

TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

PREAMBLE

In order to accomplish our commitment to positively impacting student achievement by hiring and supporting quality teachers, principals, and staff, the Shelby County Schools (SCS) Board of Education sets forth in this policy its guidelines to providing every child an effective teacher every day, every year.

SCS reform efforts are designed to foster conditions essential for student growth and address the academic, physical, and mental health conditions hindering student achievement. Specifically, through reform efforts the district strives to increase TCAP scores, ACT scores, and high school graduation rates.

Effective teaching is instrumental in meeting this obligation. Effective teaching requires well-qualified and trained individuals. Understanding that qualifications and training will vary among teachers, just as each student's academic level varies, it is imperative that the Shelby County Schools (SCS) provide a clear, common definition of "effective teaching;" support teachers through meaningful professional development; implement a fair and informative evaluation process; and appropriately recognize and reward those meeting the definition, or appropriately sanction those who consistently fail to provide effective teaching.

The district will use a common, agreed-upon process to define and measure what it deems to be effective teaching; make smarter decisions about who teaches our students; provide better support to teachers; appropriately recognize and reward teachers who are exceeding the standard.; and improve the surrounding contexts for teachers and students to foster effective teaching.

I.PURPOSE

To establish the importance of effective teaching as the primary driver of student achievement.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all SCS teachers, administrators, and district staff supporting student achievement through teacher effectiveness.

III. DEFINITIONS

Student Learning and Achievement - The formation and expansion of what students know and are able to do over a school year and during subsequent years. Student learning and achievement includes a student's depth of understanding and the application and transfer of knowledge and skills.

Student learning and achievement also includes the performance and academic progress of all students (e.g., exceptional children, English Language Learners, students participating in enrichment and intervention programs) in relation to curricular mastery and defined standards, objectives, and educational goals that can be measured and documented over the course of one academic year or during subsequent years.

Teacher Effectiveness - The individual impact that the teacher has on student learning and achievement documented using both quantitative data (e.g., value added data, student test scores, individual and group performance assessment of students, student projects, and student classroom performance) and qualitative data (e.g., peer observations and surveys, observational information, or teacher professionalism, when applicable, from teachers, district curriculum specialists, principals, parents, and students).

Effective teachers also produce at least one year of student achievement gain for one year of teaching; implement effective practices for diverse learners; recognize and seek support for students' mental health and physical needs; maximize literacy learning; implement positive behavior supports and interventions; and use resources such as technology or manual resources to support curricular access, participation, and learning.

IV. POLICY STATEMENT

The district believes that every child can and should achieve his or her highest educational potential while in school. Shelby County Schools is dedicated to providing every student with the access, opportunities, and resources needed to learn and succeed. Student learning and academic achievement are substantially impacted by the effectiveness of the teacher. Therefore, Shelby County Schools believes that effective teachers are the greatest resource that the district can provide to students to ensure that each student has continuous and high-level learning opportunities and that students make and sustain academic achievement gains from year to year. The district seeks to cultivate student academic achievement by ensuring that all SCS students are taught by effective teachers every day.

The Board of Education supports SCS teachers in raising the level of academic achievement for all students by the following:

1. Committing to teaching as a valued, high-skilled profession. To this end, the district will gather meaningful teacher input before, during, and after the implementation of policies and programs affecting student achievement;
2. Defining and measuring effective teaching;
3. Recruiting and hiring effective teachers;
4. Providing support, training, and professional development to teachers to improve

effectiveness;

5. Retaining, promoting, and making tenure decisions based on teacher effectiveness;
6. Encouraging highly effective teachers to teach the students who exhibit the highest academic need;
7. Providing professional scale compensation to teachers;
8. Providing accountability through rewards and sanctions for teacher performance;
9. Improving the teaching environment, working conditions, leadership, and the climate and culture of schools;
10. Providing human and financial resources to teachers and schools to improve teacher effectiveness; and
11. Providing systems and processes to teachers and schools to facilitate implementation of programs and policies supporting student achievement.

With this district support for effective teaching, teachers are responsible for and shall be held accountable for the following:

1. Improving student achievement;
2. Following district policies and directives; and
3. Providing school and district leadership with information about the successes and challenges regarding their teaching in order to inform future teaching practices, instructional strategies, pilots, and processes.

Policy Monitoring

The Superintendent (designee) shall monitor implementation of this policy; review the methods and definitions for measuring teacher effectiveness with appropriate stakeholders; and provide to the Board every two (2) years a report on the effectiveness of teachers' impact on student achievement.

V. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The Superintendent (or designee) is responsible for implementing this policy.