

## Your Question

You asked what states are doing about teacher evaluations during COVID-19.

## Our Response

States have taken a variety of different actions regarding teacher evaluations during COVID-19. Broadly speaking, guidance from states differ based on the extent of state requirements around the evaluation model. Some states require districts to follow the statewide evaluation model and/or have more statewide specifications for district evaluation practices. These states seem to be the most likely to offer waivers or specific guidance regarding completing evaluations during the COVID-19 pandemic. In many states, decision-making around evaluation is primarily centered at the district level, though states have established criteria on which districts can base their system. Many of these states have issued guidance to support districts in decision-making during this time. Further, some states include language around educator evaluations for teachers who are on an improvement plan. Below are examples of guidance and waivers from states regarding teacher evaluation during COVID-19. Education Commission of the States has not conducted a comprehensive 50-state scan on this issue.

### State Examples

#### *Statewide Evaluation Model*

We are aware of *at least 7 states* that have issued broad waivers of state requirements around evaluation for the 2019-20 school year.

**Arkansas:** State requirements for educator evaluation are suspended. [Guidance](#) states, “local districts must determine the process for completing end-of-year ratings for educators who were scheduled for a summative year evaluation.”

**Colorado:** In an [executive order](#), Gov. Jared Polis suspended the requirements “regarding the frequency and duration of employment performance evaluations” with the goal that this would “enable schools and districts to focus on providing alternative learning opportunities for students.”

**Florida:** [Guidance](#) states that evaluations required under section 1012.34, F.S. are waived for the 2019-20 school year. This waiver will give districts the flexibility to determine how they will calculate a teacher’s annual salary increases locally.

**Georgia:** Department of education [guidance](#) notes that teacher and leader evaluation requirements and reporting requirements have been suspended for the rest of the year.

**Louisiana:** Gov. John Bel Edwards waived laws related to educator evaluations. He issued an [executive proclamation](#) that, among other things, suspends provisions that make teacher evaluations a necessity in order to advance or renew teaching credentials. The department of education offers additional guidance on evaluation questions in this [FAQ](#).

**Mississippi:** [Guidance](#) from the Mississippi Department of Education notes that the Mississippi State Board of Education granted approval to suspend the requirement for districts to submit annual employee performance data for the 2019-20 school year.

**Oklahoma:** The Oklahoma Department of Education posted [COVID FAQs](#) that articulate the suspension of teacher evaluations for the remainder of the school year.

*At least 5 more states* have issued guidance to waive specific components, such as the inclusion of quantitative measures.

**Delaware:** The Delaware Department of Education provided [guidance](#) for educator evaluations that exempts educators from a Measure A rating tied to state assessments. Guidance also mentions that the state will provide flexibility around post-observation conference timelines. The state highly recommends that localities begin working with their leadership teams to review certain data to help them determine which educators will be a priority for completing an evaluation. Among the data recommended is the number of educators that require an improvement plan.

**New Jersey:** Gov. Phil Murphy issued an [executive order](#) that, among other things, waives the use of student growth data and requirements for observations in educator evaluations.

**Pennsylvania:** The state secretary of education signed [Act 13](#), waiving performance data required in performance ratings.

**Tennessee:** [S.B. 2672/H.B. 2818](#) (enacted) allows student growth evaluation composites generated by assessments administered in the 2019-20 school year to be excluded from the student growth measure of a teacher's evaluation for the 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22 school years, unless the composites result in a higher evaluation score for the teacher.

**Utah:** The Utah State Board of Education granted local education agencies a statewide [waiver](#) of employee evaluation requirements, including a waiver for a certain number of observations per year or a summative rating.

### *District Level Decision*

**Arizona:** The Arizona Department of Education issued [guidance](#) that reminds districts that statutory requirements have not been waived, and provides some suggestions on completing required components.

**Indiana:** Gov. Eric Holcomb issued an [executive order](#) allowing for flexibility regarding teacher evaluations. School corporations may either 1) conduct evaluations for the current school year as previously planned, not including student achievement and growth on statewide and local assessments or in-person observations, or 2) use evaluations from the 2018-19 school year. These cannot be used for teachers who are on a remediation plan or for teachers without a 2018-19 evaluation designation.

**Minnesota:** The Minnesota Department of Education issued [guidance](#) around teacher evaluations. Much of the guidance defers to local decision-making through the local oversight teams. Minnesota does not specify requirements regarding teachers on an improvement plan and, instead, recommends that teacher improvement plans be reevaluated and adjusted on a case by case basis.

**North Carolina:** The North Carolina State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction issued [guidance](#) saying that there have been no approved modifications for NC Teacher Evaluation process requirements to address

observation of instruction, which is delivered virtually because the observation process was not validated for this scenario. The guidance cautions localities that may be considering observation of online/remote teaching to proceed with extreme caution.

**Ohio:** [Guidance](#) provides district flexibility around teacher evaluations. District boards of education may use educator evaluations completed prior to school closures for employment decisions or may choose not to conduct evaluations.

**Texas:** [Guidance](#) allows districts to practice discretion as to which aspects of the appraisal process they can complete and which would require a waiver.

**Virginia:** [Guidance](#) allows for local flexibility and recommends localities consider local policy and consult their school board attorneys about the matter.

**Wisconsin:** [Guidance](#) allows for local flexibility and notes that districts have the option to request a waiver from the department of public instruction for the Educator Effectiveness evaluations for 2019-20 summary year educators.