**MCE STUDENT OUTCOME PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OPTION**

In May 2013, the State Board of Education gave final approval to a model evaluation for Missouri districts. Approximately, one hundred districts have pilot tested the model during the 2012-13 school year.

Over the past several months, I have had the opportunity to review the model and supporting documents and to meet with individuals developing the model. I deeply appreciated this opportunity, as well as, the opportunity to provide comments.

The models that I have viewed are, in my opinion, professional development models. As most of you know, I am a strong proponent of professional development. However, I have been outspoken in my belief that teacher evaluation and professional development are separate and function most effectively when they are not intermingled. The present state model utilizes a professional development model for performance evaluation. In my opinion, the state model poses significant risks in remediation of poor performance and, if remediation fails, in removal of poor performing teachers. These potential problems include the selection of teachers for reduction in force; in identifying teachers for nonrenewal and for termination; and the professional development evaluation model will adversely affect our ability to defend dismissal, nonrenewal, and RIF decisions.

Performance evaluations should set standards for learning that are student centered and provide a means for holding teachers accountable where their performance adversely affects student learning, both cognitive and affective. Professional development focuses on improvement of teaching strategies that hopefully will result in student learning. I believe that whether a student is learning or not should be the essential element in assessing a teacher’s current performance.

The State model is recommended by DESE for district adoption. A tremendous amount of good work was put into this model, which has been widely field tested across the state. However, DESE’s state model is not mandated, although I believe significant pressure will be placed on districts to adopt this model.

Districts are authorized to adopt their own teacher evaluation system provided the instrument and process are consistent with the seven “Essential Principals of Effective Evaluation” approved by the State. These essential principles are included in our revised Policy 4610.

The Summative Evaluation – Form 4610 – is a template for districts to use or to modify the criteria and the descriptors to meet the individual needs of each District.

The template itself provides a number of significant components that will assist districts in evaluating their staff based primarily upon student outcomes (learning). The criteria utilized by each district set standards for district educators and provides the basis for holding them accountable for unsatisfactory student outcomes.

The sample summative evaluation form provides ten criteria. We would recommend selection of 10-15 criteria. Use of a larger number of criteria frequently results in assessing the same outcomes twice by using different words. The criteria used in our sample is designed as an example. Districts may choose to use the criteria in lateral or in a criteria-by-criteria selection basis. Form 4610 contains multiple examples of alternative criteria, along with their specific indicators. We would suggest utilization of a majority of criteria that are student outcome rather than teacher behavior. Obviously, each district could develop their own criteria and their exemplars.

The rating scale on our sample summative model includes ratings from 1-6. I would suggest use of a scale of at least from 1-4. Use of an even number 4 or 6 is meaningful as it requires the evaluator to assess each criteria as either above or below average. Use of an odd number will often result in overuse of “average.”

You will note that each criteria has a space to mark a teacher’s score 1-6. It also provides for a total. A simple software program will generate average scores for each criteria by district, by level, by school and grade level. Criteria on which teachers score lowest would be ideal for development of professional development activities. The value of these activities would then be assessed on the next evaluation cycle.

Use of an evaluation performance model versus a professional development model facilitates the identity of teachers for employment decisions and for future reductions in force.

Finally, this system is designed to evaluate teachers based upon student learning. It is focused on the here and now, not what we hope will happen in the future. We will be discussing this issue at MASA’s Central Office Administrator Conference and at our state-wide law seminars in early August.

MCE’s Summative Evaluation form and related performance evaluation process may be used as the evaluation system for a district. It incorporates the seven essential principles. Use of a present performance student outcome model will require the district to continue the professional development activities. For those districts that choose to use a professional development or growth model, may choose to use the MCE process in RIF situations; in nonrenewal decisions; in the development of the statutory Notice of Deficiencies; and in competency decisions. We can say with equivocation that use of the MCE system as the district process, or as an overlay for poor performing teachers, will greatly enhance the probability of district employment decisions being upheld in court.