



A Union of Professionals

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Dear Douglas County Certified Employee,

As we move further into the 2010-11 school year, the Federation continues to work collaboratively with the district to fulfill the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed with the DCSD Board of Education in February 2010 around teacher evaluation. This has resulted in the implementation of CITE, or Continuous Improvement of Teacher Effectiveness. CITE is a **multi-year** plan to improve and adjust accordingly the evaluation system in Douglas County, with input from Douglas County teachers and administrators. To ensure the efficiency of this process, a CITE Implementation Team has been created, which is made up of district administration, staff, and the Federation. CITE's progress so far has resulted in:

- The use of Halogen (an electronic evaluation tool) district-wide
- The introduction of new four-tiered rubrics for all certified staff
 - Rubrics were designed by representatives of each certified employee group, i.e. classroom teachers, BRTs, Counselors, etc.
- Conversations at the school level between certified employees and their evaluators through self-assessment, goal setting and exploration with both the Halogen tool and new rubrics
 - Conversations should be happening between these individuals as they work together to understand the changes and how they impact evaluations of certified employees

As employee groups navigate these changes, I would like to make sure the following is **very** clear:

- This is a **multi-year** plan, and with that, changes and adjustments **will** be made accordingly as the entire district begins to use the new rubrics and Halogen
 - Different aspects of both the Halogen system and new rubrics will be looked at and adjusted as feedback from employees (both teachers and evaluators) is gathered by the CITE Implementation Team
- The first year is considered **“low stakes”** for this new evaluation system; it is designed for teachers and evaluators to learn the system, suggest changes, and adjust conversations to fit the new rubrics before any performance pay is tied to the evaluations
 - To be clear, no formal evidence or proof, beyond anecdotal and conversational, is required of teachers for their evaluator to set a final “determination,” i.e. Professional, Distinguished, etc.
- Most importantly, these conversations and explorations **must** encourage a change in schema around benchmarking and self-evaluation
 - One of the most important long-term goals of this system is to provide professional development around identified areas of growth as well as areas in which a teacher would like to move from “Professional” to “Distinguished”

Please do not hesitate to seek clarification around this new evaluation system either by contacting myself or using the resources under CITE on the district website. Changes in the way certified teachers are evaluated is a movement that is happening both state and nation-wide. It gives me great hope that Douglas County Certified employees are the ones designing these changes for our District.

Thank you for all you do each and every day,

Courtney Smith,
Douglas County Federation