Summary of Current Teacher Evaluation Policies and Initiatives in Midwest Region States

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REL Midwest prepared this brief in response to requests from state education agency (SEA) personnel in multiple Midwest region states. The first version was completed in June 2011. In October 2011, REL Midwest updated the brief to reflect recent policy developments in response to a request from the Minnesota Department of Education.

**Background**

Empirical research indicates that of all school-based factors, teachers have the greatest impact on student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005; Sanders & Horn, 1998). However, teachers vary considerably in their contributions to student growth (Rivkin et al., 2005; Rockoff, 2004). Although research suggests that teacher background characteristics, such as education level, years of experience, and certification, have little to no correlation with a teacher’s impact on student learning (Aaronson, Barrow, & Sander, 2007; Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2007a, 2007b; Goldhaber, 2006; Harris & Sass 2008; Rivkin et al., 2005; Rockoff, 2004), the vast majority of public school teacher evaluation systems base employment and compensation decisions on these factors (Brandt et al., 2007; Vigdor, 2008; Weisberg et al., 2009).

In an attempt to better align teacher evaluations with variations in teacher effectiveness, many policymakers and practitioners have begun to focus on designing teacher evaluation and compensation systems that include measures of teachers’ impact on student learning and achievement. Several recent federal programs, such as Race to the Top, the Teacher Incentive Fund, and the School Improvement Grants, along with foundation-funded efforts, such as the Measures of Effective Teaching project (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2010), have emphasized the importance of redesigning teacher evaluation systems to incorporate multiple measures of teacher effectiveness, including measures of student growth. For example, section (D)(2)(ii) of Race to the Top’s “Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010” requested that states “design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers…that differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth…as a significant factor” (Department of Education, 2010).

Reflecting this heightened focus on teacher evaluation, many states around the country have passed legislation requiring the use of multiple measures of teacher effectiveness in teacher evaluation systems. In addition to classroom observations, states are also incorporating some of the following measures into their teacher evaluation systems:

- Growth in student scores on standardized tests or other rigorous assessments
- Instructional artifacts
- Teacher portfolios
- Other standardized measures of student performance

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1 Research examining the correlation between teachers’ years of experience and measures of teacher effectiveness finds that teachers tend to improve during the first three to five years of teaching and then their performance on measures of effectiveness plateaus on average, diminishing the correlation between years of experience and measures of effectiveness. Therefore, the first three to five years of a teacher’s career correlate with measures of effectiveness, but that correlation diminishes significantly after that early period (Aaronson, Barrow, & Sander, 2007; Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2007a, 2007b; Goldhaber, 2006; Harris & Sass 2008; Rivkin et al., 2005; Rockoff, 2004).
• Student and parent surveys

Additionally, some states are requiring districts to consider the results of teacher evaluations in decisions related to teacher compensation, tenure, licensure, and/or dismissal, as well as in the improvement of teacher preparation programs.

Within the seven Regional Education Laboratory (REL) Midwest states, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, and Ohio have all passed legislation mandating changes to their statewide teacher evaluation systems. Policymakers, state education officials, and relevant stakeholders in these states are in various stages of designing and implementing revised evaluation systems to meet state-mandated criteria. Iowa and Wisconsin are in the beginning stages of considering new legislation to revise their respective statewide teacher evaluation systems. Given the focus across the region on the topic of teacher evaluation, this brief is intended to aid policymakers, education officials, and relevant stakeholders by providing a centralized source of information about the approaches and steps that other State Education Agencies (SEAs) have taken in designing and implementing revised teacher evaluation systems.

To conduct research for this report, REL Midwest searched for publicly available information on recent policy developments in the seven Midwest region states related to teacher evaluation. The information that was gathered was summarized state by state in the state profiles that follow.

Searches were conducted using the following protocol:

• Reviewing publicly available materials on SEA websites, such as press releases, memoranda, board of education meeting notes, published slideshow presentations, newsletters, question and answer documents, and similar sources
• Consulting states’ Race to the Top application(s), when relevant
• Conducting searches on Google and Google News with terms such as “[state name], teacher evaluation,” “[state name], teacher evaluation legislation,” “[state name], teacher tenure,” and “[state name], teacher compensation”
• Reviewing official bill language and summaries
• Examining legislative summaries found on the Education Commission of the States’ “Recent State Policies/Activities” website for Teaching Quality—Evaluation and Effectiveness.
State Policies and Initiatives

This brief describes in detail the current state of teacher evaluation in the seven REL Midwest states as of October 10, 2011, including information on the following elements:

- Recent legislation related to teacher evaluation
- Committees or task forces formed
- The implementation timeline

The following state profiles summarize publicly available information about each state’s approach and progress to date in designing and implementing new teacher evaluation systems.

Illinois

Overview

In January 2010, the Illinois General Assembly passed legislation that required school districts to incorporate student growth as a “significant factor”2 in teacher evaluations (Senate Bill 315; for more information, see the next section). In June 2011, the governor of Illinois signed Senate Bill 7 into law, which stipulates how school districts will use the results of the new teacher evaluations in granting tenure and determining teacher dismissal.

