

## Remarks to State Board on SB 191 Implementation: SCEE Report (May 12, 2011)

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First, we would like to commend the members and staff of the State Council on Educator Effectiveness for their hard work and commitment to fulfilling their responsibilities and producing a comprehensive report. Our greatest hope is that Senate Bill 191 and the work of the Council will lead to greater professionalization of the teacher workforce, by attracting more talented individuals to the profession; and by focusing current and future educators on the effective understanding and use of best instructional practices.

In seeking to create a high-quality evaluation system, the Council is to be commended for its focus on balancing the concerns of statewide consistency with local flexibility. We believe it is imperative that districts with exemplary systems already meeting or exceeding requirements – such as Harrison 2 and Douglas County – should not be bound by mandate nor unduly limited in the flexibility to innovate.

However, we do have a few areas of concern about the report that should be addressed clearly going forward.

First, a key guiding principle for state implementation of the educator effectiveness law should be to set a consistent high bar in crafting a detailed evaluation system for teachers and principals. The Council has done a good job of starting this process, but among the useful features lacking are clear and concrete performance indicators by which sound and consistent evaluation judgments can be made. Filling in the gaps in the draft performance standards is one key area for CDE to impact implementation positively.

Second, the final version of Senate Bill 191 already delayed the implementation of meaningful reforms as a compromise. With Recommendation #46 the Council states: “To encourage the maximum amount of learning about the state model system, performance evaluation results should not impact the attainment or loss of non-probationary status for

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individual educators who are rated under the state model system during the pilot and rollout period.” That period includes school years 2013-14 & 2014-15.

Yet as adopted in SB 191, Colorado Revised Statutes 22-9-105.5(10)(a)(IV)(B) & (V)(B) state that “DURING THE 2013-14 SCHOOL YEAR [and 2014-15 SCHOOL YEAR], TEACHERS SHALL BE EVALUATED BASED ON QUALITY STANDARDS. DEMONSTRATED EFFECTIVENESS OR INEFFECTIVENESS SHALL BEGIN TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE ACQUISITION OF PROBATIONARY OR NONPROBATIONARY STATUS.”

Third and finally, while the Council’s report issued recommended state policy changes for educator licensing, data, preparation, and professional development, it neglected another key area of policy to promote educator effectiveness. Missing is any recommendation for districts and schools – with incentives and technical assistance provided by the state – to craft performance-based compensation systems that make use of a strengthened evaluation system and robust student growth data. SB 191 lays the groundwork for effective teacher and principal compensation reforms – as modeled most effectively by Harrison 2 and Eagle County – to lead to more productive use of education tax resources and to promote excellent outcomes through quality classroom instruction and school leadership. It is my hope that CDE will be empowered in the near future to play a role in advancing meaningful educator compensation reform in Colorado.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

*Total Time: 3:00*