

Executive Summary

The Michigan Council for Educator Effectiveness developed the following key recommendations for each section of its charge.

TEACHER EVALUATION

Teachers play a critical role in student learning and skillful teaching has a significant impact on students' opportunities and growth. The evaluation of teachers' performance is to be composed of evidence about two key aspects of their work: (1) their practice and (2) their students' growth.

Key Recommendations for Observations of Practice

- ❖ Classroom teaching must be observed using one of the four piloted observation tools: Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching, Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model, The Thoughtful Classroom, or 5 Dimensions of Teaching and Learning. If final results from the pilot study produce evidence that suggests that any of these tools is less reliable or practical, this information should be taken into account.
- ❖ One of these tools will be selected to be the state tool, based on a competitive RFP process. The state will provide sufficient base funding to support Local Education Agencies' (LEAs') use of the state-selected tool with full fidelity. The state will provide the technical support and training for the state-selected tool.
- ❖ LEAs may choose to use one of the other three piloted observation tools instead, but must pay for any expenses above the base funding supplied by the state for the state-selected tool.
- ❖ Any observer in an LEA must be trained in that LEA's observation protocol, whether the LEA is using the state tool or one of the other piloted tools. To support fidelity in the use of the observation tool, the training must be provided by the observation tool vendor. The training regime for an observer must be equivalent to that which is offered for the state-selected tool in terms of time and content.
- ❖ Multiple observations must be conducted across the school year. At least one observation must be unscheduled.
- ❖ Qualified peers may conduct some of the observations.
- ❖ The administrator responsible for a teacher's evaluation must conduct at least one of the observations and must use results of others' observations (if applicable) in making an overall appraisal of the teacher's practice.
- ❖ In addition to receiving the above-referenced vendor-provided training on the observation tool, the administrator responsible for a teacher's evaluation must receive adequate training (which includes opportunities to practice) in coaching and providing feedback.
- ❖ All teacher observation data collected with the state-selected observation tool shall be reported to the state for research purposes to support continuous improvement of the educator evaluation system.

Key Recommendations for Student Growth

- ❖ The state should continue to develop or select, as well as support, all aspects of assessments that are aligned to state-adopted content standards in all core content areas (i.e., English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies).
- ❖ The state should also develop or select assessments aligned to state-adopted content standards in high-volume non-core content areas where state-adopted content standards exist (e.g., arts, health and physical education, career and technical education, and many high school electives).
- ❖ In addition, the state should provide guidelines for:
 - Evaluating the quality of third party or locally developed assessments.
 - Training on adequate rigor in the development and measurement of student learning objectives.
- ❖ The state should, in all cases that are possible and professionally responsible, produce value-added modeling (VAM) scores for educators on state-provided assessments in the core content areas.
- ❖ For teachers in core content areas in grades for which there are growth data available from state-mandated assessments (currently reading and mathematics in grades 4–8, but likely to change over time), at least half of the teachers' student growth component should be based on state-provided VAM scores.

- ❖ For teachers of other subject areas, LEAs should have the discretion to adopt state-provided VAM or growth data.
- ❖ State-provided VAM or growth data in core content areas may be used in a teacher’s evaluation using information from that teacher’s students, even if the teacher does not teach in one of the core content areas. This means that teachers may be evaluated, in part, for the learning of their own students, even in subject areas that they do not directly teach. This may be done as long as the teacher knows that he or she is expected to be contributing to students’ growth in core content areas and there is a reasonable connection of the core content to the teacher’s actual teaching assignment.
- ❖ In order to promote collective work on instruction within school buildings, school-level VAMs may be used for individual teachers’ evaluations if there is a reasonable connection of the core content to the teacher’s actual teaching assignment. This means that teachers may be evaluated, in part, for the learning of students whom they do not directly teach. However, school-level VAMs may not comprise more than 10% of the individual teacher’s student growth component.
- ❖ In content area assignments for which there is no state-provided VAM or growth data available, teachers should be evaluated based on alternate measures of student growth that meet the guidelines for rigorous and appropriate assessment of student growth in the applicable subject area.

ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION

Administrators play a central role in high quality instruction. They support teachers, provide feedback, and enable and enhance professional learning communities. They manage resources, work with parents, and play a critical role in communicating between the school and the community.