Background

In advance of the first round of Race to the Top, the Illinois General Assembly passed the Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA) in January 2010 (Senate Bill 315). The act established a timeline for districts to adopt new teacher evaluation systems that incorporate student growth as a “significant factor” in determining teacher effectiveness, in addition to other measures that may include teacher’s attendance, classroom observations, knowledge of subject matter, instructional methods, and classroom planning and management. Teachers who are not in contractual continued service are required to be evaluated at least once every school year, while teachers in contractual service must be evaluated at least once every two school years. The legislation requires the evaluation systems to rate teachers on a four-point scale: excellent, proficient, needs improvement, and unsatisfactory. Districts are required to submit data to the state board on the performance ratings that teachers receive, but the legislation prohibits those ratings from being disclosed to the public.

If a teacher receives a “needs improvement” or “unsatisfactory” performance rating, he or she must be evaluated at least once in the subsequent school year. In addition, a teacher who is rated

2 The magnitude of the term “significant factor” varies across the states that have referenced it in their revised teacher evaluation systems. Legislation in four out of the seven REL Midwest states—Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, and Ohio—included the provision that teacher evaluation systems consider student growth measures as a “significant factor” in ratings of teacher effectiveness. States have defined the percentage differently, and most states will only stipulate a minimum proportion of the final rating for which student growth measures will account, leaving it up to districts to determine the final percentage.
as “needs improvement” must consult with the evaluator to create a professional development plan focused on the areas that need improvement. A teacher who receives an “unsatisfactory” evaluation rating must participate in a 90-day remediation plan that includes a midpoint and a final evaluation.

PERA assigned the state board of education the responsibility of defining the minimum criteria for the evaluation systems that districts will be required to adopt. Local school boards and teacher unions have the option of forming a joint committee to collectively design their evaluation systems according to those criteria. Districts will be able to choose the specific measures that will serve as proxies for student growth, the percentage of teachers’ effectiveness ratings that will be determined by measures of student growth, the other methods that will be used to evaluate teachers, who will act as evaluators, and how evaluators will be trained and certified. Teachers and administrators are permitted to perform evaluations, but all evaluators are required to receive rigorous training and pass an interrater reliability assessment. 3

However, there are deadlines for school districts and unions to come to an agreement. If a school district has failed to negotiate specific measures within 180 days of the first meeting of its joint committee, it must adopt the model evaluation system designed by state officials, which is expected to count student growth measures as 50 percent of the evaluation rating. However, there is one exception to this rule: If the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) school board and unions fail to come to an agreement within 90 days of the first meeting of its joint committee, the school district will not be required to implement any aspect of the state’s model evaluation system and the school board’s “last best proposal” will be implemented.

Senate Bill 7, which was signed into law in June 2011, incorporates the results of the revised teacher evaluations into decisions about granting teacher tenure or dismissing teachers. This bill stipulates that beginning teachers earn at least two ratings of excellent or proficient during the final three years of the four-year probationary period before being granted tenure. If beginning teachers receive three excellent ratings in the first three years of their probationary period, they will receive tenure in three years rather than the otherwise required four years. This bill also permits the state schools superintendent to suspend or revoke a teacher’s certificate after receiving two unsatisfactory ratings in a seven-year period. Additionally, the legislation ends “last in, first out” firing policies; the law requires that teachers who receive either “unsatisfactory” or “needs improvement” ratings be dismissed before teachers who are rated “proficient” or “excellent.” Teachers rated as “unsatisfactory” or “needs improvement” must be dismissed in order of their evaluation ratings, while “proficient” and “excellent” teachers will be dismissed in order of seniority, as long as all “proficient” teachers are dismissed before “excellent” teachers.

Committees

PERA created the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC), which is charged with developing a state model for teacher evaluation. Members of the committee were appointed by the state superintendent and include representatives from the Illinois State Board of Education

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3 After September 1, 2012, the required prequalification program and evaluator assessment will be one that is approved by the state board.
(ISBE), union representatives, teachers, administrators, and education performance evaluation experts. The committee began monthly meetings in March 2010 and is required to meet at least quarterly until June 30, 2017. By September 1, 2012, PEAC is required to complete the following tasks:

- Create a state model evaluation system template from which districts will be able to create and customize their own systems.
- Create or determine methods to measure student growth in all subjects and grades, not only those that require standardized testing.
- Define “significant factor” (i.e., stipulate the minimum percentage that student growth measures will contribute to ratings of teacher effectiveness) and determine other minimum standards for district-developed teacher evaluation systems.
- Devise a rigorous prequalification program and a training program for evaluators (by September 30, 2012).
- Develop a system to collect and publish annual teacher evaluation results, as well as identify correlations between the results of principal and teacher evaluations and growth in student test scores and teacher retention rates (by September 30, 2012).
- Design a system to provide technical assistance to school districts to aid them in developing and implementing their new evaluation systems, including Web-based systems and tools.

