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# FCPS Audit Report: 23-1003 – Employee Evaluation Process

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September 2023

Prepared by  
Office of Auditor General

8115 Gatehouse Road, Suite 5500  
Falls Church, VA 22042

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## Executive Summary

Office of Auditor General (OAG) conducted a performance audit of Employee Evaluation Process in accordance with the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 audit plan approved by the Fairfax County School Board.

According to the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) FY 2023 Program Budget, employee evaluation and performance management operations are facilitated by the Office of Employee Relations (OER) within the Human Resources Department (HR). OER provides consultation and advice to program managers and principals regarding employee performance, employee misconduct, performance expectations, evaluation standards and processes, disciplinary procedures, and grievance processes. OER works to ensure fidelity and equity in the delivery of employee management practices and to ensure compliance with state and federal legal requirements. OER assists program managers and principals to support employees in achieving the highest level of job performance, equity in the workplace, and compliance with all laws, rules, and regulations by all members of FCPS.

The scope of this audit includes an evaluation of FCPS employee evaluation process for FY22 (July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022) and the first six months of FY23 (July 1, 2022, through December 31, 2022). The objectives of the audit were to perform the following:

- Evaluate the existing employee evaluation process.
- Evaluate how the process is managed at departments, offices, and schools.
- Benchmark existing processes used by other school districts to identify best industry leading employee's evaluation practices.

As a result of this audit, OAG identified four moderate risk findings and one observation. Management agrees with the findings and recommendations. A summary of the findings and recommendations are provided below:

- **Finding 1– Update to Performance Assessments and Evaluations Regulation:** *FCPS Regulation 4440 “Performance Assessments and Evaluations” (Regulation 4440), effective May 1, 2020, appears to be inadequate and does not reflect the current operational process. Furthermore, Regulation 4440 does not clarify OER roles and responsibilities. OAG recommends OER should: a) continue to update Regulation 4440 to align with the Code of Virginia (Code), Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation (Standards) adopted by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and FCPS internal process, b) continue to ensure updated resources and tools are provided on the Employee Hub<sup>1</sup> and in MyPDE, and c) modify Regulation 4440 to clarify OER roles and responsibilities.*
- **Finding 2 – Compliance with Evaluation Requirements:** The required evaluation documentation was not completed for certain employees. Out of 120 employee evaluations sampled, 62 did not have evidence that all the required components were completed including self-assessment<sup>2</sup>, teacher observations<sup>3</sup>, goal setting<sup>4</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> Employee Hub is a website designed for FCPS employees to easily access the information needed to stay updated on current events and news.

<sup>2</sup> Self-assessment is employee's examination of his/her own performance (strengths and areas of growth/development).

<sup>3</sup> Teacher observations are announced or unannounced visits to the classroom, workstation, or other setting.

<sup>4</sup> Goal setting is a collaborative conference between the evaluator and employee to determine data sources and to create specific goals related to student progress.

data collections<sup>5</sup>, mid-year<sup>6</sup> and summative evaluation<sup>7</sup>. OAG recommends OER should: a) develop procedures to ensure all required evaluation process steps are completed and monitored, b) adequately communicate to staff the documentation that should be maintained to support evaluations, and c) send automatic notifications to ensure employees stay on assigned tasks.

- **Finding 3 – User Experience of MyPDE<sup>8</sup>:** OAG administered two surveys (with 117 responses) to MyPDE users and the users feedback suggested that MyPDE is not an efficient tool to facilitate the evaluation process. OAG recommends OER should: a) continue its efforts to increase employee engagement of MyPDE and usability and b) periodically disseminate information to employees and enhance MyPDE training.
- **Finding 4 – Employee Evaluation Monitoring and Communication:** OER did not adequately monitor the completion of, and adherence to, performance evaluation standards for all employees. Furthermore, there appears to be a lack of communication or guidance to support the employee evaluation process. OAG recommends OER should: a) conduct quality control checks of random employee evaluation files, b) strengthen its monitoring of MyPDE data, and c) continue its efforts to improve communication when informing employees of the evaluation process requirements.

There is one observation recommending FCPS consider evaluating employees annually.

We appreciate the consultation, cooperation, and courtesies extended to our staff by OER.

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<sup>5</sup> Data collections are range of data collected by the evaluator regarding the employee's performance.

<sup>6</sup> Mid-year evaluation is completed at the midpoint of the employee's summative evaluation that rates the performance for each of the required standards.

<sup>7</sup> Summative evaluation is completed at the end of a summative evaluation year that rates each of the required standards.

<sup>8</sup> MyPDE is a software to document the employee evaluation process.

# Background, Scope and Objectives, and Methodology

## Background

According to the FCPS FY 2023 Program Budget, employee evaluation and performance management operations are facilitated by OER within HR. OER provides consultation and advice to program managers and principals regarding employee performance, employee misconduct, performance expectations, evaluation standards and processes, disciplinary procedures, and grievance processes. OER works to ensure fidelity and equity in the delivery of employee management practices and to ensure compliance with state and federal legal requirements. OER assists program managers and principals to support employees in achieving the highest level of job performance, equity in the workplace, and compliance with all laws, rules, and regulations by all members of FCPS. OER's responsibilities related to employee evaluation and performance management include:

- Monitor and advise on performance management practices and employee evaluation processes.
- Provide training, information, and resources to all employees regarding performance expectations, evaluation criteria, standards of conduct, progressive discipline, and related grievance processes.
- Review and revise relevant FCPS regulations related to standards of conduct, progressive discipline, grievance processes, and employee performance assessment and evaluation processes.
- Act as subject matter experts to advise and consult with principals and program managers regarding employee performance.
- Work to ensure fidelity of documentation to support disciplinary recommendations and processes, including the review of evidence compiled by program managers to ensure a fair and thorough process regarding employee misconduct, performance management, and recommendations arising from evaluations.

## Employee Evaluation and Performance Management

According to the FCPS Employee Hub, the performance assessment process and evaluations are designed to provide all employees with increased opportunities for professional growth and development. This process is based on a supervisory cycle of reflection, observation, and discussion that leads to employee improvement.

FCPS employees are assessed from the beginning of service and the results are reported regularly in an evaluation. Discussions regarding performance occur between the evaluator and the employee throughout the process. Employees have multiple opportunities to refine or enhance their skills.

*Regulation 4440* describes the assessment and evaluation process for teacher-scale employees, principals, school-based administrators (excluding principals), nonschool-based administrators, instructional assistants, and support services employees.

1. **Teacher scale employees:** The Code of Virginia requires (1) that principal evaluations be consistent with the performance standards set forth in the Virginia Board of Education's (VDOE) *Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers* and (2) that school boards' procedures for evaluating principals and assistant principals address student academic progress.

Teacher evaluations include eight performance standards gathered during and between cycles, including, but not limited to, job competence and professional behavior.

Probationary teachers are annual contract employees who begin in FCPS with three year probationary period, they are evaluated during each of their first three years while continuing contract teachers are evaluated on a three year cycle.

The evaluator shall be the program manager, the principal, or his or her designee (e.g., sub school principal, assistant principal, director of student activities, director of student services, or other appropriate administrative staff member selected by the program manager).

2. **Principals:** The Code of Virginia requires (1) that principal evaluations be consistent with the performance standards set forth in the VDOE *Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Principals* and (2) that school boards' procedures for evaluating principals and assistant principals address student academic progress.

Principal evaluations include eight performance standards gathered during and between cycles, including but not limited to, job competence and professional behavior.

Principals shall be evaluated continually from the beginning of service by their cluster assistant superintendent.

3. **School-based administrators (excluding principals):** School-based administrator evaluations include eight performance standards gathered during and between cycles, including, but not limited to, job competence and professional behavior.

Assistant principals are also subject to the performance standards set forth in the VDOE *Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Principals*.

Assistant principals and other school-based administrators shall be evaluated continually from the beginning of service by their appropriate supervisor.

4. **Nonschool-based administrators:** Nonschool-based administrator evaluations include five performance standards gathered during and between cycles, including, but not limited to, job competence and professional behavior. Non-school-based administrators are those licensed employees who have responsibilities relating to instruction but who are not assigned to a school site.

Non-school-based administrators shall be evaluated continually from the beginning of service by their supervisors or his or her designee.

5. **Instructional assistants:** Instructional assistant evaluations include five performance standards gathered during and between cycles, including, but not limited to, information relating to job competence and professional behavior.

Evaluation of instructional assistants is performed by a school administrator or program manager designated by the principal and may include input from the teacher or teachers with whom the assistant works.

6. **Unified-scale support service employees:** Support employee evaluations include six performance standards gathered during and between cycles, including, but not limited to, job competence and professional behavior.

FCPS' employees are evaluated each year until they reach a three-year cycle then they are evaluated every three years. During the evaluation year, employees may be subject to employee evaluation components based on their employee group. **Figure 1: Employee**

**Evaluation Components** provides a description of each of these employee evaluation components.

**Figure 1: Employee Evaluation Components**

<b>Employee Group</b>	<b>Components</b>	<b>Description</b>
All employees	Self-Assessment	Employee’s examination of his/her own performance (strengths and areas of growth/development).
All instructional employees <sup>9</sup> including Instructional Assistants, Teachers, Principals and School-Based Administrators	Goal Setting	A collaborative conference is held at the start of every school year between the evaluator and employee to determine data sources and to create specific goals related to student progress.
Teachers and School-Based Administrators	Observations	An announced or unannounced visit to the classroom, workstation, or other setting.
Principals	School Site Visits	May range from watching how an administrator interacts with others, to observing programs and shadowing the administrator.
All employees <sup>10</sup>	Mid-Year Evaluation	The evaluation completed at the midpoint of the employee’s summative evaluation that rates the performance for each of the required standards.
All employees	Summative Evaluation	The evaluation completed at the end of a summative evaluation year that rates each of the required standards.
All employees	Recommendation	During mid-year and summative evaluation, instructional employees receive a recommendation of reappointment, conditional reappointment or do not reappoint. Support employees receive a recommendation of reappointment or dismissal.

