



# NOVEMBER 2016

***"A great person attracts great people and knows how to hold them together."***  
***– Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe***

**SAT Online Testing Waiver:** If your district plans to apply for an online testing waiver in order to test paper/pencil this coming spring, you have until November 23. Principals will also want to be aware of a shift in College Board's policy for two-day consecutive testing that will hopefully make the process easier. For more information, please see the [MASSP website](#).

**Professional Development:** Time to work corroboratively with staff is at a premium making it is essential to be purposeful about the way professional development time is utilized. Building Principals need to "walk the talk" of highly effective instruction by modeling best practice during staff meetings and PD time: Begin your sessions with a clear learning target and success criteria, model research based instructional strategies, engage the staff, include formative assessment, check for understanding and reteach as needed...at the end of your "lesson" have staff debrief on the elements of effective instruction that you demonstrated and require an exit ticket that includes how the teacher will use one or more of the instructional strategies modeled during the session in their own classroom.

As you have been doing your classroom observations, are there any areas you would identify as ineffective or minimally effective on the evaluation framework for the majority of your staff members? How can you differentiate your PD time to support teachers with differing areas of weakness on the evaluation framework? If teachers seemed to be struggling with providing clear learning targets and success criteria – can you identify staff members who would be able to model this for their peers?

**Monitor Your Own Progress:** Are you moving forward in areas you will be evaluated on? With all the focus on teacher evaluations, the evaluations of Principals and other administrators often get left out of the conversation. Have you had a conversation with your central office about how you are being evaluated this year? Have you discussed how your district is going to comply with the new requirements? If not, your superintendent may thank you for bringing this to his or her attention since the same requirements that apply to your evaluation also apply for your superintendent.

**Performing Arts Programs:** Review schedule of Performing Arts programs to prevent conflicts. Hold in-school performances prior to evening programs to showcase your student performers.

**Holiday Policies:** Decorations, music, school events and contests... the holidays are around the corner and it is important to know your District's policies regarding holiday activities and displays. This information should be shared with staff verbally and in writing. It is important for staff to understand that holiday policies are intended to allow all students to feel welcome and a part of their school's environment. They are not intended to remove rights from others.



# NOVEMBER 2016

**Incident Weather Fan-Out:** Make sure that a building secretary is keeping an up-to-date list of staff phone numbers and that a notification plan is in place for school closings. If phone calls are no longer required due to automated systems, make sure the staff is aware of this change and what other systems you've put in place instead, like Facebook, Twitter, etc.

**First Quarter/Trimester Grades:** Form a data team comprised of your Assistant Principal(s), Counselor(s) and Special Education Supervisor. Request reports for all students that have:

- Failed two or more classes
- Four or more absences
- Been suspended for five or more days

As a team, discuss the reports and the students listed. Make note of those who appear on two or more of the lists. Divide up the students and make face-to-face contact to discuss your concerns over the next two weeks. Avoid having students miss class time by calling them to the office, conduct these meetings efficiently by walking around with a clipboard for notes and speaking to students privately in the hallway about their grades, attendance and behavior. Let them know that you are concerned about their success and ask them what support they may need to improve.

**Organize This Month's Meetings:** Here are two items you should consider adding to your staff meeting agenda this month.

- **Staff Meeting Icebreaker of the Month:** Extreme Rock, Paper, and Scissors – You play this energizer in the normal “rock, paper, scissors” fashion with a fun twist. Have the group pair off. Once the winner and loser are established, the loser must follow the winner around for the rest of the activity chanting the winner’s name. This continues until you are left with two people fighting with a large crowd of supporters watching.
- **New Teacher Meeting Topics of the Month and Mentor Teacher Checklist:** E-mail the mentor checklist to your mentor teachers each month to encourage conversation with untenured teacher mentees. (PHD)