional growth needs and the needs of their students. This elevates the profession.

6 Component Six: Evaluating the Training

Just as teachers benefit from receiving feedback about their classroom instruction, school districts and trainers should receive feedback about evaluator training. Gathering participant feedback should be built into the training course, not collected as an afterthought. This feedback can help training facilitators gain valuable insights and use self-reflection to develop any necessary next steps for modifying and improving sessions, such as identifying content that was not covered or taught well and employing training tactics that are effective for adult learners.

7 **Component Seven:** Institutionalizing Training Skills and Culture

Initial training, whether it lasts four days or fourteen, should not be the full extent of evaluator training. Training cannot be "one and done." Follow-up training should be required to reinforce and refresh knowledge and skills. Some districts require advanced or "level two" training sessions, annual follow-up days or additional modules. Within one or two years of the initial training, evaluators should participate in at least one follow-up training module to fine-tune or expand their knowledge and skills.

School districts regularly bring new school leaders with evaluator responsibilities on board. Consistent and standardized training programs will help ensure that all evaluators are fully trained, regardless of when they joined their school district.

> *Training cannot be 'one and done.' Follow-up training should be required to reinforce and refresh knowledge and skills.*

When an evaluator applies knowledge and skills gained from training sessions to a teacher's classroom observation and post-conference, both individuals grow as professionals. This is a singular act. When evaluators and teachers throughout a school building begin to recognize effective teaching practices, engage in constructive feedback and make positive changes to instruction, improvement becomes an ongoing, collective act.

Proof that training concepts are taking root within a school building may manifest as teachers using formal and informal meeting opportunities to discuss why a specific student is not grasping the material, or explaining how they retaught a lesson differently. As these actions happen more frequently and on a broader scale, they become part of the overall school culture.

Implementing a single aspect of effective training, by itself, does little to alter adult school culture. But when the key components of effective training are implemented comprehensively, this brings improvements to both individual skills and collective culture.

PART 3

Current Systems and the Way Forward

Delivery and Accountability: The State's Role

Across SREB's 16-state region, evaluator training is typically established in state laws, rules and regulations, or set by the state's department of education. In cases where a clear mandate is absent, training is often simply an established practice. These policies and practices can establish a foundation for evaluator training but still leave two questions unanswered:

1. Who delivers the training?
2. Who assures quality control, and how?

Some states mandate evaluator training but relegate the responsibility for delivering training to local school districts or regional service agencies. Who assures the quality of the training, however, is as important as who delivers the training.

Whether a state education agency delivers the training itself or not, it should know what content and skills are being taught and the rigor of the exit assessment. If local school districts have been entrusted with the responsibility of delivering training, this becomes more complicated. To stay informed about the content of training, states may require districts to submit training program descriptions for review — however, this documentation may not accurately reflect the quality or rigor of the delivery. In cases where states have shifted authority to local school districts, who is accountable for actively monitoring and ensuring the quality of evaluator training? Without defining a minimum standard of quality, there is no way for states to ensure that evaluator training is developing the knowledge and skills of evaluators, enhancing teachers' professional growth and contributing to improved student learning. Therefore, it is essential that states play an active role in setting clear expectations for evaluator training, and monitoring both the implementation and results of these expectations. Regardless of who delivers the training, SREB's educator effectiveness team recommends that states consider minimum standards for training delivery and monitoring.

Ensuring compliance and ownership may call for incentives, such as additional resources or increased flexibility, or deterrents, such as reduced flexibility.

In cases where states have shifted authority to local school districts, who is accountable for actively monitoring and ensuring the quality of evaluator training?

The State of Evaluator Training in SREB States

The following tables provide an overview of current evaluator training policies in SREB's 16 states.

