

Supervision and Appraisal for School-based Teaching Staff Policy

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1. Background

Through section 39 of the *Nova Scotia Education Act* and section 45.02 of the *Nova Scotia Teachers' Provincial Agreement*, the Halifax Regional School Board has a responsibility for ongoing supervision and appraisal of all staff. The board also assumes this responsibility as part of its commitment to teachers' professional growth and to continuous improvement in the quality of education in our school system.

2. Guiding Principles

- 2.1 The goal of a board wide approach to teacher appraisal is to enhance student learning through high quality teaching. This goal is best achieved by recognizing the variety of purposes for conducting annual teacher appraisals. The Halifax Regional School Board believes that the purposes of teacher appraisal are to:
 - a. Recognize excellence in teaching.
 - b. Promote ongoing professional growth among teachers.
 - c. Sustain a school and board wide focus on improved student achievement.
 - d. Enhance instruction through a process that promotes ongoing dialogue and self-reflection.
 - e. Inform planning for individual, school and board-wide professional development.
 - f. Inform employment decisions.
- 2.2 To be effective and to meet the needs of diverse groups in the classroom, school and community, the teacher appraisal process must be based on a common set of indicators that reflect the duties of teachers as defined in section 26 of the *Nova Scotia Education Act* (see Appendix A) and the board's Indicators of Quality Teaching. Teacher appraisal in the Halifax Regional School Board will be cooperative and consultative and will promote growth, Evaluation, or review of teachers' performance based on the following Indicators of Quality Teaching:
 - a. Planning and Preparation
 - b. Engaging all Students in Learning
 - c. Creating Effective Learning Environments
 - d. Professional Practice
- 2.3 Formative and summative judgments about teachers' performance will be based on information from a variety of sources.
- 2.4 Teacher appraisal shall be implemented in an environment that recognizes the commitment and integrity of teachers and the needs of students.

- 2.5 Teacher appraisal shall comply with the NSTU *Teachers' Provincial Agreement*.
- 2.6 Where circumstances warrant, this policy does not restrict the board from taking disciplinary action, as defined in Policy D.006 *Progressive Discipline for Board Employees*.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 **Teacher Appraisal** is an on-going process that may include Supervision for Growth, Evaluation and/or Performance Review:
 - 3.1.1 **Supervision for Growth** is a process that centers on the development and implementation of an Annual Professional Growth Plan that reflects a balance between an individual teacher's professional goals, classroom/school/system initiatives and the Board's Indicators of Quality Teaching. Supervision for Growth is a formative process that includes opportunities for self-reflection, dialogue between teachers and appraisers, formal and informal classroom observations, and professional development (individual, school and system-wide).
 - 3.1.2 **Evaluation** is a process that occurs within the on-going teacher appraisal cycle. The purpose of this process is to acknowledge the quality of a teacher's work and to make summary judgments about a teacher's performance over a period of time.
 - 3.1.3 **Performance Review** is a summative Evaluation initiated by the school principal at any time in cases where significant concerns have been identified regarding a teacher's performance.
- 3.2 **Discipline** is an action or actions that take place where significant concerns have been identified and documented regarding unacceptable conduct or behavior.
- 3.3 **Employment Decisions** apply to term, probationary, and permanent contract teachers. For term and probationary teachers, these include decisions such as, the retention, termination, granting of a permanent contract for probationary teachers, or granting of a different contract (e.g. probationary) for term teachers. In cases where significant concerns have been identified regarding performance, employment decisions, such as Performance Review, suspension or termination, may also apply to permanent teachers.
- 3.4 **Teacher** is an individual who is required to hold a certificate of qualification as a teacher and who is responsible for the provision of instruction under section 26 of the *Nova Scotia Education Act* or an individual who holds specialist qualifications other than, or in addition to, qualifications as a teacher and is a member of the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union. This policy applies to all teachers employed under a probationary, permanent or term contract.
- 3.5 **Appraiser** is anyone who holds a line supervision position. This includes, but is not limited to, principals, vice-principals and Department Heads. In the event that a principal identifies significant concerns regarding a teacher's competency and recommends a Performance Review, School Administration Coordinators and Supervisors, the Directors of Program, School Administration, and Human Resource Services, and the Superintendent may also be involved.

4. Teacher Appraisal

4.1 Appraisal is an annual process for all teachers.

4.2 Supervision for Growth and Evaluation

4.2.1 The appraisal process includes Supervision for Growth and Evaluation which shall both be carried out in a manner that allows teachers, in consultation with appraisers, to work toward an identified set of goals and to demonstrate professional growth over time.

