



DILLINGHAM CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

*P.O. Box 170
Dillingham, Alaska 99576*

Effective Instruction Handbook 2015-16

The District's Effective Instruction Framework refers to the broad range of tools, actions, and procedures that are related to the evaluation and professional development needs of certified employees of the DCSD. This handbook contains background information, procedures, and forms, and was crafted in partnership by members of the DCSD's Effective Instruction Committee.

With Gratitude

This document reflects thousands of hours of dedicated time invested by DCSD educators over a four-year period. On behalf of the students who have benefitted from the unwavering commitment to educational excellence, we offer our thanks- both to those who have served on this committee before us, and to those who will serve after us. This work will never be easy because it touches on both the personal and public aspects of our profession. As required by regulation, this work has and will continue to inform both the professional development pathways of DCSD educators, as well as factor into employment decisions about future contracts. Thankfully, many excellent educators, researchers, consultants, and colleagues have supported those who have served previously and those who serve currently. We are grateful for your contribution to this tool, and your willingness to engage in personal and professional reflection with the goal of improving the educational opportunities for the public school students in the Dillingham City School District.

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Background

In 2006, a team of DCSD educators participated in a district-sponsored course focused on developing coaching and mentoring skills. As part of this course, Charlotte Danielson, the author of *A Framework for Teaching* (2007, ASCD) worked with the group to introduce her research findings related to the elements of effective teaching practices.

By 2008, a team of teacher leaders and administrators came together and conducted an informal pilot of Danielson’s Framework for Teaching (FfT) as a teacher evaluation tool. It was found that by targeting specific areas of the Framework, we could promote deep reflection, engage in practice-changing professional development, and have a positive impact on student learning.

A committee of DCSD administrators and teachers selected Danielson’s FfT because it provides a defensible definition of good teaching that can be understood by all the stakeholders.

Additionally, the FfT:

- Clearly defines and recognizes the complexity of teaching with a common language of practice.
- Provides a “road map” for novice teachers and guidance for veteran teachers.
- Provides a point of reference around which conversations about teaching can be focused.
- Organizes the practice of teaching in four domains.
- Provides levels of performance and rubrics that define what teaching looks like at different levels.
- Structures and focuses school-wide and district efforts and provides a common framework around which efforts can be planned.
- Is based upon years of educational research.

In 2010-11, the District piloted their new evaluation system with all non-tenured teachers. This system modified the Danielson FfT to focus on areas of particular importance within the Dillingham District, and was also tied to all professional development plans. In 2010-11, the new evaluation tool was expanded to use among all certified teachers (both tenured and non-tenured,) and perception data indicated that despite the intense amount of time required to implement the new system, educators at all levels of the organization agreed the system was worth the time and a return to previous methods couldn't possibly be helpful. The evaluation process was formally approved by the Board of Education at its meeting in April, 2011. Also in 2011, the district began conducting an annual survey of all DCSD teachers to gather ongoing input from teachers about their experiences with the evaluation tool. The data from this survey has been used to guide revisions, professional development, and training.

Throughout the evolution of the District's evaluation process, the leadership team responsible for making recommendations and decisions related to the evaluation system became known as the Effective Instruction Committee, while the overarching process that includes the evaluation and professional development needs indicated as a result of the evaluation process became known as the Effective Instruction System. Within that system, the actual evaluation tools and procedures are referred to as the Effective Instruction Process. The process has been refined based on input by multiple stake holders, and has been reapproved by the Board of Education in June of 2012, June of 2013, and July of 2015 as changes have been made.

Due to changing regulations regarding teacher evaluation requirements in the state of Alaska, the Evaluation Committee began preparing changes to the Evaluation Process that would accommodate the requirement to include student-learning data in educator evaluations. In 2014-15, a pilot was conducted among educators at all levels of the DCSD that integrated student data in the evaluation process in the form of Student Growth Maps, or SLOs. That pilot provided powerful data and new learning that informed necessary refinements to improve the SLO process before a district-wide roll out of the pilot in 2015-16, and in accordance with AS 14.20.149(a) the DCSD Board of Education adopted the revised certified employee evaluation system.

Overview of the Annual Evaluation Process

Following is an overview of the steps that occur during the yearly cycle of the Evaluation Process.

