

The State Council for Educator Effectiveness

Report & Recommendations on the Evaluation of Specialized Service Professionals

All students in Colorado will have effective teachers in their classrooms and effective leaders for their schools. Evaluation provides educators with clear expectations for their performance and with ongoing feedback and support needed to improve performance.

– Council Vision Statement

SUBMITTED MAY, 2013

Thank You

Sincere thanks and recognition go to the numerous practitioners serving on the Specialized Service Professional Work Group who informed these recommendations.

The production of this report was made possible through the generous support of the Colorado Legacy Foundation, the National Governors Association and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Special recognition and thanks go to the staff responsible for facilitating the process of developing these recommendations and for producing the resulting report.These individuals include Angela Baber, Director of Initiatives, Colorado Legacy Foundation; Alyssa Whitehead-Bust, Chief of Innovation and Reform, Denver Public Schools; Jean Williams, Evaluation Design Specialist, Educator Effectiveness, Colorado Department of Education; and Courtney Cabrera, Senior Consultant, Educator Effectiveness, Colorado Department of Education. Recognition also goes to the consultants on this project for their contributions to the development and design of this report; Kelly Hupfeld, School of Public Affairs, University of Colorado Denver, and Lydia Pottoff at Epicenter Creative.

Council Members and Staff

Council Members



Matthew Smith, Chair
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Matthew Smith is vice president of Engineering and Information Technology (IT) for United Launch Alliance (ULA), which is headquartered in Centennial, Colo. In this role, Smith has enterprise-wide responsibility for engineering and IT personnel, processes, tools, products and services as well as technical oversight and launch readiness certification activities. He also leads the knowledge management and technical workforce development activities at ULA. This includes business support of the college intern program, which builds and launches large-scale model rockets each summer with payloads from the Ball Aerospace intern program and local area high school teams.



Katy Anthes, Ph.D., Vice-Chair

Katy Anthes is the Colorado Department of Education representative to the Council. She is the Executive Director of Educator Effectiveness at the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). In this role, Anthes leads CDE's efforts to recruit, prepare, evaluate, support and retain highly effective educators in Colorado. The immediate priority for Anthes is to ensure the successful implementation of the state's educator evaluation and development system, pursuant to Senate Bill 10-191.



Kim Ash

Kim Ash is the Charter representative to the Council. She is the Principal and Director of Academics at Littleton Preparatory Charter School. She earned her teacher license and BA in Elementary Education from Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida. Since her graduation from college in spring of 1997, Ash has dedicated her professional career to education with 15 of those years being part of Littleton Prep. Prior to becoming principal, Ash also served as a classroom teacher and an instructional coach.



Amie Baca-Oehlert

Amie Baca-Oehlert is a teacher representative to the Council. She is a high school counselor, on leave from her teaching duties in the Adams 12 Five Star Schools District. She earned her undergraduate degree from Clemson University and a Master's degree in school counseling from the University of Northern Colorado. Baca-Oehlert started serving a three-year term as CEA vice president in July 2012. She previously served as president of the District Twelve Educators' Association and as the Ethnic Minority At Large member on the CEA Board of Directors. She is passionate about advocating for the rights of public school educators.



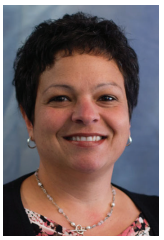
Jo Ann Baxter, Ph.D.

Jo Ann Baxter is a local school board representative to the Council. She taught for 31 years in Lincoln, Nebraska and Moffat County, Colorado and retired in 2003 as a social studies teacher at Moffat County High School. She was elected to the Moffat County Board of Education in 2003 and held the position of board president for two terms. She served on the Legislative/Resolutions Committee for CASB for seven years and received the CASB McGuffey Award in 2009.



William (Bill) Bregar

Bill Bregar is a local school board representative to the Council. In 2003 and again in 2007, Bregar was elected to the Pueblo District 70 Board of Education. In 2004, 2007 and again in 2010, Bregar was elected to the board of directors of the Colorado Association of School Boards. He served as the president of CASB during 2009.



Margaret Crespo

Margaret Crespo EdD, is an administrator representative to the Council. She has been in education for over 20 years as a teacher, counselor, assistant principal and principal and both middle and high school, director of curriculum for a nonprofit, director of secondary and most recently holds the position of executive director of secondary in Thompson School District. She has spent her career in three states New Jersey, Arizona and Colorado.



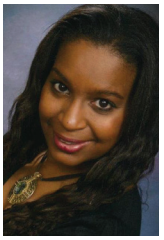
Kerrie Dallman

Kerrie Dallman is a teacher representative to the Council. She is a high school social studies teacher on leave from her teaching responsibilities in Jefferson County School District. She earned her teacher license and a B.A. in Sociology from Metro State College of Denver. She started serving a three-year term as CEA president in July 2012. She previously served as president of the Jefferson County Education Association, representing all licensed, non-administrative employees in JeffCo Public Schools, Colorado's largest school district.



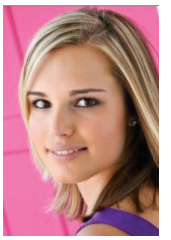
Tracy Dorland

Tracy Dorland is an administrator representative to the council. She is the Deputy Chief Academic Officer and Executive Director of the Teaching and Learning division in the Denver Public Schools. In this role, she leads the development of a comprehensive definition of teacher and principal effectiveness and the creation and implementation of performance management systems that align to those definitions. Prior to this role, she served as an Instructional Superintendent for a network of Elementary Schools in DPS.



Towanna Henderson

Towanna Henderson is the parent representative to the Council. She is a Parent/Family Liason for Denver Public Schools. Henderson has devoted over 14 years promoting academic excellence in urban youth through her work with various non-profit organizations including the Asfaw Family Foundation International, Arches of Hope Bicycle Giveaway, Colorado Association of Black Professional Engineers and Scientists (CABPES), The African-American Leadership Institute, Colorado Black Women for Political Action, LifeBound and the Denver Urban League Young Professionals.



Mandi Marcantonio

Mandi Marcantonio is the student representative to the Council. She has lived in Colorado for her entire life and is a product of Jeffco Public schools. She resides in Fort Collins, Colorado and attends Colorado State University. Her heart lies in teaching, and she has the aspirations of being a secondary English teacher. She loves working with kids, and currently works in Poudre School District with students who have disabilities. It is her life long goal to make a difference in a child's life, in the same way her former teachers changed hers.



Lorrie A. Shepard, Ph.D.

Lorrie A. Shepard is the Colorado Department of Higher Education representative to the Council. She is a University Distinguished Professor and the Dean of the School of Education at the University of Colorado Boulder. Her research focuses on psychometrics and the use and misuse of tests in educational settings. Her technical work has contributed to validity theory, standard setting, and statistical models for detecting test bias. Her research studies on test use have addressed the identification of learning disabilities, readiness screening for kindergarten, grade retention, teacher testing, effects of high-stakes accountability testing, and most recently the use of classroom assessment to support teaching and learning.



Brenda Smith

Brenda Smith is a teacher representative to the Council. She is the President of the Douglas County Federation of Teachers/ Classified Employees and the President of AFT Colorado. Prior to being elected to these positions, she was instrumental in starting the first Educational Research and Dissemination Professional Development and helped create the first Pay for Performance Plan Program in Douglas County School District. She has worked in Douglas County since 1993. She began her career as a fourth grade teacher at Bear Canyon Elementary.



Sandra B. Smyser, Ph.D.

Sandra Smyser is an administrator representative to the Council. She is the superintendent of Eagle County Schools, a district that is known for implementing innovative practices. This is her fifteenth year as superintendent in Colorado & California school districts. She earned a Ph.D. in special education from the University of California, Riverside. Her prior work experience has included working as an Assistant Superintendent, a Principal, and a bilingual special education teacher.



Jim Smyth

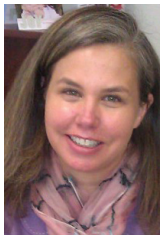
Jim Smyth is a teacher representative to the Council. He is the President of the Mesa Valley Education Association with 20 years of teaching experience. He graduated from Mesa State College in 1993 with a Bachelor's in Math an Elementary teaching license and has since acquired his Master's degree in Earth Science.

Council Staff



Angela Baber

Angela Baber is the primary staff contact for the Council. She is a Director of Initiatives at the Colorado Legacy Foundation. In this role, she works in collaboration with the Colorado Department of Education, the Colorado Department of Higher Education, the Governor's Office and many other state organizations to develop and implement effective education policies and programs and identify and scale best practices across the state.



Alyssa Whitehead-Bust

Alyssa Whitehead-Bust is the Council facilitator. She serves as the Chief of Innovation and Reform for Denver Public Schools. Prior to joining DPS, she spent 15 years in other facets of education reform both at the policy and the practice level. For 10 years, she provided consulting services to school districts, educationally-focused not-for-profits, schools, and state agencies. In her consulting career, she supported the start-up of more than 15 charter schools across the country, and served for 5 years as the founding principal of Denver-based Highline Academy Charter School. A graduate of Wesleyan University, Harvard Graduate School of Education, and the Building Excellent Schools fellowship program, she continues to be involved in higher education through a position as a cohort instructor in the University of Denver's Education Leadership for Successful Schools (ELSS) principal preparation program.



Micaela Michie

Micaela provides program support to the Council. She is a program assistant at the Colorado Legacy Foundation. One of her key roles is supporting the State Council with meeting logistics and taking minutes. Micaela has enjoyed seeing education policy created in Colorado and it is her goal to continue in education policy and research.

Table of Contents

I. Overview 1

II. Background: State Council for Educator Effectiveness 8

III. The Unique Context of Specialized Service Professionals 10

IV. Council Recommendations for Evaluating Specialized Service Professionals 13

General Recommendations 13

Recommendations on the Framework for Specialized Service Professionals Evaluation Systems 15

Recommendations for the Development and Implementation of the State Model Specialized Service Professional Evaluation System 34

Recommendations for State Policy Changes 36

Appendix A – Teacher and SSP Recommendations Cross-Walk 38

Appendix B – Key Members of SSP Work Group 40

Appendix C –Examples of Differing SSP Contexts 44



I. OVERVIEW

According to the language of Colorado's educator evaluation law, as amended by S.B. 10-191, the purposes of evaluation are to:

- Serve as a basis for the improvement of instruction;
- Enhance the implementation of programs of curriculum;
- Serve as a measurement of the professional growth and development of licensed personnel; and
- Provide a basis of making decisions in the areas of hiring, compensation, promotion, assignment, professional development, earning and retaining nonprobationary status, dismissal, and nonrenewal of contract.

C.R.S. sec. 22-9-102.

S.B. 10-191 was promoted by the perception that evaluations in education had become a compliance activity, with pro forma observations and write-ups designed to satisfy minimum statutory requirements. While some individual districts had developed rigorous and meaningful feedback systems for educators, many looked at evaluation as just another activity with another set of required paperwork. In addition, S.B. 10-191 shifted the determination of performance from one based primarily on inputs to one based primarily on results, in the form of student academic growth and achievement.

This report contains the recommendations of the State Council for Educator Effectiveness (the Council) concerning the development and implementation of a new performance evaluation system for licensed education professionals other than teachers and administrators. These professionals, previously included in a category called "other licensed personnel" by S.B. 10-191, are referred to as "specialized service professionals" in this report. Licensed specialized service professionals (SSPs) include personnel who provide support to teachers and students in areas that involve student physical, emotional, and social health and well-being. They are essential members of the education team and contribute to the academic success of students through removing barriers to learning, and ensuring overall student well-being.

SSP Category	Focus
Audiologist	Providing supports and services for children and youth ages 0-21 with hearing loss and other auditory difficulties
Occupational Therapist	Facilitating achievement of student outcomes related to curricular and environmental access, self-help skills, social participation, mobility, manipulation, sensory regulation, and pre-vocational skills
Physical Therapist	Facilitating achievement of student outcomes by addressing limitation in mobility skills, positioning and posture, gross motor skills, self-help skills, and/or foundational recreational skills
School Counselor	Promoting student academic, personal/social and career development success through individual counseling and delivery of school counseling programs

SSP Category	Focus
School Nurse	Facilitating achievement of student outcomes by addressing individual student health issues and promoting good health and well-being in the school community
School Orientation and Mobility Specialist	Assessment and instruction of students with visual impairment, including blindness or deaf-blindness, in safe and efficient travel skills across multiple environments
School Psychologist	Providing psychoeducational services to support the academic, social, emotional, and behavioral growth and development of children and youth ages 0-21
School Social Worker	Assessing, treating, and/or accommodating students with academic, mental health, cognitive, and behavioral needs, by working with students, staff, parents, and the community to remove barriers to learning
Speech and Language Pathologist	Assessing, instructing, and/or accommodating students with speech and/or language impairments

This report is a companion to 2011's State Council for Educator Effectiveness Report and Recommendations, which contained the Council's recommendations on the development and implementation of new evaluation systems for the state's teachers and principals. Like that report, the analysis and conclusions in this report reflect the collective result of hundreds of hours and the efforts of dozens of thoughtful individuals and organizations devoted to the task of making real the statutory frameworks set out in S.B. 10-191. Many of the Council's recommendations with respect to the evaluation of specialized service professionals parallel the recommendations made with respect to teacher evaluation, because the purposes of these evaluation systems are identical: to improve student outcomes through a process of continuous professional learning and improvement. (See Appendix A on page 41 for a crosswalk of SSP and teacher requirements.)

Recommendation Guiding Principals

In its previous report, the Council identified five key values to guide the development of evaluation systems for teachers and principals, and those values apply equally to the development of evaluation systems for specialized service professionals:

HUMAN JUDGMENT One: Data Should Inform Decisions, but Human Judgment Will Always Be an Essential Component of Evaluation

Although this report and its many technical recommendations may give the impression that evaluation is a scientific process that relies solely on objective data, Council members are acutely aware that evaluations ultimately rely on the perception and judgment of individuals. Like other decisions that rely on human judgment, evaluations are subject to error and bias.

Many of the recommendations in this report are directed towards processes and techniques used to improve individual judgment and minimize error and bias. For example, it is absolutely essential that evaluators have adequate training to exercise judgment in a way that is fair. It is also essential that evaluators understand the various ways to measure performance and the benefits and limitations of these methods, so they can make appropriate decisions about their implications. The most technically impressive evaluation system will fail if the human aspects of the system are neglected.

The implementation of the recommended evaluation system is designed to provide as much learning as possible about ways to inform human decision-making in order to make fair, reliable, and credible judgments. In addition, the state and its districts will need to actively use data to identify when evaluations are inappropriate, inaccurate, or inconsistent.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Two: The Implementation and Assessment of the Evaluation System Must Embody Continuous Improvement.

The implementation of this work must have a true continuous learning approach. The new specialized service professional evaluation system will be implemented on a timeline that is one year later than the statewide rollout of the principal and teacher systems, with development and beta-testing beginning in 2013-14 and full statewide implementation in 2014-15. The design of this pilot and rollout period is intended to capture what works and what does not work (and why), and provide multiple opportunities to learn from failure and to increase the opportunity for success. In that spirit, the state will need to vigilantly monitor and appropriately respond to the following:

- What districts and BOCES are doing that is or is not working;
- What other states are doing that is or is not working;
- Changes in assessment practice and tools; and
- Emerging research and best practice findings with respect to SSP evaluation.

As an increasing number of states and districts across the country experiment with improved performance evaluation systems for their educators, more evidence will arise that should continue to inform Colorado's system. The present report makes recommendations for what Council members believe to be the best possible evaluation system using current knowledge, but we must commit to learning from knowledge yet to be discovered.

FEEDBACK

Three: The Purpose of the System is to Provide Meaningful and Credible Feedback That Improves Performance.

