

# NEPF FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Refer to the current year's **NEPF Protocols** for additional information regarding the NEPF process.



## GENERAL QUESTIONS

### What are the goals of the NEPF?

Goal 1: Foster student learning and growth.

Goal 2: Improve educators' effective instructional practices.

Goal 3: Inform human capital decisions based on a professional growth system.

Goal 4: Engage stakeholders in the continuous improvement and monitoring of a professional growth system.

### What is the purpose of the NEPF?

The overall purpose of the NEPF is to identify effective instruction and leadership and to establish criteria to determine:

- The professional development needs of educators;
- Information on which to base human capital decisions including rewards and consequences; and
- Whether educators are
  - Using data to inform decision-making,
  - Helping students meet achievement targets and performance expectations,
  - Effectively engaging families, and
  - Collaborating effectively.

### How was the NEPF created?

The passage of AB 222 during the 2011 Legislative Session created a 15-member Teachers and Leaders Council (TLC) to develop a statewide performance evaluation system for teachers and school administrators. This group was comprised of 11 members selected by the governor from recommendations made by stakeholder groups and 4 approved by the state superintendent and the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) chancellor. These members brought expertise in PreK-12 standards, curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, personnel evaluation, professional development, parent involvement, public policy, and critical elements identified in driving Nevada's next-generation accountability system. The TLC began meeting in October 2011 and met on more than 25 occasions. The first phase of their work concluded in December 2012, with an appearance before the State Board of Education to begin the regulatory process.

The TLC made a deliberate decision to focus on high-leverage instructional practices based on input from guidance by national experts and with the reinforcement of research demonstrating that, by narrowing the scope to the assessment of instructional practice and professional development, the TLC will broaden the depth and breadth of the system. The domains were determined by a rigorous review of existing standards, including the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), as well as examples of other state standards such as Iowa, Colorado, and Delaware. The standards were based on a vast body of empirical evidence demonstrating an immediate and important connection to fostering student success in post-secondary environments by building students' 21st century skills so that they graduate college and are career ready. The performance indicators for each standard and the corresponding rubrics were



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developed by Dr. Margaret Heritage of the University of California, Los Angeles National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST), and her team. The rubrics and associated performance levels to assess the indicators were designed to look at teacher and student behavior, with a focus on outcomes, not process results. Dr. Heritage and her team prepared a research synthesis documenting the empirical research supporting the focus on these five (5) high-leverage instructional standards. Consistent with the legislative charge, the TLC continues to meet to further develop and refine the statewide performance evaluation system for Nevada educators.

### **Who is on the Teachers and Leaders Council?**

Please refer to the Teachers and Leaders Council webpage found at <https://doe.nv.gov/boards-commissions-councils/teachers-and-leaders-council/>.

### **Who is required to use the NEPF?**

All teachers, building administrators and other licensed educational personnel (as defined in the NEPF Protocols) who are employees of a public school district are required to be evaluated using the NEPF. This list is inclusive of teachers across all educational settings and contexts, school level administrators, principal supervisors, school nurses, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, speech-language pathologists, educational audiologists, and teacher-librarians.



## **GENERAL QUESTIONS**

### **Is the Self-Assessment required?**

Yes, completing the self-assessment form will aid in the Goal Setting process. Embracing the self-assessment step of the process empowers the educator being evaluated to shape the conversation by stating what they identify as strengths, the areas on which they want to focus, and what support they will need.



## **GOAL SETTING PROCESS**

### **What are Student Learning Goals (SLGs) and what is the process for developing one?**

SLGs are an approach to measuring student learning and the impact a teacher has on student learning. The SLG process provides an opportunity for teachers to collaborate with other teachers and with their evaluators to set meaningful academic goals for their students. SLGs are long-term, measurable, academic goals set for students to accomplish by the end of a course. Developing an SLG includes identifying the most important learning content for the year alongside teachers of the same content area (if available), reviewing student academic and social data, setting a long-term goal for students, measuring the long-term goal along the way, and evaluating student attainment of the goal at the end of the school year. The SLG process empowers teachers to set a goal for their own students and facilitates deep collaboration between teachers and evaluators to ensure that students reach the goal. The Goal Setting and Planning Tool is used to guide the process.

### **Can teachers account for individual learning needs and/or contexts of their classrooms in the SLG process?**

Setting targets for the SLG can be complex. Each teacher should set specific targets based upon his or her own students' baseline knowledge and trend data to help set appropriate SLG targets. Targets



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should be ambitious and feasible for the students identified. Tiered targets may be necessary to address the needs of all students in the class (e.g. students performing in the lowest third of the class may have an alternate end of course target than students performing at higher levels on the baseline assessment).

### **What assessments should be used to measure an SLG?**

The Teachers and Leaders Council has recommended that the assessments must meet all of the following criteria:

- Alignment with content standards/ Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS) and curriculum;
- Alignment with the intended level or rigor;
- Psychometric quality of validity, and reliability to the highest degree feasible; and
- Monitoring includes alignment, instrument security, reliability, validity, comparability, feasibility, and scoring.

### **Are SLGs allowed to be altered or changed?**

Yes, they can be revised with evaluator approval. SLGs are meant to be adaptable and responsive to student need. They are not dependent on the availability of state-wide standardized assessment scores. They can also be adjusted or revised based on changes in standards, curriculum, student population, and/or student need.

