DRIVING EXCELLENCE

Evaluating Your Superintendent for District Success

NMSBA Category D • 1 hour virtual

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OPENING POLL

Start with the end in mind

Which outcome matters most in an effective superintendent evaluation?

A
Clear accountability

B
Professional growth

C
Board–superintendent trust

D
Progress on district goals

Respond in chat with A, B, C, or D.

SESSION OUTCOMES

What you will leave with

1. **Clarify** the board's legal, ethical, and governance responsibilities
2. **Align** criteria and evidence to district goals
3. **Practice** fair feedback using a realistic dilemma
4. **Commit** to a practical evaluation checklist

60 minutes • discuss • decide • apply

WHY THIS MATTERS

The New Mexico governance frame

Statutory training context

Section 22-5-13 NMSA 1978 includes effective governance and effective methods of supporting and supervising the local superintendent among required board-training topics.

PED Governance Standard D

Effective Governance and Superintendent Partnership: establish goals, evaluate performance, communicate collaboratively, and act as a unified governance team.

Board lens: governance sets the “what” and monitors results; administration determines the “how.”



QUICK SORT

Stay in the governance lane

BOARD GOVERNANCE

- Adopt goals and evaluation criteria
- Approve policy and contract terms
- Evaluate as a board
- Monitor agreed-upon evidence

SUPERINTENDENT ADMINISTRATION

- Lead daily operations
- Select strategies and staff
- Implement board direction
- Provide evidence and context

CHAT SORT: Who owns each action? 1) Select a principal 2) Approve goals 3) Rate superintendent performance 4) Choose an instructional strategy

Superintendent Evaluation at a Glance

Purposes and Goals

- Strengthen relationships
- Set clear expectations
- Track progress toward goals
- Provides dialogue mechanism

Assessment and Improvement

- Develop goals aligned to the district strategic plan
- Track progress toward goals with clear metrics
- Provides basis for fair assessment of strengths and weaknesses

Protect District's Interests

- Documents communication of concerns and support
- Completed by individual board members, then compiled into ONE document

SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION

What is your evaluation process?



DEVELOP

Instrument and set goals

MIDPOINT

Update Superintendent self-assessment

DISCUSSION

Board & Superintendent

END OF YEAR

Evaluation

THE GOVERNANCE RHYTHM

Evaluation is a cycle, not an event



ALIGN	COLLECT	DISCUSS	EVALUATE	SUPPORT
Goals + success criteria	Agreed evidence	Progress + context	Consistent rubric	Feedback + growth

Where does your board's cycle usually break down?

Choose one: alignment • evidence • discussion • rating • follow-through

FROM VALUES TO EVIDENCE

Build criteria that can be evaluated



District priority	What result matters?
Superintendent action	What leadership is expected?
Evidence source	What will demonstrate progress?
Performance level	What does success look like?

Quality test: Is it specific, observable, equitable, and tied to an agreed goal?

CALIBRATION CHECK

Evidence before judgment

Goal: Improve third-grade reading outcomes.

A Anecdotes from two community members

B One end-of-year score without context

C Multiple agreed indicators reviewed over time

D A comparison to a neighboring superintendent

Best answer: C. Strong evidence is agreed in advance, relevant to the criterion, and examined in context.

Indicators of an Effective Evaluation

Climate and Preparation

- Evaluation is conducted in a positive climate
- Board is familiar with the Superintendent's job
- Board provides frequent and timely feedback to the Superintendent

Fair and Supported

- The Board's judgments are supported with specific examples
- The evaluation focuses on performance results, not personalities
- The Superintendent is afforded an opportunity to respond to the evaluation

Appropriate Scope

- Evaluation is limited to those matters which are observable by the Board
- Evaluation is limited to those matters over which the Superintendent has authority
- Board supports the Superintendent in the achievement of educational goals

BREAKOUT

The moving-target dilemma

Scenario

In January, the board adds a new priority to the superintendent's evaluation. The priority was not included in the adopted goals or original rubric. Some members want it scored immediately; others want to defer it.

YOUR GROUP TASK

- Name the governance risk.
- Decide what the board should do now.
- Draft one sentence the board president could use.

Choose a recorder • Be ready to report in 60 seconds

A SIMPLE CONVERSATION FRAME

Feedback that builds accountability and capacity

OBSERVE

State the evidence without labels.

CONNECT

Link evidence to the agreed goal or criterion.

INQUIRE

Ask for context, barriers, and learning.

AGREE

Document next steps, support, and follow-up.

“The agreed indicator shows ____. How do you interpret the result? What support or adjustment will help us reach ____ by the next review?”