Evaluator Training Requirements in SREB States

State	Training Required?	Who Delivers Training?
Alabama	No	SEA, LEAs, RESAs
Arkansas	Yes	SEA, LEAs, RESAs, IHEs, SPO, vendor/consultant[1]
Delaware	Yes	SEA, vendor/consultant[2]
Florida	Yes	LEA, vendor/consultant
Georgia	Yes	SEA, LEAs
Kentucky[3]	Yes	SEA, SPO
Louisiana	Yes	SEA, LEAs, vendor/consultant[4]
Maryland	Yes	SEA, LEAs, IHEs
Mississippi	No	SEA, LEAs, RESAs
North Carolina	No	SEA, LEAs, RESAs
Oklahoma	Yes	SPO, vendor/consultant
South Carolina	Yes	SEA, LEAs, IHEs, vendor/consultant[5]
Tennessee	Yes	SEA, LEAs
Texas	Yes	RESAs
Virginia	Yes	LEAs
West Virginia	Yes	SEA, SPO[6]

Sources: Review of state policy documents and a survey of state education agencies in summer 2017. SREB received incomplete survey responses from Mississippi and Texas.

Acronyms: Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs), Local Education Agencies (LEAs), Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs), State Education Agency (SEA), State Professional Organization (SPO)

[1]   Arkansas partners with BloomBoard.

[2]   Delaware partners with Insight Education Group.

[3]   In Kentucky, LEAs, RESAs and vendors provide training after initial evaluator certification.

[4]   Louisiana partners with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) and TeachStone.

[5]   South Carolina partners with NIET.

[6]   In West Virginia, the Center for Professional Development provides services that are required by state code.

Evaluator Certification Requirements in SREB States

State	Assessment Required?	Who Assesses Prospective Evaluators?	Is There a State-Level Instrument?
Alabama	No	LEAs	No
Arkansas	No	SPO and vendor/consultant[1]	No
Delaware	Yes	SEA and vendor/consultant[2]	Yes[3]
Florida	No	LEAs, vendor/consultant	No
Georgia	Yes	SEA, LEAs	Yes
Kentucky	Yes	IHEs, SPO	Yes
Louisiana	Yes	SEA, LEAs, vendor/consultant[4]	No[5]
Maryland	No	LEAs	No
Mississippi	No	LEAs, RESAs	No
North Carolina	No	LEAs	No
Oklahoma	Yes	SPO, vendor/consultant	No[6]
South Carolina	Yes	SEA, vendor/consultant[7]	Yes[8]
Tennessee	Yes	SEA, vendor/consultant[9]	Yes[10]
Texas	Yes	RESAs	Yes[11]
Virginia	No	LEAs	No
West Virginia	Yes	SEA, SPO[12]	No

Sources: Review of state policy documents and a survey of state education agencies in summer 2017. SREB received incomplete survey responses from Mississippi and Texas.

Acronyms: Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs), Local Education Agencies (LEAs), Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs), State Education Agency (SEA), State Professional Organization (SPO)

[1]   In Arkansas, beginning administrators use Observation Engine, a training and proficiency credentialing tool linked to the BloomBoard platform.

[2]   Delaware partners with Insight Education Group.

[3]   In Delaware, the state-level instrument is the Delaware Performance Appraisal System II (DPAS II).

[4]   Louisiana partners with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) and TeachStone.

[5]   In Louisiana, some LEAs use evaluator certification tools from NIET and TeachStone.

[6]   In Oklahoma, some prospective evaluators take an inter-rater reliability test immediately after training.

[7]   South Carolina partners with NIET.

[8]   In South Carolina, the state-level certification instrument is via NIET.

[9]   Tennessee partners with NIET.

[10]   In Tennessee, the state-level certification instrument is via NIET.

[11]   Texas uses the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) Certification Exam.

[12]   In West Virginia, the Center for Professional Development provides services that are required by state code.

