TOWARDS A TEACHER EVALUATION FRAMEWORK IN MEXICO: INTERNATIONAL PRACTICES, CRITERIA AND MECHANISMS

WORKSHOP SUMMARY RECORD

1 – 2 December, 2009

1. Introduction

On 1 and 2 December 2009, the Mexican Ministry of Education (SEP) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) jointly organized the workshop entitled “Towards a Teacher Evaluation Framework in Mexico: International Practices, Criteria, and Mechanisms”, as part of the OECD-Mexico Cooperation Agreement to Improve the Quality of Education in Mexican Schools. Nearly 200 representatives from federal and state educational institutions participated in the workshop, as well as Mexican and international experts, civil society organizations and members of the National Teachers’ Union (SNTE). The Minister of Education of Mexico was present for the opening of the workshop, the presentation of international experiences, as well as for the workshop conclusions presented in the final plenary session.

The following is a summary record of the proceedings of the workshop, divided into the following sections: overview of teacher evaluation, review of selected country cases, state-level practices, and workshop conclusions. An annotated agenda of the workshop is presented in Annex A.

2. Overview of Teacher Evaluation

The overarching purpose of teacher evaluation is to enhance student learning outcomes. Although approaches to teacher evaluation vary greatly across countries, the following are some of the key elements that must be considered: (i) design and governance; (ii) evaluation procedures; (iii) competent evaluators and effective feedback mechanisms; (iv) uses and consequences of evaluation results; and (v) implementation. Teacher evaluation is generally conducted for two purposes: accountability and teacher development through feedback mechanisms and access to opportunities for improvement. Establishing teaching standards or a ‘framework’ of good teaching practices may form the basis of teacher evaluations,
through initial education, to selection, recruitment, promotion, incentives, retirement and even separation from the system. In-service teacher evaluation refers to the mechanisms through which classroom teachers are assessed and evaluated. There are multiple tools that can be used for in-service teacher evaluation: classroom observations, teacher interviews, teacher portfolios, measures of student performance, teacher tests or questionnaires and surveys. To properly consider teacher evaluation within a broader evaluation system, it should be linked to student assessments, school performance assessments, and evaluations of the educational system as a whole.

Evidence from the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) provides insights from random samples of teachers in 23 countries into teacher’s attitudes and opinions regarding teacher evaluation. TALIS results show that for Mexican school leaders, subject knowledge, classroom management, relations with students, and pedagogical knowledge are the four most important aspects of a teacher’s performance that are assessed through appraisal and feedback. Teacher appraisals are most often conducted by school principles. Over 74% of Mexican teachers, well above the TALIS country average of 37%, report that appraisal and feedback led to an improvement plan for their teaching. TALIS evidence also supports the idea that stronger links between school evaluations and teacher evaluation result in a higher likelihood that teachers will modify teaching practices. Significantly, results from TALIS suggest that Mexican teachers are open to being evaluated: teachers report that evaluation and feedback enhance job satisfaction and strengthen their trust in their own abilities, without undermining job-security.

3. Review of Selected Country Cases of In-Service Teacher Evaluation

In this session of the workshop, invited international experts provided examples of in-service teacher evaluation methods from six OECD and non-OECD countries: the U.S., Chile, Portugal, Singapore, Brazil and Sweden. The following are some of the more salient characteristics of the experiences presented:

**U.S.:** In a highly decentralised educational system (with federal, state, and district jurisdictions), the cases of Denver, Delaware, and Texas illustrate the importance of piloting teacher evaluation and incentives programs, before permanent policies are put in place at the state or national level. Teacher evaluation programs should be periodically evaluated and this should be built into the design of the implementation process. Specifically, the experience from Denver highlights the importance of stakeholder engagement and dialogue throughout the design, planning, and implementation process. For its teacher evaluation system, Delaware uses teacher classification (i.e., new, tenured, and those that require assistance and support) to offer appropriate teacher improvement options. The teacher evaluation and incentives system in Texas is highly dependent on student performance data, using the school as the unit of accountability for teachers and principals.

**Chile:** There are two separate and parallel systems of teacher evaluation in Chile: one focused on individual assessment of teachers for improvement, and another that uses the school as the unit of accountability to collectively reward student performance. Teacher evaluation in Chile is based on both a national framework of good teaching practices, as well as on student performance data. The combination of individual/group evaluation mechanisms has evolved over 15 years, resulting in a system that teachers accept and are knowledgeable regarding the evaluation processes and their consequences. One of the challenges currently being discussed in Chile is how to better link teacher development and training options to the evaluation process.