Common Evaluation Issues

- Fairness of criteria
- Timing
- Failure to give written direction
- 5 (7) different evaluators
- Opportunity to correct
- Evaluating for areas that do not belong to the Board
- Climate surveys
- Template issues



RISK → RESPONSE

Protect trust when the conversation is hard

Surprise ratings	Use scheduled check-ins and surface concerns early.
Inconsistent standards	Calibrate evidence and performance levels as a board.
Individual agendas	Speak through the board's adopted process and formal action.
Public discussion of confidential detail	Follow law, policy, contract, and counsel regarding confidentiality.
No follow-through	Document support, deadlines, and the next review point.

TRUE OR FALSE

Knowledge check

1	A superintendent should first see the evaluation criteria at the final evaluation meeting.	FALSE
2	The board should use agreed evidence connected to district goals.	TRUE
3	Individual members may substitute personal priorities for the board's adopted rubric.	FALSE

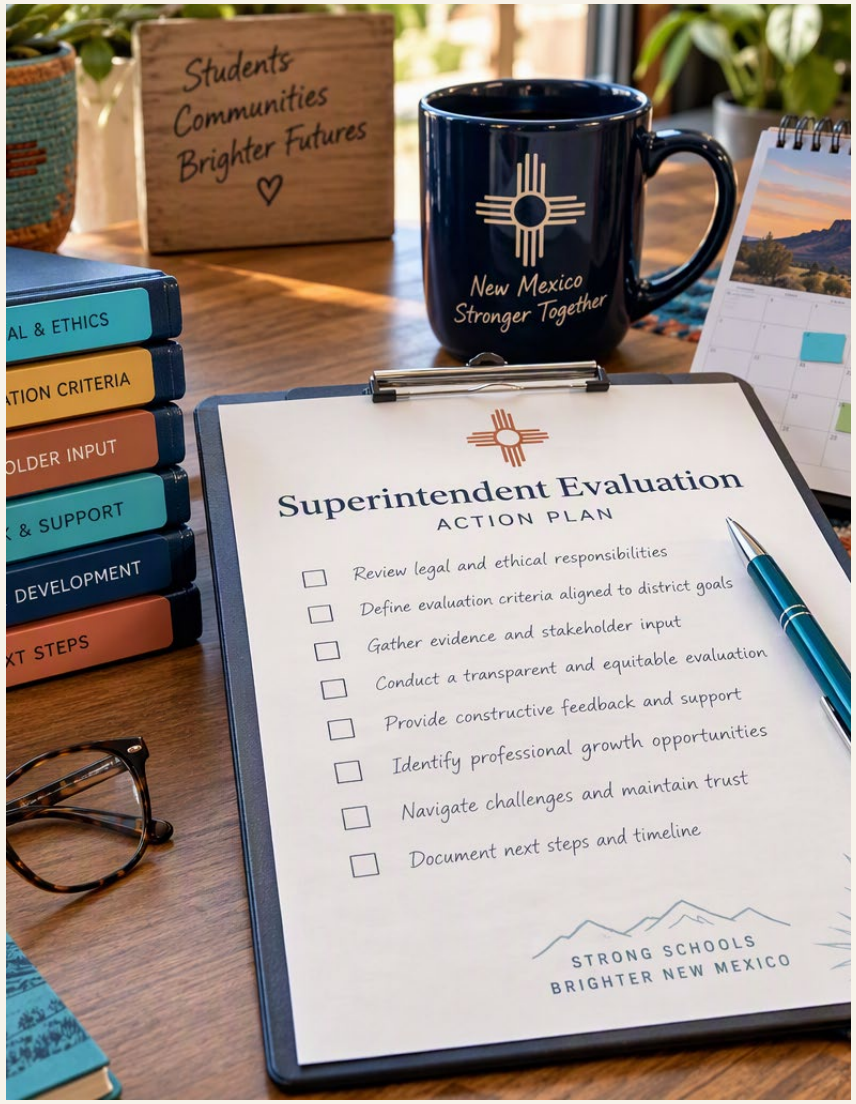
Explain the principle behind each answer, not just the answer.

INDIVIDUAL APPLICATION

Draft your board's evaluation checklist

- ☐ Goals and criteria are adopted and understood.
- ☐ Evidence sources and review dates are agreed.
- ☐ The board uses one consistent process and rubric.
- ☐ Progress conversations occur before the final rating.
- ☐ Feedback includes support, ownership, and follow-up.

Star one item to strengthen in the next 30 days.



ONE COMMITMENT

“One action I will take to strengthen our superintendent evaluation process is…”

Post your commitment in chat.

Clear expectations • Fair evidence • Growth-focused feedback



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