4.2.2 Supervision for Growth and Evaluation must be implemented in a manner consistent with a teacher's assignment:

- a. All teachers working on a probationary or term contract are required to participate in the Evaluation process each year.
- b. All teachers working on a permanent contract are required to participate in an on-going appraisal cycle which includes Supervision for Growth and an Evaluation, at least once every three years.
- c. In exceptional circumstances, Evaluation may be initiated by the principal, or teacher, when deemed appropriate.

4.2.3 In the event that a teacher transfers to a new school, the annual Evaluation for probationary and term teachers and the three year appraisal cycle for permanent contract teachers shall continue according to the schedule established in the teacher's former school.

4.2.4 The school principal will establish a schedule for the Supervision for Growth and Evaluation process and communicate this schedule to all teachers on an annual basis.

4.3 Performance Review

4.3.1 A Performance Review may be initiated by the principal in consultation with the Director of Human Resource Services, and/or School Administration, at any time.

4.3.2 Performance Review is a summative process undertaken in cases where significant concerns have been identified regarding a teacher's performance.

4.3.3 The purpose of Performance Review is to provide a summative Evaluation of a teacher's performance and includes support to a teacher, as required, should significant concerns be identified through the teacher appraisal process.

4.3.4 The Performance Review process may result in a recommendation that the teacher return to the regular teacher appraisal process, or that the teacher's contract be suspended, or terminated.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1 The principal of the school shall be responsible for ensuring that teacher appraisals are carried out according to this policy and accompanying procedures.
- 5.2 The Human Resource Services, School Administration, and Program Departments are responsible for providing professional development on the teacher appraisal process.
- 5.3 Appraisals may be conducted by a variety of appraisers who hold line supervision positions. These include, but are not limited to, principals, vice-principals, and Department Heads. In the event that a principal identifies significant concerns regarding a teacher's competency and recommends a Performance Review, School Administration Coordinators and Supervisors, the Directors of Program, School Administration, and Human Resource Services, and the Superintendent may also be involved.
- 5.4 Teachers and appraisers are expected to work together throughout the teacher appraisal process to ensure that it is cooperative and consultative.

6. Documentation

- 6.1 A Professional Growth Plan, Evaluation and/or a Performance Review Report for each term, probationary and permanent teacher must be submitted to the School Administration Department on an annual basis.
- 6.2 Each year the School Administration Department shall establish a schedule for the submission of teacher appraisal documents and communicate this schedule to all principals prior to September 15.
- 6.3 Documents created or submitted for the purpose of teacher appraisal and Performance Reviews are part of each teacher's personal file and must be treated in a manner consistent with the *Nova Scotia Teachers Union Provincial Agreement* and the *Nova Scotia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Teacher Appraisal Procedures

Section 1 – Supervision for Growth

Section 2 – Evaluation

Section 3 – Performance Review

Appendix B – Evidence of Professional Growth and Performance

Section 1 - Supervision for Growth

- 1.1. All teachers are required to complete an Annual Professional Growth Plan every year, including an evaluation year.
- 1.2. The Professional Growth Plan will normally be submitted to the principal, or designate, eight to ten weeks after the beginning of each school year.
- 1.3. Annual Professional Growth Plans:
 - a. Must focus on at least two of the following based on a teacher's development needs and priorities:
 - 1) An individual teacher's professional goals;
 - 2) Classroom/school/system initiatives;
 - 3) The Indicators of Quality Teaching.
 - b. Articulate clearly defined goals and indicators of success;
 - c. Outline actions (e.g. research, professional development) that will be carried out to meet the defined goals;
 - d. Specify the types of information that will be collected to document professional learning;
 - e. Define areas where support may be required from colleagues, administrators and/or central office staff;
 - f. Include a tentative plan for times to discuss progress toward defined goals between the principal, or designate, throughout the school year.
- 1.4. The Professional Growth Process will normally proceed each year through the following steps:
 - a. The principal, or designate, and teacher will hold a preliminary meeting to discuss timelines and required documents. This meeting can take place with individual teachers or in the context of a staff meeting.
 - b. The teacher will complete Part 1 of the Annual Professional Growth Plan. The principal, or designate, and teacher will meet to review Part 1 of the Annual Professional Growth Plan. This meeting will normally take place no later than ten weeks after the beginning of each school year.
 - d. In addition to opportunities for on-going dialogue the principal, or designate, and teacher will normally schedule a meeting before the end of May each year to discuss and document accomplishment of a teacher's goals by completing Part 2 of the Annual Professional Growth Plan.
 - e. In cases where a teacher has set long-term goals that may span more than one school year, progress towards meeting the goal will be documented.
 - f. In cases where a concern(s) has been identified during the year, success in addressing the concern(s) or further improvement required will be documented.
 - g. When the Annual Professional Growth Plan is finalized, both the principal, or designate, and the teacher shall sign the document to acknowledge that they have reviewed it.

