

Tuesday, January 24, 2012 School Leader Appraisal Advisory Council

Agenda Topics: Debrief on MCREL training; Review Appraisal Process and Timeline,

ATTENDANCE:

Dave Wheat, Bill Horwath, Nichole Johnson, Jodi Smith, Andria Schur, Dave Wheat , MCREL team: Greg Cameron, JJ Sawyer, and Mel Sussman, Patsy Cavazos, Mark Shenker, Robin Lowe, Joe Espinoza

HOUSEKEEPING:

School Leader Appraisal Advisory Council meetings will remain on Wednesdays.

The School Leader Appraisal Advisory Council intra site is now available on the HISD Portal.

DEBRIEF on MCREL TRAINING

Principals gave the January ⁴, 2012 MCREL school leader training an 85% positive rating, with 15% giving it a neutral rating.

Based on the feedback, three trends emerged:

1. Ideas about artifacts and evidence
2. "P" issues i.e. procedures, policy questions and various "What If" scenarios
3. The makeup of the advisory group. SIOs have been requested to extend invitations to school leaders who expressed a desire to serve on this council. Additional names are still requested.

These issues in addition to others concerning the School Leader Appraisal System will be addressed during council meetings.

Feedback from recent MCREL AP/Dean appraisal training sessions has been overwhelmingly positive. While there is some concern from APs and deans around the appraiser's ability to be able to provide a fair appraisal of their work and some trepidation around the student measurement piece, overall comments and feedback from attendees was positive.

DISCUSSION OVER APPRAISAL PROCESS

Initial Self-Assessment Step

- All participants felt the self-assessment was an important step in the appraisal process for all school leaders.
- For new school leaders, the self-assessment form would help new teachers set goals. For the returning school leaders, the form would serve as a reflective tool to show how they can improve their practice.

- The self-assessment tools could also be used strategically for school improvement. One participant stated that it's important to use the form strategically to work on things to help improve the school's goals instead of using abstract personal goals.
- Based on feedback, the form should be mandatory with no scoring or rating.
- The form that has been developed for the teacher appraisal, with its guiding questions, will be used. Formal conversation is very effective and should be done prior to the beginning of the year.

Goal Setting Conferences

One suggestion was having a progress conversation instead of a formal goal setting conference. Another participant stressed the importance of having a separate goal setting conference vs. combining it with another session because it could be a set time for reflection and goal setting.

A representative from MCREL offered a suggestion that if a school leader is in the "developing" or "not demonstrating" categories, improving from these ratings should be automatic goals to move up a performance level.

There will be an N/A section for those school leaders where the rubric criteria doesn't fit with their role or areas of responsibility.

Progress Conferences

- To avoid timing conflicts with spring break, the progress conferences for school leaders should be completed by end of March. During this mid-point conference, formative ratings will be provided.
- It was suggested that all 11 month and 12 month school leaders should follow the same timeline as those on the non-teacher campus appraisal system.

Questions asked and will be followed up on:

- What is the appropriate date for the progress conference for a school leader who will be taken to file review
- Will school leaders have a separate progress conference deadline if they are on a PPA?

Consolidated Assessment

After the mid-year conference, school leaders have a time frame to get in evidence of their performance and progress. This consolidated assessment period is for school leaders to have a set time to collect and present evidence. Participants expressed the following suggestions:

- The Consolidated Assessment step should not be a “formal meeting” but an evidence collection window before the summative meeting. The participants also felt it was important to let school leaders know that this window exists so they can prepare their evidence.
- To further train and educate school leaders on collecting evidence, this process should be incorporated in the school leader training.
- The name is changed from “Consolidated Assessment” to “Evidence Deadline”

End of Year Conference

- General consensus stated that the window for EOY conferences should take place by the end of the school year to early July. Overall feeling is the earlier you start the EOY conference the better.

Observation and Evidence

Regarding evidence, the direction the council would like to move towards is the documentation of observations. The next step is how to train appraisers to document.

Addressing the feedback from the January 4th meeting, the topic of observations and evidence was discussed. The council acknowledges it is easier for principals to observe and collect evidence on their asst. principals and deans because they have more opportunities to observe. For SIOs, it’s challenging. Participants brought up the following points:

- There are opportunities to observe outside of campus. For instance, SIOs should look for evidence at SMDC, PLCs, leadership meetings or other events to observe interactions of the school leaders.
- General agreement is that appraisers should look for evidence of behavior or performance, and tangible items like a meeting agenda are considered the artifacts and evidence.
- SIOs should document and debrief with their school leaders

A participant asked what evidence principal or assist. Principal would bring and the goal of evidence collecting. Is it for school leaders to bring evidence for everything or submit evidence on just the areas the appraise disagrees with? Based on the conversation, the following points were made:

- For appraisees, it’s better to have a system of providing evidence on ongoing basis vs. instead of providing a large binder of evidence at one time.
- With on-going conversations with appraisers and appraises, there is an opportunity for evidence to be collected, discussed. This process will provide an opportunity to use evidence as a way to provide feedback.

- Another suggestion was to could be a summary memorandum as documentation.

The general feedback suggested that the current list of evidence represented the right items. The following comments regarding using and collecting evidence were:

- For appraisers to review the descriptors in the rubric to know how to better evaluate the evidence to determine if the rubric components are being satisfied.
- To ease confusion of piece of evidence represents what rubric descriptor, it was suggested to review the list of evidence based on the rubric components and to evaluate if certain evidence would be better matched to a specific rubric section instead of being featured in all three sections
- Offer a “Drop Box” to help collect and store evidence.

PPA

Conversation around the PPA addressed. Two issues around PPA were whether to continue to use the PPA or provide a memorandum and was around PPA having some closure. For instance, if a school leader does not improve, more goals and requirements are added and there is no closure or end. Participants were in favor of keeping the PPA because of the explicit action steps that it provides.

Continued conversation around the PPA and if it's the right form for the school leader appraisal will continue in the following advisory council meetings.