The goal of Colorado's performance evaluation system is to provide honest and fair assessments about specialized service professional performance and meaningful opportunities to improve. If evaluators simply label and sort SSPs but fail to provide them with actionable information and opportunities for improvement, the evaluation system will have failed in its purpose. Students will be limited in their ability to perform at their best, and SSPs will not receive the support they need.

Council members hold as fundamental the belief that evaluation is a process, not an event. It is the Council's hope that the collection of information about SSP effectiveness and feedback to SSPs will take place on an ongoing basis, and not be restricted to the dates and processes set for formal evaluations. SSPs should be talking about student outcomes and professional practice continuously, and the performance evaluation system should provide a forum for that continuing conversation.

COLLABORATION

Four: The Development and Implementation of Specialized Service Professional Evaluation Systems Must Continue to Involve All Stakeholders in a Collaborative Process.

The Council's work was conducted in an environment that emphasized the value of the engagement and input of all stakeholders affected by evaluation. Consensus was achieved not through compromise, but by listening intently to each other's key needs and seeking to address them in meaningful ways. This collaborative approach must continue as systems are further developed and implemented at the state and district level, and as they are incorporated into the culture of each school, district, and board of cooperative educational services (BOCES).

Change is always difficult, and communication is vital to ensure all stakeholders understand the revisions to the evaluation process for SSPs. Every stakeholder, from students and families, teachers, specialized service professionals, administrators, school board members, and others, needs to have access to the same information and they all need a clear and shared understanding of what the new system is, how it will be implemented, and how it will impact them. The new evaluation system and its goal of continuous learning also provide new opportunities to engage the parents and guardians of students and the students themselves. Perhaps even more so than with teachers and principals, parents and guardians will need to be engaged and will need to make contributions to the evaluation process for SSPs.

ALIGNED SYSTEM

Five: Evaluations Must Take Place within a Larger System That Is Aligned and Supportive.

The focus of this report is on new evaluation systems, anticipating that improving the ways in which specialized service professionals are evaluated will lead to improvement in their effectiveness and, in turn, to improved outcomes for students. For this result to occur, SSPs must be part of a larger system that is also effective. If the larger system is not aligned to be supportive, success will continue to be limited to the work of outstanding individuals who succeed despite the systems in which they work. If education is to dramatically improve in this state, all components of our education system must serve to increase the number of educators who are able to be successful, rather than providing excuses for failure. This report represents an important step, but it must be viewed as one step in a long process. The state and its districts and BOCES must be willing to commit to the process of ensuring that the education system operates in a way that is coherent and supportive of both educator effectiveness and student outcomes.

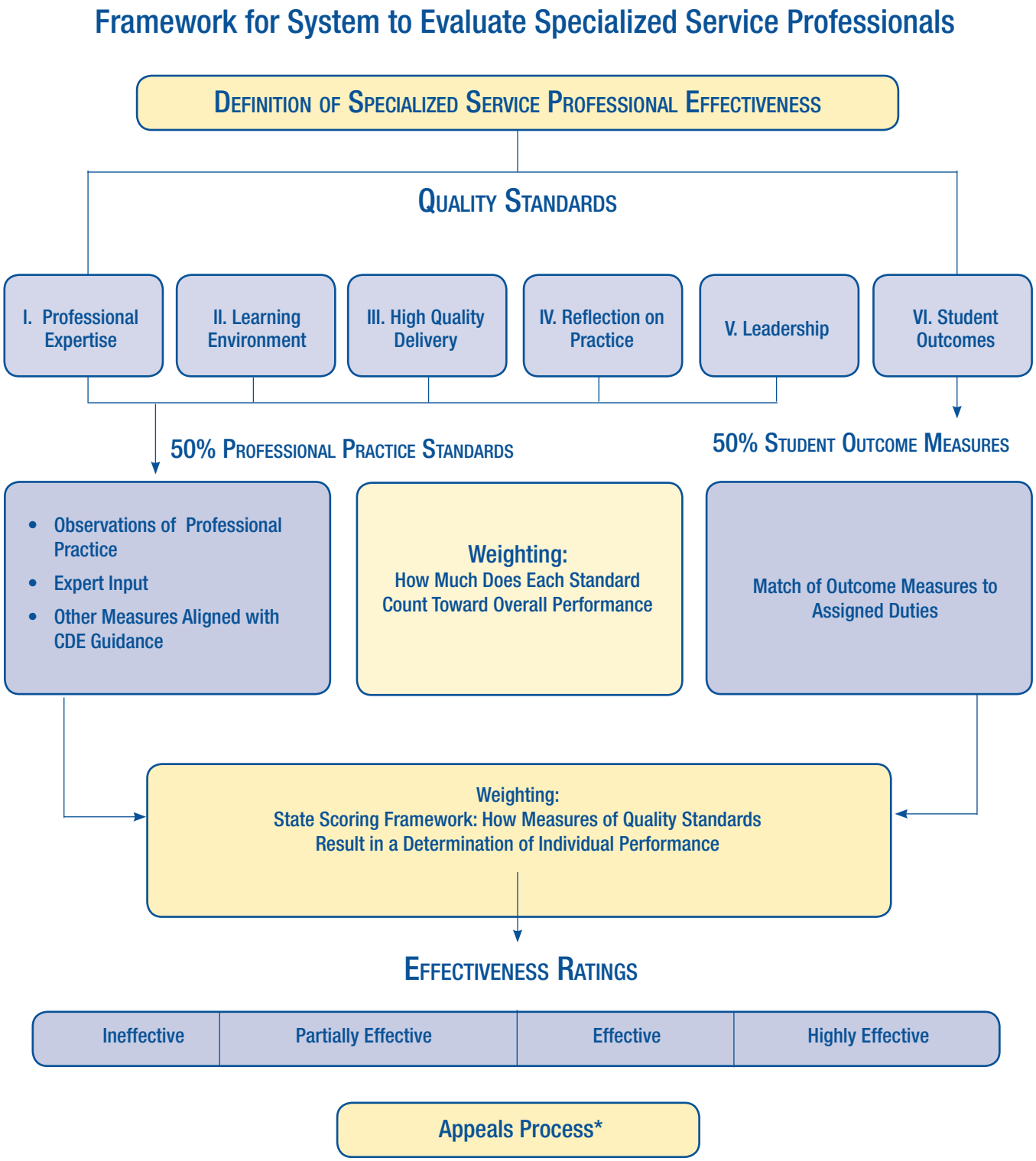
In making its recommendations, the Council applied these values and hopes that they will continue to be applied throughout the implementation of the evaluation system for SSPs .



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Framework for System to Evaluate Specialized Service Professionals

Another aspect that is common to both the previous report and this report is the general framework developed to explain the components of evaluation systems. These components, adjusted for the unique context of SSP work, also apply to the evaluation of specialized service professionals.



*Applies when professionals are not at-will employees.

Recommendations Reflect Critical and Unique Role of SSPs

Because the contributions of specialized service professionals often occur in contexts that are substantially different from those in which teachers and principals work, the expectations and processes applicable to specialized service professionals must reflect these differences in order to truly support their improvement. The Council believes that the recommendations included within this report reflect and honor the critical and unique roles that SSPs play in increasing positive outcomes for diverse student populations, and that these recommendations are grounded in the need to provide meaningful feedback to SSPs to support them in improving their practice.

To ensure that their recommendations were informed by accurate knowledge about the work of the various categories of specialized service professionals, the Council requested that the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) form a work group made up of practitioner representatives from each category. The work group, reflecting input from more than 90 SSPs across the state, provided important guidance on the development of definitions of effectiveness, quality standards and elements for evaluating SSPs, and appropriate measures of student outcomes to be used in evaluating SSP practice. Group members also emphasized the importance of involving evaluators with relevant expertise in the process of SSP evaluation. (See Appendix B on page 43 for a list of work group members and staff.)

The Council's recommendations in this report have also been influenced by lessons learned from the state's piloting and rollout of the state model teacher and principal evaluation systems, which has been underway since 2011. The Council has been apprised of the progress made during that pilot, and has incorporated lessons into the recommendations in this report when relevant. Among these lessons has been a better understanding of the importance of funding to develop the resources and infrastructure needed to build reliable and meaningful evaluation systems; the need for guidance in interpreting standards; the importance of clear and specific rubrics and examples of practice; the value of training for both evaluators and evaluatees; and the importance of communication and collaboration to the success of the entire endeavor.

As a result, the Council is confident that the recommendations in this report will result in evaluation systems for specialized service professionals that are relevant, comprehensive, and useful to SSPs in improving their professional craft. Because these recommendations were developed in this manner and are intended to result in a well-integrated and coordinated evaluation system, the Council requests that the language of the recommendations be considered as a whole. Well-intentioned changes addressing just one element of the system may well have detrimental impacts on the system as a whole.

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Overview of Recommendations

These recommendations, as outlined below and discussed fully in this report, were arrived at by full consensus of the members of the Council.

General Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Designating Specialized Service Professionals

Recommendation 2: Role of the State Model Specialized Service Professional Evaluation System

Evaluation Framework Recommendations

Recommendation 3: State Framework for Specialized Service Professional Performance Evaluations

Framework Component One – The Definition of Effective Practice

Recommendation 4: Statewide Definition of Effective Practice for Specialized Service Professionals

Framework Component Two – Specialized Service Professional Quality Standards

Recommendation 5: Use of the Specialized Service Professional Quality Standards

Recommendation 6: Student Outcomes Standard

Recommendation 7: State Specialized Service Professional Quality Standards

Framework Component Three: Measuring Performance and Weighting Results

Recommendation 8: Specialized Service Professional Involvement in Decision-Making

Recommendation 9: Evaluation Responsibility

Recommendation 10: Data Collection

Recommendation 11: Involvement of Experts in the Evaluation of Specialized Service Professionals

Recommendation 12: Differentiating Evaluation and Support Needs

Recommendation 13: Measures of Performance on Quality Standards I-V

Recommendation 14: Weighting Policies for Standards I-V

Recommendation 15: CDE Support for Selection of Student Outcomes Measures

Recommendation 16: Using Multiple Measures of Student Outcomes

Recommendation 17: Weighting of Student Outcomes Measures

Recommendation 18: Aggregating Multiple Measures for Scoring Purposes

Framework Components Four and Five – Scoring Framework and Specialized Service Professional Performance Standards

Recommendation 19: State Scoring Framework and Performance Standards for Specialized Service Professionals

Framework Component Six – Appeals

Recommendation 20: Appeals Process

Recommendations for Developing, Testing, and Implementing the State Model Specialized Service Professional Evaluation System

Recommendation 21: CDE Development and Maintenance of the State Model Specialized Service Professional Evaluation System

Recommendation 22: Evaluation Resource Bank

Recommendation 23: Timeline for Specialized Service Professional Evaluation System Rollout

Recommendations for State Policy Changes

Recommendation 24: Alignment of State Educator Policies

Recommendation 25: New Terminology for Specialized Service Professionals

Recommendation 26: Privacy of Educator Data

Recommendation 27: State Funding for Professional Expert Participation in Evaluations



II. BACKGROUND

In January 2010, Governor Ritter formed the Governor's State Council for Educator Effectiveness (Council) by Executive Order. The intent of the Council was to provide a broad-based forum to discuss options for improving teacher effectiveness and make recommendations for creating a new educator evaluation system. The 15-member Council met for the first time in March of that year. In May 2010, Colorado passed Senate Bill 10-191 (S.B. 10-191), amending the state's educator evaluation law (C.R.S. sec. 22-9-101). This landmark law codified the role of the Council and transformed the way that teachers, principals, and other licensed personnel (such as school audiologists, school physical therapists and school counselors) would be evaluated.

Since its inception, the Council has explored what effective teaching and leadership means, how effectiveness should be measured, and what strategies are needed to support continuous improvement in a manner that makes sense for Colorado and respects local values. The result of this initial effort was a 2011 report to the State Board of Education that sets forth a comprehensive set of recommendations to ensure that every student has an effective teacher and an effective principal. The recommendations in the report were used by the State Board to develop rules concerning the implementation of S.B. 10-191.

A full description of the Council, its charge, and its norms and procedures are set forth in the 2011 report. The Council includes representation from teachers, principals, SSPs, school board members, district administrators, parents/guardians, students, higher education, the charter school community and the business community. The Council places a high value on reaching out to multiple stakeholders to gather input from many different perspectives, and those perspectives were included in the recommendations contained in this report as well as the previous report.

Members of the State Council for Educator Effectiveness

- Matt Smith, Chair, Vice-President for Engineering and IT, United Launch Alliance
- Katy Anthes, Vice-Chair, Executive Director, Educator Effectiveness, Colorado Department of Education
- Kim Ash, Principal, Littleton Preparatory Charter School
- Amie Baca-Oehlert, School Counselor, Adams 12, and Vice-President, Colorado Education Association
- Jo Ann Baxter, former School Board President, Moffat County School District RE-1
- William Bregar, former School Board Member, Pueblo County District 70
- Margaret Crespo, Executive Director of Secondary Schools, Thompson School District

CRS 22-9-105.5(2)(c).

The purpose of the council shall be the same as that of the governor's council for educator effectiveness established by executive order, and shall be to consider options and make recommendations to the state board and the general assembly that seek to ensure that all licensed personnel are:

(I) Evaluated using multiple fair, transparent, timely, rigorous, and valid methods, at least fifty percent of which evaluation is determined by the academic growth of their students;

(II) Afforded a meaningful opportunity to improve their effectiveness; and

(III) Provided the means to share effective practices with other educators throughout the state.

- Kerrie Dallman, Teacher, Jeffco Public Schools, and President, Colorado Education Association
- Tracy Dorland, Deputy Chief Academic Officer, Teaching and Learning, Denver Public Schools
- Towanna Henderson, Parent, Denver Public Schools
- Mandi Marcantonio, Student, Colorado State University
- Lorrie Shepard, Dean, School of Education, University of Colorado Boulder
- Brenda Smith, President, Douglas County Federation of Teachers
- Sandra Smyser, Superintendent, Eagle County Schools
- James Smyth, President, Mesa Valley Education Association

S.B. 10-191 asks the Council to "provide the state board with recommendations that will ensure development of a set of guidelines for establishing performance standards for each category of licensed personnel to be evaluated … [and outlining] criteria to be applied in assigning educators to appropriate performance standards, which shall include measures of student academic longitudinal growth." CRS 22-9-105.5(3)(c). The Council is also to make recommendations that address the implementation of a high-quality educator evaluation system, including training needs, the development of evaluation rubrics and tools, and an evaluation process that takes place at least annually. CRS 22-9-105.5(3)(e).

The Council was charged via Senate Bill 10-191 to make recommendations regarding the evaluation of teachers, principals and other licensed personnel.

The Council recommendations in this report apply to persons who deliver specialized instructional, program, and/or student support services, are required by the state to be licensed, and who are not teachers or administrators. Colorado's Educator Licensing Act requires the following education professionals to be licensed: school audiologists, school counselors, school nurses, school occupational therapists, school orientation and mobility specialists, school physical therapists, school psychologists, school social workers and speech-language pathologists. This report refers to these individuals collectively as specialized service professionals (SSP), a term selected by the practitioners participating in the SSP work group.

CRS 22-9-102.
Legislative declaration.

…(1) The General Assembly hereby declares that: (a) A system of performance evaluation to evaluate the effectiveness of licensed personnel is crucial to improving the quality of education in this state and declares that such a system shall be applicable to all licensed personnel in the school districts and boards of cooperative services throughout the state…

CRS 22-9-105.5. State council for educator effectiveness – legislative declaration - membership - duties - recommendations - rules.