- h. One copy of the completed Annual Professional Growth Plan shall be provided to the teacher and one copy shall be retained by the school. Normally by May 31 each year, one copy will also be sent to the School Administration Department who shall forward it to Human Resource Services to be placed in the teacher's personal file.
- i. In the event that a teacher accepts an assignment at a new school, the receiving school will contact the school where the teacher was previously assigned. Upon request, the principal of the previous school will forward a copy of the Annual Professional Growth Summary and any evidence of professional growth the teacher has included from previous years to the new school.

1.5. Classroom Observation

- a. Informal classroom visits are a critical component of an effective Supervision for Growth process.
- b. Principals, or designates, are expected to conduct informal classroom visits on a regular basis and to provide verbal feedback to teachers following informal observations.
- c. Specific dates of informal classroom visits and any written notes should also be documented.
- d. If an ongoing concern is noted during informal classroom visits, the concern must be noted in writing and provided to the teacher.

1.6. Dialogue

- a. On-going feedback about professional practice is also a critical component of an effective Supervision for Growth process.
- b. Both principals, or designates, and teachers can request a meeting at any time during the year to facilitate input or feedback on the Supervision for Growth process.
- c. If specific areas of concern are identified by the principal, or designate, during an informal meeting, the teacher will be advised and the principal, or designate, will identify areas for improvement in consultation with the teacher.
- d. If the areas of concern are significant, a recommendation to switch to Evaluation or Performance Review may be made. In cases of Performance Review, the teacher shall be informed of the recommendation and the principal shall forward the recommendation to the Director of Human Resource Services, or designate, for information.

1.7. Goal Setting

Supervision for Growth is an annual process; however, it is recognized that teachers' goals for professional growth may be short-term (achieved in a year or less) or long-term (achieved over a number of years).

1.8. Peer Coaching

The Supervision for Growth process emphasizes dialogue between principals, or designates, and teachers. The Board also recognizes that professional learning among colleagues and/or mentoring can contribute positively to professional growth. A teacher may request informal observations from a colleague. Principals will determine the feasibility of such requests with consideration of available time and resources. The outcome of such observations may be included by the teacher as information to be considered as part of the appraisal, but will not take the place of classroom observation by the appraiser.

Section 2 – Evaluation

Term and Probationary Teachers

- 2.1. The evaluation process for all term and probationary teachers is carried out to support induction and professional growth. The evaluation process also provides a consistent approach to appraising teachers for employment decisions, such as granting of permanent contracts, future assignments, or termination of contracts.
- 2.2. Probationary teachers shall participate in the evaluation process during each year of their probation.
- 2.3. Term teachers placed in long-term (6 months or longer) or full-year assignments will participate in the evaluation process annually.

Permanent Teachers

- 2.4. All permanent teachers are required to participate in an evaluation at least once every three years; however, the evaluation process can be initiated by the principal, or teacher, at any time deemed appropriate.
- 2.5. In an evaluation year all components of the teacher Supervision for Growth process will continue (e.g. informal classroom observations) as long as the minimum requirements for evaluation, as defined in the following sections are satisfied.

Steps in the Evaluation Process

- 2.6. To be effective and fair, the evaluation process must be consistent. The same procedures must be followed for all teachers. These include the following:
 - a. A planning meeting
 - b. Formal classroom observations
 - c. Post-observation meetings
 - d. Completion of an Evaluation Report

2.7. Planning Meeting

The planning meeting will normally take place within the first six to eight weeks after the school year begins. The planning meeting will provide an opportunity for:

- a. The teacher and principal, or designate, to discuss school and board level goals;
- b. The principal, or designate, to review the teacher's job description, evaluation forms, and to explain that the teacher's performance will be appraised against the Board's Indicators of Quality Teaching;
- c. The teachers and principal, or designate, to complete relevant sections of the evaluation form;
- d. The principal, or designate, and teacher to discuss timelines for formal classroom observations and other opportunities for informal meetings and/or informal classroom observations.