Key Recommendations for Administrator Evaluation

- ❖ LEAs must choose from one of two administrator evaluation tools: MASA’s School ADvance Administrator Evaluation Instrument or Reeves Leadership Performance Rubric. One of these tools will be selected to be the state tool, based on a competitive RFP process. The state will provide sufficient base funding per administrator to support LEAs’ use of the state-selected tool with full fidelity. The state will also provide the technical support and training for the state-selected tool.
- ❖ LEAs may choose to use the other tool instead. An LEA that chooses to use the other tool must pay for any expenses above the base funding supplied by the state for the state-selected tool.
- ❖ Administrators must be evaluated on both their practice and student growth measures.
- ❖ In addition to student growth measures, administrators must be evaluated by at least the following evidence for each school (or LEA, for superintendents or central office personnel): proficiency of their skill in evaluating teachers; progress made in the school improvement plan; attendance rates; and student, parent, and teacher feedback. LEAs can choose to include other information.
- ❖ The school board must evaluate superintendents.

CATEGORIZING AND PROVING FEEDBACK TO TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS THROUGH ANNUAL EVALUATION SUMMARIES

Evidence about an educator’s performance will be combined into a final evaluation rating using an approach that maps the evidence onto a rubric with two axes: (1) quality of practice (based on observations) and (2) quality of student outcomes (based on student growth data). The MCEE recommends using three categories for rating teachers and administrators:

Professional: A teacher or administrator rated **professional** has exhibited the knowledge and capabilities expected of a skillful educator. We expect that educators who are extraordinary—as well as educators who are competent—would fall into this category. We also assume that even highly skilled practice can be improved. Because the purpose of educator evaluation is improvement, and because all educational practice benefits from ongoing refinement, a rating of “professional” should always be accompanied by specific feedback for development. A teacher or administrator rated as professional for three straight years may pursue opportunities for advanced roles or leadership. In addition, an educator rated as professional for three straight years may be evaluated on an alternating year basis in subsequent years and receive two-year goals for enhancement.

Provisional: A teacher or administrator rated **provisional** has exhibited some professional knowledge and skill, but has specific substantial identified weaknesses that should be addressed through feedback and targeted professional development. We expect that this category might include two groups of educators: beginning teachers and administrators who have yet to develop the level of skill necessary for professional practice and experienced teachers and administrators who struggle with mastering professional knowledge and skills. This rating is intended to be a serious signal that the educator's practice requires significant improvement in specific areas and the rating should be accompanied by clear feedback about areas that need focused attention. A teacher or administrator rated as provisional or below for three straight years should be counseled out of his or her current role.

Ineffective: A teacher or administrator rated **ineffective** has exhibited performance that has specific critical identified weaknesses. The educator should be placed on urgent notice that significant improvement must be achieved in the specific areas of underperformance within two years. An educator who receives an ineffective rating for two years in a row should be terminated from further employment as a teacher (for teachers) or as an administrator (for administrators) in his or her current LEA.

Each educator will receive a summative rating that represents the overall assessment of his or her performance—both in terms of practice and student growth—over the past year. More important, however, is that every annual evaluation—even of skillful educators—should specify goals for the continued development of practice. These goals should be developed by the evaluator in consultation with the educator being evaluated. In addition, educators should be provided with specific suggestions, resources, and opportunities for the learning needed to achieve those goals.

PROFESSIONAL TEACHING CERTIFICATION

Currently, Michigan teachers initially receive certification for five years, with an opportunity to renew this first certification for three additional five-year terms if necessary. This initial license to teach is labeled “provisional certification.” The next level of certification is called “professional.”

Key Recommendations for Professional Teaching Certification

- ❖ Teachers wishing to move from a provisional to a professional certificate must receive a professional rating for three successive years immediately prior to applying for professional certification.
- ❖ Teachers who do not demonstrate three successive years of professional ratings may apply for the renewal of their provisional certification until they either:
 - Achieve three successive years of professional ratings immediately prior to applying for their professional certification; or
 - Have three non-successive years of professional ratings but have the recommendation of their current principal.

WAIVER PROCESS

Although the MCEE is committed to creating a quality system of educator evaluation, the council recognizes that some LEAs have used time and resources to develop their own evaluation systems. LEAs that are able to demonstrate the effectiveness of their local evaluation tools and policies may apply for a waiver from the state system.

Key Recommendations for the Waiver Process

- ❖ In order to receive a waiver from using the state recommended process, entities requesting a waiver must demonstrate that their processes and systems have the same level of quality and rigor as those adopted in LEAs following the state requirements.
- ❖ If an LEA submits an adapted form of a commercial evaluation system, the LEA must demonstrate how the adaptations do not threaten the validity of the inferences based on use of the instrument.
- ❖ If an LEA is using an evaluation system that does not have available documentation about its validity and reliability, the LEA must submit a plan for how it will gather relevant data on the system's technical soundness. LEAs will receive probationary approval for their waiver, contingent on providing evidence of their system's reliability and validity within three years.