…(3) The council shall have the following duties:

…(c) On or before March 1, 2011, to provide the state board with recommendations that will ensure development of a set of guidelines for establishing performance standards for each category of licensed personnel to be evaluated pursuant to this article. The guidelines shall outline criteria to be applied in assigning educators to appropriate performance standards, which shall include measures of student longitudinal academic growth.

[1] The Council plans to provide guidance in the future with respect to other licensed personnel not addressed in this report.



III. UNIQUE CONTEXT

The Unique Context of Licensed Specialized Service Professionals

The Council determined that they needed to focus on making recommendations for principals and teachers first to ensure that they were able to meet the legislative deadline of March 1, 2011. In consultation with Bill sponsors and State Board members, the Council submitted a revised timeline for submitting recommendations regarding other licensed personnel. The Council respectfully submits these recommendations for the evaluation of SSPs in accordance with the revised timeline.

In making the recommendations contained in this report, the Council followed the same general priorities that guided it in making recommendations for teacher and principal evaluations, adapted for the context of specialized service professionals. A crosswalk of the recommendations contained in the teacher and principal evaluation systems report with the recommendations contained in this report can be found in Appendix A.

In developing its recommendations for the state's new teacher and principal evaluation system, the Council solicited input from teachers and principals, and benefited from the experience of teachers and principals who were Council members. To develop recommendations for specialized service professionals, the Council decided to involve SSPs from the outset. At the request of the Council, CDE convened a working group consisting of practitioners from all of the nine SSP licensure categories, with recommendations solicited from the statewide Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) Association, the Colorado Education Association, the Colorado Association of School Boards, the Colorado Association of School Executives, and the Colorado Department of Higher Education. More than 90 individuals across the state served on the SSP Work Group and played an integral role in the development and refining of the SSP recommendations. The core members of the SSP Work Group and their affiliations are listed in Appendix B.

In an iterative process, the SSP Work Group met numerous times to develop recommendations for the Council. In November 2012 the Work Group presented recommendations to the Council and, based on Council feedback, revised and resubmitted the report. After additional feedback from the Council, the Work Group submitted more streamlined recommendations that more accurately apply to SSPs. These recommendations were approved at the Council's meeting on February 22, 2013.

In particular, the SSP Work Group made recommendations to the Council in the following areas:

- Specialized service professionals terminology;
- Definition of effective specialized service professional practice;
- A unified set of Quality Standards and Elements for specialized service professionals;
- Recommendations on inclusion of student outcome measures in specialized service professional evaluations; and
- Feedback on the importance of expert input on specialized service professional evaluations.

Further, to assist the Council in understanding important elements of each profession, the SSP Work Group provided the following contextual information about each category. In general, many SSPs lack access to a community of practice that could provide opportunities for professional learning and growth. In each SSP category, depending on assigned job duties, an SSP may be based at a school, may work across schools in a single district, or may work across districts.

Audiologists. Currently, 61 licensed audiologists practice in Colorado. Audiologists almost always serve students in multiple schools, and often across districts, and work as members of multiple teams. Audiologists serve not only students in schools, but also children prior to entering school and adults up to age 21. A single audiologist may serve a child from diagnosis through graduation. Audiology services may vary between districts and settings, with some audiologists providing primarily diagnostic services (such as through the state's Child Find early identification diagnostic service), and others providing comprehensive direct services to students with hearing loss and other auditory difficulties.

Occupational therapists. Currently, 383 licensed occupational therapists practice in Colorado. Occupational therapists almost always serve students in multiple settings, and often across districts. They are members of many multi-disciplinary teams supporting students with special needs. Occupational therapists may serve children and youths from ages 0-21. An occupational therapist may work in Child Find as well as in preschools, elementary, middle, and high schools.

Physical therapists. Currently, 79 licensed physical therapists practice in Colorado. Physical therapists are responsible for a diverse caseload of children and youth aged 0-21. Physical therapists typically serve students in multiple schools and work as collaborative members of teams within each school setting. Some physical therapists work in several school districts or for BOCES. Physical therapists may work for Child Find, or on specialized district-wide teams that provide expertise on specific students when requested.

School counselors. Currently, 1617 licensed school counselors practice in Colorado. School counselors are employed in elementary, middle/junior high, and high schools, and in district supervisory counselor education and post-secondary settings. Some school counselors work as the only counselor or as part of a team at a single school, but many serve multiple schools and travel within or across districts. School counselors use many strategies to promote equity and access to rigorous educational experiences for all students.

School nurses. Currently, 357 licensed school nurses practice in Colorado. Several different models of school health service delivery exist in the state. School nurses may work full-time in one building, may be responsible for more than one building and travel from school to school, or may work for BOCES. They are frequently the only health professional in their buildings and often work in isolation. Nurses may be employed by the district, or contracted through local county health agencies, community agencies, or hospitals. School nurse to student ratios vary from district to district, with some nurses in Colorado responsible for more than 5,000 students.

School orientation and mobility specialists. Currently, 42 licensed school orientation and mobility specialists practice in Colorado. Most are itinerant, with the exception of personnel working at the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind. School orientation and mobility specialists work exclusively with students with visual impairment, including blindness or deaf-blindness. The primary focus of school orientation and mobility specialists is to instruct students on the basic foundations of safe and efficient travel within multiple environments.

School psychologists. Currently, 738 licensed school psychologists practice in Colorado. Some school psychologists are based at a single school, but many are district-wide and travel from school to school. Some school psychologists work only with students identified for special education; some work with students in the general education population; and some work with both populations. The assigned duties of school psychologists may represent a particular focus such as assessment and special education eligibility, mental health service provision, service coordination, behavior intervention, and the like.

School social workers. Currently, 461 licensed school social workers practice in Colorado. Some social workers are based at a single school, but many are district-wide and travel from school to school. Some social workers work only with students identified for special education; some work with students in the general education population; and some work with both populations. The assigned duties of social workers may represent a particular focus, reflected in titles such as home-school liaison, attendance specialist, graduation coach, mental health professional, interventionist, and the like. All have a focus on assessment, prevention, and interventions for students, families, and systems in need. Many also work in the area of crisis management and intervention.

School speech-language pathologists. Currently, 1065 licensed school speech-language pathologists practice in Colorado. School speech-language pathologists work with students in all educational settings from preschool to transitions services for students 18-21. Some are assigned to a single school but many provide services to two or more schools. Speech-language pathologists provide instructional support and can be the only service provider for a student receiving special education services. Speech-language pathologists cover a vast number of areas within the speech-language domain such as students who stutter, students who have significant difficulty expressing themselves regarding curricular and instructional concepts, and students who have significant difficulty pronouncing words. Speech-language pathologists also support students with other disabilities in which communication is considered a major component such as Autism Spectrum Disorders, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and students who require the use of assistive technology. All speech-language pathologists direct services based on data collected from formal and informal assessment, observations and family and teacher input through a multi-disciplinary team.

Another issue for SSPs who work in multiple schools or districts, or who are contracted from other organizations, is the identity and engagement of their immediate supervisors. The vast majority of classroom teachers report to a single school principal, and so the line of authority for teacher evaluation is clear. SSPs may work in multiple sites for multiple principals within a single district, or in multiple districts through a BOCES or other organizations. The line of supervisory authority is not always so readily apparent, and the work of the SSP is often much more dispersed than that of a classroom teacher.

For many members of the SSP Work Group, authentic evaluative feedback has been lacking throughout the course of their careers. This must change. Specialized service professionals, like teachers and principals, work in extremely challenging environments and deserve to participate in an evaluation system that recognizes their contributions and provides opportunities for meaningful professional reflection and growth. If we are serious about student success, we must support these professionals who are so important to student well-being and access to learning.

The Council is grateful for the input of the members of the SSP Work Group, and the Council's recommendations rely heavily on the insights provided by the field.



IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Council Recommendations for Evaluating Specialized Service Professionals

Like teacher and principal evaluation recommendations made by the Council in 2011, the new recommendations for evaluating specialized service professionals are intended to provide support, encouragement, and motivation for professionals as they engage in the challenging work of enabling and empowering students to learn and in removing barriers to learning. These recommendations are the building blocks for the Colorado Framework for Specialized Service Professional Evaluation Systems.

The Council developed these recommendations to provide guidance to the State Board of Education in promulgating rules for evaluating specialized service professionals. Council recommendations will be used by CDE to develop SSP requirements within the State Model Educator Evaluation System and used by districts in rolling out new evaluation systems. It is the Council's hope and expectation that the language of continuous professional improvement embedded in the new SSP evaluation system will become an expectation at every site where SSPs work.

General Recommendations

Terminology

The Council's first recommendation addresses the request of the SSP Work Group that practitioners in these professions are referred to jointly as "specialized service professionals." This term is more descriptive and precise than the term "other licensed personnel" used by S.B. 10-191, as "other licensed personnel" can encompass a wide array of individuals such as licensed district staff, superintendents and teachers on special assignment (TOSAs). To make clear that these recommendations are specific to professionals providing specialized support services to students, and to honor the contributions these individuals make to improve the educational experiences of children across Colorado, the Council agrees with the Work Group that a specific term is needed to reference the nine licensure categories in the Colorado Educator Licensing Act representing the licensed personnel who provide specialized support services to students.

Recommendation 1: Specialized Service Professionals

> **The Council recommends that licensed professionals providing support and related services in schools be referred to as "specialized service professionals."**

It should be noted that this term differs slightly from the term used in the Educator Licensing Act, which is "special services providers." This choice was made intentionally.

Role of the State Model Educator Evaluation System

It is also important to reiterate the balance sought in all licensed personnel evaluations in Colorado. The state's constitutional responsibility for oversight of education must be balanced with the constitutional right of local school districts to control instruction in their schools. The recommended evaluation system for specialized service professionals, like the teacher and principal evaluation systems addressed in the prior report, strikes this balance by setting high-level standards and minimum requirements, while specifically allowing districts to determine whether to adopt the state's model evaluation system or to develop their own within the parameters set by the state.

Recommendation 2: The Role of the State Model Licensed Specialized Service Professional Evaluation System.

A. CDE, in consultation with the State Council, shall develop a model specialized service professional evaluation system that follows the framework and meets the criteria identified by the Council in its recommendations, and that fits within the Colorado Model Educator Evaluation System.

B. The creation of the state model system shall support districts and BOCES by providing an exemplar system, rather than requiring each district and BOCES to develop a system independently. Districts and BOCES may adopt the state model system or develop their own local system. Districts and BOCES choosing to develop their own system shall comply with the mandatory elements and technical requirements outlined in the Council's recommendations. The Council recommends that waivers not be granted for the mandatory elements.

C. CDE shall develop rubrics for each category of SSP that accurately reflect distinct professional practices across SSP professions.

To help the reader navigate through the complexities of the evaluation process, the Council has created examples of specialized service professionals in different contexts. These examples are illustrative only, and do not cover the wide range of contexts experienced by SSPs. These examples are included in Appendix C on page 44 of this report.

Recommendations on the State Framework for Specialized Service Professional Evaluation Systems

All of the Council's recommendations for specialized service professional evaluation stem from the framework depicted below reflecting the required components for an SSP evaluation system and the sequential nature of the process. Each of these components will be discussed in turn, together with the Council's recommendations on these components.

In order to foster an aligned system, the Council believes that the framework for evaluating specialized service professionals should closely track the evaluation frameworks for teachers and principals – SSP contributions to student outcomes are critical to the effectiveness of school principals and classroom teachers. However, the nature of the work of specialized service professionals differs sufficiently from that of teachers – and from each other - so that modifications to the teacher evaluation frameworks are appropriate in order to evaluate SSPs in a fair, reliable, and credible manner. In general, this framework is aligned with the Colorado Framework for Evaluating Teachers, with three notable differences.

First, in the case of specialized service professionals, the Council recommends focusing on student outcomes rather than student academic growth. Second, while the Council encourages peer participation in teacher and principal evaluations, it recommends that professional expert participation be a required part of the SSP evaluation process. SSP work can be extremely specialized, and the observations and perceptions of other professionals who understand how to identify high-quality performance will be invaluable. This participation by professional experts is not intended to take the place of evaluation by the SSP's supervisors, but rather to supplement and inform it.

Finally, the SSP Framework contains a statewide mandate for a uniform appeals process, but only for those SSPs who are not at-will employees and whose job status may be affected by evaluation ratings. The teacher framework contains a mandatory appeals process because teacher performance ratings carry with them consequences for nonprobationary status. Unlike teachers, SSPs may be at-will employees.

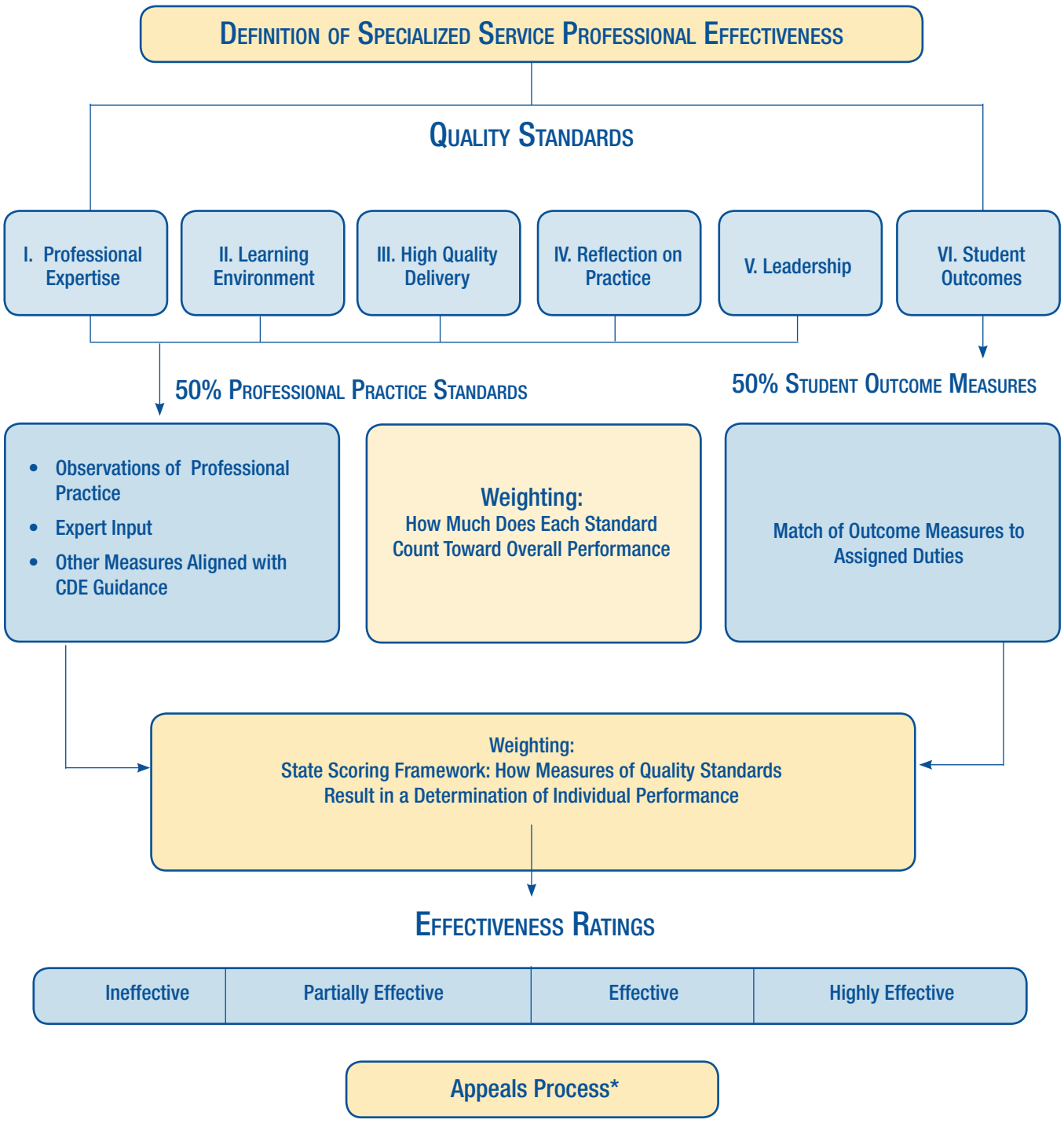
All of these recommendations are discussed in greater detail later in this section.