2.8. Classroom Observation

- a. The principal, or designate, is expected to conduct three formal classroom observations during the evaluation process.
- b. To ensure that classroom observations are fair and consistent, the principal's, or designate's, observations shall be guided by and documented on the Classroom Observation Form which outlines the Board's Indicators of Quality Teaching.

2.9. Post-observation Meetings

Following each formal classroom observation, the principal, or designate, shall meet with the teacher to:

- a. Review the written record of the Classroom Observation Form;
- b. Provide an opportunity for the teacher to discuss his/her self-assessment of the classroom observation;
- c. Discuss observed strengths;
- d. Review and respond to observed areas of concern where necessary.

2.10. Completion of the Evaluation Report

- a. During an evaluation year, the principal, or designate, will prepare the Evaluation Report. The Evaluation Report will include evidence of performance as defined by the teacher's job description and the Board's Indicators of Quality Teaching, Classroom Observation Form, a record of post-observation meetings, and other data (see Appendix B) collected or submitted by teacher over the course of the evaluation process. This report will normally be completed before the end of March for Term and Probationary Teachers and before the end of May for Permanent Teachers.
- b. The principal, or designate, shall schedule a meeting with the teacher to:
 - Review the Evaluation Report;
 - Provide an opportunity for feedback and/or discussion of information included in the Evaluation Report;
 - Review recommendations, if any, written in response to a concern(s) identified during the evaluation process.
- c. To acknowledge that they have reviewed the Evaluation Report, both the principal, or designate, and the teacher shall sign the document. In the event that a teacher refuses to acknowledge they have reviewed the document, the report will be entered into the file with a notation that the teacher has refused to sign.
- d. The teacher shall have the right to submit a written response to the draft document and may do so within five working days of meeting with the principal, or designate, to review the draft document in order to have their comments included by the submission deadline. A teacher may add comments to their file regarding the Evaluation Report or any other document at any time.
- e. When the document is finalized, one copy shall be provided to the teacher and one copy shall be retained by the school. The original document(s) will be sent to the School Administration Department by March 31 for Term and Probationary Teachers and May 31 for Permanent Teachers. School Administration shall then forward it to Human Resource Services to be placed in the teacher's personal file.

Section 3 - Performance Review

- 3.1. A Performance Review shall be undertaken with the approval of the Director of Human Resource Services by the principal to provide intensive supervision to teachers for whom significant concerns about performance have been identified through the Supervision for Growth and/or Evaluation process.
- 3.2. The Performance Review process may lead to the recommendation for the termination of the teacher's contract.
- 3.3. Normally, all Performance Reviews will be completed by the second week of April.
- 3.4. The Performance Review process shall commence when a letter of notification of commencement of Performance Review process is received by the teacher from the Director of Human Resource Services, or designate.
- 3.5. A meeting shall take place with the Director of Human Resources, the principal, and the teacher within seven school days of receipt of the letter of notification. The principal shall ensure that all issues and decisions are recorded in writing and distributed to meeting participants. The purpose of this meeting is to:
 - a. Identify concerns;
 - b. Review the process;
 - c. Establish goals to address identified concerns;
 - d. Establish the timelines.
- 3.6. Following this initial meeting, a planning conference will normally take place within two weeks. At the planning conference, the teacher and principal will:
 - a. Review the goals for improvement;
 - b. Establish a plan to address the goals. The plan will clearly document: actions the teacher must take to address these goals; support for the teacher; indicators of success; observation techniques that will be used to collect data for the report; timelines; data collection; and timelines for formal classroom observations.
- 3.7. All data relevant to the Performance Review process will be collected and documented. These include documentation of support provided to the teacher, a record of professional development activities, and other evidence of professional growth that is provided by the teacher.
- 3.8. Classroom observation shall be a mandatory part of this process.
 - a. The principal shall visit the classroom or teaching area while the teacher is teaching on, at least, four separate occasions.
 - b. The dates, times, and summary of observations of each visit shall be documented and included in the final Performance Review document.
 - c. A conference shall take place within a week after each classroom visit to discuss observations, to provide written documentation of the observations along with written recommendations for improvement, where applicable.
 - d. At each conference, the teacher shall have an opportunity to respond to the written documentation of the observations and/or recommendations for improvement.