### **Evaluation Forms and MyPDE**

According to *Regulation 4440*, copies of data collections and related memorandums developed as part of the assessment and evaluation process shall be maintained in the local site file in compliance with the current version of *Regulation 6701 Records Management Program*.

<sup>9</sup> Based on FCPS regulations, goal setting is required for instructional employees each year regardless of evaluation cycle. In FY 2022, FCPS leadership approved for goal setting to be required for only those instructional employees on evaluation cycle.

<sup>10</sup> In FY 2022, FCPS leadership approved for mid-year evaluation to be required only for instructional employees that are on probation, on conditional reappointment, and/or not meeting performance expectations.

In October 2019, MyPDE, online management tool, was implemented as a software tool to document the employee evaluation process. According to the FCPS website, MyPDE supports a comprehensive approach to professional development and employee performance evaluations. It is a central repository for all FCPS professional development and training, which includes a library of online courses and resources. The system provides a structure for a fully online process for all employee performance evaluations, which may include goal setting, self-assessment, and both mid-year and summative evaluations. According to FCPS FY 2023 Program Budget, OER monitors the completion of, and adherence to, performance evaluation standards through MyPDE.

### **Disciplinary Recommendation Process**

During the employee evaluations process, documentation and support is collected for any performance related disciplinary action that may need to occur in the future such as, *conditional reappointment, do not reappoint or dismissal*.

1. **Conditional reappointment:** Employees receiving a *conditional reappointment* will be evaluated again the following year. The employee must achieve a recommendation for reappointment on the next year's summative evaluation or dismissal will be recommended. An intervention program is formed to assist those employees on conditional reappointment status; the intervention team includes the employee, an HR performance specialist, and a site administrator. This rating/recommendation applies to teachers, principals, school-based administrators (excluding principals), non-school based administrators.
2. **Do not reappoint:** Employees receiving a *do not reappoint* will be recommended for dismissal. Unsatisfactory performance will be noted in the summative evaluation along with the standards that were below the effective performance expectation. This rating/recommendation applies to teachers, principals, school-based administrators (excluding principals), non-school based administrators and instructional assistants.
3. **Dismissal:** Employees receiving a *dismissal* signify performance significantly below one or more standards guidelines, or expectation and there is no reasonable prospect that the employee can sufficiently improve performance to remain an employee of the school system. This rating/recommendation applies to unified-scale support service employees.

Typically, two weeks after the mid-year evaluation deadline, performance coordinators in OER will run a status report from MyPDE that indicates the employees who have received recommendations of *do not reappoint/dismissal*. The list is provided to each performance specialist responsible for their assigned regions and departments.

OER will also run the report after the summative evaluation deadline to confirm evaluators' recommendations and ensure necessary documentation to support the recommendations. In the event that *do not reappoint/dismissal* is confirmed, the OER performance coordinators will contact the employee to discuss options (offering them opportunity to resign through an agreement letter) instead of being recommended for *do not reappoint/dismissal*.

### **Scope and Objectives**

OAG conducted this performance audit in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS). Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and



conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings, observations and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

The objectives of the audit were to perform the following:

- Evaluate the existing employee evaluation process.
- Evaluate how the process is managed at departments, offices and schools.
- Benchmark existing processes used by other school districts to identify best industry leading employee's evaluation practices.

The scope of this audit includes an evaluation of FCPS employee evaluation process for FY22 (July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022) and the first six months of FY23 (July 1, 2022, through December 31, 2022).

As required by GAGAS, OAG assessed whether internal control was significant to the audit objectives. OAG's assessment included the use of the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission internal control framework. The framework includes five components: Control Environment; Risk Assessment; Control Activities; Information and Communication; and Monitoring; along with 17 related principles. OAG determined that all five components of internal control and the 17 related principles were significant to the audit objectives.

## **Methodology**

To satisfy our audit objectives, the audit team performed the following:

- Reviewed applicable laws, rules, regulations and FCPS policies and procedures.
- Interviewed key personnel from OER to gain an understanding of the employee evaluation process. The interview focused on the following areas:
  - Adequate governance processes are implemented to support employee performance management.
  - Roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities of evaluators and employees are clearly documented and communicated.
  - Appropriate processes and tools have been established and employed consistently to support employee performance management.
  - Awareness and training activities are provided to evaluators to ensure adequacy and effectiveness of employee evaluations.
  - Assessment of MyPDE tool as an effective tool to facilitate the employee evaluation process.
  - Results of employee evaluation process are considered in the context of other HR activities.
  - Effective monitoring exists to ensure evaluators are notified with delinquent evaluations.
- Obtained an understanding of the information system controls established during the implementation of MyPDE.
- Evaluated and tested the internal controls and the operating effectiveness of the employee evaluation process, on a sampling basis.
- Surveyed employees to obtain feedback on the employee evaluation process, on a sampling basis.
- Benchmarked other school district to compare their employee evaluation process with current FCPS practice.
- Researched industry leading practices for employee evaluation process.

## Sampling Plan

The audit team used IDEA, a data analytical software, to select a random sample of 120 out of 28,319 employee evaluations to test controls and compliance with the employee evaluation process to ensure:

1. Appropriate performance standards were applied.
2. Evaluations and required components were completed in a timely manner.
3. Evaluations were completed by the appropriate individual.
4. Appropriate documentation or artifacts were maintained to support evaluations.
5. Corrective activities including disciplinary actions or performance improvement plan were followed up by OER.

The sample included teacher scale employees, principals, school-based administrators (excluding principals), non-school administrators, instructional assistant, and unified-scale support service employees (including leadership team members).

In addition, OAG selected a random sample of 40 out of 210 employee performance issue recommendations including employees receiving do not reappoint, conditional appointment and dismissal to verify that corrective action plans were created for those employees.

## Research, Benchmarking and Surveys

### A. Research

The audit team reviewed leading national practices including the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the Society for Human Resources and Management (SHRM) to compare concepts with FCPS's current employee evaluation process.

The OPM under Code of Regulations 5 – CFR § 430.206-Planning Performance recommends a 12-month employee evaluation period. See [Office of Personnel Management](#).

In addition, an article written by [SHRM](#) reports that more companies are moving to ongoing reviews and more frequent feedback. Here is a quotation from the article, "*For companies to be agile, feedback must get closer to real time*".

### B. Benchmarking Against Other School Districts

The audit team surveyed six other school districts, comparable in sizes with FCPS as well as neighboring schools to learn about their evaluation systems. One out of six organizations responded and indicated:

- They utilize PowerSchool Perform to manage the employee evaluation process.
- They hold trainings throughout the year focusing on implementing the evaluation process according to their evaluation handbooks.
- They provide a timeline at the beginning of the year and give updates throughout the year to employee's on where they should be in the process.

### C. Surveys

The audit team administered two surveys to obtain an overall understanding of employees' feedback of the employee evaluation process. One was designed to capture the selected administrators' perceptions of their own practice as evaluators (see **Appendix A: Evaluator Survey**). The other was intended to gather information on the perceptions of the staff members whom they had evaluated (see **Appendix B: Employee Survey**).

Out of the 222 employees contacted, 62 evaluator and 55 employee responses were received.

### **OAG Organization**

OAG is free from organizational impairments to independence in our reporting as defined by government auditing standards. OAG reports directly to the Fairfax County School Board through the Audit Committee. We report the results of our audits to the Audit Committee and the reports are made available to the public via the FCPS website.

# Audit Findings, Recommendations, and Management’s Responses

The finding(s) within this report has been attributed a risk rating in accordance with established risk criteria as defined in Table 1.

**Table 1 – Risk Criteria**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
High	One or more of the following exists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Controls are not in place or are inadequate.</li> <li>• Compliance with legislation and regulations or contractual obligations is inadequate.</li> <li>• Important issues are identified that could negatively impact the achievement of FCPS program/operational objectives.</li> </ul>
Moderate	One or more of the following exists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Controls are in place but are not sufficiently complied with.</li> <li>• Compliance with subject government regulations or FCPS policies and established procedures is inadequate, or FCPS policies and established procedures are inadequate.</li> <li>• Issues are identified that could negatively impact the efficiency and effectiveness of FCPS operations.</li> </ul>
Low	One or more of the following exists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Controls are in place but the level of compliance varies.</li> <li>• Compliance with government regulations or FCPS policies and established procedures varies.</li> <li>• Issues identified are less significant but opportunities exist that could enhance FCPS operations.</li> </ul>

OAG identified four moderate risk findings and one observation which are detailed below.

## **Finding 1 – Update to Performance Assessments and Evaluations Regulation**

**Risk Rating:** *Moderate – Compliance with subject government regulations or FCPS policies and established procedures is inadequate, or FCPS policies and established procedures are inadequate.*

**Condition:**

*Regulation 4440*, effective May 1, 2020, appears to be inadequate compared to the State requirements and does not reflect the current operational process.

1. There were inconsistencies between (a) the standards mentioned in *Regulation 4440* and (b) the Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation (Standards) adopted by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). FCPS' evaluation process reflects the updated Standards; however, *Regulation 4440* was not revised to include the additional Standards issued in May 2022.

