

## **FAQ's About the Evaluation Summary**

### ***Introduction:***

The evaluation summary should provide important insights into a teacher candidate's knowledge, skills in teaching, character, teaching ability, accomplishments, and potential. Many letters, however fall short of this goal. This is regrettable for the candidates and potential employers. It is important that in the evaluation summary, you be thoughtful and realistic using actual data to support your statements. Write what you know. Write your letter in an engaging fashion. Remember the importance of this letter on the teacher candidate's professional career.

### ***Did you know?***

The Evaluation Summary replaces the letter of recommendation and may be used by the teacher candidate as part of their credential files.

### ***Why do I need to write the Evaluation Summary?***

The Evaluation Summary provides a credible source of information from someone who has been involved with the candidate.

### ***How should I begin?***

Begin with a paragraph introducing the candidate, how you know them. Make sure that you state their name. It can also explain why you are the person writing the Evaluation Statement. This should be a short statement. Sample beginning statements might include:

- I am writing this Evaluation Statement...
- I am pleased to write...

### ***What should I stay away from stating in the letter?***

Remember that not everyone can be the best student teacher you ever had. These kinds of statements can seem gratuitous. Only make this statement if they are literally true. If you do make comments like: "Kathleen Benson is the best student teacher I ever had working in my classroom", the rest of the letter must provide credible supporting evidence for this claim. The goal is to demonstrate that the writer knows the candidate well enough to make an informed judgment.

### ***What other key components should I include?***

Write two or three paragraphs about the teacher candidate's teaching experience with you. Don't simply enumerate facts and specifics or describe every last detail. Present the big picture, without being superficial. Place the candidate's work in the context of the field. Describe the most important pieces of information that you need to relate to an employer. Use action Verbs. Ask yourself, if you were on a hiring committee, what types of information would you like to know about a potential candidate. Back up statements with details to illustrate your point.

- Planning ability
- Instructional techniques
- Classroom management

- Classroom community
- Differentiated instruction
- Ability to adapt lessons
- Assessment techniques to inform instruction
- Ability to work as a member of a team
- Work ethic and attendance
- Initiative
- Integrity
- Skill in using technology

***How should I conclude the Evaluation Summary?***

It is critical to indicate how you think the teacher candidate will do in the future as a teacher.

This part of the letter should make a clear statement of recommendation that flows logically from the statements in the body of the letter.

Transition statements are important to use:

In summary

In closing

Based on the foregoing

Accordingly

***What else might I include?***

You may want to state your own qualifications in the context of supervising student teachers.

***What else should I avoid?***

Don't be too brief. One paragraph or two short paragraphs can be the kiss of death.

Don't ramble. Be succinct and to the point.

***What if I have a student teacher who was satisfactory but not great?***

Write areas to work on in a positive manner. Use phrases such as "working toward"

***What about the length of the Evaluation Summary?***

In most cases, the evaluation summary should consist of three or four paragraphs and not be over one page in length.

***Additional points***

Please review the Summary with the student teacher and University Supervisor during the exit interview.

Please be sure to sign the original document and give the summary directly to the student teacher. Also, return a copy of the form to the Student Teaching Office in the business reply envelope provided in the packet of information your student teacher supplied.