- 3.9. The final Performance Review document shall include all components of the Performance Review process, including one of the following recommendations:
 - a. If the goals have been achieved, then the principal shall recommend to the Director of Human Resources, or designate, that the Performance Review process end and the teacher return to the teacher appraisal cycle.
 - b. If the goals have not been achieved, then the principal shall make a recommendation to the Director of Human Resources, or designate, for termination of the teacher's contract or further action. Concerns identified by the principal must be substantiated in the final Performance Review document.
- 3.10. The teacher shall sign the final Performance Review document to attest to the fact that he or she has read the document. In the event that a teacher refuses to acknowledge they have reviewed the document, the report will be entered into the file with a notation that the teacher has refused to sign.
- 3.11. The teacher shall have the right to submit a written response to the Performance Review and may do so within five working days of meeting with the principal to review the Performance Review in order to have their comments submitted with the Performance Review document. If submitted, the teacher's response will be appended to the final Performance Review document. A teacher may add comments outside of this document to their file at anytime.
- 3.12. A copy of the final Performance Review complete with signatures, attachments, and documentation, and the teacher's written response, if applicable, will normally be provided to the teacher no later than April 15.
- 3.13. The final appraisal document will normally be submitted by the principal to the Director of Human Resources, or designate, no later than April 15 and shall be placed in the teacher's personal file.
- 3.14. Following a Performance Review, all future appraisals, including Supervision for Growth, must indicate sustained teacher effectiveness or a recommendation to shift to the Performance Review process shall be forwarded to the Director of Human Resource Services, or designate.
- 3.15. The teacher may request NSTU representation at any meetings related to the Performance Review process.

Appendix A - Teachers - Duties (Education Act)

26 (1) It is the duty of a teacher in a public school to

- (a) respect the rights of students;
- (b) teach diligently the subjects and courses of study prescribed by the regulations that are assigned to the teacher by the school board;
- (c) implement teaching strategies that foster a positive learning environment aimed at helping students achieve learning outcomes;
- (d) encourage students in the pursuit of learning;
- (e) monitor the effectiveness of the teaching strategies by analyzing outcomes achieved;
- (f) acknowledge and, to the extent reasonable, accommodate differences in learning styles;
- (g) participate in individual-program planning and implement individual program plans, as required, for students with special needs;
- (h) review regularly with students their learning expectations and progress;
- (i) conduct such assessments and Evaluations as are necessary to document student progress;
- (j) administer such Evaluation and assessment instruments as required by the school board or by the Minister;
- (k) take all reasonable steps necessary to create and maintain an orderly and safe learning environment;
- (l) maintain appropriate order and discipline in the school or room in the teacher's charge and report to the principal or other person in charge of the school the conduct of any student who is persistently defiant or disobedient;
- (m) maintain an attitude of concern for the dignity and welfare of each student and encourage in each student an attitude of concern for the dignity and welfare of others and a respect for religion, morality, truth, justice, love of country, humanity, equality, industry, temperance and all other virtues;
- (n) attend to the health, comfort and safety of the students;
- (o) report immediately to the principal the existence of any infectious or contagious disease in the school or the existence of any unsanitary condition in the school buildings or surroundings, and perform such duties as are from time to time prescribed by or under the Health Act;
- (p) take all reasonable steps to secure full and regular attendance at school of the students under the teacher's supervision;
- (q) keep accurate attendance records and report absent students to the principal as prescribed by the regulations;

- (r) communicate regularly with parents in accordance with policies established by the school board;
 - (s) keep such records as are required by the school board or the Minister and permit the inspection of those records by the board, the superintendent or superintendent's representative, the principal, the supervisor and the Minister or Minister's representative or, upon their request, provide the records to them;
 - (t) assist in the development and implementation of the school improvement plan;
 - (u) maintain their professional competence;
 - (v) serve, to the extent reasonable, on committees established within the school to improve student achievement and success;
 - (w) implement programs and courses as prescribed by the public school program; and
 - (x) perform such other duties as are prescribed by this Act or the regulations.
- (2) Teachers are accountable to the school board through the principals of their assigned schools with respect to the performance of their responsibilities. *1995-96, c. 1, s. 26.*

Appendix B - Evidence of Performance and/or Professional Growth

Formative and summative judgments about teachers' performance and/or professional growth will be based on consideration of a variety of information which may include, but is not limited to:

- Teacher maintained portfolios
- Self-evaluation documents
- Evidence of professional development activities
- Samples of short or long-term classroom plans, curriculum, assessments etc.
- Reflective journals
- Participation in school-wide activities (e.g. Planning for Improvement, Home-school connections)
- Evidence of activities related to leadership development
- Peer Coaching
- RCH plans and activities
- Evidence of activities related to Department of Education and regional initiatives
- Other data as determined by the teacher based on his/her goals for professional growth
- Mentoring Experiences