The Standards were updated to include the following:

- For Principals:  
Performance Standard 6: Culturally Responsive and Equitable School Leadership. The principal demonstrates a commitment to equity and fosters culturally inclusive and responsive practices aligned with division and school goals, priorities and strategies that support achievement for all students.
  - For Licensed Instructional Employees:  
Performance Standard 6: Culturally Responsive Teaching and Equitable Practices. The teacher demonstrates a commitment to equity and provides instruction and classroom strategies that result in culturally and responsive learning environments an achievement for all students.
2. Furthermore, *Regulation 4440* references multiple components that were no longer applicable such as:
    - Basis for salary changes such as annual salary increments or freezing salary for support service employees in work improvement period.
    - The evaluation recommendations for support employees listed in *Regulation 4440* consist of reappointment, work improvement period, demotion, and dismissal, however the current FCPS process reflects only reappointment or dismissal.
    - Links to access current employee evaluation resources for example the Teacher Performance Evaluation Program Handbook is no longer accessible.
  3. *Regulation 4440* did not provide guidance to employees regarding the FCPS' performance management system, MyPDE, which was implemented in 2019.

4. *Regulation 4440* does not clearly define the OER roles and responsibilities to ensure accountability and effectiveness of the employee evaluation process.

#### **Update as of July 31, 2023**

Management notified OAG that there is a discrepancy between the Code of Virginia 22.1-294 (Code) and Regulation 4440. Per the Code, "*Probationary principals and assistant principals shall be evaluated each school year.*" However, based on the language in Regulation 4440, Section IX, Designation of Evaluation Cycles, "*Principals shall be evaluated (1) annually during the first three years as principal if new to FCPS and (2) during the first year in the position of principal if, the principal has been an administrator in FCPS.*" OAG interpreted that per the Code, all probationary principals need to be evaluated annually. However, per the Regulation, there is a condition to be evaluated annually only if the principal has not been an administrator in FCPS.

For the purpose of this audit, OAG focused on the Standards and not the Code. OAG understood that management is working to update the regulation to reflect the requirements of the Code.

#### **Criteria:**

- Per *Regulation 1102, Procedures for Maintenance of Directives*, "By state mandate, policies must be reviewed by appropriate staff members at least every five years and updated as necessary. Regulations are reviewed and updated every five years or sooner."
- Per FCPS Fiscal Year 2023 Program Budget, OER is responsible for monitoring and ensuring the supervision and performance evaluation programs for all employees.

#### **Cause:**

While resources related to the current Standards and evaluation process is provided via the Employee Hub and MyPDE, *Regulation 4440* has not been updated or reviewed as necessary.

#### **Effect:**

- Increases the risk of noncompliance with the Standards.
- Increases the uncertainty of employees understanding of the current employee evaluation process and requirements for the use of MyPDE.
- Prevents the employee evaluation resources from being easily accessible as the links in the regulation no longer exist.
- Decreases the OER's accountability of roles and responsibilities over the employee evaluation process.

#### **Recommendation:**

OAG recommends OER should:

- Continue to update *Regulation 4440* to align with the Code, Standards, and the current FCPS internal process.
- Continue to ensure updated resources and tools are provided on the Employee Hub and in MyPDE.
- Modify *Regulation 4440* to clarify OER roles and responsibilities.

#### **Management Responses (Actions and Due Date):**

- Management concurs with findings.

- OER is currently updating Regulation 4440 to reflect FCPS' current operational processes for managing evaluations.
- OER is currently updating Regulation 4440 to be in compliance with the standards outlined in the Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation, as adopted by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE).

**Responsible:** Office of Employee Relations, OER

**Due Date:** September 25, 2023

## Finding 2 – Compliance with Evaluation Requirements

**Risk Rating:** *Moderate – Compliance with subject government regulations or FCPS policies and established procedures is inadequate, or FCPS policies and established procedures are inadequate.*

**Condition:**

OAG reviewed samples of FCPS employees to determine if evaluation files are maintained in compliance with (a) *Regulation 4440*, (b) Performance Assessment and Evaluation Calendar issued by OER, and (c) VDOE requirements.

During the audit, OAG tested the respective aspects of the evaluation processes for 20 samples in each category, of teachers, principals, school-based administrators, non-school based administrators, instructional assistants, support employees. OAG also tested Leadership Team (LT) members evaluations during the scope period. LT evaluations were not managed through MyPDE as it was a manual process.

OAG found that components of the evaluation process were not properly documented or may not have been completed for the employee groups. The results are summarized below:

- **Teachers:** Out of the 20 teacher evaluations sampled, nine teachers did not have the required components. Out of the nine, six were missing teacher observations, two were missing teacher observations and self-assessments and one was missing mid-year evaluation for a probationary teacher. The teacher observations and mid-year evaluations for probationary teachers are a requirement of VDOE.
- **Principals:** Out of the 20 principal evaluations sampled, 14 principals did not have evidence that all the required components were completed. For example, one principal did not have evidence that self-assessment, goal setting and site visits were completed. Another principal changed roles from support to instructional and his evaluation files were not properly generated in MyPDE to reflect his new role. As a result, the employee completed self-assessment with support employee standards and the mid-year evaluation was not completed as it was not available in MyPDE.
- **School-Based Administrators:** Out of 20 school-based administrators' evaluations sampled, 17 school-based administrators did not have evidence that all the required components were completed. For example, one school-based administrator did not have evidence that self-assessment, goal setting, summative and data collections were completed. Another school-based administrator did not have evidence that self-assessment, goal setting, and data collections were completed.
- **Non-School Based Administrators:** Out of 20 non-school based administrators' evaluations sampled, three non-school based administrators did not have evidence that all the required components were completed. Out of the three, two were missing self-assessments, and one was missing a mid-year evaluation.
- **Instructional Assistants:** Out of 20 instructional assistants' evaluations sampled, five instructional assistants did not have evidence that all the



required components were completed. Out of the five, three were missing self-assessment, one was missing self-assessment and mid-year evaluation and one was missing a mid-year evaluation.

- **Support Employees:** Out of the 15 support employees sampled, nine support employees did not have evidence that all the required components were completed. Out of the nine, four did not have self-assessments and mid-year evaluations, two were missing self-assessments, two were missing mid-year evaluations, and one was missing mid-year and summative evaluations.
- **LT Members:** OAG selected five LT members' evaluation to test. In FY 2022, the former Superintendent decided to conduct a transition/exit discussion in lieu of documented evaluations in anticipation of the upcoming departure. For FY 2023, OAG validated that self-assessments<sup>11</sup> and mid-year evaluations were completed.

**Criteria:**

- VDOE requires the use of observation for teachers and mid-year evaluations for probationary teachers.
- VDOE requires that student academic progress be a significant component of the evaluation. FCPS uses goal setting as the main measure to document student progress.
- *Regulation 4440* states that self-assessment, goal setting, teacher observations, mid-year evaluation, summative evaluation, evaluator site visits and data collections should be completed and maintained as a part of the employee evaluation process.

**Cause:**

- Inadequate or ineffective guidance and communication of evaluation procedures and documentation requirements.
- Lack of automation in MyPDE requiring manual intervention from HR Technology to update the employee's required evaluation components when changing roles.

**Effect:**

- Inadequate guidance increases the risk of noncompliance with employee evaluation requirements and increases the risk of inconsistencies related to the employee evaluation process.
- Non-compliance with VDOE related to incomplete teacher observations and mid-year evaluations for probationary teachers.
- Incomplete evaluations could result in missed opportunities to address feedback on job performance.

**Recommendation:**

OAG recommends OER should:

- Develop procedures to ensure all required evaluation process steps are completed and monitored.
- Adequately communicate the documentation that should be maintained to support evaluations.
- Send automatic notifications to ensure employees stay on assigned tasks.

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<sup>11</sup> LT Members self-assessment documentation was worded as goal setting but serving the same purpose as self-assessment.

**Management Responses (Actions and Due Date):**

- OER concurs with findings.
- OER will resume its practice of sending communications to all stakeholders regarding the documentation needed to support evaluations, not just for those with performance concerns.
- OER will ensure notifications are turned back on in MyPDE to remind employees of assigned tasks.

**Responsible:** Office of Employee Relations, OER

**Due Date:** Implementation of these actions will begin at the beginning of the 2023-24 school year and will be a continuous effort throughout the school year.

