



*Ministerial Growth
& Evaluation Process*



Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

COLOSSIANS 3:23-24

PHILOSOPHY

Christian educators have a unique privilege—sharing God’s saving message with those they are called to serve. They approach this role with humility, first toward God’s Word as their source of strength for spiritual growth and as their primary tool for equipping others. They also approach the educational portion of their tasks with a humility that recognizes the need for professional growth and commitment that seeks out ways to improve their educational practice.

PURPOSE

The press of daily tasks and responsibilities for Christian teachers can, at times, become a nearly overwhelming burden. In the daily throes of a sinful world, time in service to the church and God’s people can easily be consumed with a flood of urgent and important ministry activities. Proactively living out a commitment to lifelong learning,

continuous growth, and professional development, while important, do not carry the urgency of daily tasks and activities. As a result, sincere intentions for personal and professional development may be left unrealized without a clearly articulated and manageable plan.

To assist and support Lutheran congregations and their teachers, the WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools has developed the WELS Ministerial Growth and Evaluation Process . The process includes planning and evaluation tools that allow teachers and school leaders to plan, collaborate, and chart progress in the context of shared accountability and ongoing professional and spiritual growth. Such collaborative ministry improvement is critical for the continued health and wellness of Lutheran schools and may also be one of the most impactful steps teachers and leaders can take to strengthen the Christian education of the children and families they serve.

PROCESS

Four modules have been designed to equip WELS educators to implement the Ministerial Growth and Evaluation Process.

1 WELS Teaching Standards

The WELS Teaching Standards, outlines the Ministerial Growth and Evaluation Process which is built on our strongest asset and highest goal—to serve the Lord and others (Matthew 22:36-40). The process uses WELS Teaching Standards and research-based best practices aligned with the Bible and a uniquely Christian worldview to direct ministerial growth and accountability.

2 Coaching A Formative Process

Coaching: A Formative Process, introduces a Learning-Focused Teacher-Growth Model. It incorporates educator self-reflection and instructional coaching. This formative process is a streamlined research-based learning-focused model of effective instruction, collaborative practices, tools, and training.

3 The Ministry Development Plan

The Ministry Development Plan, presents an individual teacher's multi-year structured plan for professional and spiritual growth. The Ministry Development Plan cycle is flexible to coincide with licensure cycles and individual approaches to professional and spiritual growth. It aligns with school goals and focuses on improved student learning.

4 Evaluation A Summative Process

Evaluation: A Summative Process, incorporates research based tools to provide evidence based data for evaluation. This module will equip educators and administrators to discuss, record, and share accurate and usable performance data. This data informs what is shared on call lists.

SUPERVISION FOR TEACHER GROWTH AND EVALUATION CYCLE

The supervision for teacher growth and evaluation cycle makes classroom observation and coaching conversations the main focus for supervision. In this model there are several observations per year both walk through and traditional observation. This cycle also includes an annual Ministry Development Plan review and a formal review every three years. Note the Summative Evaluation may occur in any year of the Ministry Development Plan cycle. Below is a possible seven year cycle.



YOUR CALLING

God has known you before the beginning of time and by his grace, he called you to be his own! God knows you even better than you know yourself and has also called you into the teaching ministry to equip his lambs. Your calling before time, and your calling into the teaching ministry, bring great comfort as well as great responsibility. You serve not because of something inherent in you, but because God in his grace has chosen you and equipped you. He knows not only what you are, but also what you will be!

GROWTH

In our calling we are not yet all that we can be. It is true that we are fully redeemed children of God who have been washed clean in the blood of Christ. We are now clothed in Christ's righteousness and God's true dear children possessing a sure hope of eternal life. In the sense of your justification, God's work is complete.

However your life of sanctification is always a cycle of sin and grace as daily your new creation in Christ fights against your old sinful nature. Being called as a child of God and, in your case, as a Christian teacher does not mean that you are complete in your faith, gifts, and abilities. Rather, you seek to grow daily as you serve your gracious Savior.

