



Template for the evaluation of principals – A Guide for Superintendents

BY MARTIN WEINSTEIN



Although, the mandates and the very nature of MOLP's, QR rubrics, PPO's MOSL's, etc., have changed, our written accounting of the performance of the principals under our charge, should remain unchanged. More specifically, As Sgt. Joe Friday frequently implored on the television series *Dragnet*, "Just the facts." I thank one of my mentors and namesake - the other Martin Weinstein (former superintendent and tennis administrator/player "Extraordinaire") for drilling this quote and reference into my head during my salad years as a school administrator.

Granted, many of us oftentimes feel compelled to convey our "voice" in our evaluation of those reporting to us. Perhaps, this compulsion is an outgrowth of the desire to establish a non-adversarial rapport with those we lead. However, personalized documentation/memorialization of the performance of administrators can lead to potential grievances and dreaded lawsuits. Perhaps, the following can best illustrate

Sgt. Joe Friday's non-subjective approach to principal evaluation...

***Pre-Tenure Walk-Through:
November 20, 2010
8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Tenure Date: April 13, 2010***

November 21, 2009

Principal

Dear

Thank you for meeting with me on November 20, 2009 to discuss your vision for this, the 2009-2010 school year, and to jointly observe teaching and learning across your school. The primary purpose of this visit was to help inform my decision-making with regard to your upcoming completion of tenure (scheduled date: April 13, 2010). In addition to this visit, your last two Progress Report scores and most recent Quality Review score will be taken into consideration, as well. These were as follows:

2008-2009 Progress Report score:	Not Applicable for Phase-Out School
2008-2009 Quality Review score:	Not Applicable for Phase-Out School
2007-2008 Progress Report score:	<u>D</u>
2007-2008 Quality Review score:	<u>Proficient</u>
2006-2007 Progress Report score:	<u>C</u>
2006-2007 Quality Review score:	Not Applicable (score assigned to another principal)

We commenced the visitation of nineteen (19) classrooms at approximately 8:45 a.m. During these visits, I observed the following:

What the school does well

- The tone of the building was quite good. Students were generally well behaved during passings and within the classrooms.
- In two (2) classrooms, grade-level, standards-based student writing was conspicuously posted and found in the students' portfolios. In addition, detailed and appropriate teacher comments supported these students' efforts.

Areas of Concern

- There was limited evidence of instructional coherence and academic rigor across grade levels.
- The delivery of the teachers' instruction was not aligned with State standards or curriculum maps.
- There was narrow evidence of differentiation of instruction in the preponderance of classrooms.
- The pervasive pedagogical practice across all grades was anchored to workbook activities and related handouts.
- Apart from the intervention provided by paraprofessionals, teachers were not observed working with groups of students or, furnishing students with materials designed to support their individual learning needs.
- Teachers generally were unable to describe grouping arrangements within their classrooms. Upon questioning, many teachers stated, "High and low level students are seated together and these groups remain for all subjects." Only three (3) teachers were able to articulate in specific terms, student groupings based on current ARIS data or strategically planned formative assessments.
- Instruction tended to be teacher-dominated.
- Learning Objectives were found in many classrooms to lack specificity and clear expectations. In more precise terms, in very few classrooms were learning objectives posted which articulated the knowledge and skills students were to acquire by the conclusion of the lesson.
- Higher order thinking questions were not presented during the course of instruction.
- In seventeen (17) classrooms, display boards were adorned with handouts from textbook series, or multiple choice and short answer examinations. Teacher comments on these work products were generally restricted to terms such as "Very Good," "Nice Job," or the teachers placed check marks or numerical grades on the headers of these documents.
- Within the aforementioned classrooms, there was no evidence of the appropriate utilization of portfolios to serve as the basis for promotional determinations. The majority of these portfolios were replete with worksheets, in-class quizzes, graphic organizers such as "Four Square," a variety of Venn Diagrams and "rough draft" writing pieces (these writing pieces for the most part did not reflect current work). Eight (8) teachers were unable to produce student work for the students under their charge. Among these teachers, three (3) claimed that they just received portfolios to place the work of the students in, and in all cases the teachers experienced difficulty locating the students' work within the classroom.
- Manipulatives were not used during the course of instruction pertaining to Mathematics or Science on any grade level.
- The utilization of technology, such as computers was not observed in any classrooms.

- Support appeared to be in place for four (4) “At-Risk” students who were being serviced by a “pull-out” teacher.
- One of your two Assistant Principals was observed patrolling hallways and was not working in classrooms. The other Assistant Principal was not visible during the course of my visit.
- In one (1) classroom under the supervision of an Art teacher, students were calling out, and getting up from their seats at will, while this teacher struggled to gain control of the class.

At approximately 10:25 a.m., we began a discussion germane to your Principal Performance Review's 2009-2010 Goals and Objectives, the inquiry work of the school and your professional development foci. During the course of this discussion, I directed your attention to your school's 2007-2008 Progress Report. More specifically, I asked you to describe the measures you have put in place to leverage greater outcomes on the School Environment portion of this Report (school achieved 4.5 out of 15). You indicated many initiatives that you have started to put in motion to build a greater sense of community within the school for many constituencies. When asked about the Student Progress portion of this report (15.2 out of 60), you discussed in rather broad “brushstrokes” professional development offerings that have been provided to your staff. However, few of these “offerings” related to Mathematics. In this area, the students' gains were appreciably less than English Language Arts. In terms of your efforts pertaining to serving high-need students (Closing the Achievement Gap portion of this report), you did not describe any tangible programs or strategies to positively and systemically impact the school.

Our discussion relating to your Principal Performance Review goal, “To continue to increase the number of teachers using differentiated instruction in the classroom to enhance math and reading,” led to an agreement that this desired instructional outcome is not entrenched in the majority of classrooms on all grade levels. We also discussed the lack of goal attainment evidence for grades 4 and 5. The goals you set for these grades are as follows, “Maintain and continue to improve reading skills in grade 4” and the goal: “To improve the reading skills of Grade 5 students using a standards-based writing rubric.” We also examined the Quality Reviewer's recommendation “Further differentiate professional development and coaching to continuously extend and improve the skills of individual teachers.” You concurred that the professional development opportunities provided to your teachers have not effectively raised the quality and rigor of instruction in the school. Lastly, our conversation involving collaborative inquiry work did not surface any substantive finding that this is an embedded practice within the school.

Ms. , the granting of tenure is largely contingent upon a principal's demonstrated success in sustaining the academic growth of his or her school. Based on the school's past Progress Reports of “D” and “C”, your most recent Quality Review score of “Proficient” combined with the observations I made during my visit to your school on November 20, 2009, I have serious concerns regarding your efforts to build teaching capacity in your school, which is the underpinning of sound pedagogical practice, leading to desired student achievement.

I will be visiting your school, approximately one month prior to your tenure date of April 13, 2010. During the course of this visit, I will be re-examining the aforementioned “Areas of Concern,” in order to determine as to whether improvements have been made.

Sincerely,

Martin Weinstein
Community Superintendent

I have received this letter and I understand that a copy will be placed in my file.

Signature

Date

Cc: File