### Finding 3 – User Experience of MyPDE

**Risk Rating:** *Moderate – Issues are identified that could negatively impact the efficiency and effectiveness of FCPS operations.*

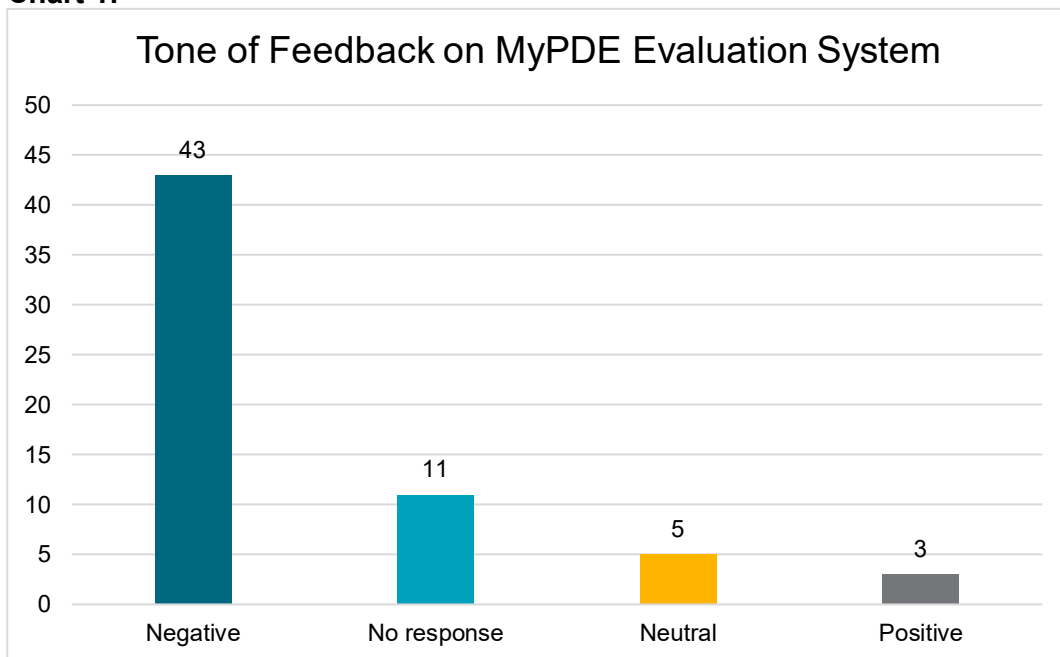
**Condition:**

OAG administered a survey to get feedback from the users of MyPDE. The feedback suggests that MyPDE is not an efficient tool to facilitate the evaluation process with room for improvement.

We asked a sample of evaluators to provide their feedback on MyPDE and found that 43 users out of the 62 sample users are not satisfied with MyPDE (see **Chart 1 - Tone of Feedback on MyPDE Evaluation System**). Some of the comments include:

- *“Clunky, too many clicks, hard to navigate, doesn't format nicely, frustrating that I can't see my direct and indirect reports.”*
- *“MyPDE is not efficient. It's not user-friendly.”*
- *“MyPDE needs to be more efficient to navigate. There are too many clicks to complete tasks within the evaluation.”*
- *“The evaluation system on MyPDE is not user-friendly and/or intuitive. I find that staff do not use it unless they absolutely have to such as when they have to prove a signature.”*
- *“Very confusing, multiple pathways to location makes very difficult to work with.”*

**Chart 1:**



Furthermore, OAG encountered a *glitch* during testing, that a task could be “checked off” as completed in MyPDE system while the detailed step was not performed.

**Criteria:**

Per Government Accountability Office (GAO) Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government, Principle 16 – Perform Monitoring Activities; management should establish

and operate monitoring activities to monitor the internal control system and evaluate the results.

**Cause:**

The guidance and trainings on MyPDE may not be effective to ensure easy useability for employees.

**Effect:**

- Inadequate training increases the likelihood of employees not effectively utilizing MyPDE.
- Inadequate guidance increases the risk of noncompliance with the employee evaluation documentation requirements.

**Recommendation:**

OAG recommends OER should:

- Continue its efforts to increase employee engagement of MyPDE and useability.
- Periodically disseminate information to employees and enhance MyPDE trainings.

**Management Responses (Actions and Due Date):**

- OER concurs with findings.
- OER is working with the MyPDE vendor to enhance user experience by enhancing the Dashboard and Widgets for more streamlined, efficient, and accurate navigation.
- OER will continue to create more trainings to assist in user navigation and completion of assigned tasks.

**Responsible:** Office of Employee Relations,  
OER

**Due Date:** Implementation of these actions will begin at the beginning of the 2023-24 school year and will be a continuous effort throughout the school year.

## Finding 4 - Employee Evaluation Monitoring and Communication

**Risk Rating:** *Moderate – Issues are identified that could negatively impact the efficiency and effectiveness of FCPS operations*

**Condition:**

OAG found OER is not adequately monitoring the completion of, and adherence to, performance evaluation standards for all employees. OER does not have a process to ensure the adequate completion of evaluation and maintenance of required documentation for all employees. Currently, OER's monitoring includes:

- Sending notifications to principals and program managers regarding evaluation delinquencies after the summative evaluation deadline.
- Performing a review to ensure proper documentation is available to support disciplinary recommendations, by running a dismissal report for employees after the completion of summative evaluations to confirm dismissal recommendations with evaluators and ensure appropriate documentation are submitted.

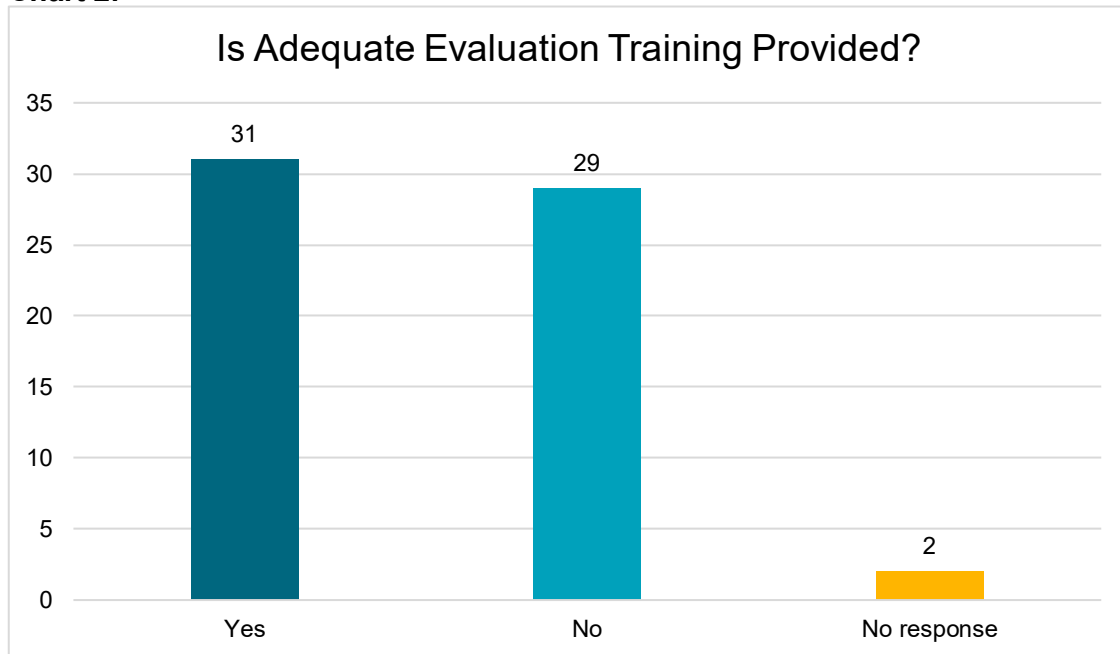
OAG also tested the dismissal recommendations for support employees to ensure that corrective actions are followed up by OER. Out of the 14 employee dismissal recommendations tested, five recommendations in MyPDE did not reflect the accurate recommendations. According to OER, evaluators marked "recommend dismissal" by mistake instead of "recommend continued employment" during the summative evaluation. While the errors did not impact personnel actions, the records within MyPDE were not rectified.

In addition, there appears to be a lack of communication or guidance to support the employee evaluation process. OER published a *Guidance for Evaluation Processes* listing the evaluation requirements. However, the guidance document does not address how to perform or document certain requirements. For example, one of the teacher evaluation requirements is to conduct observations, but the method that should be used to conduct and document the requirement is not communicated to evaluators. As a result, there is inconsistency in documenting observations.

Lastly, while training and how-to videos are available to support the use of MyPDE, there are no trainings available for evaluators on how to conduct quality evaluations. This was also noted in the survey administered by OAG where almost half of the survey respondents stated that the training they received was inadequate. (See **Chart 2 - Is Adequate Training available?**). Some of the comments include:

- *"I believe there is not consistency among the division. So, training should be held annually with tights and loose so all evaluators understand what is required of them."*
- *"There was no formal training, but my team provided guidance to me. I think there should be formal training for all evaluators otherwise, ratings are likely not."*
- *"We haven't received training since the latest iteration of evaluation process was implemented in 2013ish."*
- *"The most recent training has been online and in my opinion was ineffective. It's impossible for me to work in a building with children and engage in online."*

**Chart 2:**



**Criteria:**

Per Government Accountability Office (GAO) Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government:

- Principle 16 – Perform Monitoring Activities: management should establish and operate monitoring activities to monitor the internal control system and evaluate the results.
- Principle 14 – Communicate Internally; management should internally communicate the necessary quality information to achieve the entity’s objective.

**Cause:**

- OER did not properly review the dismissal report as mistakes went undetected.
- The regulation does not address the roles and responsibilities of OER in the process of monitoring employee evaluations.

**Effect:**

- Inadequate monitoring, guidance and training increases the risk of errors and noncompliance with the employee evaluation requirement.
- There is no method to ensure positive reinforcement to employees meeting and/or exceeding expectations as OER only monitors file completeness for employees with performance issues.
- The level of monitoring that is required of OER has not been established in the regulation that may include ensuring documentation to support all employee evaluations are being properly maintained by schools and offices.
- Inaccurate data is maintained in MyPDE.

**Recommendation:**

OAG recommends OER should:

- Conduct quality control checks of random employee evaluation files.
- Strengthen its monitoring of MyPDE data.

- Continue its efforts to improve communication when informing employees of the evaluation process requirements.

**Management Responses (Actions and Due Date):**

- OER concurs with findings.
- OER will conduct quality control samples throughout the evaluation window to ensure compliance with required documentation.
- OER will leverage the data collected during the control samples to communicate to Leadership as to whether employees/evaluators are in compliance.
- OER will continue to utilize the reporting feature in MyPDE to gather data and create new reports as necessary.