MINISTRY TEAM

Alone. For most, it's not a word that excites the spirit and builds hope. You were never meant to be alone, and the very word can conjure feelings of fear and vulnerability.

You are not alone. God is always with you, and he has given you the gift of a family of called workers. Your faculty and staff are family from God. They each bring varying gifts needed for the health and ministry of your school team. Together, when you serve in humility with Christ as your loving head, you can continue to support and strengthen one another as you grow in your mutual ministries.



Read 1 Cor. 13:2, Eccle. 4:12, Proverbs 27:17, and 1 Cor. 12:14 for encouragement from God's word in building your school ministry team.

The WELS Ministerial Growth and Evaluation Process is meant to be a positive tool to assist you and your ministry team to grow in your lives of faith and ministry. This personal and team growth is aimed at strengthening your witness and instruction so that your students, God's lambs, might also grow in their faith, knowledge, and skills.

1 WELS Teaching Standards

FOUNDATION:

Christian teachers are faithful servants of Jesus Christ.

Called teachers are public ministers of the Word who faithfully serve (1 Cor. 4:2) with joy (Phil. 4:4) and dedication (1 Tim. 4:12).

Christian teachers...



know the subjects they are teaching.

The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines she or he teaches and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for learners.

know how individuals grow and develop.

The teacher understands how students learn and develop and provides instruction that supports their spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, and emotional growth.



understand that individuals learn differently.

The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and the barriers that impede learning and adapts instruction to meet diverse cultural, socioeconomic, and exceptional needs.

know how to teach.

The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners' spiritual growth and the development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.





know how to create and maintain a Christian learning environment.

The teacher uses an understanding of the proper use of law and gospel as well as individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that promotes Christian living, self-discipline, positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

communicate effectively.

The teacher uses effective verbal and non-verbal communication techniques as well as instructional media and technology to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.



know how to plan a variety of effective lessons.

The teacher organizes and plans systematic instruction based upon knowledge of God's Word, curriculum goals, pedagogy, subject matter, learners, and the community.

know how to assess student progress.

The teacher uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and promote the continuous spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development of learners.



know how to grow spiritually and professionally.

The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his or her choices and actions on others in the learning community, and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow.

are connected with colleagues and the community.

The teacher acts ethically and with Christian integrity to foster relationships with colleagues, other education professionals, families, the congregation, and the community to support student learning and well-being.



Visit cls.welsrc.net/mgep for complete WELS Teaching Standards and continuum along with standards for principals and early childhood directors.

Coaching A Formative Process

SUPERVISION FOR GROWTH

Supervision for Teacher Growth occurs when an individual serves as an instructional coach to a teacher and helps him or her reflect on practice and make informed plans for improvement. The purpose is to promote growth in professional practice.

Supervision for Teacher Growth outlines how principals, early childhood directors, mentors, or instructional coaches conduct teacher observation, gather teaching data, and conduct post-observation conferences to help teachers reflect on and grow in their ministries.

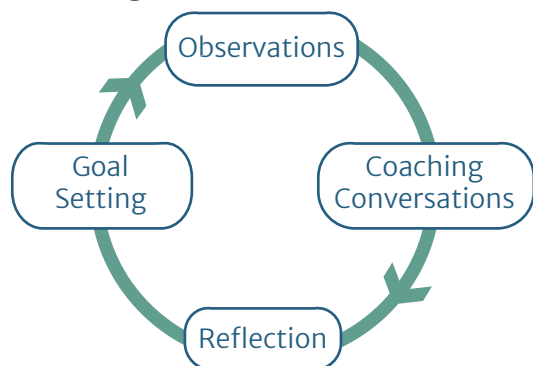
The recorded data from observations and coaching conversations provide context for the creation and evaluation of individual ministry development plans. In this way, teacher observations and coaching conversations are the engine that drive continual reflection and growth.

THE BIG PICTURE

Supervision for Teacher Growth fosters reflection by providing teachers with a second perspective. The WELS Teaching Standards and its continuum are useful for teacher reflection, but finding one's place on the continuum is difficult. People need help seeing themselves within the context of the big picture. An observer can capture data about one's teaching and reflect it back to him, so he can more clearly see where he fits on the continuum and can continually improve.

