



Board Urges Adoption Of Full Educator Evaluation System

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The recommendations of the Council on Educator Effectiveness are set to begin their travel through the legislative process on Wednesday, and the State Board of Education is urging the Legislature to adopt the recommendations as offered.

In a resolution, the board said adopting only parts of the proposal would mean a weaker system.

"If they're going to approve it, it is our intent that they be approved in its entirety," Casandra Ulbrich (D-Rochester), vice president of the board, said in offering the resolution. "If we start picking at it, then it's not as strong and it will not work as effectively."

The board also made the point that the Legislature has to provide the funds needed to implement the system for it to work properly.

In addition to funds districts might need to implement the plan, the council called for training for administrators on using the system.

The recommendation also calls for a supplemental assessment, outside the state-required tests, to help measure student growth during the year. Joseph Martineau, deputy superintendent for accountability services and the department's liaison to the council, said the state had the ability to develop such an assessment in-house, but would likely contract it out.

"People who have been doing this for a while would have a better idea of the pitfalls you could run into, not just how to do it," he said.

But there are still some considerations to be made in the final product.

The proposal bases half of a teacher's or administrator's evaluation on the academic growth of their students, but education board member Richard Zeile (R-Detroit) questioned how it would address team teaching or other situations where responsibility for a child's development might be shared between educators.

"That's a part of the data system that's missing," Mr. Martineau responded.

The council also did not make clear how districts should provide feedback to those who are not ranked as "Professional" on their assessment, only that such feedback must be provided.

Gary Abud, the 2013-14 teacher of the year, said it was essential that teachers and administrators ranked as "Provisional" or "Ineffective" on their assessments be provided not only feedback on how they can improve, but professional development to help them make those improvements.

Under the proposal, educators rated Ineffective for two consecutive years would be fired and those rated Provisional for three consecutive years would be removed from their post, though they could be assigned another job within the district.

CONSOLIDATION: In a bit of a step back from his earlier comments that the state should move to countywide districts, Mr. Flanagan asked board members to join him in urging funding for incentives for districts to share services.

The board approved a resolution, sent to the Legislature, calling for at least \$5 million in incentive grants to consolidate administrative services to the intermediate school district level.

Mr. Flanagan said that funding got dropped from the current year budget in favor of incentives only for school districts to consolidate. In many instances, he said, actually merging districts might not make sense.

"We're hoping to get an equal amount of money so districts will have an incentive to build this service structure," Mr. Flanagan said. "If you really want to reduce

deficit districts, one of the concrete things you can do is put in some incentive money for driving these services up (to ISDs)."

Mr. Flanagan said the new teacher and administrator evaluation system will also likely drive merging of services.

"Now that they see they're going to be responsible for student scores, they're not interested in burgers and buses," he said of administrators.

He expected the move would not mean more privatization if ISDs are given the opportunity to consolidate the services.