The timelines below sometimes require adjustment to accommodate late hires, changes in teaching assignments mid-year, and completion of a process within a specific course or unit. There is no maximum number of permitted walk-throughs or informal observations; administrators are encouraged to conduct frequent walk-throughs and informal observations, as their schedules may permit. Steps 3 and 4 can occur at any time throughout the process. For example, that could mean the formal observation cycle (which consists of the pre-observation conference, observation, and post-observation conference) may be punctuated by walk-throughs, or informal observations may occur both before and after the formal observation cycle.

Steps of the Standard Evaluation Process

The formal evaluation is the evaluation protocol for all non-tenured teachers and tenured teachers designated by their site administrator for the formal evaluation cycle. The only difference in the process for tenured versus non-tenured teachers is that non-tenured teachers must participate in a minimum of two formal observation cycles (steps five through seven) twice each school year, while tenured teachers are required to have a minimum of one formal observation cycle.

Step	Date	Title	Description
1	July-August	Administrator Training	Annual training in the Evaluation System for all administrators occurs during the start-of-year.
		Teacher Training	Certified teachers receive training in the Evaluation System during the district wide in-service. Site administrators may follow up by providing more site-specific training in the process. Evaluation is based on Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching, with special (not exclusive) emphasis on the domains, components, and elements included on the summative evaluation document that may be unique to various teaching assignments. Beginning in 2015-16, all educators with a Type A, B, or M certificate, must pilot a measure of student learning data as part of their evaluation process. Beginning in 2016-17, student learning data will be included in educator evaluations in accordance with 4 AAC 19.010 in domain five.
2	September-October	Self-Reflection/ Calibration Conference	Certified teachers engage in a self-reflection using the rubrics appropriate to their teaching assignment. Documentation of the evidence from the previous months and evidence expected to be available during the upcoming evaluation cycle is noted in the self-reflection document, and the teacher provides a copy to the evaluator. The evaluator and the teacher engage in a calibration conversation, during

			<p>which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The administrator provides clarity on the performance expectations at the site in relationship to the teacher’s unique assignment. • The teacher shares a written draft of his/her proposed SLOs (during 2015-16, only one SLO is required; in subsequent years, two to four SLOs are required) for the administrator’s review. • A shared understanding regarding what ‘proficiency’ looks like in the teacher’s assignment is achieved. • Agreement is reached regarding what evidence can be expected in relationship to discussed levels of performance. • Potential areas for targeting through professional development are identified. <p>Any SLOs are expected in draft form during the self-reflection/calibration conference. Student data may not be available at the time of the meeting, so final approval of the SLO by the site’s administrator will be postponed until one week after the necessary student data becomes available.</p>
3	Ongoing	Walk-throughs	<p>Walk-throughs are short in duration and are comprised of any observations an administrator may make of a teacher. These observations may occur both in the classroom and in settings outside the classroom, such as meetings or hallways, and may or may not result in feedback. If concerns are noted, they will be immediately brought to the attention of the teacher for discussion. There are no limits to the frequency or duration of walk-through observations. If walk-throughs occur during activities related to any SLOs, they provide an opportunity for communication regarding the action steps towards SLO achievement. While walk-throughs will most frequently result in evidence related to domains 2 and 3, opportunities may arise during collaboration, in-service, or the performance of other work activities for walk-through observations that may be relevant to domains 1, 4, and 5.</p>