**Portugal:** Teacher evaluation in Portugal reflects a reform process that attempts to learn from previous unsuccessful policies and adjust the system accordingly. Insufficient investment, for example, in the training and development of teacher evaluators resulted in high political and economic costs for the government. Teacher evaluation is conducted for all teachers (tenured and those under temporary contract), through two separate systems, one for accountability and another for teacher professional development.
Singapore: Teacher evaluation in Singapore can be characterised as a highly centralised, robust teacher performance management system, covering the full teacher career cycle: from teacher education, to recruitment, selection, promotion, incentives, sanctions and retirement. The system emphasises continuous improvement of teachers and schools, including those that are already performing well, through a mixture of both financial and non-financial incentives. As in Chile, teachers in Singapore that repeatedly perform poorly in evaluations may face sanctions and even removal from their teaching positions.

Brazil: Teacher evaluation in Brazil is implemented based on a highly decentralised national evaluation framework, with state and city-level design and implementation. Since 2006, Brazil has instituted Prova Brasil, a standardised student assessment analogous to the ENLACE assessment in Mexico. Student performance data, however, are used collectively to identify and evaluate school performance. Incentives for teachers are based on the school as the unit of accountability. National targets for improvements in student learning outcomes are translated into school-specific targets that are defined by principals and teachers.

Sweden: In the context of a highly decentralised educational system, teacher evaluation in Sweden exists largely at the school-level. Teacher improvement and professional development, therefore, also take place largely at the local level. Salary negotiations, for example, take place between individual teachers and school management, in a process that is explicitly based on trust and transparency.

4. In-Service Teacher Evaluation in Mexico: State-level Experiences

In this session, education authorities from the Mexican states of Chiapas, Nuevo Leon, and Veracruz presented teacher evaluation and rewards programs that are being designed and implemented at the local level. All three of these experiences use student performance data provided by the ENLACE assessment as an important element for teacher and school evaluation and rewards programs. The following are some of the salient characteristics of these experiences:

Chiapas: The Secretary of Education of Chiapas presented the evaluation system that is currently being designed to link student performance data from ENLACE to school evaluation and teacher rewards. Chiapas is an illustrative example of the high-degree of diversity that exists within and between states: six indigenous languages are spoken, more than 56% of localities in Chiapas have less than 500 inhabitants, and more than 50% of schools have a single teacher. One important element is that educational authorities are using ENLACE results to identify the 10% poorest performing schools in order to provide special assistance and interventions.

Nuevo Leon: Teacher evaluation in this state is based on a multi-stage selection process that begins with teachers’ self evaluation. This system has proven effective in identifying and rewarding high-performing teachers that receive an ‘academic excellence’ award only after passing several stages of a peer-review process. In order to have data on student performance that can be used by school principals and teachers for improvement processes during the course of a single school year, Nuevo Leon has adopted an ‘intermediate ENLACE’: results are provided to school staff three months after the exam so that improvement and/or corrective measures can be implemented accordingly.

Veracruz: ENLACE results are the basis for the teacher evaluation system in Veracruz, focused on teacher development for continuous school improvement. Education authorities in Veracruz have developed educational materials for teachers and principals that provide support for individual and group-based improvement. Individual schools and teachers are given the freedom to develop their own improvement plans, but with the clear goal of enhancing student learning outcomes. Opportunities for professional development and teacher training are important consequences of the evaluation process.
5. Towards a Teacher Evaluation Framework in Mexico: Workshop Conclusions

To ensure that participants had sufficient opportunities to discuss and comment on the content of the workshop, a session was devoted exclusively to group work among participants. In the session, seven groups were formed to discuss and identify elements from the international and state-level practices that could form part of an in-service teacher evaluation framework in Mexico. Given the richness of the group discussions, a detailed summary from the seven work groups is presented in Annex A. The following workshop conclusions, presented in the concluding plenary session of the workshop, are taken from those elements that were common across the presentations and group discussions:

- **Designing, planning and implementing a teacher evaluation system is a complex, multi-phase and multi-actor process.** A teacher evaluation system is a key policy instrument to improve the quality of education offered in schools. The design and implementation of a teacher evaluation system should consider short-term actions and results, as well as a longer-term vision and a roadmap that can guide the process.

