



A New Path Forward: *Teacher Evaluation*

Cincinnati Federation of Teachers
Association of Cincinnati Public School Office Personnel

In a recent speech at the National Press Club, the president of the American Federation of Teachers unveiled a serious and comprehensive reform plan to ensure great teaching. AFT President Randi Weingarten said it is imperative to move public education from an industrial model to one that will better **prepare students for today's knowledge economy.**

She laid out a new approach to teacher evaluation, saying that a strong teacher development and evaluation system is crucial to improving teaching. The union's framework for teacher development and evaluation has been created by union leaders from around the country, with input from some of America's top teacher evaluation experts.

It calls for **regular, rigorous reviews by trained evaluators, including peers and principals, based on professional teaching standards, best practices and student achievement.** The goal is to improve public education by helping promising teachers improve, enabling good teachers to become great, and identifying those teachers who possibly shouldn't be in the classroom.

The main components of the AFT teacher development and evaluation proposal are:

- **Basic professional teaching standards.** Every state should adopt standards that spell out what teachers should know and be able to do. Districts could augment to meet specific community needs.
- **Standards for assessing teachers' practice.** These standards should be based on multiple measures, including student test scores based on valid and reliable assessments that show students' real growth while in the teacher's classroom. Classroom observations, self-evaluations, portfolio reviews, appraisal of lesson plans, students' written work and other projects should also be considered.
- **Implementation benchmarks.** Implementation benchmarks must be established so professional standards don't gather dust. Principals and superintendents charged with putting this new evaluation system into practice need to take responsibility—and be held responsible—for making it work.
- **Support for teachers.** Teacher evaluation needs to be a continuous process throughout teachers' careers. Ways to support and nurture teacher growth include solid induction, mentoring, ongoing professional development, and career opportunities that keep great teachers in the classroom.

The CFT believes that our members possess the talent, determination and vision to turn these proposals into reality. In fact, **some of the recommendations outlined by President Weingarten were pioneered right here in Cincinnati schools by our union.** Our goal in the current contract negotiations, and beyond, is to give teachers the tools, time and trust to do their jobs well and help students succeed.

The speech, a summary of the teacher development and evaluation proposal, and other materials can be found at www.futurestogether.org.



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