4	Ongoing	Informal Observations with Documented Feedback	Minimum of 1 observation per semester with a minimum duration of 10 minutes each. Dates are recorded on the evaluation and feedback is provided to the teacher either verbally or electronically. When possible, an informal observation related to an SLO is ideal to support the educator's reflection and action steps related to progress towards the SLO goals. Informal observations may be related (like any other part of the process) to any domain, 1-5.
5	Must occur before the formal observation Non-tenured teachers must participate in the formal observation cycle (steps five through seven) twice each school year.	Pre-Observation Conference	The pre-observation conference is held to address the upcoming formal observation & must be directed by guiding questions. Since domains 2 and 3 are generally easily observable, special emphasis on domains 1 and 4 should occur during the conference as an opportunity to evaluate evidence of the 'off-stage' aspects of the teacher's practice. If appropriate to the timeline of any of the SLOs, SLO progress should be reviewed at this time.
6	Must be scheduled in advance	Formal Observation with Follow Up	The formal observation is required to last a minimum of 30 minutes. The administrator must provide written or verbal follow up to the teacher within 5 workdays. The follow up may occur as part of the post-observation conference, but if the post-observation conference is scheduled for more than 5 days after the observation, follow up must be done separately within 5 days of the observation.
7	Must be completed within ten days of the formal observation.	Post-Observation Conference	The post-observation conference must be completed within 10 days of the observation. The focus of the conference is the formal observation and both the teacher and the administrator are expected to share their perceptions of what occurred during the lesson based on observational data and evidence of student learning. The building administrator keeps all documents from the pre-observation conference, observation, and post-observation conference; they are not submitted to HR with the summative evaluation document. Completed SLOs are also kept on file at the site for any educator on a formal evaluation.
8		Summative Evaluation	A draft of the evaluation should be provided to the teacher 24 hours before the summative evaluation meeting. Any completed SLOs and relevant data should be provided to the

			<p>administrator 24 hours before the summative evaluation meeting. During this meeting, the principal shares the evidence gathered over time and provides the principal's evaluation of where on the rubric the evidence indicates the teacher is generally teaching. The teacher is invited to share any additional evidence not yet considered, and the principal may decide to modify the summative evaluation document. The teacher may provide a written response to the evaluation that will be attached to the evaluation document in the teacher's personnel file, provided the response is received by the district within 5 days of the summative evaluation being signed. The summative evaluation conference is a separate meeting from the post-observation conference.</p> <p>In instances where the final SLO data is not available until after the summative evaluation meeting, an updated copy of the summative evaluation containing only the ratings for domain 5 may be submitted as soon as the data is available.</p>
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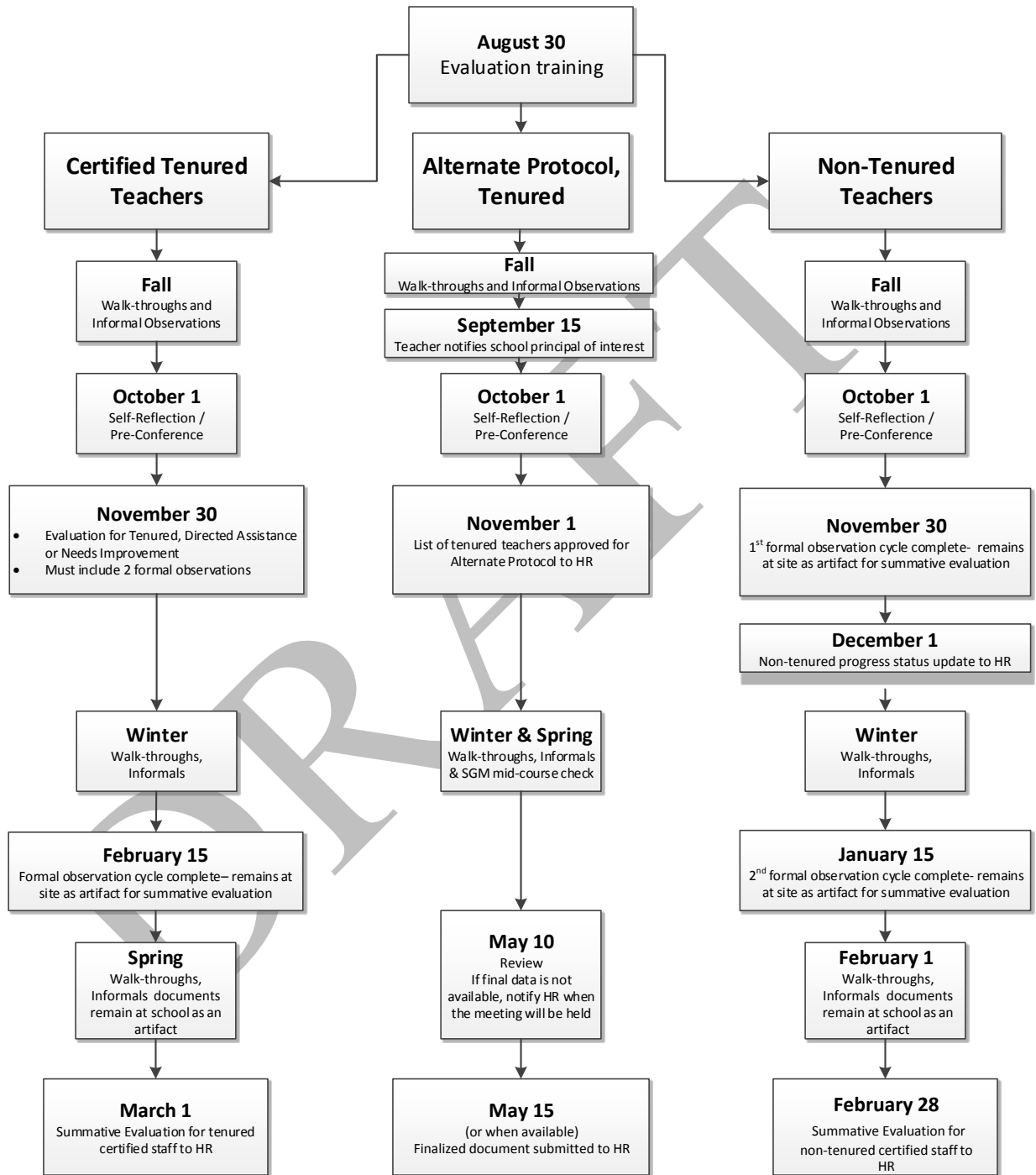
Steps of the Alternate Year Evaluation Process

