

Your Question:

You asked for information about recent trends in teacher evaluation policies.

Our Response:

In 2018, Education Commission of the States released a [policy snapshot](#) on state actions related to teacher evaluation efforts. Since then, states have continued to make reforms to their teacher evaluation policies, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. This information request outlines legislative changes to teacher evaluations in the past few years including:

- Changes during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Changes to measurements used in teacher evaluations.
- Changes to teacher evaluation ratings or how teachers are assigned a rating.
- Changes to appeals processes for teacher evaluations.

For more information about legislative activity regarding teacher evaluations, visit our state education [policy tracking tool](#). For information specific to changes in teacher evaluations relative to student growth measure, see this [state information request](#).

Changes to Teacher Evaluations During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The following examples highlight a sample of enacted legislation that demonstrates how states modified their teacher evaluation policies at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Often, states suspended teacher evaluations or modified the way they were conducted.

Arizona

[S.B. 1165](#) (2021) removed the requirement for governing bodies to conduct teacher performance evaluations during the 2020-2021 school year. The bill specified that the absence of an evaluation during the 2020-21 school year cannot be used for dismissal and that an evaluation is not required for eligibility for performance pay.

Delaware

[S.B. 42](#) (2021) suspended the educator evaluation system for the 2020-21 school year and replaced it with an observation and feedback cycle.

Maine

[L.D. 1172](#) (2021) waived requirements to perform evaluations during the 2021-22 school year with the exception of teachers in their second year of a probationary period.

Changes to Teacher Evaluation Measures

Louisiana

[S.B. 234](#) (2021) prohibits the determination of whether students need additional academic supports to be used in evaluating teacher performance.

Nevada

[S.B. 475](#) (2019) requires an employee's statewide performance evaluation to account for class assignments that exceed the recommended student-to-teacher ratios. If the ratios do exceed recommendations, the impact of the higher student-to-teacher ratios must be incorporated into the final evaluation designation.

New Mexico

[H.B. 227](#) (2019) allows teachers to use personal leave and up to 10 days of sick leave without attendance impacting their annual performance evaluation provided leave is taken consistent with policies of the local school board or charter school governing body.

Pennsylvania

[S.B. 751](#) (2020) specifies that rating tools used to rate professional employees and temporary professional employees, including principals, must be approved by the department of education. It provides that the new rating tool must adjust the relative weight of classroom observation and practice models and student performance within the new system.

Virginia

[S.B. 1196](#) (2021) Adds cultural competency as a component in teacher, principal and division superintendent evaluations.

Changes to Teacher Evaluation Ratings

Arizona

[S.B. 1071](#) (2019) requires a school district governing board and charter school governing body to adopt policies for principal and teacher evaluation that: 1) are designed to improve principal/teacher performance and improve student achievement and 2) include four performance classifications: highly effective, effective, developing, and ineffective.

Illinois

[H.B. 18](#) (2021) requires districts to establish a teacher evaluation plan that ensures teachers rated as either "excellent" or "proficient" are evaluated at least once in the course of the three school years after receipt of the rating and are informally observed at least once in the course of the two school years after receipt of the rating.

Changes to the Frequency of Teacher Evaluations

Maine

[L.D. 345](#) (2019) requires the superintendent to evaluate probationary teachers each year of their employment as probationary teachers instead of solely during their second year.

Washington

[H.B. 1139](#) (2019) modifies teacher and principal evaluation standards, including requiring that comprehensive evaluations be performed every six years instead of four.

Wyoming

[H.B. 22](#) (2019) requires local education agencies, instead of the Wyoming State Board of Education, to establish rules governing teacher performance evaluation systems. Requires the performance of each initial contract teacher to be evaluated once a year against the school district's standards for performance, as submitted and approved.

Changes to the Appeals Process for Teacher Evaluations

Georgia

[H.B. 86](#) (2021) provides for a separate appeals process for unsatisfactory and ineffective summative performance ratings contained in personnel evaluations for teachers whom accepted a school year contract for the fourth or subsequent consecutive school year.

Illinois

[S.B. 1213](#) (2019) requires each school district to develop and implement an appeals process for teacher evaluation ratings that are deemed unsatisfactory. This includes, but is not limited to, an assessment of the original rating by a panel of qualified evaluators agreed to by the joint committee that has the power to revoke the initial rating. The bill requires the joint committee to determine the criteria for successful appeals. The bill also requires that the issuance of a rating to replace an "unsatisfactory" rating must be determined through bargaining between the exclusive bargaining representative, if any, and the school district.