Evaluator Training Guidance in SREB States

State	Does the State Provide Implementation Guidance?	Is Training Length for New Observers Specified?	What Training Areas Does the State Require or Recommend?
Alabama	No	No	None
Arkansas	Yes	Yes	Development of teacher growth goals, evaluation law and process, evidence collection, feedback and conferencing techniques, observation rubric, orientation to online platform, rubric calibration exercises, using quantitative measures to inform practice
Delaware	Yes	Yes, four days	Development of teacher growth goals, evaluation law and process, evidence collection, feedback and conferencing techniques, observation rubric, rubric calibration exercises
Florida	No	No	None[1]
Georgia	Yes	No	Evaluation law and process, evidence collection, observation rubric, orientation to online platform
Kentucky	Yes	Yes, two days	Conducting mock feedback conferences, development of teacher growth goals, evaluation law and process, evidence collection, feedback and conferencing techniques, observation rubric
Louisiana	Yes	No	None
Maryland	Yes	No	State provides guidance on observation practices for leadership academies
Mississippi	No	No	None
North Carolina	Yes	No	None
Oklahoma	Yes	Yes, two or three days[2]	Evaluation model and process, observation rubric, orientation to professional learning focus, rubric calibration exercises
South Carolina	Yes	Yes, three days	State uses National Institute for Excellence in Teaching curriculum
Tennessee	Yes	Yes, two days	Conducting mock feedback conferences, evaluation model and process, evidence collection, observation rubric, using quantitative measures to improve practice, rubric calibration exercises, feedback and conferencing techniques
Texas	Yes	Yes, three days	Evaluation law and process, evidence collection, feedback and conferencing techniques, observation rubric
Virginia	No	No	None
West Virginia	Yes	No	Evaluation law and process, observation rubric, orientation to online platform

Sources: Review of state policy documents and a survey of state education agencies in summer 2017. SREB received incomplete survey responses from Mississippi and Texas.

[1] Florida regulations require districts to ensure evaluators are accurate raters and provide timely feedback.

[2] In Oklahoma, the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) instrument for principal evaluation requires two days of evaluator training. The Tulsa and Marzano instruments for teacher evaluation require three days of training.

Next Steps for States

Most SREB states currently have policies and practices in place to address evaluator training — but these do not consistently ensure the level of rigor needed for evaluators to develop the knowledge and skills needed for effective, real-life application. SREB's educator effectiveness team strongly recommends that states prioritize high-quality evaluator training and address this gap by taking the following actions:

- **Set minimum required components** to be included in all training conducted throughout the state, regardless of who delivers the training.

- **Provide supplemental resources** for implementing the required components to those tasked with delivering training to administrators.

- **Require and approve an end-of-training assessment tool** and passing score.

- **Collect and analyze data on training**, including the number of people taking both the training and the final assessment, the percentage of participants who achieve competency, and the number of participants who fail to reach competency and re-enroll in training.

- **Include local superintendents or district instructional leaders** as participants in revamped training programs.

When evaluators are well trained, classroom observations become more rigorous, reliable and relevant — resulting in effective instructional practices and professional development for teachers. When these actions are sustained, collective efforts, students can learn, grow and achieve more, and our nation's schools improve and become more competitive internationally. For this vision to become a reality, state and local leaders should prioritize a crucial piece of the foundation: evaluator training.

SREB Can Help

SREB's educator effectiveness team understands that incorporating the components outlined in this report to transform evaluator training may present some distinct challenges. Through our work with state and district education agencies and expert consultants, we have developed expertise on the design and implementation of evaluation and professional growth systems. We are ready to offer direct assistance and connect agencies who seek support with agencies that have demonstrated successful track records in this work. We offer three main categories of services:

1. Policy review and assistance
2. Technical assistance and strategy development for implementation efforts
3. Research and data collection, including benchmarking, needs assessments and focus groups

Our team encourages the use of multi-stakeholder approaches and innovative approaches to problem solving. We are available to facilitate these approaches directly with states or through multi-district initiatives.

Please visit SREB.org/ee to contact us to discuss your needs or request information.

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