State Framework

Recommendation 3: State Framework for Specialized Service Professional Evaluation Systems.

All districts and BOCES in the state shall evaluate the performance of specialized service professionals using an evaluation system that includes the components of the State Framework for Specialized Service Professional Evaluation Systems, as reflected in the chart below.

Framework for System to Evaluate Specialized Service Professionals



*Applies when professionals are not at-will employees.

Summary Overview of Mandatory and Discretionary Framework Elements

To assure quality and comparability and to meet the requirements of S.B. 10-191, new specialized service professional evaluation systems in Colorado will be anchored by a common definition of effective practice and common performance standards. Districts and BOCES may either use the state's Quality Standards, or may develop their own as long as they meet or exceed the state standards. In addition, specialized service professional evaluation systems must contain the components set forth in the Framework and must use student outcomes to determine at least 50 percent of an SSP's evaluation. Districts and BOCES are free to develop their own approaches in selecting appropriate student outcome measures and determining relative weights to be assigned in performance on professional practice standards, within general parameters and guidelines set out by the Council and CDE.

The chart below summarizes the mandatory and discretionary components of the Specialized Service Professional Evaluation Framework. The following sections provide more details about each component and set forth the Council's recommendations in each area. All references to district and BOCES decisions assume that these decisions will be made in collaboration with SSPs, including representatives of the local association or federation if one exists.

Component	Common Statewide	Local Flexibility
Overall framework for evaluation	All districts and BOCES shall include the components of the State Framework for SSP in their evaluation systems.	None.
Definition of SSP effectiveness	All districts and BOCES shall use the statewide definition of SSP effectiveness.	None.
SSP Quality Standards	Districts and BOCES may use the six Colorado SSP Quality Standards and associated Elements to evaluate SSP performance.	Districts and BOCES may develop SSP quality standards and elements that meet or exceed state quality standards as determined via CDE's assurance process.
Measuring professional practice	All districts and BOCES shall measure professional practice using Standards I-V or their local equivalents.Data collection shall include multiple measures on multiple occasions, including observations, and shall include professional expert participation as set out in these recommendations.	Districts and BOCES may develop/select additional measures to assess professional practice, provided they meet state guidelines.
Measuring student outcomes	All districts and BOCES shall measure student outcomes using Standard VI or its local equivalent.	Districts and BOCES may develop/select additional measures of student outcomes, provided they meet state guidelines.
	Student outcomes shall be measured using multiple measures.	Districts and BOCES may use measures of student academic growth where appropriate.

Component	Common Statewide	Local Flexibility
Weighting	Performance on Standard VI (student outcomes) shall account for at least 50% of an SSP's rating. Each Standard I-V shall have a measurable influence on the overall professional practice score.	Districts and BOCES may choose how to allocate weights on Standards I-V, provided each standard has a measurable influence on the overall total professional practice score. Districts and BOCES may choose how to allocate weights on measures of Standard VI. Districts and BOCES may choose how to analyze data and aggregate multiple measures.
Scoring Framework	All districts and BOCES shall use the state scoring framework.	None.
Performance standards	All districts and BOCES shall use statewide performance standards in rating SSPs.	None.
Appeals	All districts and BOCES shall have an appeals process for SSPs who are not at-will employees.	

Framework Component One – The Definition of Effective Practice

Council members agree that the services provided by specialized service professionals are complex activities requiring multiple skills and aptitudes. A significant and indispensable part of the definition of effective SSP practice is the ability to improve student outcomes. However, our education system also expects that education professionals will accomplish broader goals as well, including preparing students for future civic responsibilities, engaging families, and supporting the profession. The recommended definition seeks to encompass this complexity while maintaining a clear focus on student outcomes.

Recommendation 4: Statewide Definition of Effective Practice for Specialized Service Professionals

All districts shall use the following definition of effective practice for specialized service professionals:

Specialized Service Professional Effectiveness Definition: Effective specialized service professionals are vital members of the education team. They are properly credentialed and have the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure that diverse student populations have equitable access to academic instruction and participation in school-related activities. Effective specialized service professionals develop and/or implement evidence-based services or specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of their students. They support growth and development to close achievement gaps and prepare students for postsecondary and workforce success. They have a deep understanding of the interconnectedness of the home, school and community and collaborate with all members of the education team to strengthen those connections. Through reflection, advocacy, and leadership, they enhance the outcomes and development of their students.

Component Two – Specialized Service Professional Quality Standards

Quality standards and related elements further define and operationalize professional effectiveness, and provide the basis for measuring performance. To the extent possible, the Council aligned the Specialized Service Professional Quality Standards and elements with Colorado's Quality Teaching Standards, to ensure that the overall evaluation system is consistent and straightforward. Like the teacher and principal quality standards, the recommended SSP Quality Standards represent guidance to districts and BOCES, who may either adopt the state's quality standards or develop standards that meet or exceed the state's standards.

Recommendation 5: Use of the Specialized Service Professional Quality Standards

A. The Specialized Service Professional Quality Standards outline the knowledge and skills required for effective specialized service professional practice and will be used to evaluate SSPs in the state of Colorado. All districts and BOCES shall base their evaluations of specialized service professionals on the full set of Specialized Service Professional Quality Standards (Quality Standards) and associated detailed descriptions of knowledge and skills (also known as "Elements"). Districts and BOCES shall either adopt the state Quality Standards and Elements or shall adopt a locally-developed set of quality standards and elements that meet or exceed the state standards and elements, as determined through the quality assurance process established by CDE.

B. The narrative descriptions of the Elements within the Quality Standards are intended to assist districts and BOCES in understanding the performance outcomes of the Element and to guide the selection and use by districts and BOCES of appropriate tools to measure a specialized service professional's performance against the Quality Standards.

C. While there is a single set of Quality Standards which applies to all nine licensure categories of SSPs, districts and BOCES shall ensure that the tools used to evaluate these professionals adequately differentiate the professional practices for which each category of SSP, either through use of the CDE-developed licensure-specific rubrics or via locally developed evaluation tools.

The different context in which special services professionals operate does require some differentiation in quality standards in order to ensure that the evaluations are meaningful for SSPs. This is true for some of the professional practice standards (I-V). In particular, while SSP Quality Standards II, IV, and V are virtually identical to Quality Teaching Standards II, IV and V, more variation is required for Quality Standards I and III to better reflect the work that SSPs do.

Standard VI for specialized service professionals required a major change from Quality Teaching Standard VI. For teachers, Quality Teaching Standard VI focuses on student academic growth, which must comprise 50 percent or more of a teacher's overall rating. This is appropriate because the primary work of teachers is focused on student academic learning. However, after much discussion and input from SSPs around the state, as well as consultation with one of the original sponsors of S.B. 10-191, the Council has decided to recommend that SSP Quality Standard VI focus broadly on student outcomes, rather than the narrower category of student academic growth. *This does not mean that academic growth could not still be included if there were meaningful academic measures that SSPs felt relevant.*

The work of specialized service professionals is typically focused on non-academic factors that affect overall student well-being, and may only indirectly impact student academic learning. For example, a school nurse may administer medication to a student with ADHD that is intended to help the student take full advantage of the instruction in the classroom. The nurse's professional actions directly impact the student's well-being, which in turn will hopefully positively affect the student's ability to learn in the classroom. However, the nurse is one step removed from what actually happens in the classroom, so it makes more sense to focus on the student outcomes that can be more tightly linked to the nurse's action. By broadening Standard VI to include a wide range of student outcomes relevant to SSP performance, the Council intends to keep the focus on students while accurately capturing the multiple ways in which SSPs contribute to student well-being and academic success. Specific examples of student outcomes that may be applicable to the work of SSPs are discussed later in this report.

Recommendation 6: Student Outcomes Standard

Because the work of specialized service professionals is focused on removing barriers to student achievement through the delivery of services supporting student health, well-being, and access to learning, the State Specialized Service Professional Quality Standards should reflect the professional's contributions to the broader category of student outcomes rather than the more limited category of student academic growth.

With these important modifications, the Council believes that it has found the proper balance between seeking consistency with the evaluation framework applicable to other educators and recognizing the unique contributions of specialized service professionals. The following table summarizes the similarities and differences between the two sets of quality standards.

Teacher and SSP Quality Standard Comparison

	Teaching Quality Standard	SSP Quality Standard
Standard I	Teachers demonstrate knowledge of the content they teach.	Specialized service professionals demonstrate mastery of and expertise in the domain for which they are responsible.
Standard II	Teachers establish a respectful environment for a diverse population of students.	Specialized service professionals support and/or establish safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environments for a diverse population of students.
Standard III	Teachers facilitate learning for their students.	Specialized service professionals plan, deliver, and/or monitor services and/or specially designed instruction and/or create environments that facilitate learning for their students.
Standard IV	Teachers reflect on their practice.	Specialized service professionals reflect on their practice.
Standard V	Teachers demonstrate leadership.	Specialized service professionals demonstrate collaboration, advocacy, and leadership.
Standard VI	Teachers take responsibility for student growth.	Specialized service professionals take responsibility for student outcomes.

Recommendation 7: State Specialized Service Professional Quality Standards

The Council recommends that the state adopt the following Quality Standards and related elements for specialized service professionals.

Quality Standard I: Specialized service professionals demonstrate mastery of and expertise in the domain for which they are responsible.

Element a: Specialized service professionals demonstrate knowledge of current developmental science, the ways in which learning takes place, and the appropriate levels of intellectual, social, and emotional development of their students.

Element b: Specialized service professionals demonstrate knowledge of effective services and/or specially designed instruction that reduce barriers to and support learning in literacy, math, and other content areas.

Element c: Specialized service professionals integrate evidence-based practices and research findings into their services and/or specially designed instruction.

Element d: Specialized service professionals demonstrate knowledge of the interconnectedness of home, school, and community influences on student achievement.

Element e: Specialized service professionals demonstrate knowledge of and expertise in their professions.

Quality Standard II: Specialized service professionals support and/or establish safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environments for a diverse population of students.

Element a: Specialized service professionals foster safe and accessible learning environments in which each student has a positive, nurturing relationship with caring adults and peers.

Element b: Specialized service professionals demonstrate respect for diversity within the home, school, and local and global communities.

Element c: Specialized service professionals engage students as unique individuals with diverse backgrounds, interests, strengths, and needs.

Element d: Specialized service professionals engage in proactive, clear, and constructive communication and work collaboratively with students, families, and other significant adults and/or professionals.

Element e: Specialized service professionals select, create and/or support accessible learning environments characterized by acceptable student behavior, efficient use of time, and appropriate behavioral strategies.

Quality Standard III: Specialized service professionals plan, deliver, and/or monitor services and/or specially designed instruction and/or create environments that facilitate learning for their students.

Element a: Specialized service professionals provide services and/or specially designed instruction aligned with state and federal laws, regulations and procedures, academic standards, their districts' organized plans of instruction and the individual needs of their students.

Element b: Specialized service professionals utilize multiple sources of data, which include valid informal and/or formal assessments, to inform services and/or specially designed instruction.

Element c: Specialized service professionals plan and consistently deliver services and/or specially designed instruction that integrate multiple sources of data to inform practices related to student needs, learning, and progress toward achieving academic standards and individualized student goals.

Element d: Specialized service professionals support and integrate appropriate available technology in their services and/or specially designed instruction to maximize student outcomes.

Element e: Specialized service professionals establish and communicate high expectations for their students that support the development of critical-thinking, self-advocacy, leadership and problem solving skills.

Element f: Specialized service professionals communicate effectively with students.

Element g: Specialized service professionals develop and/or implement services and/or specially designed instruction unique to their professions.

Quality Standard IV: Specialized service professionals reflect on their practice.

Element a: Specialized service professionals demonstrate that they analyze student learning, development, and growth and apply what they learn to improve their practice.

Element b: Specialized service professionals link professional growth to their professional goals.

Element c: Specialized service professionals respond to complex, dynamic environments.

Quality Standard V: Specialized service professionals demonstrate collaboration, advocacy and leadership.

Element a: Specialized service professionals collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to meet the needs of students.

Element b: Specialized service professionals advocate for students, families and schools.

Element c: Specialized service professionals demonstrate leadership in their educational setting(s).

Element d: Specialized service professionals contribute knowledge and skills to educational practices and their profession.

Element e: Specialized service professionals demonstrate high ethical standards.

Quality Standard VI: Specialized service professionals take responsibility for student outcomes.

Element a: Specialized service professionals generate high levels of student outcomes consistent with the requirements of their respective professions.

Element b: Specialized service professionals demonstrate their ability to utilize multiple sources of evidence to evaluate their practice, and make adjustments where needed to continually improve student outcomes.

Component Three – Measuring Performance and Weighting Results

The next component of the Framework for Specialized Service Professional Evaluation Systems involves measuring an SSP's performance against the Quality Standards and weighting the data to reflect required and discretionary priorities. S.B. 10-191 sets forth several requirements in this area:

- Districts must adopt measures of effectiveness and processes that ensure systematic data collection;
- Multiple measures must be used to evaluate SSP performance; and
- Data must be gathered with sufficient frequency to provide a basis for the evaluation.