HOW IS SUPERVISION FOR GROWTH DIFFERENT THAN SUPERVISION FOR EVALUATION?

Teacher Growth is formative. It is entirely about teacher reflection and improvement while Teacher Evaluation is about rating performance. Rating, evaluating, or grading has no place in formative supervision because it hinders growth.



OBSERVATION

There are two types of observations: traditional and walkthroughs.

Traditional observations last for an entire class period or longer. They provide an instructional coach with a complete picture of a lesson and classroom routines. Walkthroughs, or quick visits, take ten minutes or less and give a snapshot of the classroom climate, routines, and lessons. Because they are short, they can be conducted frequently and cumulatively provide a well-rounded picture of the instruction.

DETAIL

Detail when observing is important. Record what you see or hear, and avoid writing down your interpretation. Let the data speak for itself. For example, you might write, "Three students did not begin the practice sheet when directed." You would not write your interpretation of the event, such as, "Several students are confused." There might be varying reasons why students did not begin, and you might not be aware of them all. If you stick to the facts of what you see and hear, the data is non-judgmental and the teacher can help interpret it in the post-observation conference.

When observing focus on the most important elements of the lesson. A pre-observation meeting offers an opportunity for the teacher to request an area of focus.

Here are some suggested, research-proven strategies to look for.

Environment

- Is Safe
- Supports Learning
- Students are Engaged

Learning

- Worthwhile Lesson
- Critical thinking
- Students know where they're going and how to get there

Assessment

- Frequent
- Feedback
- Evidence of Learning



Visit cls.welsrc.net/mgep for tools and templates for classroom observation.

COACHING CONVERSATION

During a coaching conversation the coach seeks to use the observation data in a non-judgmental way to encourage the teacher to self-reflect and consider areas for growth. The coach's job is to facilitate the conversation so it focuses on important teaching elements and student learning. Here are some things to keep in mind.

Non-judgmental Approach: Monitor your own bias, and remember to keep Luther's explanation to the eighth commandment in mind. Every lesson is affected by the students in the room and the events of the day. The WELS Teaching Standards and its Continuum provide an objective measure of good teaching and can guide your conversation. Finally, remember that the goal is to develop a growth-mindset rather than a perfect teacher.

Stance: The observer can take on various stances during the conversation, from instructive to facilitative. A coach is facilitative when they use questions to draw the conclusions and goals from the teacher based upon the factual data collected during the observation. A coach is instructive when they tell the teacher what the data means and what they need to do to improve. A facilitative stance instills self-reflection and ownership and is more likely to result

in the teacher taking improvement actions than an instructive stance. The stance that the coach takes depends upon the situation in the classroom and the experience of the teacher.

Positioning: The coach's physical presence is important in the conversation. The coach must fully attend to the teacher. It also helps to create a third point in the conversation by letting the data, the students, or student work serve as the evidence speaking to the teacher. This changes the coach's role from the evaluator to the partner in assessing the situation.

Language: Language can either encourage reflection or shut it down. The best way to encourage reflection is by using language that lets the teacher know you understand and trust her to assess the situation and make goals.



Watch examples of coaching conversations at cls.welsrc.net/mgep.

The Ministry Development Plan

THE MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The WELS Ministry Development Plan (MDP) serves as a formative growth tool WELS teachers. Its function is to assist teachers and those supporting them in purposely focusing on professional growth to enhance student learning and spiritual growth based upon the WELS Teaching Standards. In addition the MDP serves as a tool to promote and strengthen discussion and data gathering regarding pedagogical practices which will allow for positive teacher and school development and assist in providing data for meaningful summative assessment.

SHIFTS IN THINKING

The formative growth that is the goal of the MDP, involves two shifts in thinking.

The first shift is from an input model that measures strategies teachers implement to an output model that still values the implementation

of research-based practices, and incorporates tools to assess the effect of that implementation on student learning.

