

Measuring a Teacher's Value and Effectiveness in SREB States

Research in recent years has confirmed what many parents and principals have always known: Teachers are the most important factor in students' education- and some teachers are better than others. This realization is accompanied, however, by a tragic and now-substantiated reality: Students unlucky enough to be assigned ineffective teachers for three years in a row experience insurmountable academic losses. In response, policymakers have called for better teacher evaluations that can identify a range of teacher effectiveness- and researchers have responded with new measures and tools.

SREB states need to develop and implement comprehensive teacher evaluation models that use multiple measures. These evaluation models should provide teachers with information that can help them improve. The models also should differentiate effective teachers across a range of performance- rather than simply label them "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory." Measures that can be included in a comprehensive teacher evaluation model include:

1. Outcome-based student performance measures.
2. Other student performance measures, as needed or required, particularly for teachers whose students are not assessed based on their students' standardized test scores.
3. Observations of teaching performance.
4. Students' perceptions of a teacher's performance.
5. Teacher knowledge- subject and pedagogical.
6. Teachers' perceptions of their working conditions, as needed.

Used collectively and appropriately, these measures can help states create a balanced comprehensive teacher evaluation system that will produce fair, reliable results. A strong, comprehensive model should incorporate both objective and subjective measures, giving the overall model a better change of predicting teacher effectiveness than if only one of these types of measures is used.

In response to state requests for assistance in crafting policy on teacher effectiveness and evaluation, this SREB *Policy Brief* brings together key findings on the components of comprehensive teacher evaluation models from top researchers and policy groups.

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