

TO: All Faculty Receiving Final Evaluations
FROM: Douglas Rice
SUBJECT: Confidentiality of Final Evaluations

The new performance evaluation system is a radical departure from the old EBO system under which approximately 98% of us received the same final rating of "effective." The new elements of the performance evaluation system - such as choices (Level I or II, administration only or team observations), outside observers, unannounced observations, five different performance ratings, merit pay and loss of raises for less-than-effective performance, new standards and specific teaching behaviors, and piloting non-classroom teacher-scale educators - have raised many questions and added to the anxieties normally associated with evaluation.

I strongly believe that it is in our best interests to keep each individual's performance rating confidential. Each person's right to privacy far exceeds the rights of others to satisfy their curiosity. Furthermore, if individual ratings become common knowledge, then such information could easily become topics of conversation for Franklin parents and students. Also, discussions of ratings and comparisons could promote competitiveness rather than teamwork, and could promote judgemental attitudes toward our colleagues based upon very limited knowledge and no formal observations of their performance.

This rating is one of many you will receive during your professional career, and should be used, along with other evaluative information, to set your professional development goals. For any performance evaluation system to be effective, it must lead to the assessment and improvement of performance. Each of us must continually assess our strengths and our areas for improvement. We must utilize our strengths while developing the skills we need to enhance our performance. The administrative staff has tried to reach consensus on each rating after considering all relevant information gathered since the beginning of the year. We have also tried to follow the guidelines we have been given and which state that we must perform at or above a particular level on all eight standards in order to receive a particular rating. Furthermore, the "effective" rating represents a high level of performance and is the standard for Fairfax County Public Schools. An educator who achieves at this level on all eight standards is an excellent educator and is the kind of professional that you would want to work with your children.

Please feel free to discuss your rating and aspects of your performance with the administrator who supervises your department and with me. All of us need to continue discussions of performance as we seek ways to improve our service to our students and to the Franklin community. Please keep your rating confidential, respect the confidentiality of others, and use this performance information to set your professional development goals.