The second shift is one of emphasis. For most teachers, data collection and observation have traditionally been in the service of a summative evaluation. While the MDP is a potential data source for such evaluation, its primary purpose is teacher growth that results in increased student learning. As a result, the weight of emphasis shifts from teacher evaluation to teacher and student growth.

Learning and teaching are complex.

Teaching expertise can be learned, develops over time, and is not linear.

Growth occurs through reflection, feedback, and professional learning experiences.

Development depends on context (levels of support).

The Ministry Development plan incorporates both a professional component and a spiritual component.

Professional Component

A goal statement that addresses the teacher's professional growth and the anticipated effect on Student learning

A rationale that connects the goal to at least two of the WELS Teaching Standards and considers school goals.

An assessment process that documents implementation and shows effect of implementation on student learning.

Spiritual Component

A goal statement that addresses an area of emphasis for study and the anticipated effect on the teacher's ministry.

A rationale that connects the goal to the teacher's ministry and to the school's mission.

Summary data that includes personal growth and effect on the teacher's ministry.

Ministry Development Plans belong to the teacher for their own personal use and are developed in consultation with a principal, instructional coach, or mentor. Ministry Development Plans are not sent to WELS.

EMPHASIS FOR SPIRITUAL GOAL

Consider your role as a minister of the gospel, called to share the love of Jesus with children and families. Identify personal, formal, and professional study opportunities that will help you grow in your understanding and application of God's Word. Use the definitions below as you choose options that will enable you to grow in faith, be equipped for service, and guard against unbelief.

Personal study is done privately and enables daily contact with God's law and gospel.

Formal study is done together with others but does not result in a written record. Formal study provides the called worker with fellowship, mutual encouragement, and outside perspectives.

Professional study is conducted through an institution that provides a record of completion. Professional study encourages a deeper understanding of God's word by sitting at the feet of experts and completing assignments.

EMPHASIS FOR PROFESSIONAL GOAL

Consider areas of education about which you are passionate as well as those that challenge you. Use previous classroom observations reports, and Teacher Performance Assessments as tools to determine an area of emphasis. Identify ways in which this topic relates to your school's short and long-term goals.

Goal Example

I will engage in future learning and implement research-based strategies for struggling readers **so that** students show an increase in comprehension levels and gain confidence in their ability to understand and interpret text.

WELS Teaching Standard

Standard 2: Christian teachers know how individuals grow and develop.

Assessment

Samples of student work
Student Surveys



Review more examples, watch a goal setting conversation, and download a template for your own Ministry Development plan at cls.welsrc.net/mgep.

Evaluation A Summative Process

SUMMATIVE EVALUATION

Summative Evaluation Forms exist to provide feedback. They create an opportunity for a principal and teacher to openly discuss teaching and learning in the classroom. They are a reminder to praise God for identified areas of strength and seek God's help for areas that suggest improvement. They help teachers see where they are and where they can carry out professional growth goals to improve student learning and ministry within the school.

Summative Evaluation Forms provide data to the Commission on Lutheran Schools (CLS) to use as part of the call process. Evaluation forms make it possible for CLS to supply district presidents with candidates that meet a calling bodies' desired needs. This evaluation form represents a Spirit-motivated effort to meet the needs of our synod, respond to the needs of our called workers, and provide a measurable means of evaluation.

