



Teacher Selection Tools for Level 4 Schools

Transforming Level 4 schools will require significant improvement in the effectiveness of the teaching staff in these schools. Research has shown repeatedly that the most critical variable impacting student learning is the quality of the classroom teaching. Level 4 schools will need to identify and retain their strongest teachers; develop, support and improve the performance of all teachers; and exit those teachers who are not demonstrating effectiveness with students.

Level 4 schools are likely to have significant vacancies to fill as a result of the re-application process or teachers who leave because of the school's Level 4 status. The *challenge* of filling these vacancies presents an *opportunity* to dramatically improve teaching capacity in these schools. Districts will need to support their Level 4 schools to attract experienced, effective teachers who want to help lead the transformation of the school, as well as to recruit promising new teachers who are committed to the mission of high achievement for urban students.

A critical factor this spring will be the school leadership's ability to **screen and select** teachers who have the core competencies needed to help transform the school. Successful "turnaround" teachers will need to have demonstrated effectiveness in enabling students to achieve high levels of academic growth and closing the achievement gaps. They must be relentlessly committed to high achievement for all students. They must be skilled at building strong relationships in diverse, multi-cultural settings with students, families, colleagues and the community. And they must have deep content and pedagogical knowledge and skills, yet constantly seek to improve their practice to maximize student learning.

Over the next month, the Department seeks to support districts in improving teacher screening and selection decisions by:

1. Defining a set of competencies required for successful "turnaround" teachers based on the growing body of evidence and research nationally, and
2. Providing tools (e.g. selection rubric, competency-based interview questions, sample reference check questions, etc.) for principals and HR staff to use these competencies to improve their teacher selection decisions.

These competencies will include evidence of the teacher's effectiveness based on student growth. As you know, the use of teacher effectiveness measures in recruitment, placement, evaluation, rewards and retention strategies is a requirement of the Federal School Turnaround grants. It is our intention that the teacher selection tools will enable Level 4 schools to begin the process of using measures of effective teaching and will also provide evidence of early implementation for purposes of grant compliance.

ESE plans to finalize the tools over the next month and roll them out in a series of small group training sessions in April. This teacher selection "tool-kit" will be dynamic and evolving, and we expect to refine, expand and improve the content and tools over the next year in partnership with local and national practitioners. Please complete the short attached survey to help us better understand how these tools might be useful to you this spring.

March 5, 2010



**Teacher Selection Tools for Level 4 Schools
Superintendent Survey**

District Name _____

Please indicate your interest in the following:

1. Would you, your principals, or your HR Director like to be involved in designing and developing these teacher selection tools so that they best meet your district's needs?
2. Would you, your principals, or your HR Director be interested in attending a training session on using the teacher selection tools?
3. Would you like to receive the teacher selection tools in an electronic/online format?
4. Would your district like additional hands-on assistance in training your principals and/or hiring teams to use the teacher selection tools?
5. What other areas of assistance around teacher recruitment and selection would be helpful to you?

HR Director or other point of contact for Teacher Recruitment and Selection at your District:

Name _____

Title _____

Phone _____

Email _____

*Please return to Deputy Commissioner Karla Baehr at ESE
781-338-3101 kbaehr@doe.mass.edu*

March 5, 2010