### **What is the Professional Practice Goal (PPG) and what should it entail?**

The educator uses the Self-Assessment Tool and/or previous evaluation to identify and set a Professional Practice Goal. The goal should align to and provide support for the SLG. Progress toward the PPG should be discussed during the Mid-Cycle Goals Review process.



## **OBSERVATION CYCLE**

### **What should be discussed in the pre-observation conference?**

A Pre-Observation Conference should precede each scheduled observation cycle. This provides the educator an opportunity to discuss needs and evidence for the strategies used. It is also recommended that the educator being evaluated leads these discussions and provides the rationale for the basis of his/her instructional practices. This is also a good time for the educator to discuss the context of their class(es) including, but not necessarily limited to, student-to-teacher ratio considerations, student characteristics that impact instructional practices, specific procedures the teacher has in place and purpose for the procedures, information from previous lessons, and where students are in the continuum etc.



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### **How long should a scheduled classroom observation be?**

“Scheduled” (announced) observations are those observations for which prior notice is given and a pre-observation conference has been held. The minimum number of scheduled observations is differentiated according to experience and performance as outlined in the NEPF Protocols. For teachers, each scheduled classroom observation, as one component of the teacher evaluation process, needs to be conducted for a *minimum* of twenty minutes.

### **What is the purpose of the post-observation conference?**

The Post-Observation Conference should be a joint discussion between the educator and evaluator. This is a time during which the evaluator and educator discuss additional evidence related to what happened prior to and after the observation to highlight the continuum of instruction. In addition, the evaluator should provide explicit feedback on performance, and educator professional learning needs are discussed and identified. Based on observations and evidence, if an educator’s performance is likely to be rated ineffective or developing, the evaluator uses the Educator Assistance Plan Tool to develop and implement an assistance plan pursuant to NRS 391.695 and/or 391.715. Early support is best; therefore, this tool should be used to provide assistance to educators at any time during the evaluation cycle.



### **MID-CYCLE GOALS REVIEW**

#### **Is the Mid-Cycle Goals Review required?**

Yes, a conference should be held mid-year to discuss educator progress towards attaining goals (both the SLG and Professional Practice Goal) and performance on all NEPF Standards and Indicators.

#### **What should be discussed at the Mid-Cycle Goals Review?**

This step is used to prompt reflection, promote dialogue between the educator and evaluator, and plan changes to practice and/or goals as necessary. The Mid-Cycle Goals Review is the time when the educator and evaluator formally meet to discuss students’ progress toward the SLG and the educator’s performance (including progress toward the Professional Practice Goal) to date. At this time, the educator and evaluator may choose to revise the SLG, if appropriate. In addition, if an educator is having difficulty, the Mid-Cycle Goals Review allows the evaluator to provide the educator with the assistance required.



### **SUMMATIVE EVALUATION**

#### **What is the purpose of the summative evaluation?**

Thoughtful summative evaluation identifies trends and patterns in performance and offers feedback for improvement. It also provides the educator with valuable information that strengthens self-reflection and analysis skills.



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### **What is the procedure for observing and evaluating teachers that have achieved highly effective status on their NEPF evaluations for two consecutive years?**

For educators who receive a Highly Effective rating for two consecutive years, the final summative evaluation requirement is waived the following year; however, educators who meet this criterion are expected to participate in the evaluation cycle. Evaluators complete the Summative Evaluation Exemption Verification Tool. During the subsequent school year, educators who met this criterion will once again participate in the evaluation cycle and receive a summative evaluation (three-year cycle: 2 years of earning a Highly Effective summative rating + one year of a summative evaluation waiver).

### **How are the scores calculated?**

The following domain weights will be used for teachers and administrators: 65% for Instructional Practice/Instructional Leadership, 20% for Professional Responsibilities, and 15% for Student Performance (SLG).

In addition, a post-probationary teacher whose performance on that evaluation is designated as effective or highly effective is awarded an additional weight equivalent to the percentage by which the ratio of pupils for which the teacher is responsible exceeds the recommended ratio of pupils per licensed teacher (recommended class sizes are 15:1 for grades K – 3 and 25:1 for grades 4-12). Teachers who teach more than one grade level should be given an adjustment based on the lowest grade level taught. Band, choir, and orchestra teachers; teachers who teach grade levels other than K-12; and teachers who do NOT provide direct, regular instruction to students are not eligible for the class size adjustment. Teachers who teach multiple subject areas should be given the adjustment for any eligible classes. The adjusted score cannot exceed the maximum score that would otherwise be possible for a teacher rated as highly effective. The Standards and Indicators eligible for the adjusted weight are:

- The manner in which the teacher employs the cognitive abilities and skills of all pupils (IPS 2.1),
- The manner in which the teacher provides an opportunity for extended discourse (IPS 3.1),
- The manner in which the teacher structures a classroom environment (IPS 3.4),
- The manner in which the teacher engages with the families of pupils (PRS 4), and
- The perception of pupils of the performance of the teacher (PRS 5).



## **NEPF TRAINING AND RESOURCES**

### **Are trainings available on the NEPF?**

Educational personnel are encouraged to review resources offered by the Regional Professional Development Program (RPDP) centers serving [Southern](#), [Northeastern](#), and [Northwest](#) Nevada. In addition, NEPF Courses are available in Canvas.

For additional questions or comments, visit the Nevada Department of Education's [NEPF](#) webpage.