**Responsible:** Office of Employee Relations,  
OER

**Due Date:** Implementation of these actions will begin at the beginning of the 2023-24 school year and will be a continuous effort throughout the school year.

## **Observation 1 – Employee Evaluation Industry Leading Practices**

FCPS' employee evaluation is every three years for non-probationary employees. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) under Code of Federal Regulations 5 – CFR § 430.206 - Planning Performance recommends a 12-month employee evaluation period. Please refer to [Office of Personnel Management](#).

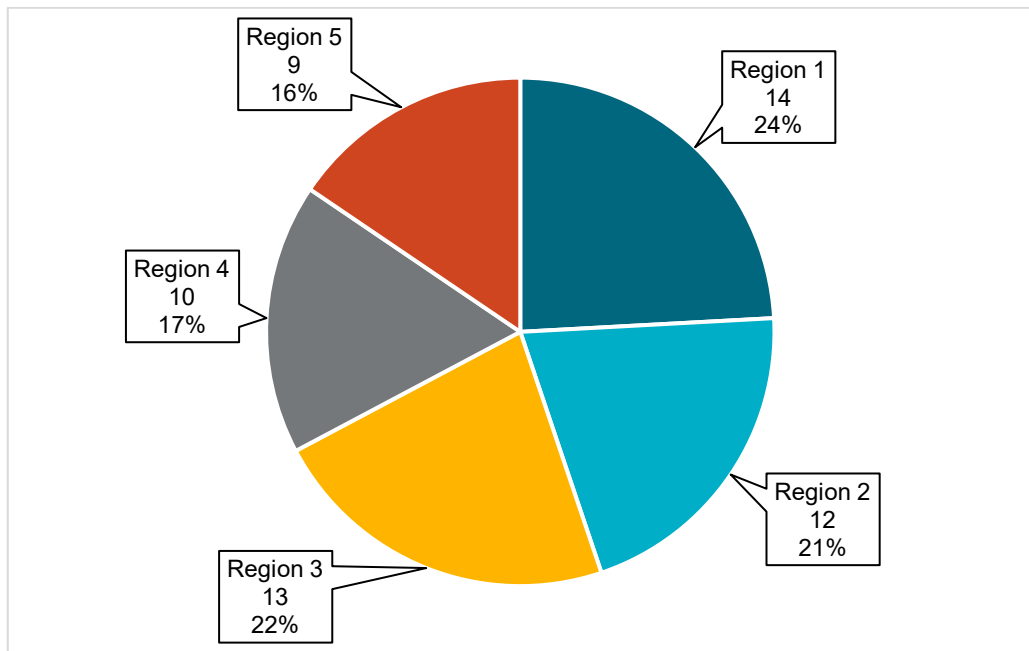
Our review of performance evaluation literature shows that the concept of employee evaluation may be changing. An article written by the Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM) reports that more companies are moving to ongoing reviews and more frequent feedback. Please refer to [SHRM Article](#).

While FCPS employee evaluation frequency is adhered to *Regulation 4440* and Code of Virginia from VDOE, OAG recommends employees be evaluated annually.

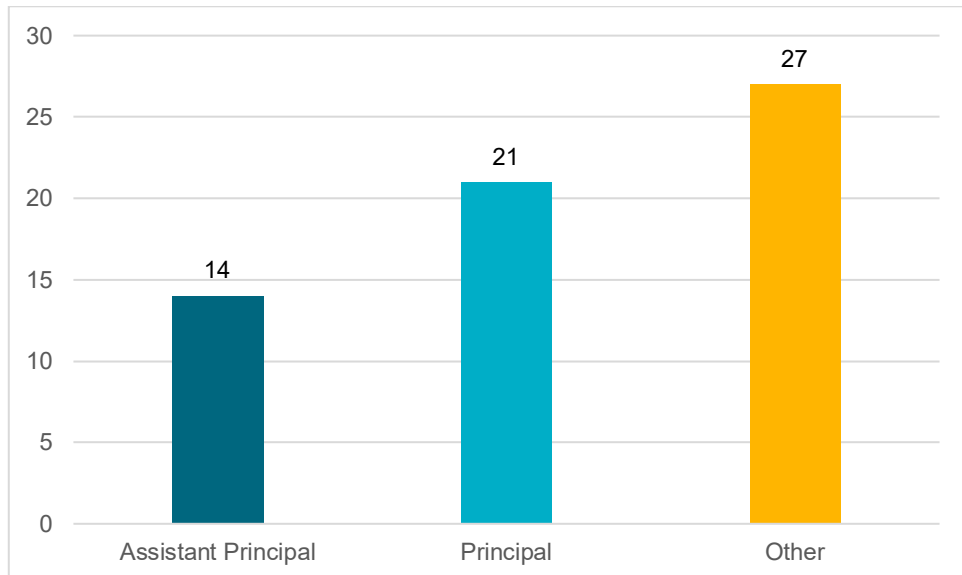


## Appendix A - Evaluator Survey

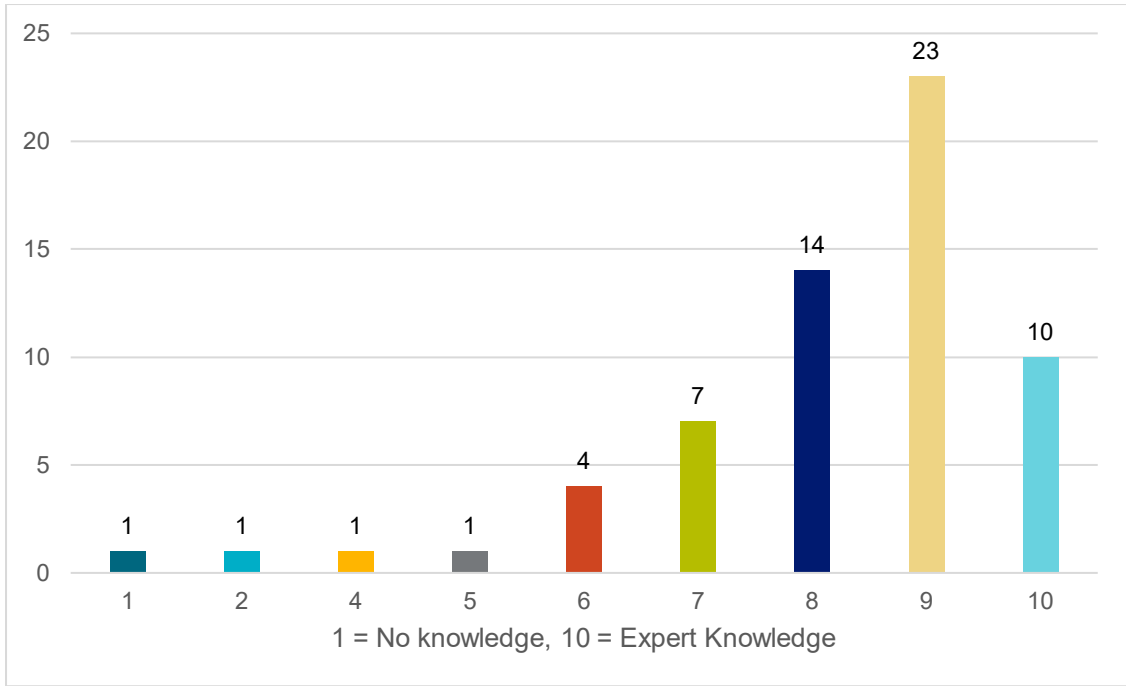
1. In what region is your school located?



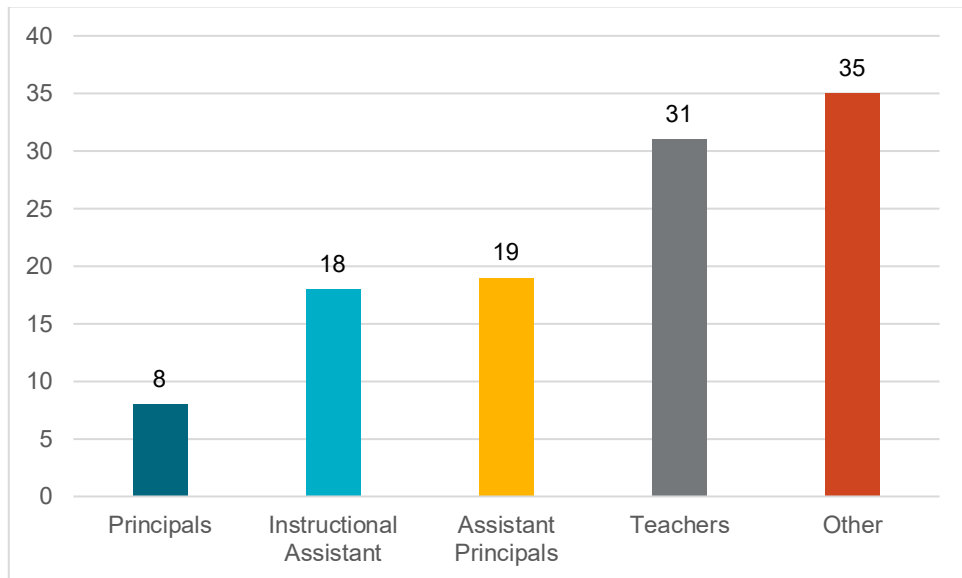
2. What was your role during the 2021-2022 school year?



