

South Dakota Standards for Teaching Frequently Asked Questions

Updated Oct. 30, 2011

What are South Dakota’s new standards for teaching, and where can I find them?

Per the recommendation of a 25-member work group, the South Dakota Board of Education adopted Charlotte Danielson’s Framework for Teaching as the state’s professional performance standards for teachers. The Danielson Framework consists of four domains – Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, Professional Responsibilities – and 22 components within those domains. You can access the Framework and its 22 components at <http://doe.sd.gov/secretary/sdteacherstandards.asp> Click on “Danielson Framework” in the right column.

Just exactly what does the new legislation say?

The new law regarding teacher standards and evaluation in South Dakota has two parts. See full text of the two statutes on page 3 of this document. Here’s a quick summary:

SDCL 13-42-33 requires the Board of Education to “establish minimum professional performance standards for certified teachers in South Dakota public schools, and to establish best practices for evaluation of the performance of certified teachers that may be used by individual school districts.” Per the recommendation of the work group, the Board of Education adopted the Charlotte Danielson’s Framework for Teaching as the state’s professional performance standards. See full text on page 3.

SDCL 13-42-34 requires any public school district seeking state accreditation to evaluate its certified teachers at least once a year (teachers in years one-three) and at least every other year (teachers in years 4 and beyond). It further states that each school district shall adopt procedures for evaluating the performance of its certified teachers that are based on the professional performance standards established by the Board of Education. See full text on page 3.

So ... does my district have to evaluate using the new standards?

The use of the new standards for evaluation purposes is required. However, districts may use whatever tool or system or process they want for the actual evaluation.

Think of it this way: The standards for teaching should serve as the basis for evaluation. They are the “what.” They answer the question: What am I being evaluated on? They are the professional performance standards that we want teachers to strive for. The evaluation process that a district uses is the “how,” or how the evaluation is actually done.

Nothing in either of the statutes noted above mandates that districts use a particular evaluation tool. But SDCL 13-42-34 is clear that the evaluation must be based on the professional performance standards.

Do I have to evaluate on all 22 of the components of the Danielson Framework?

No, districts can choose at the local level whether they want to evaluate on all 22 components or just two. A number of districts nationwide that have implemented the Danielson Framework choose to focus on just eight components when first starting the process. These are called the “Observable Eight.” A district could choose a variety of combinations based on what its local goals are. To access the Observable Eight online, go

to <http://doe.sd.gov/secretary/sdteacherstandards.asp> Click on “Observable Eight Components” in the right column.

When does this requirement kick in?

SDCL 13-42-34 states that “each school district shall adopt procedures for evaluating . . .” However, it does not give a specific timeframe for adoption.

The Department of Education realizes that districts need time to become familiar with the new standards, and that teachers and administrators need time to be trained on a new and/or modified evaluation system. We also know that evaluation instruments are often part of your negotiated agreements.

With all of this in mind, the department’s expectation is that districts would use the 2011-12 school year to:

- Become familiar with the new state standards for teaching, which are Charlotte Danielson’s Framework for Teaching
- If necessary, conduct a cross-walk of the Framework for Teaching and the district’s current standards, to ensure alignment
- Take advantage of professional learning opportunities that the department is providing through TIE and East Dakota Educational Cooperative
- Take formal board action to adopt the standards locally
- Determine your desired evaluation system moving forward
 - Will your current system work with the new standards?
 - Do some modifications need to be made, or does your district want to move towards Danielson’s evaluation model?
- Take necessary steps to incorporate any changes you make in your local evaluation system into your negotiated contract

This would pave the way for a district to begin evaluating on the new standards in school year 2012-13, using whatever tool or method of evaluation the local district desires.

How can my administrative team get up to speed on the Danielson Framework?

Districts should be aware that a variety of resources related to the Framework for Teaching, including tools for evaluation, are available. The department is partnering with TIE and East Dakota Educational Cooperative to offer training on the Framework and associated evaluation process – should a district choose to use the Danielson system of evaluation.

Watch for information about these opportunities at <http://doe.sd.gov/secretary/sdteacherstandards.asp>

Who can I contact for more information?

The department is working closely with TIE and East Dakota Educational Cooperative to roll out the new standards.

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RELATED STATUTES

13-42-33. Promulgation of rules on performance standards. The Board of Education shall, no later than July 1, 2011, promulgate rules pursuant to chapter 1-26 to establish minimum professional performance standards for certified teachers in South Dakota public schools, and to establish best practices for the evaluation of the performance of certified teachers that may be used by individual school districts.

13-42-34. Teacher evaluations. Any public school district seeking state accreditation shall evaluate the performance of each certified teacher in years one through three not less than annually, and each certified teacher in the fourth contract year or beyond, not less than every other year.

Each school district shall adopt procedures for evaluating the performance of certified teachers employed by the school district that:

- (1) Are based on the minimum professional performance standards established by the Board of Education pursuant to § 13-42-33;
- (2) Require multiple measures;
- (3) Serve as the basis for programs to increase professional growth and development of certified teachers; and
- (4) Include a plan of assistance for any certified teacher, who is in the fourth or subsequent year of teaching, and whose performance does not meet the school district's performance standards.