- **There is no single-model of a teacher evaluation system that can be adapted and implemented in Mexico.** There are, however, practices and experiences that can offer specific elements and lessons learned that can be considered for a teacher evaluation system in Mexico. Relevant elements of teacher evaluation systems from other countries will have to be commensurate and adapted to the specific characteristics, constraints and culture of Mexico.

- **Given the large diversity of possible policies, practices, and instruments for teacher evaluation, piloting an in-service teacher evaluation framework may be a cost-effective and valuable exercise before a full national program.** Piloting allows for controlled and detailed monitoring to identify results and impacts, including expected or unexpected consequences of the policy. Piloting also allows authorities to adjust and take corrective measures if necessary.

- **In order to better communicate to teachers what is expected of them, teacher standards and frameworks of good teaching practices can be valuable tools on which to build certain aspects of the teacher evaluation system.** Standards of good teaching practices (such as those developed by C. Danielson), encompass different aspects: planning and preparation, classroom environment, classroom instruction, and professional responsibilities. To evaluate compliance with these standards, as well as to identify areas for improvement, the capacity to conduct in-class observation, peer and parent interviews, self-evaluation, and student and teacher portfolio evaluation, for example, may be needed but may not readily exist at the local level.

- **Standards and frameworks of good teaching practices should be linked to other forms of evaluation** such as curricular, school performance, and student assessments. Teacher evaluation, therefore, should form part of a policy framework aimed at continuous improvement and accountability. There is an opportunity to promote continuous improvement processes at the school level if the school is considered as one of the units of accountability of a teacher evaluation system.

- **Teachers in Mexico are open to evaluation, as long as the process is fair, transparent, credible, and as long as opportunities for improvement and professional development are linked to the evaluation process.**

- **An in-service teacher evaluation framework in Mexico should include the periodic and objective evaluation of the system as part of its initial design and budget considerations.** This process is crucial to allow for improvement of the policy framework and to build credibility.
of the in-service teacher evaluation system. Evidence and evidence-based decision-making can also facilitate dialogue and consensus among stakeholders.

- **International practices demonstrate that teacher evaluation systems require a collective process of stakeholder engagement, communication, and acceptance.** Federal and state educational authorities, teachers’ unions, researchers, experts, parents, and civil society organisations should have the opportunity to contribute in the long-term process.

- **A key element for any successful teacher evaluation system is the proper training and development of evaluators.** If the evaluation will be school-based and internal, principals and teachers should be trained and qualified to conduct the evaluations. If it is external, competent and trained personnel should be certified to carry out such an important and sensitive function, as objectively, fairly and accurately as possible.

- **Student performance data can be used within a teacher evaluation system.** There are conceptual as well as practical challenges involved with using student performance data to identify the contribution of individual teachers to student growth. Nevertheless, international practices and experiences from Mexican states demonstrate that student performance data can be used as an indicator of school and teacher performance, especially when complementary criteria are also used. Risks associated with high-stakes uses of student performance data (i.e., teaching to the test, exclusion of low-performing and/or disadvantaged students, copying, among others), need to be adequately addressed.

- **Teacher evaluation in Mexico should consider both the need for accountability measures as well opportunities for teacher development and improvement.** The outcomes and consequences of teacher evaluation processes should be clearly articulated and communicated to teachers and school staff. Incentives that are tied to teacher evaluations should consider both financial and non-financial rewards. Financial incentives should not be permanent, but should be linked to teacher performance and provided on a temporal basis. Feedback mechanisms are vital to provide teachers with clear guidance on aspects that require improvement.

- **In-service teacher evaluation in Mexico will need to consider and address the diversity of teachers, schools, communities and contexts.** A credible and accurate evaluation system will need to account for such varying conditions as those that exist between a multi-grade, single-teacher school in a rural indigenous community, and a well-staffed school in an affluent urban neighbourhood. Feedback mechanisms, as well as the opportunities for professional development will need to take into account these differences.

- **For an effective teacher evaluation framework within Mexico’s decentralised education system, a national framework and guidelines may serve to orient and guide state-level implementation of the evaluation process.** A teacher evaluation system in Mexico should be comparable across regions and states, but should also allow for state-level adjustments to ensure viability and increased reliability.
ANNEX A

ANNOTATED AGENDA OF THE WORKSHOP
Towards a Teacher Evaluation Framework in Mexico:
International Practices, Criteria and Mechanisms

Annotated Agenda
1 – 2 December 2009

Salón Juárez, Hotel Meliá Reforma
Paseo de la Reforma 1, 06030
Mexico City, Mexico

Expected Results from Workshop:

- To identify specific elements that can contribute to the design of an effective and viable in-service teacher evaluation policy in Mexico, taking into account a review and analysis of international models.