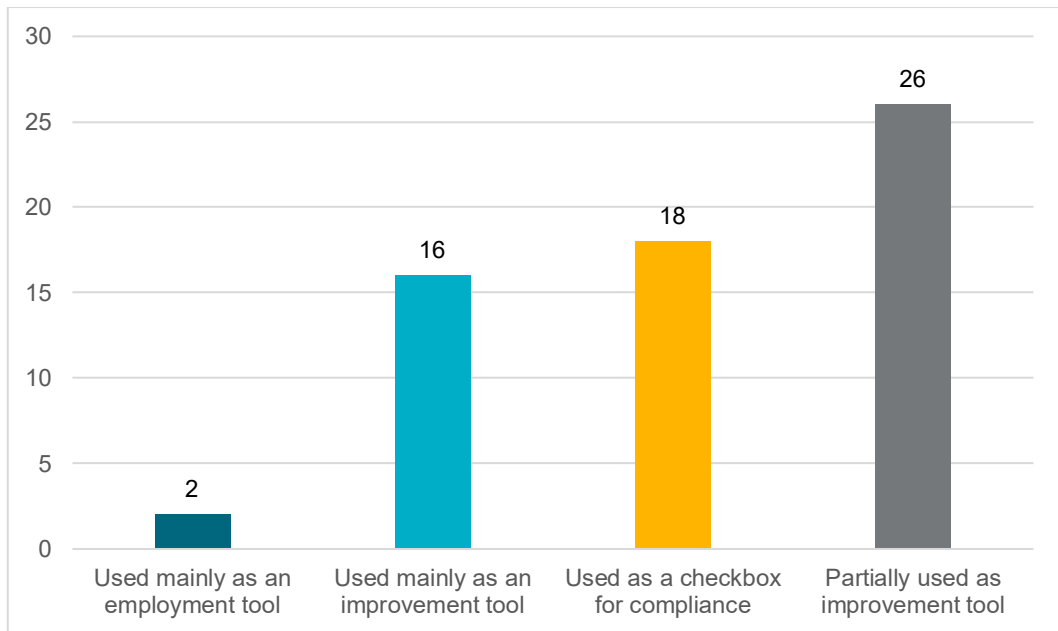
3. On a scale of 1-10, please rate your familiarity with requirements for conducting evaluations based upon the Virginia Department of Education.



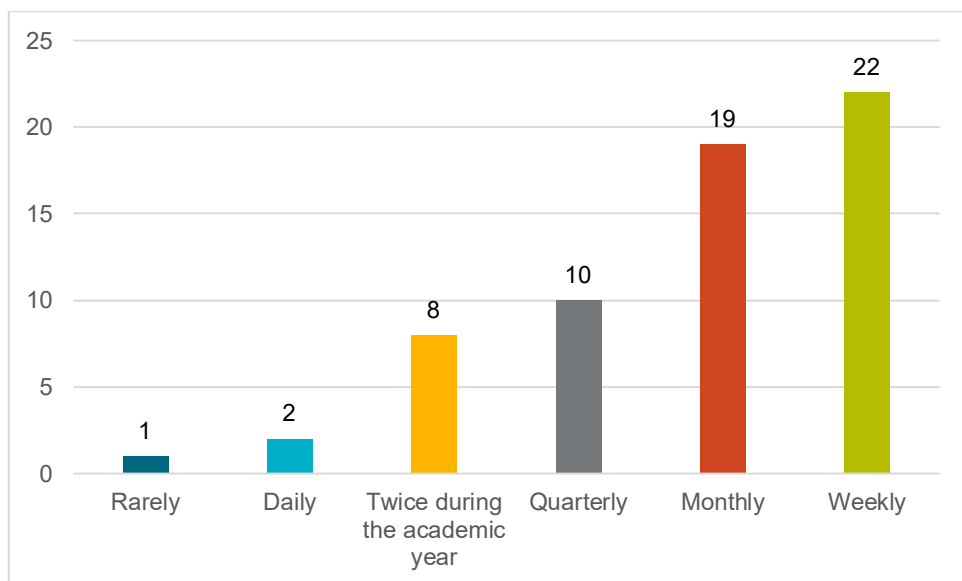
4. What roles were you required to evaluate during school year 2021-2022?



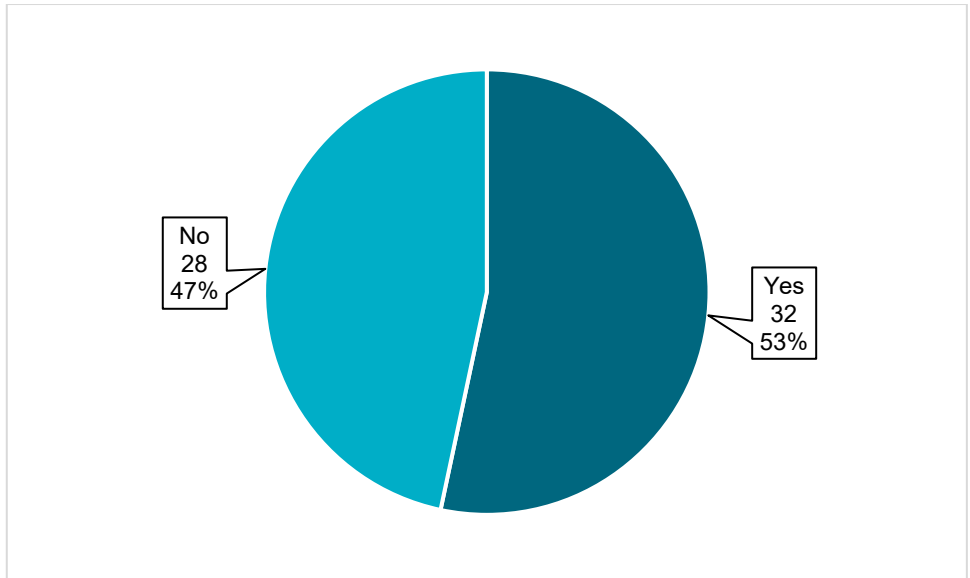
5. What is your feedback on FCPS evaluation purpose:



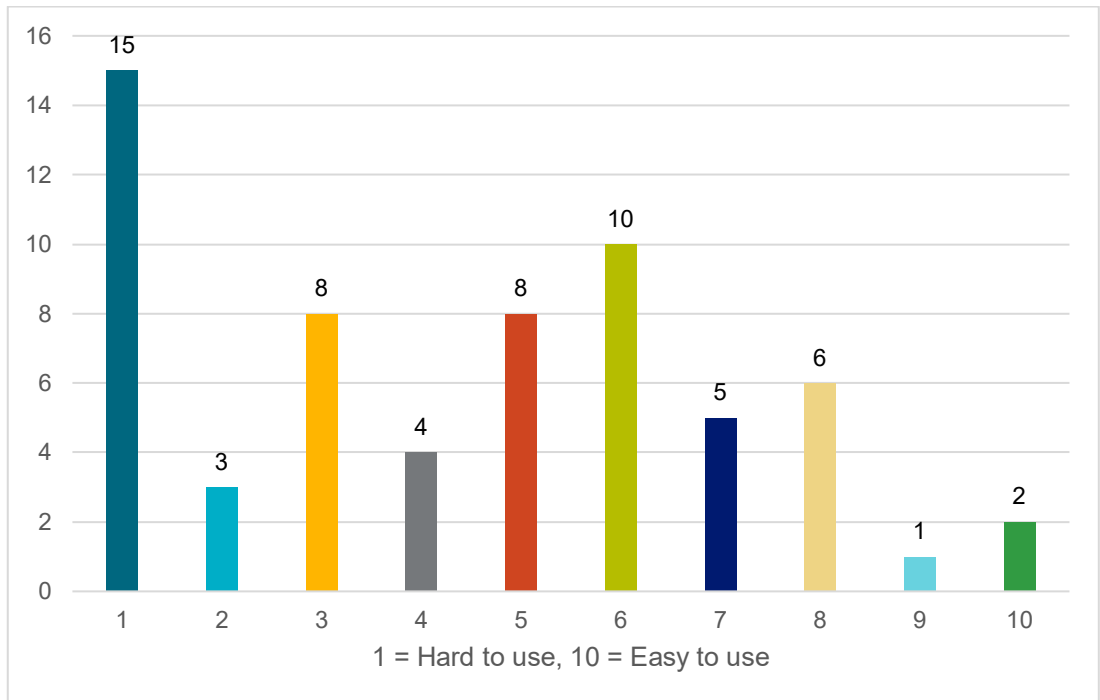
6. Please estimate the frequency in which you hold professional conversations with staff members about their performance:



7. Do you receive adequate training to enable you to perform the evaluation process effectively?



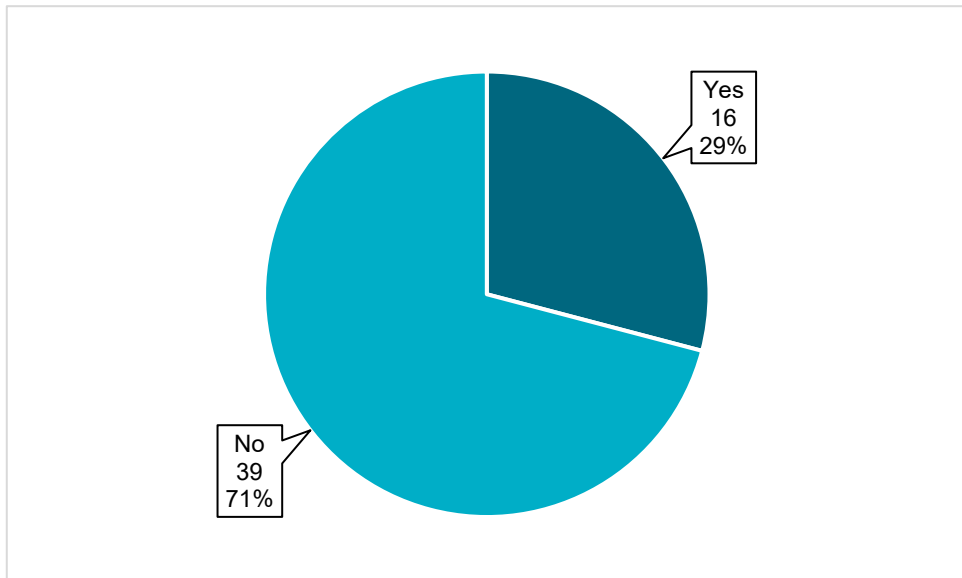
8. On a scale of 1-10, please rate the evaluation system MyPDE:



