

► Include the Association in the Evaluation Process

The Teachers' Tenure Act contains important information regarding your status as a Probationary teacher. The following is a list of some of the things you need to be familiar with:

- If you were hired after July 19, 2011, you have a **five** year probationary period.
- You should be provided with an Individualized Development Plan (IDP) that you AND your administrator worked on collaboratively.
- You should be provided with an annual year-end performance evaluation each year during your probationary period.
- In addition, your annual year-end performance evaluation should be based on classroom observations and should include an assessment of your progress in meeting the goals of your IDP.
- Lastly, in order to successfully complete your probationary period, you must be rated as effective or highly effective on your three most recent annual year-end performance evaluations.

PA 101 of 2011 made evaluation a prohibited subject of bargaining. This means that unless you had a contract in place when the law was passed – evaluation is no longer in your contract. However, just because evaluation is not in your contract does not mean that you have to go this alone. Make sure to involve your mentor in your evaluation and involve your association rep if you have any problems or concerns.

Your mentor, association reps and leaders are around to make sure you receive a fair and objective evaluation. You can help the association help you by following these tips:

- Become familiar with the Board Policy on evaluation.
- Have conversations with your mentor, colleagues and association reps about how best to handle your evaluation. Share any concerns you have about your performance so far.
- If you think that the evaluation may not go well, begin to document any conversations you have had with your evaluator. Note the day, time and topic of those conversations and any negative comments.
- Make note of how long the evaluator observed your performance.
- In most cases, the evaluation process includes a post-observation conference at which time you should receive a written copy of your evaluation. Review it carefully, paying close attention to negative comments and/or suggestions for improvement.
- If you do not receive an effective rating on your evaluation, discuss the report with your evaluator. Make sure you clearly understand his/her evaluation of your performance. Ask if your mentor can attend the meeting with you.
- If problems are noted, ask for specific guidelines about what needs improvement. Ask your evaluator to name someone he/she considers a model of good teaching so that you can observe that teaching style.
- Don't assume that any negative comments mean your job is in jeopardy, but do take the comments seriously.
- Notify your mentor and the association of any problems or issues you have with your evaluation. They may advise you to respond in writing to the evaluation and they can provide guidance on how best to do that.

Remember—teaching is a journey. Just when you think you've arrived, you find that there are other places to go.