In accordance with AS 14.20.149 b(4), a tenured teacher who has exceeded the district's performance standards for tenured teachers may be evaluated with a formal observation once every two school years. A tenured teacher exceeds the district's performance standard by achieving an overall proficiency score greater than 2.75. Tenured teachers meeting this criteria may be designated by his or her site administrator for the alternate evaluation process, which is outlined below. Although the SLO is submitted to Human Resources at the conclusion of the Alternate Evaluation Process for inclusion in the employee's personnel file, the educator's overall rating from the previous year is held over and remains the rating that is used in the summary report provided to the state.

Step	Date	Title	Description
1	July-August	Administrator Training	Annual training in the Evaluation System for all administrators occurs during the start-of-year administrator trainings.
		Teacher Training	Certified teachers receive training in the Evaluation System during the district wide in-service. Site administrators may follow up by providing more site-specific training in the process.
2	September-	Self-	Teachers on the alternate evaluation prepare a draft of at

	October	Reflection/ Calibration Conference	least one SLO to bring to this conference. The planned assessment and goal for student growth are discussed and refined during the conference, and while one SLO is required, more may be developed at the discretion of the teacher and administrator. A timeline for action steps that include a mid-SLO and post-SLO check in are developed and added to the SLO plan. Student data may not be
3	Ongoing	Walk-throughs	Walk-throughs are short in duration and are comprised of any observations an administrator may make of a teacher. These observations may occur both in the classroom and in settings outside the classroom, such as meetings or hallways, and may or may not result in feedback. If concerns are noted, they will be immediately brought to the attention of the teacher for discussion. There are no limits to the frequency or duration of walk-through observations. If walk-throughs occur during activities related to any SLOs, they provide an opportunity for communication regarding the action steps towards SLO achievement.
4	Ongoing	Informal Observations with Documented Feedback	Minimum of 1 observation per semester with a minimum duration of 10 minutes each. Feedback is provided to the teacher either verbally or electronically. An informal observation is ideally conducted around the time of the mid-SLO check-in to support the educator's reflection and action steps related to progress towards the SLO goals.
5		Final SLO Review	The completed SLO and relevant data should be provided to the administrator 24 hours before the final SLO review meeting. During this meeting, the principal and teacher review the SLO and relevant data and discuss the growth of the teacher and students that occurred during the course of the SLO. The signed SLO document, with student names redacted or omitted, is submitted to Human Resources for inclusion in the employee's