9. Please give your feedback on the evaluation system MyPDE:

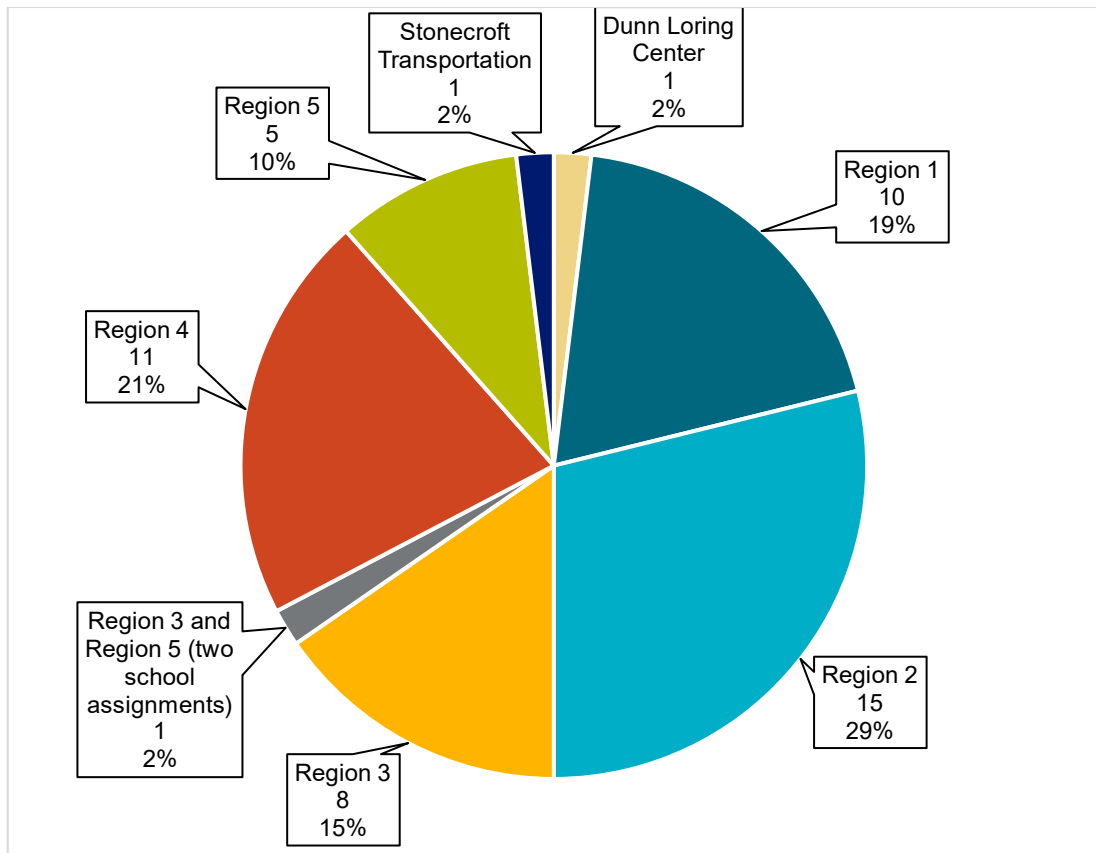
Theme	Count
Difficult to navigate	22
Cumbersome	13
No Response	11
System limitations	10
Easy to use	3
Antiquated	1
Not applicable	1
Improved	1

10. Has there been any changes to your evaluation responsibilities in FY23?

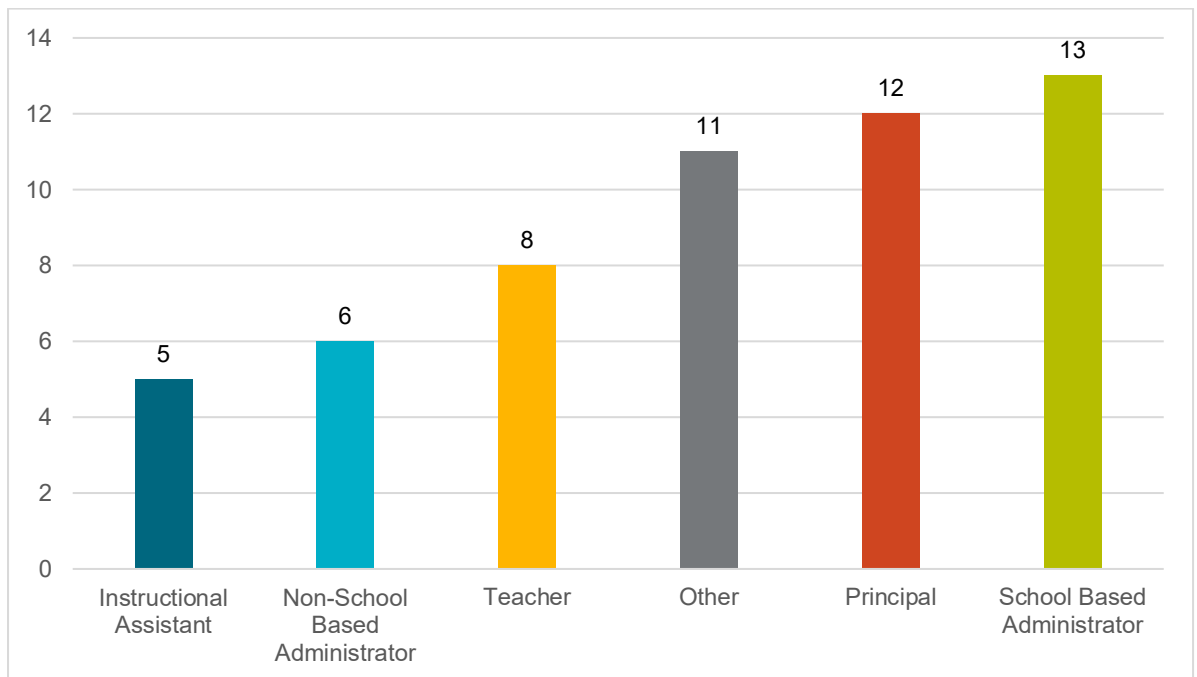


## Appendix B - Employee Survey

1. In what region is your school located?



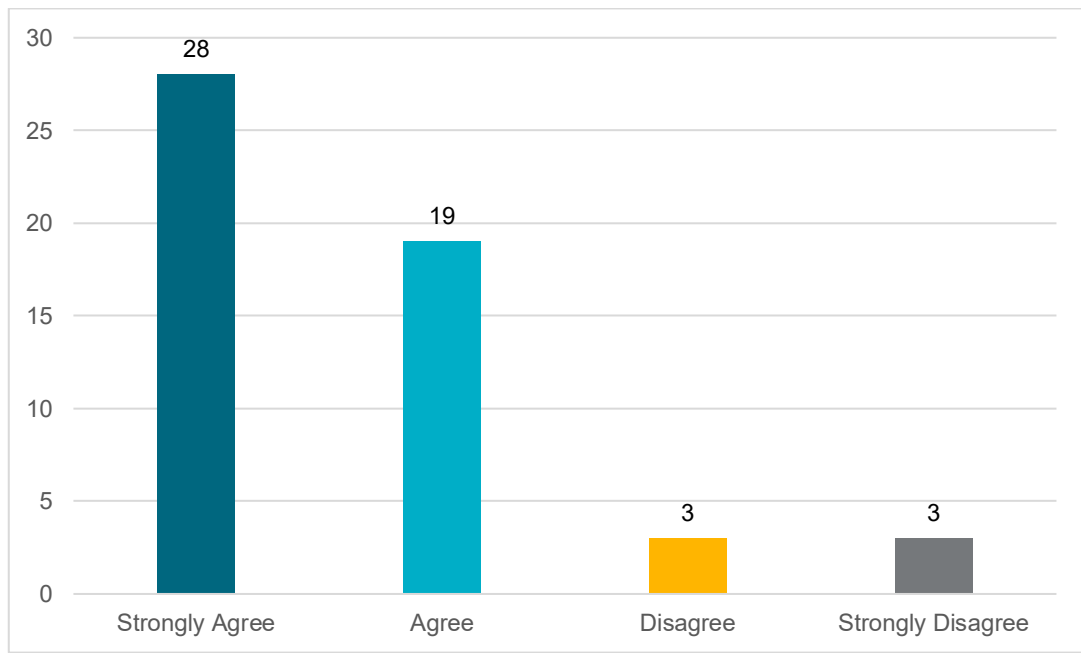
2. What was your role during the 2021-2022 school year?



