



Bringing Oakland Together for Our Students

## B. Teacher Evaluation and PD are Supportive and Data-Driven

### Questions:

1. What is the purpose of teacher evaluation?
2. How should teacher evaluation support teacher professional development?
3. How should teacher evaluation inform professional development decisions at the site and district levels?
4. How should data and evidence about student learning inform evaluations and professional development?

### Why this Matters:

- **Differentiated Support is Key to Improvement:** “Evaluation systems fail to differentiate performance among teachers. As a result, teacher effectiveness is largely ignored. Excellent teachers cannot be recognized or rewarded, chronically low-performing teachers languish, and the wide majority of teachers performing at moderate levels do not get the differentiated support...they need to improve as professionals.”<sup>6</sup>
- **A Comprehensive System:** American Federation of Teachers (AFT) President Randi Weingarten stated “this is the perfect time to incorporate a new approach to teacher support and evaluation.” The AFT’s “aim is to have a comprehensive, fair, transparent and expedient process to identify, improve and—if necessary—remove ineffective teachers.” AFT says, “a comprehensive development and evaluation system would enable all teachers to improve, and to align their work with what kids need to know and do.”<sup>7</sup>
- **Professional Development at High Performing Schools:** “Certainly any organization that is to sustain its effectiveness over time must engage in ongoing processes of continuous improvement. Even more certainly, a school that claims its fundamental purpose is to ensure high levels of learning for all students should search for more effective practices if even some of its students are not succeeding.”<sup>8</sup>
- **Professional Development Must be Data Driven:** For example, research involving over 1,000 mathematics and science teachers concluded that sustained and intensive professional development is most likely to enhance teacher skills, and ultimately student achievement.<sup>9</sup>

### Notes on the Current Reality in OUSD:

- **Evaluation Procedure:** Tenured teachers in OUSD are evaluated once every other year through a formal process. The contract requires mid-year and final summary assessments of new employees and employees who received unsatisfactory, below, or approaching expectations.<sup>10</sup>
- **Lack of Meaningful Evaluation:** In OUSD, most teachers are rated *satisfactory*. Many evaluations are not happening at all. In a 2008 audit of 100 current teachers’ evaluations since 2004: 22 teachers had no evaluations on file; only four teachers received an *unsatisfactory* rating in any category on any evaluation; two teachers received at least two *unsatisfactory* ratings in a final evaluations.<sup>11</sup>
- **Professional Development:** Site leaders direct professional development for teachers, including district-led workshops and site-based meetings focused on skills, content, or curriculum. All schools in OUSD were recently asked to organize ‘professional learning communities’ in which groups of teachers routinely meet to engage in job-embedded activities that include inquiry, action research, and data analysis.

6 Weisberg, Daniel, et al., The Widget Effect: Our National Failure to Acknowledge and Act on Differences in Teacher Effectiveness (The New Teacher Project, 2009) pg. 6.

7 Address at American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Teacher Evaluation Conference, February 2011.

8 Dufour, Richard, “We’re Already a ‘Good’ School – Why Do We Need to Improve?” Education Week, Jan. 6, 2010 (Vol. 29, #16, p. 12)

9 Garet, M. S., et al. (2001). What makes professional development effective? Results from a national sample of teachers. American Educational Research Journal, 38(4), 915-945.

10 Oakland Education Association/OUSD 2005-08 Collective Bargaining Agreement Title 13

11 Dufour, Richard, “We’re Already a ‘Good’ School – Why Do We Need to Improve?” Education Week, Jan. 6, 2010 (Vol. 29, #16, p. 12)