

As you know, CFT and CPS are taking the next step in our recently ratified contract by developing the language and process by which part of our pay will connect to student learning measured by multiple fair and reliable indicators. A full description of that plan was emailed to you.

But we also want to make sure that we communicate with you ongoing about the essential elements of this new plan and its progress, as well as solicit your ongoing feedback.

First, most teachers are willing, some are even anxious, to have excellence rewarded through extra pay. But we've always stressed that any new methods of differentiating teachers' pay must be done through trustworthy measures and not political whim or administrative favoritism.

And we have never trusted the notion of "merit pay," where students' standardized test scores could determine teachers' compensation, both because our students come to us from such diverse situations and such pay systems usually cause teaching to those tests instead of fully educating learners. Plus, only a minority of teachers have classes that even use standardized tests.

What we are creating are modifications to our existing Teacher Evaluation System that

- Was developed with teacher input.
- Was in general terms described in our newly ratified contract.
- Will gather ongoing feedback from teachers throughout the yearlong pilot.
- Must be and will be fair to teachers.
- Uses multiple measures of student learning whenever student growth is judged.
- Still involves lead teachers in the evaluation process of classroom teachers.
- Requires building administrators to collaborate with their teachers to develop and implement the evaluations.

To make this nationally innovative program work we need your involvement. Not only give us feedback through email responses, attendance at CFT membership meetings and comments to your building representative, please become part of structures like curriculum councils, where this pilot plan will be honed.

Over the years, we've forged an understanding with our district that only with teachers and administrators collaborating will we reach our common goals for our students. This evaluation plan will become one of the most important collaborative structures in that history. We want you to be part of it.