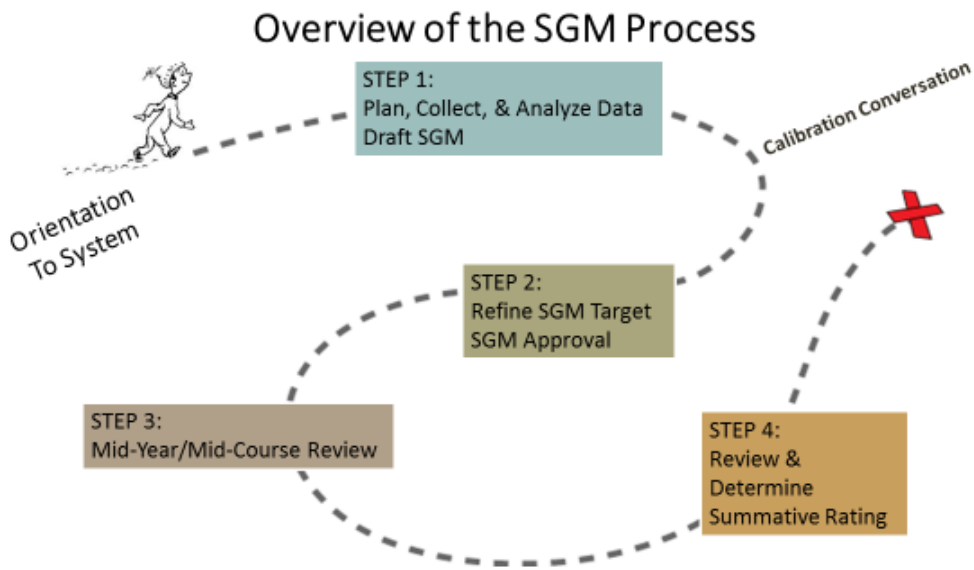
Teacher Evaluation Time Line



REVISED
11-12-15

Student Growth Maps (SLOs)

The following image provides an overview of the SLO process. This process may occur over the course of an entire school year, semester, quarter, or substantive unit of instruction.



Scoring an SLO

The performance bands for the student learning data are used to determine the educator's performance rating for components in domain five. Following completion of an SLO, the educator and his/her evaluator meet to review the percent of students who met the goal(s) set within the SLO. The rating from the SLO is then transferred onto the summative evaluation document.

Performance Band for Domain 5			
Unsatisfactory	Basic = 2	Proficient = 3	Exemplary = 4
Less than 64% of the students in the ending data group met or exceeded the target	65-79% of students in the ending data group met or exceeded the target	80-89% of students in the ending data group met or exceeded the target	90% or more of students in the ending data group met or exceeded the target

Evaluation Pathways

As shown on the [Teacher Evaluation Continuous Growth System](#), there are five pathways for the certified evaluation process to follow. They are: non-tenured evaluation plan, tenured evaluation plan, alternate protocol for tenured teachers, directed assistance plan, and needs improvement plan.

Overall Ratings

In order to be rated as “overall proficient” in any domain, 50% or more of the boxes in the domain must be rated as proficient or higher. This overall domain rating is used to help identify the level of support needed by an educator, and to guide professional development planning.

Reducing an educator’s overall performance in all five domains to one single rating can seem like an impersonal approach to evaluating teachers. However, 4 AAC 19.055 requires districts file an annual report with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development indicating the number and percentage of educators at each of the performance levels following the conclusion of each school year. Educator names and personally identifiable evaluation information will not be disclosed; only the number and percentage of educators at each performance level will be reported to the state.

An educator’s overall rating is calculated in the same manner as a grade point average.

1. Use the following values to determine the total number of points earned, not including the ‘Overall Proficient’ boxes for each domain

Rating = Point Value			
Unsatisfactory = 1	Basic = 2	Proficient = 3	Exemplary = 4

2. Divide the number of points earned by the total number of boxes (not including the ‘Overall Proficient’ boxes for each domain). It is important to note the number of boxes will vary based on the evaluation form being used and the number of SLOs (if applicable) that are included in the final evaluation summary.

3. Refer to the following chart to determine the final performance-rating box to be checked:

Score	Equivalent Rating for State Reporting
3.25-4.0 And no ratings of basic or unsatisfactory*	Exemplary
2.75-3.24 And no ratings of unsatisfactory*	Proficient
2.00-2.74 And no ratings of unsatisfactory	Basic
1-1.9	Unsatisfactory

*Any educator with a rating of *unsatisfactory* may not have an overall rating of *proficient* or *exemplary* per 4AAC19.010(f).