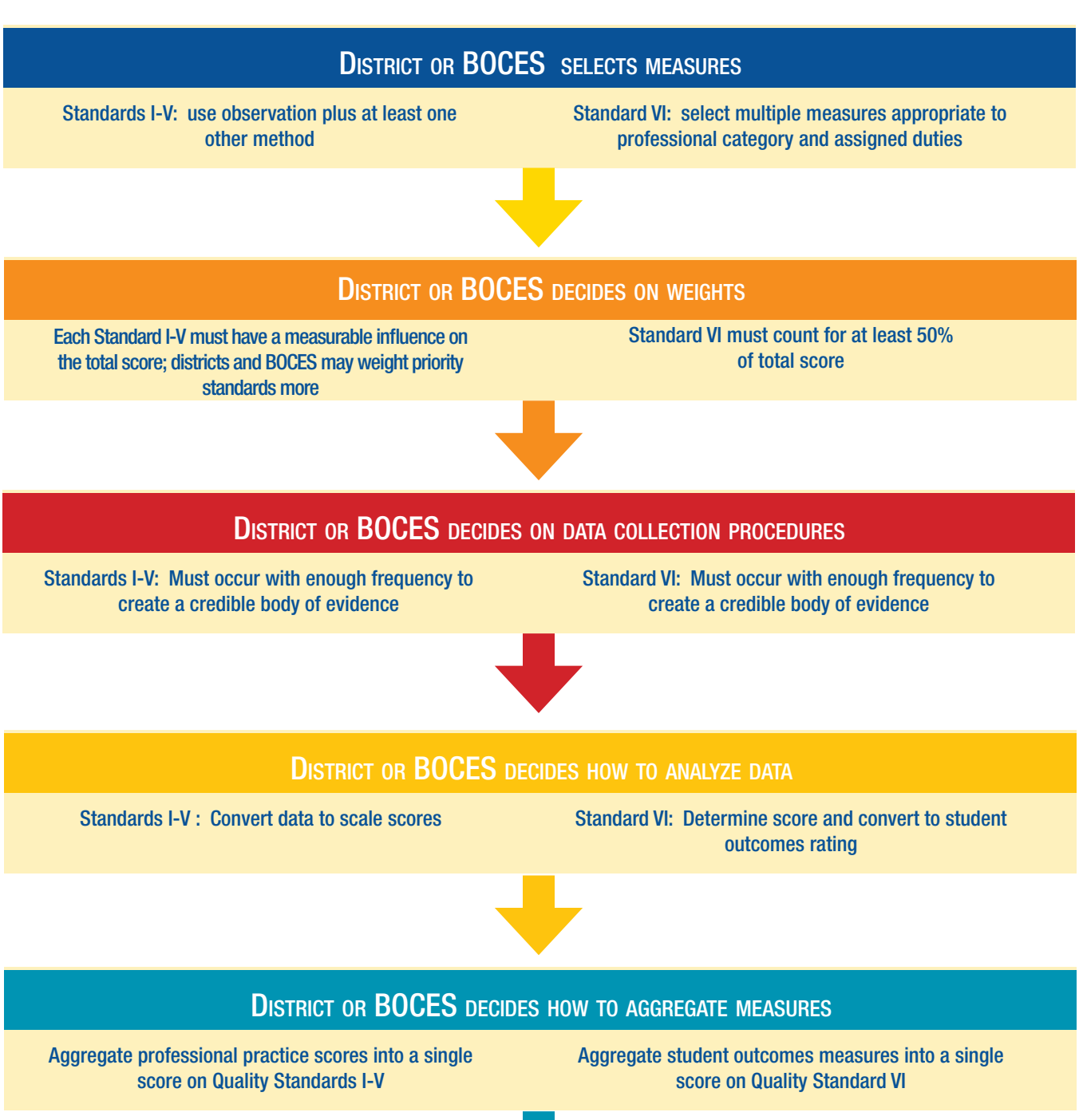
For teachers, S.B. 10-191 requires that at least 50 percent of a teacher's evaluation must be based on measures of student academic growth. Consistent with S.B. 10-191, the Council recommends that specialized service professionals are held responsible for measures of student outcomes, which may include student academic growth if appropriate. As a result, at least 50 percent of an SSP's evaluation shall be based on measures of student outcomes, in accordance with S.B. 10-191.

Council members believe strongly that the development of an ongoing professional learning process in schools and districts will be an important outcome for new evaluation systems. In the past, evaluation has often been viewed as a single event – and in the case of SSPs, an event that for many has yet to provide meaningful and actionable feedback. It is the Council's hope that districts, BOCES, and schools will use evaluation systems as vehicles for data collection and feedback throughout the year, even though actual ratings may take place only once per year. This process will work best if educators, including SSPs, are involved in the decision-making about appropriate measures and are kept clearly informed about measures and the measurement process.



Council members believe strongly that the development of an ongoing professional learning process in schools and districts will be an important outcome for new evaluation systems. In the past, evaluation has often been viewed as a single event – and in the case of SSPs, an event that for many has yet to provide meaningful and actionable feedback.

The following chart shows the aspects of the measurement and weighting component of the Specialized Service Professional Evaluation Framework that are within the discretion of districts and BOCES:



Involving Specialized Service Professionals in Decision-Making

As discussed above, the success of the system in promoting ongoing professional learning will depend in large part on the support of SSPs throughout the process. In addition, the highly individualized nature of SSP work, even within the categories of SSPs, requires the participation of professionals to ensure that the measures selected for each individual are relevant and appropriate.

Recommendation 8: Specialized Service Professional Involvement in Decision-Making

A. Districts and BOCES, in collaboration with specialized service professionals, including representatives of the local association or federation if one exists, shall develop or adopt measures of performance that measure a specialized service professional's performance against the Quality Standards. These measures shall be developed or adopted for every category of specialized service professional employed by the district or BOCES, and shall reflect varying assignments and job duties. Districts may measure performance of the Quality Standards using tools that are locally selected or developed.

B. To ensure that specialized service professionals have input into evaluation decisions, districts and BOCES are strongly encouraged to include a specialized service professional chosen from one of the nine licensure categories as a member of the district's or BOCES' advisory personnel performance evaluation council (1338 committee) or the district accountability council (DAC).

C. Supervisors shall clearly communicate to specialized service professionals the tools that may be used to measure their performance on the Quality Standards prior to their use, and how these tools will be used to arrive at a final effectiveness rating.

Evaluation Responsibility

Many specialized service professionals work across districts or in other staffing configurations that may make it difficult to identify the SSP's supervisor or even the primary employer. This may have contributed to the relative lack of actionable feedback from prior evaluations reported by SSP Work Group members. In order for systematic data collection and analysis and meaningful evaluations to occur on a regular basis, the responsibility for evaluation of each SSP must be clearly identified and the methods of data collection appropriate for individual SSP assignments defined in advance.

Recommendation 9: Evaluation Responsibility

For each specialized service professional, the person or persons responsible for supervising that professional's work shall be clearly identified to the specialized service professional at the beginning of each contract year. The supervisor shall be responsible for the specialized service professional's evaluation and shall collaborate with the specialized service professional to define in advance the process for collecting data and the identification of elements to be used in the evaluation. Further, the supervisor shall establish the role of any expert evaluator with the specialized service professional.

General Measurement and Data Collection Principles

The Council's recommendation on data collection reflects its intent to have schools and districts incorporate data collection and analysis on an ongoing basis. This allows the system to provide informal feedback and support on a more regular basis, ensuring that evaluation is a process rather than an event.

Recommendation 10: Data Collection

A. Districts and BOCES shall use multiple measures to evaluate all specialized service professionals against the Quality Standards using multiple formats and occasions.

B. At least one of these measures shall be observation by the supervisor and/or a trained evaluator with relevant professional expertise. The supervisor shall select the focus of the observation in consultation with the specialized service professional, based on the professional's responsibilities and appropriate opportunities for observation.

C. Data used in evaluating specialized service professionals shall be collected from a representative sample of sites at which the professional provides services.

D. A formal rating of the specialized service professional as Highly Effective, Effective, Partially Effective, and Ineffective shall take place once a year, using a body of evidence collected systematically in the months prior. Districts and BOCES shall collect enough evidence of performance to ensure that the complete body of evidence leads to a fair and reliable measure of each professional's performance against the Specialized Service Professional Quality Standards.

Involving Experts in the Evaluation Process

In its previous report making recommendations as to teacher and principal evaluation, the Council encouraged but did not require districts to make use of peer evaluators in the teacher evaluation process. In most cases, the primary evaluator for teachers – the principal – is familiar with the teacher's job responsibilities and can identify high-quality performance and its impact on student growth.

In the case of specialized service professionals; however, the SSP's supervisor may or may not be familiar enough with the profession to be able to confidently apply the standards of the profession to the evaluation and provide meaningful feedback. To date, many SSPs in Colorado have been evaluated by persons not familiar with the professional work. Not surprisingly, this has resulted in relatively cursory evaluations and a consistent lack of actionable feedback.

As a result, the Council believes that the input of experts in the profession is critical to obtaining a meaningful understanding of the SSP's performance and giving the SSP opportunities for improvement. This will be particularly important for novice SSPs and for those whose have received ratings of infective or partially effective. Due to the wide variety of SSP work and distribution among districts and BOCES, the Council believes that the most effective and efficient way to provide for this type of professional involvement in evaluation is through a pool of trained evaluators coordinated by the Colorado Department of Education. While such professional involvement is not necessary every year for everyone, the input of experts in the profession should be involved at least every three years, and more often for novice SSPs or those facing performance issues.

Recruiting and training appropriate professional experts will require resources and funding. The Council recommends that sufficient funding be appropriated to CDE to ensure the quality implementation of this recommendation. This funding should include short-term funding to establish the required infrastructure and longer-term funding for sustainability. Without such funding, the Council understands that this recommendation cannot be implemented with fidelity on a statewide basis.

Recommendation 11: Involvement of Experts in the Evaluation of Specialized Service Professionals

A. The involvement of professionals with relevant field expertise shall be part of the evaluation process of each specialized service professional, in accordance with this recommendation. Such experts must have, for each evaluation in which they participate:

1. A credential and/or license in the same domain area;
2. Demonstrated work experience in the domain;
3. If currently working in the field, performance ratings of Effective or higher;
4. Thorough knowledge about professional expectations and responsibilities; and
5. Training in evaluation through a process approved by CDE.

The district or BOCES shall ensure that a professional assigned to a particular evaluation is free of any substantial conflict of interest.

B. The participation of experts shall occur in the following circumstances:

1. Evaluations of specialized service professionals in their first three years of practice;
2. Evaluations of specialized service professionals that will be relied upon for decisions concerning the acquisition or loss of nonprobationary status;
3. Every third evaluation for all other specialized service professionals.

C. The participation of experts may occur face-to-face or in a virtual environment, depending upon geographic constraints and the nature of the participation, except that observations must occur face-to-face. Districts and BOCES may choose to limit expert participation to the evaluation of Standards I and III. Depending upon the scope of the participation of the expert and the measures to be used to evaluate the specialized service professional, expert participation may take the following forms:

1. Observations, such as observing diagnostic assessments, treatment delivery, participation in Individualized Education Plan meetings, meetings with students, and other activities central to the specialized service professional's assigned duties and selected measures;
2. Review of documents relevant to the specialized service professional's assigned duties and selected measures, such as diagnostic reports, student treatment records, Individualized Education Plans and progress reports, attendance records, or any other relevant and appropriate documentation;
3. Interviews with educators, parents, and/or students; and/or
4. Any other observation or review that relates to the performance of the specialized service professional and is appropriate and helpful to the purposes of the evaluation.

As part of the expert's participation, the expert shall provide the specialized service professional's supervisor with support designed to advance the supervisor's knowledge of professional expectations and context.

D. The participation of the expert shall result in actionable and timely feedback provided to the specialized service professional as part of the evaluation. At the SSP's request, this feedback shall be provided directly to the SSP by the expert, either face-to-face or virtually.

E. CDE shall establish a pool of professionals with relevant field expertise who are willing to serve as experts

for evaluations in the various categories of specialized service professionals. CDE shall ensure that the numbers and backgrounds of experts are sufficient to meet the requirements of this section, and that all persons serving as experts are appropriately trained in evaluation. All districts and BOCES, including those implementing locally-developed evaluation systems, may access the pool of experts for evaluations.

F. Depending upon resources available, CDE may choose to roll out the use of experts by focusing first on making experts available for the evaluations of novice specialized service professionals.

G. This recommendation for a statewide system shall not go into effect until sufficient funding is available for implementation. If the statewide system does not go into effect, districts and BOCES may choose to implement professional expert participation in evaluations with local funding.

In addition to requiring professional expert participation in specialized service professional evaluations, the Council strongly encourages the development of processes that can provide regular and informal coaching for SSPs who might otherwise be isolated in the practice of their profession. For SSPs working in isolated areas or who provide services across a wide geographic area, this coaching could occur on a virtual basis.

Differentiating Evaluation and Support Needs

S.B. 10-191 contemplates that "not all educators require the same amount of evaluation and support." CRS 22-9-105.5(3)(a.5). For example, specialized service professionals new to the field may be expected to require more intensive oversight and support, while experienced SSPs who have repeatedly demonstrated effectiveness might need less oversight themselves and be better deployed in supporting new SSPs who require more assistance.

Recommendation 12: Differentiating Evaluation and Support Needs

A. District and BOCES evaluation policies may reflect a determination that different categories of specialized service professionals require varying degrees of evaluation and support.

B. Because of the high stakes associated with evaluation results, SSPs in the following categories shall have a more intensive process of evaluation that leads to a more robust body of evidence about their performance:

1. Specialized service professionals in the year before they are eligible to move from at-will to not-at-will employment status, if applicable; and

2. Specialized service professionals whose performance indicates they are likely to be rated as Ineffective, Partially Effective, or Highly Effective. Districts and BOCES may collect this evidence in whatever manner they determine best.

Exemplar – Value of Expert Participation in Evaluations

Audrey, an audiologist, is employed by a BOCES and serves a number of primarily rural districts. She has never been evaluated by someone who really understands the work she does, and because of her geographic isolation she rarely has opportunities to interact with others in her field. In preparation for her evaluation, the BOCES contacts CDE and requests that CDE select a member of its SSP expert pool to help conduct Audrey's evaluation. CDE selects Andrew, an audiologist who has previous experience working in rural districts. Andrew arranges to observe Audrey at work with students and in an IEP conference, and reviews her diagnostic write-ups and other documentation via email. Before the observation, Andrew calls Audrey to go over the relevant SSP standards and explain the process. He also asks Audrey what she is hoping to get out of her evaluation process, and tailors the process accordingly. Audrey's supervisor accompanies Andrew to the observations. After the evaluation, Andrew debriefs with Audrey and her supervisor, and arranges for two virtual coaching sessions in the month after the evaluation.

In making its more detailed recommendations in the area of measuring performance, the Council discussed the measurement of student outcomes (reflected in Standard VI) separately from the measurement of professional practice (reflected in Standards I-V). The discussion of this component will first address the measurement of professional practice, and will then turn to the measurement of student outcomes.

Decisions on the Measurement and Analysis of Professional Practice

Measuring Professional Practice (Standards I-V)

Standards I-V describe professional knowledge, skills, and aptitudes common to effective specialized service professionals. These standards can be measured in many different ways, including through supervisor or peer observations, a review of student files demonstrating the use of appropriate diagnostic tools and recommended accommodations, feedback from classroom teachers, input from fellow SSPs, surveys of students and families, and the like. S.B. 10-191 requires only that evaluations include direct observation, although it also requires multiple measures and lists other methods for gathering data.

In Council discussions, the following surfaced as objectives for this area:

- Encouraging districts and BOCES to collaborate with SSPs, including representatives of the local association or federation if one exists, in developing or adopting appropriate methods and tools for measuring performance;
- Encouraging districts and BOCES to "triangulate" SSP evaluation through multiple measures while still allowing flexibility for local contexts that may offer fewer opportunities for data collection;
- Requiring the involvement of persons with relevant professional expertise in the measurement and feedback process for certain standards, within schools and within and across districts;
- Encouraging the involvement of students in the measurement and feedback process, to provide students with meaningful opportunities to take ownership of their learning experience and, where appropriate, to provide input on the support services provided to them;
- Encouraging districts and BOCES to differentiate between measures that are appropriate for high-stakes evaluation and those that are better used for formative performance feedback; and
- Ensuring that measures are fair and valid to the extent possible, with CDE serving as a technical resource for districts through the establishment of a Resource Bank and targeted support to districts and BOCES.

Recommendation 13: Measures of Performance on Standards I-V

A. Districts and BOCES shall use a deliberate combination of the measures indicated below to measure the performance of specialized service professionals against Specialized Service Professional Quality Standards I-V for the purpose of high-stakes evaluations and in order to provide feedback on performance to specialized service professionals. Districts may use additional measures that have been approved for use in specialized service professional evaluations in a manner aligned with CDE guidelines. Measures shall be chosen in collaboration with specialized service professionals, including representatives of the local association or federation, if one exists.

B. Districts and BOCES shall collect information on specialized service professional performance against Specialized Service Professional Quality Standards I - V through the use of observations with corresponding timely feedback to professionals; these shall be aligned with technical guidance provided by CDE. Evaluators shall receive CDE-approved training in evaluation skills to ensure that they are competent in conducting observations.

C. In addition, districts and BOCES shall collect specialized service professional performance data and shall provide timely feedback to SSPs based on data collected. Further, districts and BOCES are strongly encouraged to include parents in the identification of appropriate measures and shall collect data from at least one of the following additional other measures (when appropriate to the professional's assigned duties):

1. Student perception measures (e.g., surveys), where appropriate and feasible as defined by CDE guidelines;
2. Peer feedback;
4. Review of student support documentation; and/or
5. Any other evidence relevant to the specialized service professional's assigned duties.

