

For Immediate Release

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## **Growing Number of Pittsburgh Teachers Recognized for Distinguished Performance – Earning Access to Rewards and Recognition from the District**

### *Additional Role Groups Ratings Based in Part on Student Outcomes This Year*

PITTSBURGH, July 2, 2015 —For the second year in a row, roughly 97 percent of District teachers demonstrated effective performance according to cumulative results from the 2014-15 Educator Effectiveness Reports. The District announced the results today that reveal a growing number of teachers performed at the highest level, with 49 percent demonstrating distinguished performance. This is the third year District teachers have received the reports, which, starting last year, are used for end-of-year teacher ratings under state law Act 82 of 2012. The District received a three-year approval from the Pennsylvania Department of Education to use its locally-developed system for ratings through the 2016-17 school year.

“Six years ago we set out to improve student outcomes through increasing the effectiveness of teacher practice. Today’s results mean that more teachers will now be able to take advantage of formal and informal leadership opportunities, advance to higher levels of compensation, lead professional learning, and experience recognition efforts led by the District,” said Superintendent Linda Lane. “More importantly, these results suggest that more District students are experiencing highly effective instruction, even while it may take some time before we see comparable gains in student achievement.”

### **More Teachers to Access Rewards, Recognition and Leadership Opportunities**

The District’s system for growth and evaluation was developed as part of a broader *Empowering Effective Teachers* Plan, which sought to increase student achievement by increasing teacher effectiveness and better leveraging the most highly effective teachers in the District. The District has implemented several opportunities to recognize and elevate teachers performing at high levels including access to higher earnings and leadership opportunities. Over the course of 10 years, highly effective teachers in PPS can earn up to \$100,000 based on their performance. Additional recognition opportunities now offered within the District include a reception that celebrates teachers performing at the top levels.

### **Distribution of Teacher Effectiveness**

Under state law Act 82, evaluations must be based 50 percent on teacher observation and 50 percent on student performance. Developed in collaboration with the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers (PFT), the District approach uses student feedback, student growth, and observation by school leaders as part of a holistic picture of educator effectiveness.

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Under Act 82, teacher performance is identified as either *Distinguished*, *Proficient*, *Needs Improvement* or *Failing* each year. In 2014-15, 97.1 percent of PPS teachers performed at the proficient level or above, up from 96.9 percent last year and 85.4 percent when looking at the 2012-13 preview results. In effect:

- 48.7 percent of teachers demonstrated performance that earned them *Distinguished* ratings, up from 22.5 percent last year;
- 48.4 percent of teachers earned *Proficient* ratings, down from 74.4 percent in 2014;
- 1.2 percent of teachers earned *Needs Improvement* ratings, from 1.5 percent in 2014; and
- 1.8 percent of teachers demonstrated performance that earned *Failing* ratings, from 1.6 percent last year.

Teachers whose performance is *Distinguished*, *Proficient* and *Needs Improvement* will be classified as satisfactory, and those who performed at the *Failing* level will be classified as unsatisfactory. In accordance with state law, teachers who performed at the *Failing* or *Needs Improvement* levels will be placed on a “performance improvement plan” to aid in improvement. Teachers with two consecutive years of unsatisfactory ratings will be subject to dismissal.

### **Additional Role Groups Ratings Based in Part on Student Outcomes This Year**

For the first time this year, 86 school leaders and 335 non-teaching professionals such as guidance counselors, social workers, and school nurses also received evaluations under Act 82.

As a result, ratings for these groups now include student outcomes in addition to observation of professional practice.

“It is our belief that every staff member plays an important role in helping our students reach their goals, and that professional growth across all roles will impact student outcomes,” said Superintendent Lane.

School leader evaluation in 2014-15 is based 70 percent on observation, 15 percent on teacher correlation ratings, and 15 percent on building-level results as specified by the state. In 2014-15 of school leaders:

- 39.5 percent demonstrated performance that earned them *Distinguished* ratings,
- 59.3 percent of earned *Proficient* ratings;
- 1.2 percent earned *Needs Improvement* ratings; and
- 0 percent earned a *Failing* rating.

Non-teaching professional evaluation is based 80 percent on observation and 20% on building-level results. Of non-teaching professionals:

- 33.4 percent performed at the *Distinguished* level;
- 66.3 percent earned *Proficient* ratings;
- 0.3 percent earned *Needs Improvements* ratings; and
- 0 percent were rated *Failing*

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