- To identify relevant criteria and assessment instruments that can be deployed gradually in the implementation of a teacher evaluation framework in Mexico.

- To identify the uses of instruments, including ENLACE, employed by state educational authorities for assessing teacher performance, and to identify priority areas for further development.

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Tuesday, 1 December 2009

**Day 1**

08:00 – 09:00    Participant Registration and Welcome Coffee

**SESSION 1. TEACHER EVALUATION: Concepts, Criteria, and Overview of International Practices**

The purpose of this session is to provide a conceptual framework of teacher evaluation, considering that the goal of teaching is to enhance student learning outcomes through effective teaching practices. An overview of international practices will provide examples of how countries use different types of assessments (summative and formative), with different criteria and instruments to assess in-service teacher performance: measures of student performance through standardised tests and other means, classroom observation, teacher portfolios, peer reviews, teacher examinations, and interviews. The presentations will touch upon the variety of uses and consequences that in-service teacher evaluations have in different settings. This session should conclude with a working-definition of in-service teacher evaluation that will facilitate the discussions of the following sessions.

**Session Chair:** Carlos Mancera, Chair of OECD Steering Group on Evaluation and Incentive Policies

09:00 – 09:30    **1.1 Opening Remarks:** Background, expected results and working methods

- Carlos Mancera, Chair of the OECD Steering Group
- Aart de Geus, Deputy Secretary General of the OECD
- Alonso Lujambio Irazábal, Secretary of Public Education - Mexico

09:30 – 10:45    **1.2 Teacher Evaluation: Conceptual Basis, Criteria, and Instruments**

- Paulo Santiago, Senior Policy Analyst, OECD: *Teacher evaluation within a comprehensive framework*
- Michael Davidson, Senior Policy Analyst, OECD: *General overview of different approaches to teacher evaluation through evidence from TALIS*
- Question and answer session
SESSION 2. INTERNATIONAL PRACTICES OF IN-SERVICE TEACHER EVALUATION

This session will provide examples of in-service teacher evaluation methods from six OECD and non-OECD countries: the U.S., Chile, Portugal, Singapore, Brazil and Sweden. The country cases will illustrate common issues that teacher evaluation systems must address: activities considered to improve the quality of teaching, role of standardised student assessments and other measures of learning outcomes, national framework vis-à-vis local implementation, institutional and technical capacity requirements at the school and supervisory levels, sufficiently robust information systems that link student/teacher/school data, and the weight of different criteria in assessing teacher performance. The country cases will also provide examples of the consequences and uses of teacher evaluation results, ranging from financial incentives (e.g., U.S., Brazil, Chile), to career development and training opportunities (Singapore and Portugal). The country cases should assist in answering key questions that are of particular importance for Mexico: What are the drawbacks and strengths of evaluation systems used for different purposes (e.g., accountability, career development and teacher training)? How can a national teacher evaluation framework provide sufficient direction and flexibility for local implementation?

Session Chair: Carlos Mancera, Chair of OECD Steering Group

10:45 – 12:00  2.1 Performance measures: Criteria and instruments, including standardised tests
   - Examples from Denver, Texas, and Delaware in the U.S.: Susan Sclafani, National Center for Education and the Economy (NCEE), U.S.
   - Approaches to Teacher Evaluation in Chile: José Marcelo Henríquez D., University of Chile
   - An OECD Review of Teacher Policy in Portugal: Paulo Santiago, OECD
   - Questions

12:00 – 12:15  Coffee Break

12:15 – 14:00  2.2 Performance measures (continued): Criteria and instruments, including standardised tests
   - Teacher Evaluation in Singapore: Lee Ong Kim, National Institute of Education Singapore
   - Teacher Evaluation and Rewards in Brazil: Maria Helena Castro, State University of Campinas and Gabriela Miranda Moriconi, National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (INEP)
   - Teacher Evaluation in Sweden: Ulf Fredriksson, Mid Sweden University
   - Questions and Discussion