D. All measures used to collect data must be aligned with technical guidelines issued by CDE and must be adequately differentiated for job category and assigned duties.

E. In addition to the potential use of student perception data as a measure of professional practice for purposes of formal evaluation, districts and BOCES are strongly encouraged to gather student perceptions of their support experiences on an ongoing basis to provide specialized service professionals who directly support students with informal feedback.

F. Prior to and throughout the evaluation process, supervisors shall engage in a professional dialogue with specialized service professionals focused on their professional practice and growth for the course of the year.

G. In making decisions about how to use the data collected about specialized service professional performance, districts and BOCES shall consider whether the data collected are better suited for use in a high-stakes evaluation or for the purpose of proving feedback and professional development opportunities for the individual professional, or for both purposes provided they are appropriately weighted. In making this decision, districts and BOCES shall consider the technical quality and rigor of the methods used to collect the data, and the technical quality of the data itself.

H. With respect to the measurement tools and methods described in this recommendation, CDE shall provide districts with technical and implementation guidelines. CDE's Resource Bank shall include examples of tools determined to be technically rigorous or to have an evidence base.

Weighting Policies for Professional Practice Measures

As discussed above, S.B. 10-191 requires that performance on Standards I-V determine no more than 50 percent of a specialized service professional's overall performance. The Council has determined that, as is the case with teachers, allowing districts to have flexibility in deciding how to allocate the relative weights of Standards I-V would promote important district discussions on specialized support priorities. However, the Council agrees that it is also important to maintain a minimum level of consistency. The Council's recommendation in this area allows districts to choose how to allocate the importance of Standards I-V, provided that each Standard has a measurable influence on the total professional practice score.

Recommendation 14: Weighting Policies for Standards I-V

A. Districts and BOCES shall evaluate the performance of specialized service professionals against the Colorado Quality Standards using multiple measures of performance, which are weighted in such a way that the measures of Standards I-V determine no more than 50 percent of the specialized service professional's performance; and the measures of Standard VI (student outcomes) determine at least 50 percent of the weight of the evaluation.

B. Districts and BOCES shall determine locally how multiple measures of specialized service professional performance against the Quality Standards will be aggregated to provide an overall effectiveness rating against Standards I-V. Such determinations shall be made in collaboration with specialized service professionals, including representatives of the local association or federation, if one exists. CDE shall provide exemplars of such policies.

C. In developing their weighting policies, districts shall ensure that Standards I-V are aggregated in such a way that each standard has a measurable influence on the overall total subscore for Standards I-V.

D. Districts shall communicate their weighting policies in order to ensure that all SSPs understand the process whereby they are assigned an effectiveness rating against Standards I-V.

Decisions on the Measurement and Analysis of Student Outcomes

Measuring Student Outcomes (Standard VI)

As discussed previously, the Council recommends that specialized service professionals be held accountable for student outcomes, a broad category that may include student academic growth if warranted by the duties assigned to the SSP, but that more often is likely to include more general measures of student well-being such as health, inclusion, and access to learning such as the illustrative examples below.

Examples of student outcomes that could be attributed to SSPs, depending on their assigned duties:

Audiologists

- Increased student access to auditory learning
- Increased stakeholder implementation of accommodations
- Increased usage of hearing assistance technology

Counselors

- Reduction in school absentee rates
- Increased graduation rates
- Reduced incidents of bullying

Nurses

- Reduced absenteeism due to health issues
- Improved immunization compliance
- Effective chronic disease management

Occupational Therapists

- Student goals on the IEP related to independence in self-care skills met
- Increased engagement and participation in targeted classroom activity

Orientation and Mobility Specialists

- Improved student functional mobility
- Improved spatial awareness
- Improved attending behaviors and auditory abilities

Physical Therapists

- Student goals on the IEP related to functional mobility in the educational environment met
- Removal of barriers in the educational environment to increase student access

Psychologists

- Improved mental health outcomes for treated students
- Behavior goals met on Individualized Education Plans
- Improved school climate

Social Workers

- Decrease in discipline referral rates
- Number of parents attending parent groups and trainings
- Increased grades for students in caseload

Speech and Language Pathologists

- Student academic growth in Reading and Writing
- Improved student participation in class

Recommendation 15: CDE Support for Selection of Student Outcomes Measures

The Council recommends that CDE develop guidelines that at a minimum address and require that:

A. Districts and BOCES consider the match of available outcome measures to the assigned duties of specialized service professionals, both in terms of content and attribution of student outcomes;

B. Districts and BOCES involve specialized service professionals, and the local association of federation if one exists, in choosing or developing appropriate measures of student outcomes that match specialized service provider assigned duties; and

C. Districts and BOCES, in collaboration with specialized service professionals and the local association or federation if one exists, determine the circumstances under which it is appropriate to use student academic growth data as one of the measures of student outcomes.

Recommendation 16: Using Multiple Measures of Student Outcomes

A. Districts and BOCES shall determine, in collaboration with specialized service professionals and the local association or federation, if one exists, which multiple measures shall be used to collect evidence for different specialized service professional categories. Such determinations shall be consistent with the professional category as well as assigned duties and responsibilities. To the extent that specialized service professionals within the same professional category have different assigned duties and responsibilities, different evidence points will be identified.

B. For each specialized service professional, at least two measures of student outcomes shall be selected that are both relevant to the specialized service professional's assigned duties and objectively measurable. The specialized service professional to be evaluated shall provide input on appropriate measures to include within their evaluation.

Using Student Academic Growth as a Measure of Student Outcomes

As discussed previously, the Council determined that while student academic performance and growth is an important indirect outcome of SSP work, SSPs should not be held directly accountable for student performance and growth in the same way that teachers are held accountable for this category. In certain cases, such as where an SSP's assigned job duties include actions intended to directly improve student academic growth, it may be appropriate to use student academic growth measures as one of the student outcomes measured under Standard VI. Again, depending on the SSP's assigned duties, this student academic growth measure may be assigned to an individual SSP or attributed to a team of which the SSP is a member.

Weighting Student Outcome Measures

Districts and BOCES are permitted to give different emphases to different types of outcome measures. For example, a district that is focusing on improving outcomes for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) may decide to weight student progress against IEP goals more heavily than other types of student outcomes. This flexibility should be balanced with the requirement that multiple measures be used to determine SSP performance against Standard VI.

Recommendation 17: Weighting of Student Outcomes Measures

Districts and BOCES, in collaboration with specialized service professionals and the local association or federation if one exists, shall determine locally a policy for deciding how the multiple measures of student outcomes required by Standard VI will be used to establish a specialized service professional's performance on that standard. In developing their weighting policies, districts and BOCES shall ensure that weights assigned to student outcome measures are consistent with the measures' technical quality and rigor.

Aggregating Scores

Finally, once a district or BOCES has determined its measures and their relative weighting, the district or BOCES provides each SSP with a single score representing performance on Standards I-V, and a single score representing performance on Standard VI.

Recommendation 18: Aggregating Multiple Measures for Scoring Purposes

Districts and BOCES shall aggregate the multiple measures of SSP performance about Quality Standards I-V into a single score; and aggregate the multiple measures of SSP performance against Quality Standard VI (student outcomes) into a single score.

Sam is a school speech language pathologist who works in a large district where he is responsible for identification, instruction, and classroom accommodations for students with receptive and expressive language delays. One of the measures of student outcomes for Sam is the academic growth of the students in his caseload, as measured by state summative assessments in reading and writing.

Christine is a school counselor assigned to an urban middle school. Chris and the other educators at the school agree that significant steps need to be taken to improve the school culture so that students can focus on learning. Chris leads the implementation of a new behavior management system, and agrees that one of his student outcome measures will be collectively-attributed student academic growth in the building in the year after implementation.

Components Four and Five – Scoring Framework and SSP Performance Standards

After collecting, analyzing, weighting, and aggregating the data, and assigning scores to each SSP for professional practice and student outcomes, districts and BOCES must now use these scores to place SSPs in ratings categories. The Council's recommendations require districts and BOCES to use a statewide scoring framework and the same set of statewide performance ratings in taking this action.

Recommendation 19: State Scoring Framework and Performance Standards for Specialized Service Professionals

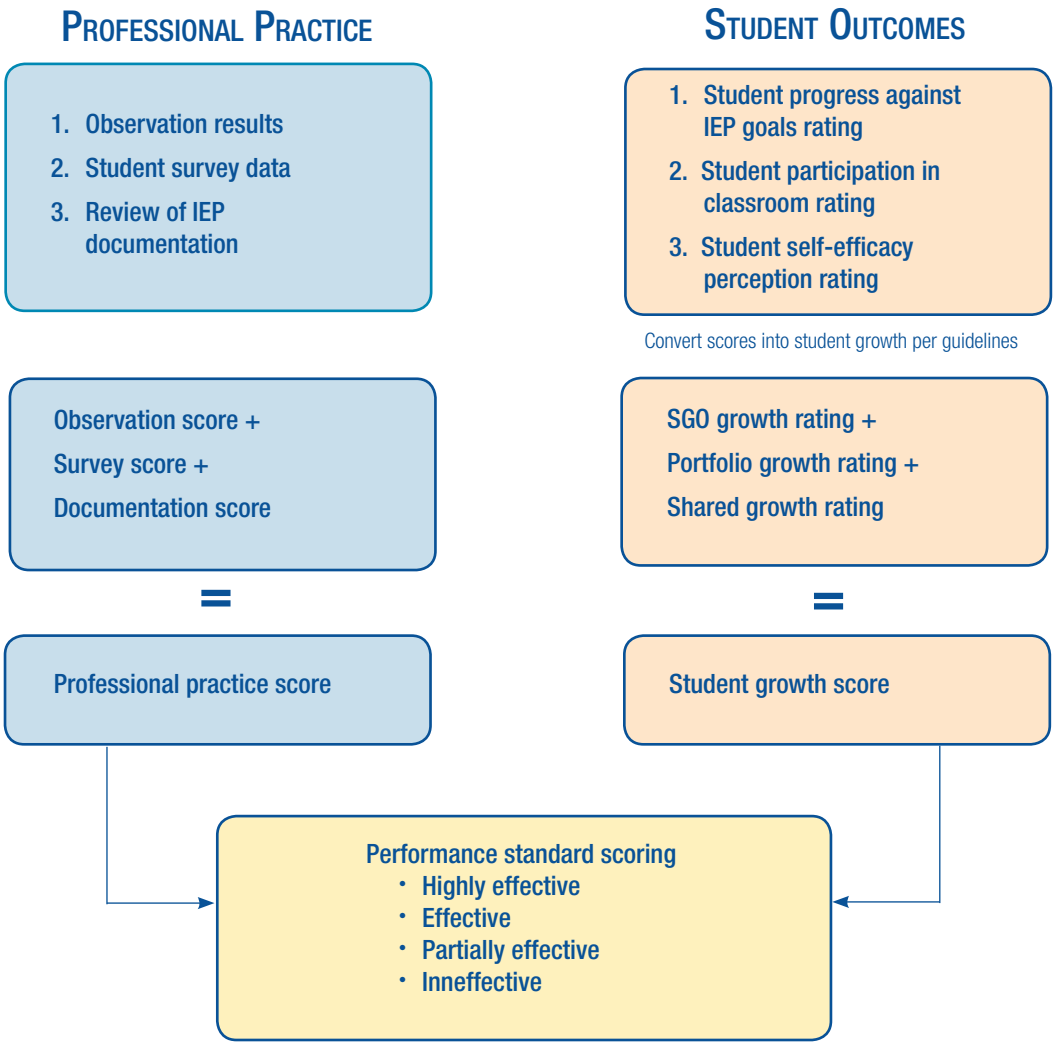
A. In accordance with S.B. 10-191, four performance ratings shall be used statewide: Ineffective, Partially Effective, Effective, and Highly Effective.

B. A single, common statewide specialized service professional performance scoring framework shall be used to assign both novice and experienced specialized service professionals to one of the four performance standards. This scoring framework shall be developed by CDE.

C. Districts, in consultation with principals, shall determine the role that SSP evaluation ratings will play in a principal's evaluation.

Combining Multiple Measures Flow Chart for SSPs

(with EXAMPLES of possible measures)



Component Six – Appeals

In the case of teachers, effectiveness ratings impact eligibility for non-probationary status. Novice teachers must earn non-probationary status through proven effectiveness, while teachers who receive two consecutive ratings of ineffective can lose non-probationary status. As a result, S.B. 10-191 requires districts to develop an appeals process by which teachers may appeal their ratings.

While some specialized service professionals are employed on an at-will basis, many are not. For those SSPs who are not employed on at at-will basis, the Council recommends that the appeals process applicable to teachers also be available to these SSPs to provide appropriate protection of their rights. This approach was confirmed in discussions with the primary sponsor of S.B. 10-191 as consistent with the intent of S.B. 10-191.

Recommendation 20: Appeals Process

Specialized service professionals who receive a second consecutive rating of Ineffective or Partially Effective and who are not employed on an at-will basis may appeal their rating using the process set forth in State Board rules for teachers. Districts and BOCES may choose to, but are not required to, provide this appeals process for specialized service professionals who are employed on an at-will basis.

Recommendations for Specialized Service Professional Evaluation System Development and Implementation

The evaluation systems required by S.B. 10-191 represent monumental changes in the way in which Colorado districts and BOCES currently conduct educator evaluations. Reflecting the significance of the change, the teacher and principal evaluation systems are in the process of being piloted and rolled out on a gradual basis. The leadership of the state is essential to this process and to ensuring that all districts and BOCES will have what they need to implement quality evaluations. For this reason, the Council makes recommendations about the development and rollout of the new model Specialized Service Professional Evaluation System that are similar to those made for the development and rollout of the state's teacher and principal evaluation systems.