TIMELINE

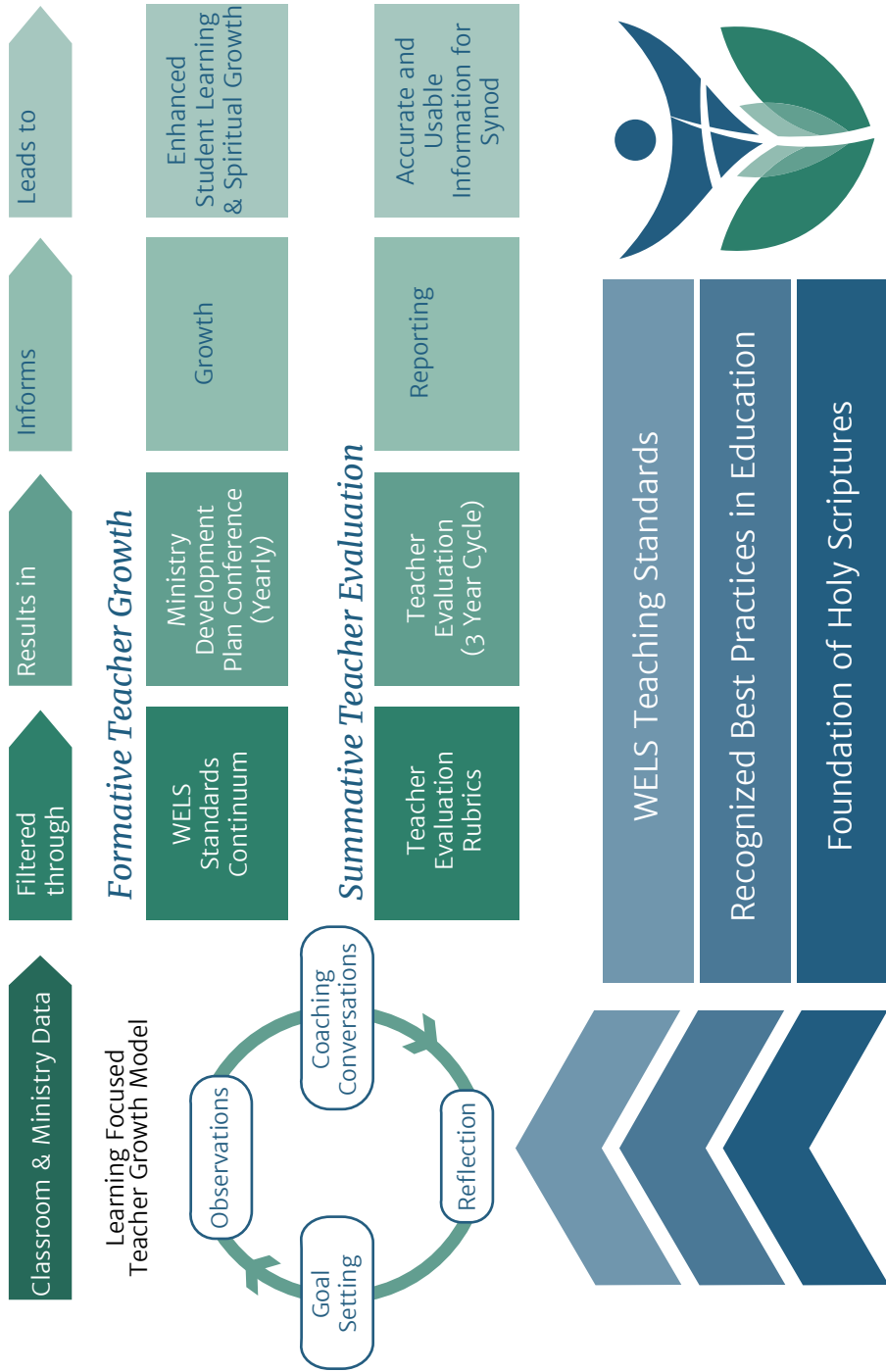
The Summative Evaluation is designed to be administrated every three years for most teachers. In unique cases, evaluation may take place more frequently.

THE FORM

The Summative Evaluation Form provided to administrators electronically offers opportunity for evidence based ratings in five categories: ministry traits, content knowledge, learner and learning, instructional practice, and professional responsibility. Evaluators should choose the performance rating that matches the teacher's level of performance as informed by data. If there is disagreement on the rating level teachers and administrators should seek a consultation with an agreed upon mediator such as pastor, school counselor, district coordinator, or circuit pastor.

*May the Lord
bless the use of
these tools and
the called servants
who use them.*

WELS Ministerial Growth and Evaluation Process





The WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools exists to guide and assist congregations in advancing the gospel of Jesus by providing resources, training, and personal assistance for starting and strengthening Lutheran schools.



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