FAQs

Why doesn't every teaching assignment have a specialized rubric and evaluation form?

Danielson's Framework for Teachers provides both general and specialized rubrics for educators that have been adopted by the DCSD. In most circumstances, the Evaluation Committee elected to use the same general evaluation summary form for the majority of educators. Although components and elements may look slightly different in various settings, it is expected that the unique characteristics of any specific teaching assignment and the evidence that constitutes various performance levels will be discussed during the calibration conference. For example, employing culturally sensitive practices is expected of all teachers but the community in which the school exists along with the age or developmental level of students the teacher serves will influence how the expectation is manifested. Similarly, the specifics of what 'questioning and discussion techniques' are expected to look like in a general education classroom, a self-contained special education classroom, or an online learning environment, would be discussed during the calibration conference. There are some positions that are distinctly different, so specialized evaluation forms have been developed. For example, because of the significance of the Individualized Education Plan paperwork and meeting processes, the evaluation form for special education teachers includes that criterion. Additionally, there are educators that are exempt from the student learning data requirement, and specialized forms have been adopted to reflect requirements for their positions.

What happens when a teacher teaches in more than one school, has more than one teaching assignment, or is otherwise split?

The two formal observations of non-tenured teachers should occur in different settings to ensure the evaluator has a well-informed understanding of the performance of the non-tenured teacher in the multiple settings or roles he or she may be assigned to. In the case of both non-tenured and tenured teachers with multiple work locations, the employee's primary location shall determine who the teacher's primary evaluator will be. In that circumstance, the primary evaluator is expected to consult with the other supervising administrator for input into the employee's evaluation and informal or walk-through observation data should be shared between the two supervisors to ensure a well-informed understanding of the educator's performance is reflected in his/her summative evaluation. In circumstances where an employee has two totally different roles, the principal may alternate between the two evaluation documents on a year to year basis. In all circumstances where a teacher is responsible for the instruction of students, the SLO process shall be employed in the evaluation process.

Does the Student Growth Map requirement apply to everyone employed in a certificated position, including those who hold various types of certificates?

All educators, including those in the special education and homeschool programs, are required to have student learning data as a part of their evaluation, unless the educator is specifically exempt in regulation. School Psychologists, Speech Language Pathologists, and other Type C certificated educators are exempt from the student learning data requirement. Educators with Type A, B, and M certificates are required to have an SLO. The regulations allow educators in some specialized assignments to use relevant student data that may not be directly linked to learning, such as the use of attendance data or graduation rate data in the evaluation of school

principals. Questions regarding what type of data can be used should be discussed with one's evaluator.

What happens if an SLO cannot be completed by the summative evaluation deadline?

All other portions of the evaluation should be filled in, and a note should be entered in the relevant evidence box for that component indicating when the data is expected to be available to complete that portion of the evaluation. The evaluation should be submitted as-is by the deadline, with an updated copy submitted to HR once the new data is available. The evaluation MUST have the words FINALIZED COPY clearly entered in the start of the evidence box to make clear the document contains the finalized SLO data. No other portion of the evaluation may be changed or updated; only absent SLO data and the related rating may be added.

Where can I find out more information about the state regulations?

The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development offers links to the regulations and the Department's guidance to districts on how to implement the regulations at <https://education.alaska.gov/> by clicking on the green "Accountability" star.

If the law allows a teacher to have a year off of being evaluated, why does a tenured teacher who exceeded the district's performance expectations still have to do at least one SLO?

There are several reasons for this. First, Alaska's regulations require ALL impacted educators to pilot an SLO during the 2015-16 school year. So at least for 2015-16, everyone would have to do one SLO regardless of his or her evaluation status. Second, the survey results from the SLO pilot project clearly revealed that participating teachers found the SLO process to be highly beneficial for their students and for their own professional reflection. The district places students at the forefront of each decision, so although it would have been nice to not have any formal requirements during the alternate year, having teachers complete one SLO in the alternate year supports the district's focus on student success and also supports the professional growth desires of our highly skilled teachers by affording them the bi-annual ability to focus more deeply on one SLO.