



1. Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership

In recent years, many SEAs and LEAs have begun to develop evaluation systems that go beyond NCLB's minimum HQT standards, provide more meaningful information about the effectiveness of teachers and principals, and can be used to inform professional development and improve practice. High-quality systems, informed by research that affirms that educators have significant and lasting effects on student learning, draw on multiple measures of instructional and leadership practices to evaluate and support teacher and principal effectiveness. This flexibility will give SEAs and LEAs the ability to continue this work designed to increase the quality of instruction for all students by building fair, rigorous evaluation and support systems and developing innovative strategies for using them.

To receive this flexibility, an SEA and each LEA must commit to develop, adopt, pilot, and implement, with the involvement of teachers and principals, teacher and principal evaluation and support systems that: (1) will be used for continual improvement of instruction;

(2) meaningfully differentiate performance using at least three performance levels; (3) use multiple valid measures in determining performance levels, including as a significant factor data on student growth for all students (including English Learners and students with disabilities), and other measures of professional practice (which may be gathered through multiple formats and sources, such as observations based on rigorous teacher performance standards, teacher portfolios, and student and parent surveys); (4) evaluate teachers and principals on a regular basis; (5) provide clear, timely, and useful feedback, including feedback that identifies needs and guides professional development; and (6) will be used to inform personnel decisions. An SEA must develop and adopt guidelines for these systems, and LEAs must develop and implement teacher and principal evaluation and support systems that are consistent with the SEA's guidelines. To ensure high-quality implementation, all teachers, principals, and evaluators should be trained on the evaluation system and their responsibilities in the evaluation system. As part of developing and implementing these evaluation and support systems, an SEA must also provide student growth data on current students and the students taught in the previous year to, at a minimum, teachers of reading/language arts and mathematics in grades in which the State administers assessments in those subjects in a manner that is timely and informs instructional programs. Once these evaluation and support systems are in place, an SEA may use data from these systems to meet the requirements of ESEA section 1111(b)(8)(C) that it ensure that poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers.