14:00 – 15:00  Lunch Break

SESSION 3. TEACHER EVALUATION IN MEXICO: Assessments and State-Level Experiences

Many of the challenges facing other countries in implementing in-service teacher evaluation systems are also present in Mexico. Constraints on the capacity to carry out robust, objective, comparable, and reliable teacher evaluation processes at the local level, for example, are present in Mexico, as well as limits regarding information and data systems to identify, link, and monitor
student progress and individual teachers. Although important efforts have been made to reward teachers in Mexico for meeting certain criteria since the early 1990s, student learning outcomes have not been the principal element in teacher evaluation in Mexico. Nevertheless, teacher evaluation and rewards programs that include student performance are being designed and implemented in a number of Mexican states. In this context, the ENLACE exam may be a factor that provides an opportunity for Mexico to design and implement a gradual, multi-year teacher evaluation framework that involves national guidelines with state-level implementation. The purpose of this session is to identify local practices linking student learning outcomes and other complementary criteria to teacher performance and school rewards programs that can serve to inform the design of a national in-service teacher evaluation framework for Mexico.

Session Chair: Carlos Mancera, Chair of OECD Steering Group

15:00 – 17:00  **3.1 Teacher Assessment practices in a Sample of Mexican States**
- General overview of teacher evaluation in Mexico: Margarita Zorrilla, INEE and OECD Steering Group
- Teacher Evaluation Practices in Veracruz: Planning, Evaluation and Educational Administration Unit and Basic Education Subsecretariat, Education Secretariat of Veracruz
- Teacher Evaluation and Rewards Practices in Nuevo León: Educational Planning and Coordination Unit, Education Secretariat of Nuevo León
- Teacher Evaluation for Improved Learning Outcomes in Chiapas: Secretary of Education of Chiapas
- Questions and discussion

17:00 – 18:00  **3.2 Plenary Comments of First Day and Overview of Day 2**

18:00 – 18:30  Break

18:30 – 20:00  **Book Presentation Evaluating and Rewarding the Quality of Teachers – International Practices**
- Welcoming remarks by Carlos Mancera, OECD Steering Group
- Michael Davidson, OECD Secretariat
- Susan Sclafani, Editor and Lead Author, member of the OECD Steering Group and NCEE
- Lucrecia Santibáñez, OECD Steering Group
- Closing remarks from Jorge Santibáñez Romellón, Chief of the Unit for Planning and Evaluation of Education Policies, SEP
  Wine reception to follow

**Wednesday, 2 December 2009**

**Day 2**

**SESSION 4.  CRITERIA IN MEXICO FOR TEACHER EVALUATION: Identifying Challenges & Opportunities**

The purpose of this session is to draw together the previous discussions on international practices and state-level experiences to identify relevant and operational elements to contribute to the design of an effective in-service teacher evaluation framework. Working groups will be formed that will discuss the
three topics outlined below and report their findings in a plenary discussion. The basic premise of this session is that a teacher evaluation framework can be designed and gradually implemented in Mexico, beginning with viable and achievable goals in the short-term, while working towards a more robust framework in the longer-term.

Session Chair: Margarita Zorrilla, Member of OECD Steering Group

09:00 – 09:45  
4.1 Summary of Key Elements from Day 1 and Preliminary Conclusions from OECD Steering Group on School Leadership and Teacher Policy  
– Carlos Mancera, OECD Steering Group  
– Teacher evaluation as part of teacher professional career paths: Ulf Fredriksson  
  *Mid Sweden University*

09:45 – 11:45  
4.2 What Scenarios of Teacher Evaluation in Mexico? (Working Groups)  
- Elements of international and state-level practices that can be effectively used in the Mexican context  
- Constraints that will have to be addressed (methodological and administrative)  
- Opportunities for a gradual, multi-phase approach

11:45 – 12:00  
Coffee Break

12:00 – 13:00  
What Scenarios of Teacher Evaluation in Mexico?  
  Plenary Presentation of Results from Working Groups

13:00 – 13:30  
Plenary Discussion

**SESSION 5.  TOWARDS A TEACHER EVALUATION FRAMEWORK IN MEXICO:**

Workshop Conclusions

14:00 – 14:30  
5.1 Conclusions and Concluding Remarks  
– Carlos Mancera, OECD Steering Group  
– Susan Sclafani, OECD Steering Group and NCEE  
– Michael Davidson, OECD Secretariat  
– Alonso Lujambio Irazábal, Secretary of Public Education, SEP

1500 – 1600  
*Lunch*

The following documents and publications were made available at the workshop:

- “Los docentes son importantes”, (OECD, 2008)
- Teacher evaluation: A conceptual framework and examples of country practices (OECD, 2009)