

The Superintendent Evaluation Process

Strengthening the Board-Superintendent Relationship

Adapted from a publication by the Illinois Association of School Boards



There is no one method to evaluate a superintendent; however, there are suggested “best practices” to help provide the Governance Team (board/superintendent) guidance. The objective should be to establish a process that promotes district improvement and provides professional development and growth opportunity.

The school board that fully understands its governance role will see four compelling reasons for conducting regular superintendent evaluations: (1) a means for ensuring accountability, (2) an opportunity to strengthen the board-superintendent relationship; (3) a structured way for the board to impact superintendent professional development, and (4) as a tool in determining salary and contract considerations.

In order for a superintendent evaluation process to be effective, all parties must know their roles, the roles of the other players, and the responsibilities they have to one another. The process can be broken down into the following three phases.

1. Schedule the Evaluation on the Calendar

Determine when is the best time during the year to conduct the annual performance review.

2. Build the Instrument to be Used

One-year prior to the annual performance review, the board and superintendent will craft the language to express expectations and goals. This should be a collaborative process, owned by the full board and superintendent. The mutually agreed upon instrument should be formalized in writing at the beginning of the evaluation period.

Agree on Expectations

In determining the expectations on which the superintendent’s performance will be measured, it is useful to devise categories within which expectations and specific targets can be set. Four categories that may provide a useful framework might include: (Eadie, 2005)

1. Board-superintendent relations
2. Implementation of the district’s strategic plan (mission/vision/goals/performance objectives/measures)
3. District leadership and management
4. Community (external) relations

Agree on Indicators

The board and superintendent should agree on what evidence will be required of the superintendent to demonstrate that he or she has achieved the goals or fulfilled the board’s expectations.

Determine the Rating Scale to be Used

3. Conduct the Annual Performance Review

In the annual performance review, the school board compares the superintendent's results with the board's expectations. One-year prior, the board and superintendent will have already reached a clear agreement on and documented the instrument and process to be used.

When the time comes to assess the superintendent's performance against expectations agreed to with the board, the following steps could be considered best practice:



1. The superintendent presents to the school board his or her own self-assessment of performance on each of the goals and expectations that have been agreed to. The superintendent should provide evidence of some tangible progress toward the agreed-upon expectations.
2. Individual board members complete the evaluation and the results are collected/compiled by the board chair.
3. The board meets to discuss and come to a consensus regarding the superintendent's performance. The ratings are compiled into a single document.
4. The board chair meets with the superintendent to present the final evaluation to the superintendent.
5. The entire board meets with the superintendent, so that he or she has the opportunity to hear from all board members. If board members disagree about superintendent performance, it is important that the superintendent hear all points of view. However, the board chair will want to remind everyone that the "one voice" whose direction the superintendent will be expected to follow is that of the majority.
6. A written summary of the evaluation should be given to the superintendent with a copy retained by the board in a confidential "superintendent's personnel file".
7. If the evaluation instrument or process needs to be modified to reflect additional or modified expectations as well as updated goals, this is the time to do so.

While this describes the annual formal evaluation process, boards are encouraged to also engage in a less formal, semi-annual evaluation.

References/Credits

The best practices outlined in this document have been adapted from and used with permission from the Illinois Association of School Boards in their publication "*The Superintendent Evaluation Process: Strengthening the Board-Superintendent Relationship*"

Building the Instrument and Conducting the Annual Performance Review Using the eBOARD Evaluation Module



eBOARD's Evaluation Module can streamline and enhance the annual performance review process by...

- allowing the superintendent to attach supporting evidence and linking to the strategic plan and board policies throughout the year
- making it easier for the board members to see the progress made on each agreed upon expectation
- saving precious time of the board chair by automatically compiling the results as board members complete the evaluation

eBOARD's Evaluation Module guides the board and superintendent through the process using six stages. Each of these stages are outlined below.