Recommendation 21: CDE Development and Maintenance of the State Model Specialized Service Professional System

A. The state model system shall be designed so that it is:

1. **Complete and fully developed, ready for implementation by districts that choose to use it;**
2. **Coherent, in that all components of the system are connected and well-aligned with one another;**
3. **Comprehensive, in that the system, over time, serves all specialized service professionals; and**
4. **Supported, in that CDE provides support for districts using the state model system.**

B. The rollout of the model system will be based on the state's specialized service professional effectiveness definitions and professional quality standards. It will include, at a minimum, the following components:

1. **Evaluation process**
2. **Rubrics, tools, and templates differentiated for each of the nine licensure categories**
3. **Guidelines on measures of student outcomes for each of the nine licensure categories**
4. **Data management and support**
5. **Guidelines on implementation support**
6. **Guidance on professional development**
7. **Decision frameworks**

Evaluation Resource Bank

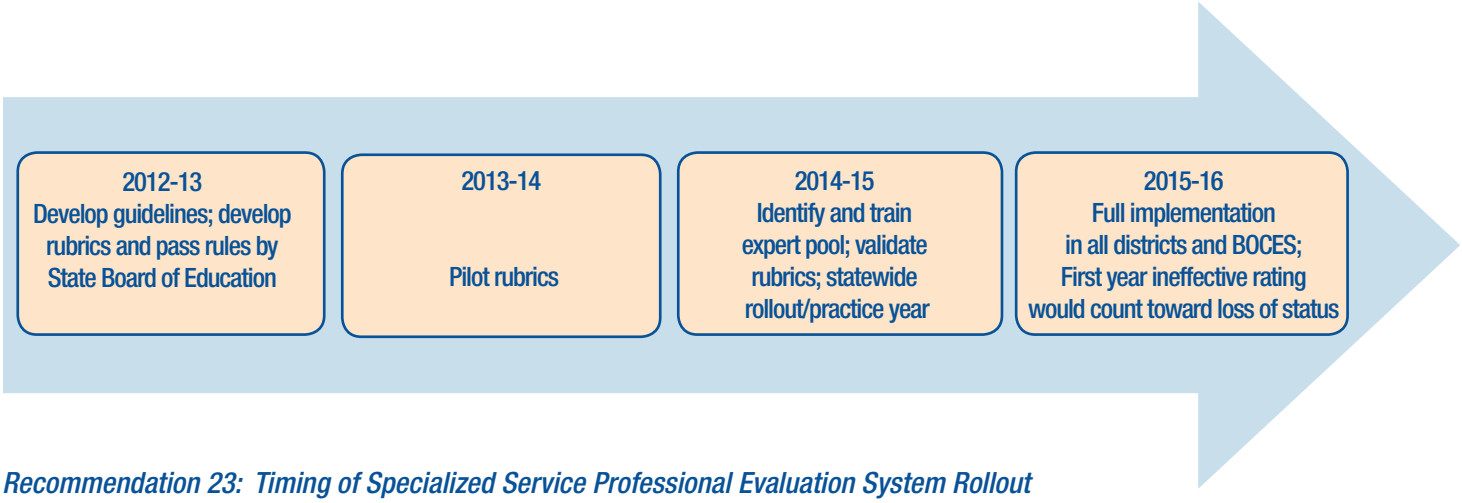
S.B. 10-191 requires the state to develop an Evaluation Resource Bank to house evaluation tools such as professional practice rubrics and sample student growth objectives. The Council recommends that the Evaluation Resource Bank also include evaluation tools for evaluations of SSPs. In particular, the resources available to districts, BOCES, and SSPs should include guidance concerning the selection of student outcome measures as well as guidance concerning systems of professional development for all nine SSP categories, informed by the feedback of the SSP experts participating in evaluations.

Recommendation 22: Evaluation Resource Bank

The Resource Bank developed and maintained by CDE shall support districts in the design, implementation, and ongoing support of their specialized service professional evaluation systems, and will include a broad array of materials applicable to multiple specialized service professional contexts.

Timeline for Implementation and Development

The timeline for the development and rollout of the state model system needs to provide sufficient time for developing and testing the various parts of the evaluation system. The Council recommends that the new system be piloted first and then rolled out statewide.



Recommendation 23: Timing of Specialized Service Professional Evaluation System Rollout

The State Model Specialized Service Professional Evaluation System shall be developed and rolled out according to the following timeline:

A. During the 2012-13 school year, CDE shall develop guidelines, rubrics, and other tools for the system and support the promulgation of SSP rules via the State Board of Education

B. During the 2013-14 school year, CDE shall pilot these tools in select districts and BOCES, and shall populate the Evaluation Resource Bank.

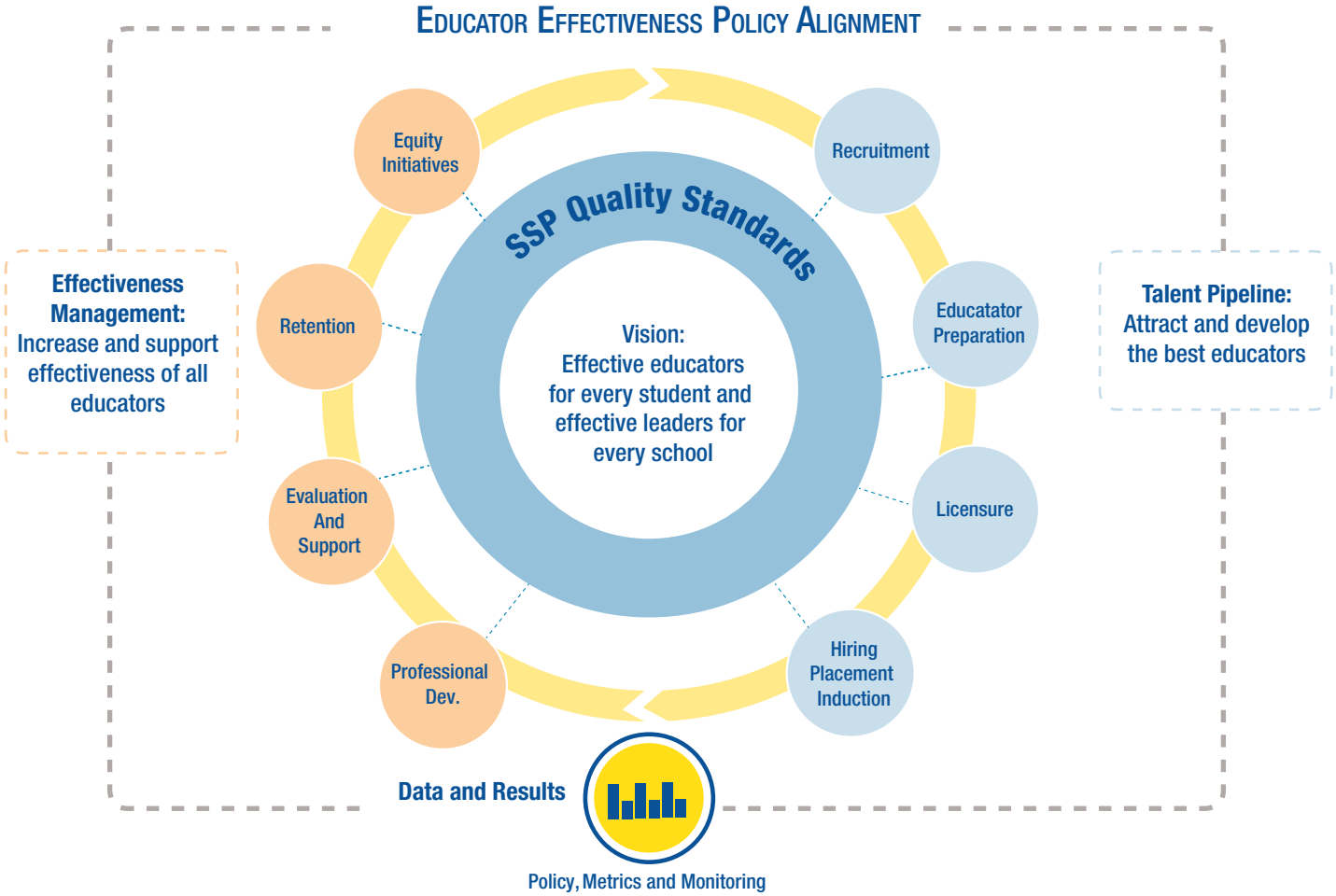
C. During the 2014-15 school year, CDE shall begin statewide implementation of the Specialized Service Professional Evaluation System, and shall, depending upon available funding, identify and train a pool of persons with relevant field expertise for participation in specialized service professional evaluations. CDE shall validate the SSP rubrics. Ratings of Ineffective earned during this year shall not count towards decisions about loss of non-at-will employment status.

D. During the 2015-16 school year, the Specialized Service Professional Evaluation System shall be fully implemented in all districts and BOCES throughout the state. This is the first year that negative consequences will be acknowledged as counting toward the necessary two consecutive years of ineffective or partially effective ratings that would result in a loss of status.

Recommendations for State Policy Changes

To succeed, Colorado's new educator evaluation systems need to be part of a larger system in which training, incentives, resources, and accountability are aligned. For this reason, the Council's previous report made recommendations that the state take steps to ensure that other state education policies aligned with the assumptions and incentives contained in the new teacher and principal evaluation system. This alignment is just as important for specialized service professionals.

The figure below illustrates the envisioned alignment of the system. All policies are mutually reinforcing and centered on rigorous, research-based educator quality standards and definitions.



Recommendation 24: Alignment of State Educator Policies

The Council recommends that a thorough review of current statutes, rules, and policies that govern the preparation, induction, and licensure of Colorado specialized service professionals be completed as quickly as possible. Such review shall be guided by the policy goals for these areas, so that all policies directly facilitate the ability of specialized service professionals to enter and continue in the profession meeting the state definition of effectiveness. All preparation, induction, and licensure programs should be designed to support specialized service professionals in being effective in accordance with the new Quality Standards.

As the alignment of policies occurs, the Council recommends that the term "specialized service professional" be used consistently to refer to the personnel covered by this report. This terminology is important to the field and represents to practitioners a new level of professional recognition.

Recommendation 25: Consistent Use of "Specialized Service Professional" Terminology

Moving forward, it is recommended that all policies referring to the personnel addressed in this report shall refer to such personnel as "specialized service professionals."

Protecting Individual Information

In its prior report, the Council identified the desired uses of educator evaluation data at both the individual educator and aggregate (state level), and these can also be applied to specialized service professionals' evaluation data. At the individual level, evaluation data should be used to improve practice, enhance professional effectiveness, identify areas for professional development, make employment decisions, and conduct research and analysis. At the state level, evaluation data should be used to examine and report state, district, and school-level trends in specialized service professional effectiveness, track progress toward state goals for SSP effectiveness, conduct research and analysis, and evaluate the effectiveness of SSP preparation programs and professional development offerings.

These desired uses must be balanced with the need to protect the privacy of individual specialized service professionals. The Council recommends that the state, districts, and BOCES be prevented from making public individual SSP evaluation ratings or student outcome data tied to individually-identifiable SSPs. Colorado currently has a statute that prevents the state from disclosing information about individual educators (CRS 22-2-111; as of the 2013 legislative session, any sample size with 5 or less cannot be disclosed to protect individual privacy), but the statute does not address district or local disclosure. In the case of many SSP categories, the relatively small number of professionals means that the state and districts must be especially careful about disclosing even aggregate information where the disclosure would potentially compromise individual SSP privacy.

Recommendation 26: Protection of Educator Data

The state should develop and adopt statutory provisions to provide appropriate and timely protections regarding the use and reporting of all educator evaluation data, including evaluation data concerning specialized service professionals.

Funding the State Expert Pool

Finally, one of the Council's most important recommendations for specialized service professionals involves the creation of a statewide pool of persons with relevant field expertise to participate in the evaluations of SSPs. This recommendation cannot go forward without the funding to support the work of CDE in developing, training, and maintaining this pool of professional experts. As such, the Council strongly recommends that the State Board of Education request that the General Assembly provide sufficient funding for this initiative.

Recommendation 27: State Funding for Professional Expert Participation in Evaluation

In order to ensure high-quality professional expert participation in specialized service professional evaluations, the state is strongly encouraged to fund a statewide program that identifies, trains and coordinates the participation of professional experts in these evaluations. In particular, the Council recommends that the State Board of Education make the funding of this pool a priority when working with legislators and/or the Governor.

Appendix A – Recommendations Crosswalk

Recommendations for Teacher Evaluation System	Recommendations for SSP Evaluation System
N/A	1. Specialized Service Professionals
1. The role of the state model educator evaluation system	2. The role of the state model Licensed Specialized Support Professional evaluation system
2. State framework for evaluating teaching	3. State framework for specialized service professional evaluation systems
3. The statewide definition of effective teaching	4. Statewide definition of effective practice for specialized service professionals
4. Statewide use of the Colorado Teacher Quality Standards	5. Use of the Specialized Service Professional Quality Standards
N/A	6. Student outcomes standard
5. Colorado Teacher Quality Standards	7. State Specialized Service Professional Quality Standards
6. Teacher involvement in measurement decisions	8. Specialized service professional involvement in decision-making
N/A	9. Evaluation responsibility
7. Data collection	10. Data collection
N/A	11. Involvement of experts in the evaluation of specialized service professionals
8. Differentiating evaluation and support needs	12. Differentiating evaluation and support needs
9. Measures of performance on Quality Standards I-V	13. Measures of performance on Quality Standards I-V
10. Weighting policies for Standards I-V	14. Weighting policies for Standards I-V
N/A	15. CDE support for selection of student outcomes measures
11. Using multiple measures to assess student growth	16. Using multiple measures of student outcomes
12. Assignment of teachers into categories for purposes of measuring student growth for use in evaluation	N/A
13. Assignment measures of student growth/learning categories	N/A
14. Selection of measures for calculating a teacher's individual student growth score	N/A
15. Student growth objective framework	N/A
16 Attribution of student data among teachers	N/A
17. CDE support for selection of growth models	N/A
18. Analysis of student growth data	N/A
19. CDE support for the analysis of student growth data	N/A
20. Weighting of student growth measures	17. Weighting of student outcomes measures
21. Aggregating multiple measures for scoring purposes	18. Aggregating multiple measures for scoring purposes

Appendix A – Recommendations Crosswalk

Recommendations for Teacher Evaluation System	Recommendations for SSP Evaluation System
22. Preliminary state scoring framework and performance standards for teachers	19. State scoring framework and performance standards for specialized service professionals
23. Weighing policies	N/A
N/A (decided later)	20. Appeals process
[24-40 relate solely to principal evaluation system	N/A
41. Engaging parents and guardians as partners	N/A
42. Student engagement	N/A
43. Development of the state model system	21. Development and maintenance of the state model specialized service professional evaluation system
44. Evaluation resource bank	22. Evaluation resource bank
N/A	23. Timing of SSP evaluation system rollout
45. Development of new student growth measures	N/A
46. Performance evaluation ratings during pilot and rollout period	N/A
47. CDE guidelines for district implementation	N/A
48. Monitoring system outcomes	N/A
49. Alignment of state educator policies	24. Alignment of state educator policies
N/A	25. Consistent use of “specialized service professional” terminology
50. Protection of educator data	26. Protection of educator data
N/A	27. State funding for professional expert participation in evaluation
51. State educator licensing system	N/A
52. Educator preparation	N/A
53. Induction programs	N/A
54. Professional development	N/A
55. School leadership academy	N/A
56. Accountability systems	N/A
57. Educator recognition	N/A
58. Implementation needs	N/A
59. Principal authority on staffing decisions	N/A
60. Ongoing monitoring of policy needs	N/A

Appendix B – Key Members of the SSP Work Group

SSP Category	Name	Title and Affiliation
School audiologists	Lisa Cannon	Denver Public Schools; Colorado Department of Education
	Cheryl Johnson	University of Colorado; Hands and Voices
	Donna Massine	Douglas County School District
	Pattie Collins	Pikes Peak BOCES
	Melissa Kelly	Mountain BOCES
	Nancy Cyphers	Adams 12 School District
	Heidi Adams	Adams 50 School District
School counselors	Amie Baca-Oehlert	Adams 12 School District; Colorado Education Association
	Bernadine Knittel	Thompson Valley High School; University of Northern Colorado
	Rex Filer	Adams State College
	Elysia Clemens	University of Northern Colorado
	Laurie Carlson	Colorado State University; Colorado School Counselors Association
	Misti Ruthven	Colorado Department of Education
	Tracy Thompson	Colorado School Counselors Association
School nurses	Kathleen Patrick	Colorado Department of Education
	Elizabeth Clark	Brighton School District
	Debbie Caldwell	Rocky Ford School District
	Jean Lyons	Denver Public Schools
	Susan Rowley	Boulder Valley School District
	Paulette Joswick	Douglas County School District
	Pam Brunner Nii	Children's Hospital
	Teresa Ross	Cherry Creek School District; Colorado Association of School Nurses
	Linda Buzard	Jefferson County Public Schools
School occupational therapists	Jayne Dougherty	Colorado Department of Education
	Tricia Williams	Aurora Public Schools
	Liz Wall	Jefferson County Public Schools
	Jill Laschober	Cherry Creek School District
	Breea Bush	East Central BOCES

