

Teacher Growth and Evaluation Policy

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1. Policy Statement and Objective

Effective teachers play an important role in helping all students to reach their maximum level of well-being and achievement and in ensuring access to high-quality, culturally and linguistically responsive, and equitable education.

This policy was developed to align with the Nova Scotia Teaching Standards and sets out the framework for collaborative and effective teacher growth and evaluation through all stages of the teaching career, focusing on excellence in teaching and learning.

The objective of the *Teacher Growth and Evaluation Policy* is to develop and maintain the best possible learning environment for students by supporting teachers in their ongoing growth and development. This policy supports the recognition and continuous reinforcement of effective instruction and assessment practices through a supportive and collaborative professional learning process that supports inclusive education.

The provincial Teacher Growth and Evaluation process will

- recognize and affirm excellence in teaching
- provide guidance in the selection and completion of professional learning activities
- provide timely feedback and intervention to teachers as they hone their skills
- monitor teachers' progress throughout their careers
- inform collaborative planning for professional learning among education partners

This policy does not address issues of teacher discipline; any teacher discipline issues will be addressed by the Regional Centres for Education (RCEs) and the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP) in accordance with existing policies and/or processes.

2. Definitions

appraiser: Anyone who holds a supervisory position and is responsible for the supervision and evaluation of a teacher. Where significant performance concerns are identified and the teacher is recommended for an individualized support process, the principal is the appraiser, unless another individual is approved by the Director of Human Resources.

employment decisions: Decisions regarding employment status that apply to term, probationary, and permanent contract teachers. For term and probationary teachers, these include decisions such as retention, termination, discharge, granting of a permanent contract for probationary teachers, or granting of a different contract (e.g., probationary) for term teachers. In cases where a teacher is participating in the individualized support process, employment decisions, such as transfer, suspension, termination, or discharge, may also apply to permanent teachers.

evaluation process: A process that occurs within the ongoing Teacher Growth and Evaluation process. The purpose of this summative process is to acknowledge the quality of a teacher's work and to make summative assessments of a teacher's performance. The evaluation process also identifies areas of concern and may lead to employment decisions.

growth process: An ongoing evidence-based process that centres on the development and implementation of a Growth Plan that reflects a balance between an individual teacher's professional goals, and classroom, school, and system initiatives, within the frame of the Nova Scotia Teaching Standards. Professional growth is a formative process that includes opportunities for individual reflection, dialogue between teachers and appraisers, formal and informal classroom observations, and professional development (individual, school, and system-wide). The growth process focuses on student achievement, with emphasis placed on inclusion and equity.

individualized support process: A summative process initiated by the principal, in consultation with the Human Resources Department of the RCE or CSAP, in cases where significant concerns have been identified regarding a teacher's performance and may lead to an employment decision.

Teacher Growth and Evaluation process: A process that involves ongoing collaborative professional growth and evaluation for teachers with a focus on improving student well-being and achievement.

teacher: A teacher as defined in the Nova Scotia *Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act* who is employed under a probationary, permanent, or term contract pursuant to Article 20.

3. Guiding Principles

- 3.1 Continued professional growth of all teachers will strengthen the Nova Scotia education system and maximize outcomes for students.
- 3.2 Effective teaching has a positive impact on student learning, development, and well-being, as defined by the knowledge, skills, and attributes in the Nova Scotia Teaching Standards.
- 3.3 The Teacher Growth and Evaluation process must be used as a means to support inclusive, equitable, and culturally, linguistically, and socially responsive school environments. Teachers have a responsibility to actively participate in their own professional learning.
- 3.4 The Teacher Growth and Evaluation process
 - 3.4.1 is a collaborative process through which goals are authentically developed and supported
 - 3.4.2 is essential to enhancing teacher performance and improving learning for all students
 - 3.4.3 is based in evidence
 - 3.4.4 takes into account teaching practice at different career stages, content area knowledge/subject background, and experiences
 - 3.4.5 recognizes that support for teacher growth shall be available through resources and opportunities
 - 3.4.6 is founded in respect and professionalism and the principles of inclusive education
 - 3.4.7 is designed to improve teaching through the identification of teaching strategies, teaching environments, or teaching behaviours
 - 3.4.8 may be used and relied upon by RCEs and CSAP for the purpose of employment decisions

4. Application

- 4.1 This policy applies to all teachers, school administrators, and RCE/CSAP personnel with responsibilities for teacher growth and evaluation.
- 4.2 The directives outlined in this policy replace directives in existing policies covering the same issue.

5. Policy Directives

- 5.1 Teacher Growth and Evaluation is an annual process for all teachers.
- 5.2 **Teacher Growth and Evaluation**
 - 5.2.1 The Teacher Growth and Evaluation process shall be carried out in a manner that allows teachers, in consultation with the appraiser(s), to develop a growth plan that includes an identified set of goals, strategies, and evidence to demonstrate growth over time.
 - 5.2.2 Growth and evaluation must be implemented in a manner consistent with a teacher's employment status:
 - a) Teachers employed under a probationary or term contract are required to participate in the yearly evaluation process.
 - b) Teachers employed under a permanent contract are required to participate in an ongoing growth and evaluation process that includes an evaluation at least once every three years.
 - c) The evaluation process may be initiated by the principal at any time when deemed appropriate and in consultation with Human Resources staff.
 - 5.2.3 In the event that a teacher transfers to a different school, the cycle outlined in 5.2.2 above shall continue according to the schedule established in the teacher's former school and in a manner consistent with this policy.
- 5.3 **Individualized Support Process**
 - 5.3.1 An individualized support process may be initiated by the principal, in consultation with Human Resources staff, at any time where significant concerns have been identified regarding a teacher's performance. The individualized support process cannot be initiated without consultation with Human Resources staff. The individualized support process is only undertaken in cases deemed to be necessary by principals and/or Human Resources staff.
 - 5.3.2 The individualized support process may result in a recommendation that the teacher return to implementing the growth and evaluation process or may result in employment decisions.
 - 5.3.3 Should significant concerns be identified through the growth and evaluation process, the individualized support process will provide a summative evaluation of a teacher's performance, outline expectations, and provide ongoing support and feedback to a teacher, as required.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

- communicate the *Teacher Growth and Evaluation Policy* and associated documents to unions, professional associations, and RCEs and the CSAP, ensuring that personnel understand their roles and responsibilities related to the policy
- monitor the implementation of the *Teacher Growth and Evaluation Policy*, in collaboration with the RCEs and the CSAP

Regional Centres for Education and Conseil scolaire acadien provincial

- communicate the policy and associated documents to school administrators and staff
- oversee the implementation of the *Teacher Growth and Evaluation Policy* in all schools and work sites under its management and control
- provide guidance and support to principals for the administration of the individualized support process
- ensure Human Resources staff establish and communicate the teacher's schedule for growth and evaluation each year
- monitor the implementation of the *Teacher Growth and Evaluation Policy*, in collaboration with the EECD

Principals, vice principals, and other appraisers

- conduct evaluations of all teaching staff in a manner consistent with the teacher's employment status
- ensure all teachers are actively engaged in the growth and evaluation process
- work with teachers to maximize teacher growth under the *Teacher Growth and Evaluation Policy*
- ensure each teacher's cycle for growth and evaluation is shared with them on an annual basis
- initiate an individualized support process (in consultation with Human Resources staff)

Teachers

- participate actively in the growth and evaluation process, as well as in their own professional learning
- understand the purpose of the individualized support process

7. References

—. 1989. *Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act*. SNS, c. 460. www.nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/teachers%20collective%20bargaining.pdf.

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- Public School Administrators Association of Nova Scotia (PSAANS)
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