

Clio Area Schools Administrative Guidelines

1240 - SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION PROCEDURES

- A. Review the Superintendent's job description together with the annual District goals. The job description and the District's annual goals constitute a set of written directions to the Superintendent, specifying his/her major responsibilities. The Board should not assess the Superintendent on duties not reflected in one of these documents.

Early in the evaluation cycle, the Board President or the Board as a whole should go over these documents with the Superintendent to make sure that they accurately reflect what is expected of the chief administrator. The review session should also be used to re-affirm any priorities that have been set for the Superintendent and the District for the coming year.

- B. Select, create, or adapt an evaluation instrument or review the instrument currently used. This must be completed early in the evaluation cycle to ensure that the Superintendent knows precisely on what bases and in what fashion s/he will be evaluated over the coming year.

The most important consideration in reviewing or selecting an instrument is to make sure the instrument can be tailored to the District's needs. Model instruments are available from a variety of sources. None of these models perfectly incorporates the responsibilities and performance goals set for the Superintendent in a given District. Boards that begin with such instruments must modify them to reflect what the Board expects of its chief administrator.

- C. Establish guidelines for using the instrument. Before individual trustees begin filling out the instrument, the Board must develop ground rules about how the instrument will be used. These rules promote some degree of consistency among Board members in completing the evaluation form.

For example, if the instrument works by a rating scale (requiring that the appraiser assign, say, a one (1) to five (5) rating to each area under evaluation), Board members must discuss among themselves, in advance, the type of performance that merits each possible score. Similarly, the Board must decide in advance under what circumstances it will require written commentary or documentation along with a rating. Extremely low or extremely high ratings should always be accompanied by written comments. Also to be addressed during the ground rules discussion is the question of what type of data is appropriate and easily available for making a judgment in each job performance area.

- D. Allow the Superintendent to complete a self-appraisal. A Superintendent self-appraisal has three (3) functions:
1. It gives the Superintendent an opportunity to provide trustees with additional information on job performance.
 2. It allows the Superintendent to register his/her feelings about job performance before the Board begins its active deliberations.
 3. It points out areas of disagreement about job performance that need to be discussed in the evaluation conference.

The Superintendent must be given a voice in the decision to include self-appraisal as a part of the evaluation process. S/He should also be included in discussions about how the self-appraisal will be used and what forms it will take.

The Superintendent's self-appraisal can take any of several forms. The

Board may allow the Superintendent to fill out the same evaluation form that Board members will complete; it may ask the administrator to respond in writing to a series of questions regarding the year's goals and performance; or it may allow the Superintendent to submit a report with form and content unspecified.

- E. Have each Board member fill out the instrument separately. Initial, independent assessments by each Board member facilitate frank, substantive discussion about the Superintendent's performance and ensure that each Board member's judgment is taken into consideration during the Board's deliberations. The individual assessments, however, are only a tool for helping the Board to arrive at a group judgment about the Superintendent's performance. They should not be given to the Superintendent unless the Board and the Superintendent have made a prior agreement that the assessments will be shared.
- F. Hold a meeting among Board members to compare assessments and reach a single, consensus appraisal. During this meeting, each Board member should be asked to articulate his/her assessment of the Superintendent's job performance in each category under consideration. The Board should discuss any significant differences between the judgments. The outcome of these discussions should be consensus ratings in each area of job performance. The consensus ratings are then entered on a single evaluation form.

If, after discussion, the Board cannot reach a shared decision about the rating in a particular area, the majority view regarding job performance should be entered on the form. Averaging ratings distorts the picture of the Board's assessment and provides the Superintendent with no meaningful directions about job performance to which s/he can respond.

- G. Hold a conference with the Superintendent to discuss the evaluation. Once the Board as a whole has agreed on its evaluation, it must hold a conference with the Superintendent to discuss its findings. This discussion is the heart of the evaluation process.

The purpose of the evaluation conference is threefold:

1. To discuss the Board's deliberations with the Superintendent.
2. To give the Superintendent an opportunity to respond.
3. To work with the Superintendent in defining the Board's expectations for the coming year.

The conference is also an appropriate occasion for discussing disagreements or misunderstandings regarding the respective roles of the Board and Superintendent in specific areas of school governance.

For the conference to be of value, discussion must be frank and open. All parties must attempt to substantiate their comments by giving specific, concrete examples of their concerns. The Board can modify its appraisal ratings during the discussion if it believes additional information warrants the change.

- H. Formulate performance goals for the Superintendent for the coming year. The outcome of the evaluation conference should be not only the final appraisal ratings for the Superintendent, but also a set of priority goals - specific, projected achievements in job performance toward which the Board would like the Superintendent to direct
- Priority goals should be the product of discussion and mutual agreement between the Superintendent and the Board. They will be derived by examining both the evaluation findings and the annual District goals. The optimum number of priority goals for a Superintendent is normally three (3) to five (5).
- I. Set a calendar for next year's evaluation cycle. The final step in the evaluation process is also the first step in next year's cycle - to fix a calendar noting the dates by which each step in the procedure will be carried out. The Board president and the Superintendent will normally set the calendar, after reviewing any problems with last year's process.