

## **ACCOUNTABILITY PRINCIPLES**

New provisions for educator accountability must accompany the investment of additional resources in Pennsylvania's public schools. Accountability is best pursued in partnership with school boards, teachers and their unions, and administrators. The new rules must be fair to educators and credible to the public, focused on improving student achievement and created according to the following principles:

### **THE CONTEXT OF ACCOUNTABILITY**

Accountability must be implemented within a system of high standards for all students, with annual testing to measure student learning, and where the standards, assessments and curriculum are aligned.

### **THE UNITS OF ACCOUNTABILITY**

Accountability exists on four levels: the individual educator, small groups of educators within a school, schools and school districts. Accountability at each level must be appropriate to the unit's responsibilities and authority.

### **EVALUATION**

Multiple measures must be used to evaluate teachers and administrators. For the first time, however, student-learning outcomes must be included as one of these elements, and they must be used in a way that measures annual growth in student achievement rather than simple test scores.

### **CAREER ADVANCEMENT AND COMPENSATION**

Teachers and administrators must have opportunities to advance their careers and enhance their compensation based on their own professional accomplishments – beyond their years of experience and degrees earned – and the success of their group, school or district in increasing student achievement. A guiding tenet in this area must be that educators never have to compete against one another for a fixed sum of money; instead, all educators who achieve the agreed standards should have access to set rewards.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

School districts must provide, and educators must be held responsible for participating in, opportunities for research-based professional development that encourage continuous collaboration, end the isolation of teaching, build learning communities and are based on the data-driven needs of students and schools.

### **EDUCATOR QUALITY**

Educators who are performing below a satisfactory level must have access to remediation, with job termination for those who do not sufficiently improve. In addition, educators new to the profession should receive intensive and ongoing support to ensure their success.

### **SUCCESSFUL SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS**

The performance of schools and school districts should be measured based on whether their students are making at least a year's worth of academic growth each year and, over time, making progress toward standards. Other performance measures – such as graduation and attendance rates – should also be considered.

### **UNDER-PERFORMING SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS**

Schools and districts that are not meeting their student learning goals must receive outside help from qualified advisors. Those that continue to fail their students should face loss of decision-making powers and, ultimately, may be reconstituted or closed.