Appendix B – Key Members of the SSP Work Group

SSP Category	Name	Title and Affiliation
School physical therapists	Melinda Mueller	Cherry Creek School District
	Amy Barr	Cherry Creek School District
	Margitt Kennedy	Aurora Public Schools
	Holly Ingham	Aurora Public Schools
	Kimberly Scearce	Douglas County School District
School psychologists	Franci Crepeau-Hobson	University of Colorado Denver
	Barb Bieber	Colorado Department of Education
	Ellen Kelty	Denver Public Schools
	Lisa Zimprich	Fountain-Fort Carson School District
	Dawn Loge-Greer	Adams 14 School District
	Deirdre Shearer	Harrison School District
	Collette Hohnbaum	Douglas County School District
	Cindy Grubbs	Northeast BOCES
	Shannon Altenhofen	Colorado Department of Education
	Janelle Biederman	Windsor High School
	Ron Lee	Cherry Creek School District
	Valorie Young	South Central BOCES
School social workers	Liz Davis	Poudre School District
	Brenda Miles	Colorado State University
	Melissa Perkins	Douglas County School District
	Camille Rossi	Aurora Public Schools
	Meredith Henry	Littleton Public Schools
	Earl Rendon	Centennial BOCES
	Camilla Short-Camilli	Cherry Creek School District
School speech-language pathologists	Cynthia Millikin	Colorado Department of Education
	Tami Cassel	Colorado Department of Education
	Angie Horne	Adams 12 School District
	Edie Jansen	Garfield 16 School District

Appendix B – Key Members of the SSP Work Group

SSP Category	Name	Title and Affiliation
School speech-language pathologists	Jennifer Seedorf	Northeast Colorado BOCES
	Shirley Padilla	Jefferson County Public Schools
	Lisa Gessini	Denver Public Schools; ASHA Advisory Council
	Connie Egleston	Cherry Creek School District
	Kitty Odell	Pueblo 60 School District
	Val Knafelc	Fountain-Fort Carson School District
	Sun Coates	Denver Public Schools
	Amy Simmons	Cherry Creek School District
	Margorie Martinez	Mesa County Valley School District 51
	Christine Riegel	San Juan BOCES
School orientation and mobility specialists	Tanni Anthony	Colorado Department of Education
	Silvia Correa Torres	University of Northern Colorado
	David Gooldy	Cherry Creek School District
	Michael Plansker	Adams 12 School District
	Pat Lewis	INSIGHTS, Inc.
	Elaine Karns	Poudre School District
	Cheryl Leidich	Denver Public Schools
	Trina Boyd Pratt	Aurora Public Schools
	Michelle Chacon	Adams 50 School District
	Melinda Carter	Jefferson County School District

Appendix B – Staff for Work Group

Colorado Legacy Foundation Staff	Name	Title and Affiliation
	Angela Baber	Director of Initiatives
	Milagros Barsallo	Former Project Coordinator, Teach 360
	Heather Chikoore	Manager of Research and Impact
	Finessa Ferrell	Director of Initiatives
	Micaela Michie	Project Assistant, Project Management Office
	Amy Spicer	Director of Research and Impact
	Stephanie Wasserman	Former Director of Health and Wellness
Colorado Department of Education	Katy Anthes, Ph. D	Executive Director, Educator Effectiveness, Colorado Department of Education
	Courtney Cabrera	Senior Consultant, Educator Effectiveness, Colorado Department of Education
	Mike Gradoz	Director of Field Services, Educator Effectiveness, Colorado Department of Education
	Sed Keller	Assessment Implementation Specialist, Educator Effectiveness, Colorado Department of Education
	Toby King	Director, Educator Effectiveness, Colorado Department of Education
	Tricia Majors	Project Manager, Educator Effectiveness, Colorado Department of Education
	Dawn Pare	Senior Consultant, Educator Effectiveness, Colorado Department of Education
	Tara Boertzel-Schuenemann	Student Growth Support Consultant, Educator Effectiveness, Colorado Department of Education
	Bob Snead, Ph. D	Student Growth Support Consultant, Educator Effectiveness, Colorado Department of Education
	Chris Vance	Field Services Support Consultant, Educator Effectiveness, Colorado Department of Education
	Jean Williams, Ph. D	Evaluation Design Specialist, Educator Effectiveness, Colorado Department of Education

Appendix C – Examples of Differing Contexts in Which SSPs Serve

Specialized Service Professionals serve in a variety of contexts within and across the nine professional groups included within the SSP designations. This table illustrates some of the diversity of contexts within which these professionals serve. The intent of these examples is to highlight that SSPs serve in countless settings and contexts; these examples do not provide a full spectrum of the differing circumstances in which SSPs work. These examples were developed by members of the SSP work group, and in some cases they vary in length and level of detail.

SSP Work Context Examples		
School Audiologist	Audrey, a school audiologist serving in a mountain community, serves over 10 districts across a large area of the state. She is the only audiologist serving students from the earliest grades all the way to 21 years of age in these districts. Because she is the only professional with her particular and necessary skill set, she has limited interaction with experts in her field. In addition, her direct supervisor and other administrators in her schools have very little knowledge of the specific practices or skills of an educational audiologist.	Christine is a school audiologist in a large urban school district. Unlike her colleagues who have more traditional educational audiology roles, she spends her days as a member of the Child Find team in the district doing specialized screenings and assessments primarily on 2-4 year old children. She has limited ongoing contact with these students and families as her main role is to identify hearing loss and assess the implications for learning and development. She does not continue to work with them on an ongoing basis.
School Counselor	Sam is a school counselor working in a rural community and has been assigned to work in two very different setting:; an elementary school serving 1st through 4th grade and the district's alternative high school. At the elementary school he serves 230 students, many of whom are impacted economically or by cultural and/or language barriers. In this setting, he provides a counseling curriculum to all students. His second assignment is on a campus that has been designated as an "Alternate Education Campus" where students have to meet select criteria to attend. This means that they have been identified as having a drug/ alcohol addiction, teen pregnancy, or some other life impacting issue requiring his professional support. In this setting, he runs a number of counseling groups addressing different issues. In both settings the principal is evaluator and the counselor has no access to other counseling professionals.	Patricia is working at a large suburban high school where she is one of eight counselors working on a team. The team develops annual program goals that align with the school's goals. Each counselor serves approximately 350 students, and they are assigned to students by grade level. Each grade has two counselors who work side-by-side with one another. The counselors provide a counseling curriculum to all students as well as running smaller groups. There is a team leader who helps guide and mentor the team as well as an assistant principal who is assigned to supervise and evaluate the counselors.

Appendix C – Examples of Differing Contexts in Which SSPs Serve

SSP Work Context Examples		
School Nurse	Darcy works as a school nurse. She is considered a "school nurse consultant." She is the only registered nurse in her BOCES. As a consultant, she focuses on providing indirect services to students, mostly those with special health care concerns or those who are being evaluated for special education services. She is responsible for as many as eight schools and 5,000 students at a time. Her schedule is driven by health acuity and report deadlines and she rarely encounters the administrators in the buildings she serves. Her evaluation is done by someone who is not familiar with the competencies, roles, or responsibilities of a professional school nurse.	Paula is a full-time site-based school nurse in a large high school. She has 2300 students in the building and reports directly to the principal. She is the only nurse in the school, but has school nurse colleagues within the district. She provides direct care to students in the health room, sometimes as many as 100 per day. She also trains school staff to manage health conditions and nursing procedures for students with special health care needs. She works most closely with the special education team, the dean, counselors, and the School Resource Officer. Her evaluation is done by an administrator who knows her as a member of the school team, but is not knowledgeable about the competencies, roles, and responsibilities of the professional nurse.
School Occupational Therapist	Steve is a school occupational therapist in a BOCES. He supports multiple schools (preschool through high school) within multiple districts in the BOCES. His schedule does not allow him to be onsite regularly at any one school or any one district. He has infrequent communication with colleagues and administrators. He struggles to participate in meaningful evaluation as he is not able to establish ongoing, consistent communication with the person/s responsible for his evaluation.	Lindsey is a school occupational therapist working in a metro school district Child Find department. Her role is to screen and/or evaluate children ages 0-5 years old to determine if they would benefit from special education services. She works as part of a multidisciplinary team in a setting with a structured daily schedule. Interaction with children and family members is brief, typically from 1- 3 hours and consists of assessment and IFSP/IEP, as needed. She has no further interaction or contact with the students and families beyond this evaluative interaction. She has daily communication with her team members and other specialized service providers. However, she has limited communication and engagement with the person responsible for her evaluation. Supervisor observations are limited to assessment appointments and IFSP/IEP meetings.

Appendix C – Examples of Differing Contexts in Which SSPs Serve

SSP Work Context Examples		
School Orientation and Mobility Specialist	Nicole is a School Orientation and Mobility Specialist in a large suburban district. She serves all students in her articulation area with visual impairments (including blindness) ages 5-21 as well as other students with additional disabilities. She also serves the district as a certified Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments (TVI). As such, she is employed both as a related service provider and a special education teacher. Tammy primarily teachers group lessons in a variety of schools, and she also conducts individual lessons with students with the most severe visual impairments. She is required by her district to teach concepts and skills beyond the academic core-curriculum arena, such as those tied to the Expanded Core Curriculum for Students who are Blind/ Visually impaired (ECC). Tammy has regular direct contact with her colleagues working in other articulation areas in the district and is evaluated by the district's Director of Special Education, with whom she has frequent direct contact.	Brian is a School Orientation and Mobility Specialist for a rural BOCES. He serves students from ages 3-21 in 10 districts. The closest distance he has to travel between sites is 27 miles; the longest is 112. Brian cannot spend a great deal of time at any one site, so he maximizes his time when he is there. His lessons occur in a variety of settings: he teaches not just in students' school environments, but also in their homes and neighborhoods and in the local and extended community. This may involve in-the-community instruction on crossing a variety of streets (including multiple lanes), the use of all types of public transportation, and traveling in rural areas. Brian primarily has contact with his colleagues via texts, emails, and occasional calls. He has no peers in his BOCES who do the same work that he does. He is evaluated by the Director of Exceptional Student Services for his BOCES who he sees at most twice a year.
School Physical Therapist	Mike is a physical therapist who provides services for 6-15 schools in the Denver metro area. He is able to participate in the development of team goals which focus on increasing accessibility for students to achieve better student outcomes. While he has access to peers and occasionally other administrators in charge of his evaluation, his evaluation is more focused on written material from IEPs and anecdotal record than on direct observations and professional interactions with his team.	Yolanda is a physical therapist who provides services in rural Colorado at multiple schools and is an employee of the local BOCES. Her schedule does not allow for her to be onsite regularly at any one school. She travels frequently and, at times, for longer distances. Often, travel between locations can take 1-2 hours. She does not have consistent communication with colleagues and at times is the only physical therapist on staff for the BOCES. She is unable to participate in a meaningful evaluation as she is not able to establish ongoing communication with the person responsible for her evaluation, nor does she have access to peer feedback.

Appendix C – Examples of Differing Contexts in Which SSPs Serve

SSP Work Context Examples		
School Psychologist	Genevieve is an itinerant school psychologist in northeast Colorado and provides services to many different school districts and school buildings, with each school district serving students from preschool through twelfth grade. This often involves traveling at least 3, 000 miles per month between districts and schools to provide such services as: psychoeducational evaluations (cognitive ability tests, measures of social-emotional functioning, behavior analysis, etc.) to determine eligibility for special education services; consultation to school personnel, other staff, and families regarding student learning and behavior; assisting in the development of individual education plans, behavior support plans, or intervention plans; and in-service professional development training. Her schedule is rarely the same from week to week or even day to day.	Terrance works in two schools in a suburban school district: one elementary school and one middle school. His days vary and each might include any of the following: conducting psycheducational evaluations (cognitive ability tests, measures of social-emotional functioning, behavior analysis, etc.), scoring those assessments and writing comprehensive psychological reports; participating in special education eligibility / IEP meetings; providing individual and/or group counseling; conducting suicide risk assessments; participating on a threat assessment team to evaluate the potential of violence in a student; consulting with educators and parents; providing crisis intervention to students and staff; and implementing and/or evaluating school-wide and classroom-wide interventions such as bully-proofing programs. Although he has regularly scheduled responsibilities on most days, some of these activities may have to take a back seat when student mental health issues need to be managed or crises occur.
School Speech and Language Pathologist	Susan is a speech-language pathologist who works in an early childhood educational setting. She serves students identified with a disability under a variety of disability categories. She works with 50-60 preschool-aged students to improve their understanding of language and their ability to express themselves in a clear precise manner. Her services are often provided in the preschool classroom during naturally occurring times for communication. Susan works collaboratively with the teachers to support language development within the classrooms. She conferences with parents to provide feedback about their child's progress and strategies they can use at home to support language development. Susan writes IEP goal and collects data on the progress students make.	Brandon is a speech-language pathologist who works for a BOCES on the eastern plains. His work week consists of going to a different school in a different district every day. He works with students from k-12 who have been identified has having speech or language concerns which could be from a variety of disabilities such as Autism Spectrum Disorders, Intellectual Disabilities, and Traumatic Brain Injury. Some of Brandon's students are learning to communicate with augmentative communication devices (an electronic speech communication system), some are learning strategies to assist them improve their academic achievement. Brandon is also responsible for special education evaluations for students referred due to concerns with their educational achievement. He works closely with the general educators to learn what concepts are being taught so he can support his students either in the classroom or in group intervention settings.

Appendix C – Examples of Differing Contexts in Which SSPs Serve

SSP Work Context Examples		
School Social Worker	Teresa is a school social worker who supports PBIS implementation at 8 elementary schools and 4 middle schools. She serves as a member of the district crisis team and the district behavior team. She is evaluated by the director of special education and works closely with building administrative teams. She works individually with students; runs ongoing groups; and is a member of the community wrap-around team with representatives from the department of human services, the community mental health center, the juvenile justice/court system, and schools. She travels to many schools and community sites (court, mental health, homes of students).	Andrew is a school social worker who works in an affective needs program that supports students with emotional disabilities. This classroom is located in a middle school. He links students from a self-contained setting to a general education setting. He runs parent groups; sits on the building problem solving, PBIS, and crisis teams; is a member of the district special education leadership team; attends court hearings; and supports family system meetings at the department of human services. He teaches a social emotional wellness class to students and provides professional development on behavior to the building and district staff. He is evaluated by his building principal.
School Orientation and Mobility Specialist	Tammy is a School Orientation and Mobility Specialist in a large suburban district. She serves all students in her articulation area with visual impairments (including blindness) ages 5-21 as well as other students with additional disabilities. She also serves the district as a certified Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments (TVI). As such, she is employed both as a related service provider and a special education teacher. Tammy primarily teachers group lessons in a variety of schools, and she also conducts individual lessons with students with the most severe visual impairments. She is required by her district to teach concepts and skills beyond the academic core-curriculum arena, such as those tied to the Expanded Core Curriculum for Students who are Blind/ Visually impaired (ECC). Tammy has regular direct contact with her colleagues working in other articulation areas in the district and is evaluated by the district's Director of Special Education, with whom she has frequent direct contact.	David is a School Orientation and Mobility Specialist for a rural BOCES. He serves students from ages 3-21 in 10 districts. The closest distance he has to travel between sites is 27 miles; the longest is 112. Brian cannot spend a great deal of time at any one site, so he maximizes his time when he is there. His lessons occur in a variety of settings: he teaches not just in students' school environments, but also in their homes and neighborhoods and in the local and extended community. This may involve in-the-community instruction on crossing a variety of streets (including multiple lanes), the use of all types of public transportation, and traveling in rural areas. Brian primarily has contact with his colleagues via texts, emails, and occasional calls. He has no peers in his BOCES who do the same work that he does. He is evaluated by the Director of Exceptional Student Services for his BOCES who he sees at most twice a year.



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