1. Setup

Led by the Superintendent

1. Create two "private" evaluation types for the Superintendent Evaluation Instrument (1) Superintendent Self-Assessment; and (2) Superintendent Evaluation. The instrument used for both will be the same but the permissions will be different for each.
2. Assign proper permissions for users within each Evaluation Type created.
Superintendent Self-Assessment (for the Superintendent)
 - The superintendent should have "Super User" or full admin rights
 - If the superintendent plans to utilize his/her administrative assistant, then that person can be given either "Setup & Design" access to help load content, or "Super User" rights depending upon the preference of the superintendent.
 - No other users need to be provided access to this evaluation type
Superintendent Evaluation (for the Board)
 - The Board Chair should have "Super User" or full admin rights
 - The superintendent should have "Setup & Design" rights
 - The board/superintendent administrative assistant should have either "Setup & Design" or "Super User" admin rights depending upon how the individual is being utilized for administrative assistant in working with both the board chair and superintendent
 - No other users need to be provided access to this evaluation type as board members will be later identified as respondents to complete the evaluation

2. Design

Led by the Board Chair and the Superintendent

1. Within the Superintendent Evaluation type, create a new evaluation instrument, either from a template or from scratch. You are now ready to build your mutually agreed upon expectations, performance indicators, and select the rating scale to be used.

2. Once the instrument to be used has been finalized, the Superintendent should attach evidence, throughout the evaluation period, related to progress towards expectations.

3. Launch

- *Superintendent Self-Assessment - Led by the Superintendent*
 1. Prior to launching the evaluation to the board for completion, the superintendent should copy the evaluation instrument in the "Superintendent Evaluation" type into the "Superintendent Self-Assessment" type.
 2. The Superintendent can then launch the superintendent self-assessment to himself or herself to complete.
 3. Upon completion of the self-assessment by the superintendent, the results can be printed to a PDF and attached to the Superintendent Evaluation that will be released to the board.
- *Superintendent Evaluation – Led by the Board Chair*
 1. Once the superintendent has loaded all of the evidence and the self-assessment has been attached to the instrument, the Board Chair is ready to launch the evaluation to the board members to complete the evaluation

4. Response

Led by the Board Members

1. Once launched by the Board Chair, the board members will receive an email with a link to the evaluation instrument in eBOARD. Each board member will individually go in and complete the evaluation and enter their comments.

5. Review

Led by the Board Chair but conducted with full board

1. Once all board members have completed the evaluation, the board members should come together to discuss and come to consensus regarding the superintendent's performance. Group consensus comments can be added at this time.
2. The board should determine whether they want the final evaluation to reflect the individual votes, i.e. 3-2 on each indicator or only reflect the majority vote on each indicator as well as individual comments or only consensus review comments. If the board elects to only reflect the majority vote rather than the individual ratings, then the board chair will make a new copy of the instrument and complete it indicating the majority votes and consensus comments.

6. Action Plan

Full Board and Superintendent Together

1. Once the final evaluation is completed, the entire board should meet with the superintendent to review the results and determine any agreed upon action steps.

7. Finalize

Led by Board Chair

1. Once the board and superintendent have met to review the results and develop any agreed upon action steps, the final evaluation instrument is ready to be published to the board members and superintendent. A copy should also be printed and signed by both the board chair and superintendent, with a copy being retained in a confidential "superintendent's personnel file".

Roles And Responsibilities of the School District's Leadership Team

School Board

Superintendent

Citizens *Source of Authority* Board
(Georgia Constitution)

End Results *Focus* Means
(Student Achievement)

1 *Sequence* 2

Adopts *Policies* Implements/
 Rules

Beliefs <i>Responsibilities</i>	Strategies
Vision		Objectives
Mission		Assessment
Goals		Evaluation
Standards		Accountability
Advocacy		Advocacy

Approves *Accountability System* Implements
(Based on Goals)

Approves/Monitors *Budget* Implements/Monitors

Votes *Method* Recommends

RESPECT

TRUST

CONFIDENCE