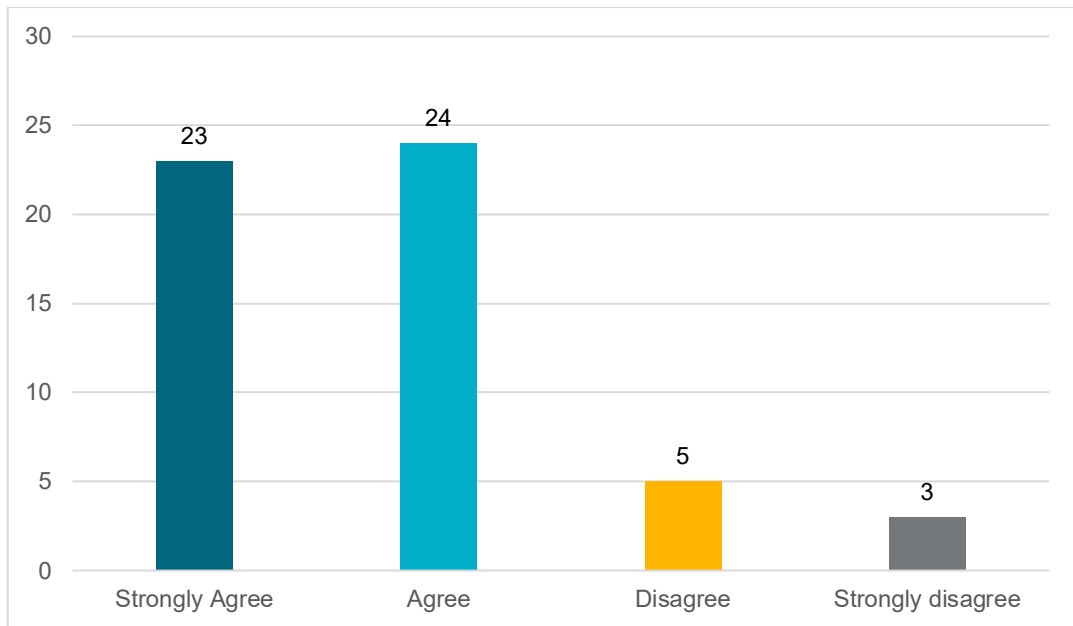
3. If you responded to question #2 with other, please specify your role.

Title	Count
Administrative Assistant I	1
Assistant principal	1
Coaching (crisis) Resource Teacher	1
College and Career Specialist	1
Crisis Resource Teacher	1
Region Assistant Superintendent	1
School Bus Driver	1
School Psychologist	2
Social Worker	1
Warehouse Assistant Supervisor	1

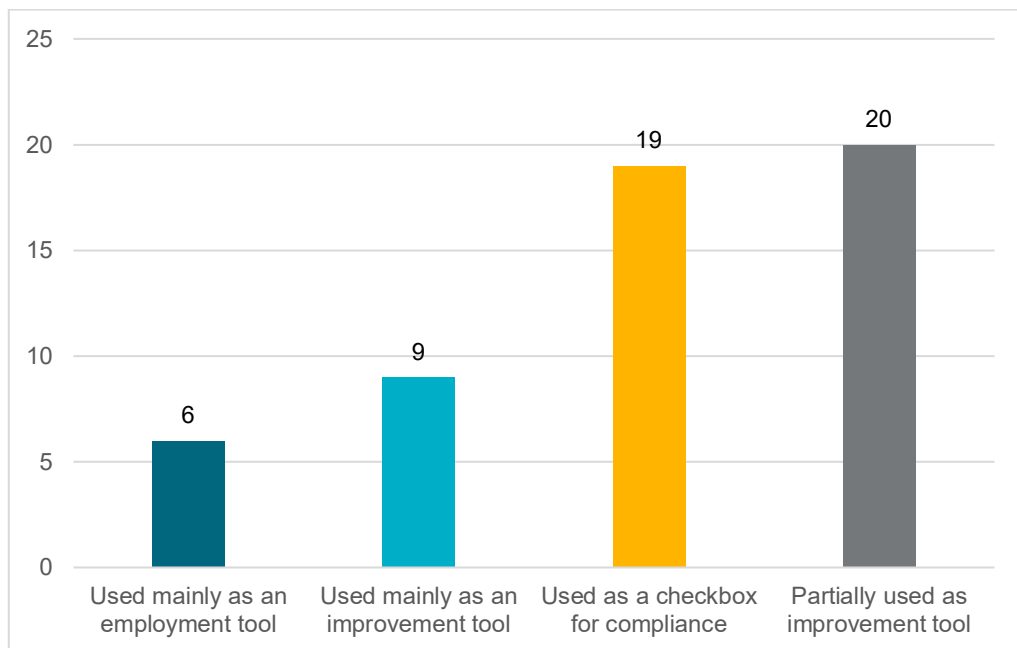
4. My administrator (evaluator) ensures that I am familiar with the Virginia Department of Education Evaluation Standards:



5. My administrator (evaluator) provides me with evidence from observations or other feedback given on my performance to support the ratings I received during my evaluation:

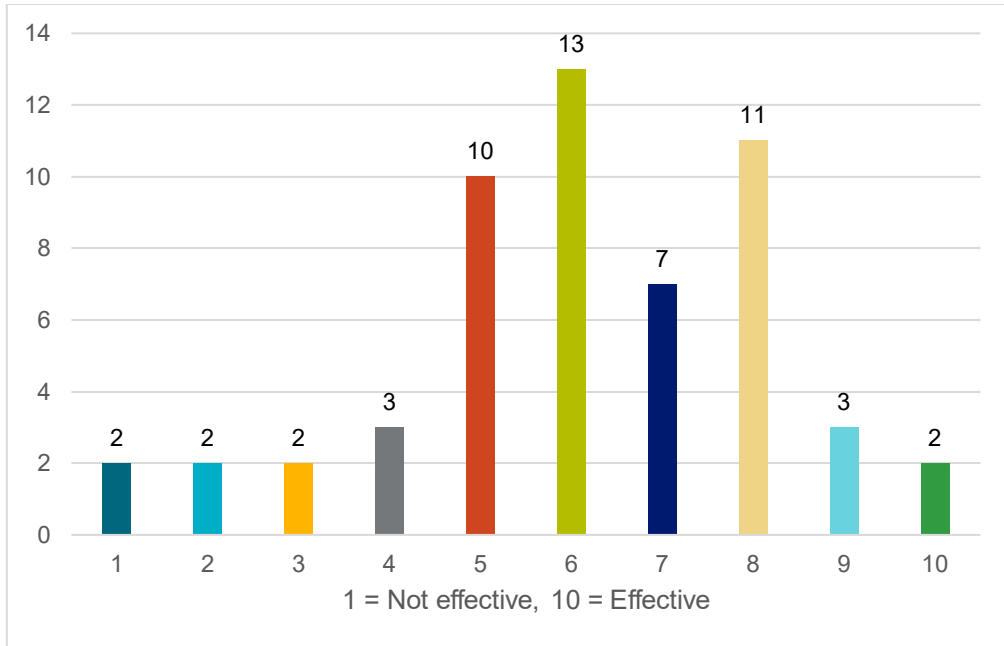


6. What is your feedback on FCPS evaluation purpose?

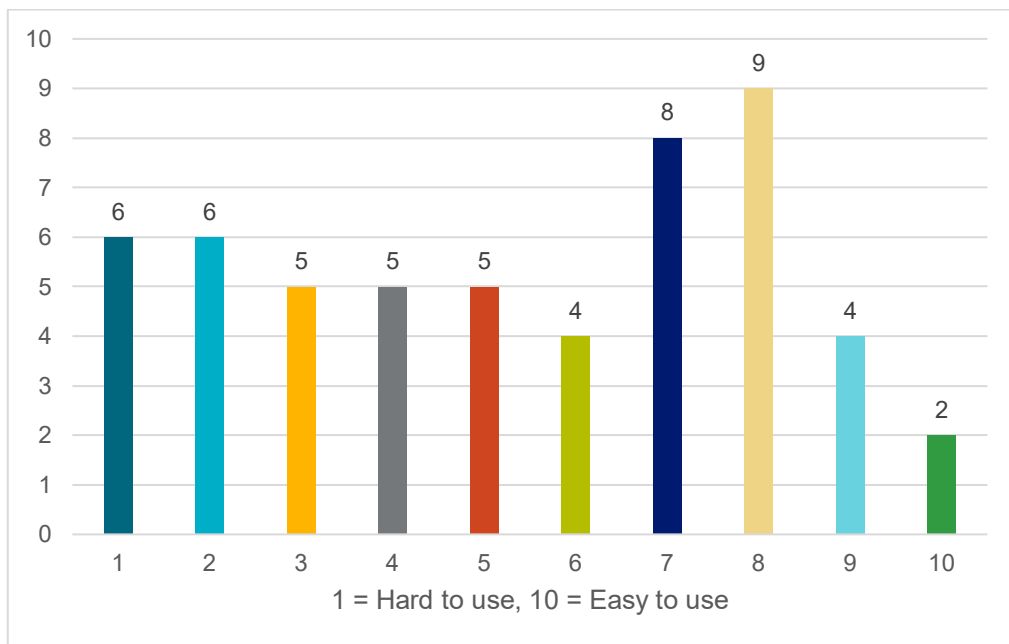


7. On a scale of 1-10, please rate FCPS evaluation process:





8. On a scale of 1-10, please rate the evaluation system MyPDE:



9. Please give your feedback on the evaluation system MyPDE:

Theme	Count
No response	17
Difficult to navigate	15
Easy to use	6
Cumbersome	6
Adequate	2
Not applicable	1
Unfair rating system	1

System limitations	1
Great resource tool	1
Meets needs as repository	1
Untimely information	1
Improved	1
Ineffective	1

10. Has there been any changes to your role in FY23?