In addition, by September 2014, PEAC must release a research-based assessment of the district teacher evaluation systems to measure their validity and reliability. PEAC will then make recommendations about any aspects of the evaluation systems that need to be improved.

In October 2011, PEAC is hosting regional forums and posting an online webinar and survey to gather feedback from teachers and administrators on its proposed recommendations for district minimum standards and the state teacher evaluation model. As of mid-October, the drafted minimum standards required that measures of student growth include at least two types of assessments and account for at least 30 percent of a teacher’s final evaluation rating (Performance Evaluation Advisory Council, 2011b, Slide 12). In its draft form, the model state evaluation system, which districts can choose but are not required to implement, recommends that student growth measures account for 50 percent of the final evaluation rating (Performance Evaluation Advisory Council, 2011b, Slide 14). After receiving feedback from teachers and administrators, PEAC will submit its recommendations to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) in late October, which will publish the draft minimum standards and state evaluation model in November for a 45-day public comment period. In spring 2012, ISBE will finalize the rules.

**Timeline**

The timeline for implementation of PERA and Senate Bill 7 is as follows:

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4 The system must ensure that teachers and administrators cannot be personally identified in the data.
• **September 1, 2012.** School districts that received federal School Improvement Grants must incorporate measures of student growth into their teacher evaluations. In CPS, 300 schools that received school improvement grants will be required to incorporate new evaluation systems.

• **September 30, 2012.** The state must have a data system in place to store and track the results of teacher evaluations and student growth.

• **September 1, 2013.** CPS must incorporate student growth into the evaluation systems for its remaining schools.

• **September 1, 2014.** The state must issue a research-based evaluation study to assess the implementation and effectiveness of teacher evaluation systems among the school districts.

• **September 1, 2015.** The lowest-performing 20 percent of school districts outside of Chicago are required to incorporate student growth into their evaluations.

• **September 1, 2016.** The remaining school districts are required to incorporate student growth into their evaluations (Performance Evaluation Advisory Council, 2010a).

**Indiana**

**Overview**

On April 30, 2011, the governor of Indiana signed Senate Bill 1 into law, which requires Indiana local school corporations (LSC) to design and implement annual teacher evaluation systems based on multiple measures of teacher effectiveness, including student growth. The results of the evaluation systems will be used to inform compensation and employment decisions such as granting tenure, dismissal, reductions in force policies, and salary increases. In July 2011, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) released a second iteration of its draft teacher effectiveness rubrics, a comprehensive protocol for annually evaluating a teacher,\(^5\) called RISE (Indiana Department of Education, 2011a), as well as a draft salary schedule (Indiana Department of Education, 2011c). (The final teacher evaluation rubrics and salary schedule will be released in January 2012.)

**Background**

Senate Bill 1 requires local school corporations (LSC) to implement new teacher evaluation systems based on multiple measures of teacher effectiveness, including student growth measures. IDOE will define the criteria for the four categories of teacher effectiveness—highly effective, effective, improvement necessary, or ineffective—as well as other minimum standards for

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\(^5\) The RISE teacher evaluation rubric provides a rating of teacher professional practice, but does not include measures of student learning. In order to comply with Senate Bill1, LSCs must assign teachers a summative evaluation rating that includes measures of student growth. Therefore, the evaluation rating provided by the RISE teacher evaluation rubric can act as one component of a larger summative score.
designing teacher evaluation systems at the LSC level. The bill requires that when LSCs develop evaluation systems based on state-mandated criteria, those systems also include the following:

- Annual teacher evaluations
- Objective and rigorous measures of student achievement and growth, such as standardized test scores or other standardized measures of growth for non-tested subjects
- Rigorous measures of teacher effectiveness, including observations
- Feedback for teachers within seven days of the evaluation, tying the results to defined actions and timelines for improvement
- Trained evaluators approved by the principal

The results of the evaluation system will impact both employment and compensation decisions. New teachers will be required to receive effective or highly effective ratings in three of five probationary years to become professional. Reduction in force policies will no longer be based on seniority and must also consider the results of performance evaluations in decisions about teacher terminations. However, seniority, leadership positions, or the academic needs of the students may be considered as a tiebreaker if multiple teachers are rated in the same performance category. Teachers hired after July 2012 may be dismissed after receiving two consecutive ratings of “ineffective,” two consecutive “improvement necessary” ratings, or “ineffective” or “improvement necessary” ratings in three out of five years.

The law also stipulates that teacher contract-salary scales that are negotiated in collective bargaining after July 1, 2012, reflect a combination of the following factors:

- The results of teacher evaluations
- A teacher’s “instructional leadership roles, including the responsibility of conducting evaluations”
- Experience and additional degrees or credit hours (limited to a maximum of 33 percent of the total raise amount)
- Ability to meet the academic needs of the students in the school (Indiana Department of Education, 2011c)

Teachers who receive ratings of either “improvement necessary” or “ineffective” in their annual reviews will be ineligible to receive automatic pay raises.

Finally, IDOE must annually disclose the results of teacher evaluations for each school, LSC, and teacher preparation program on its website. Senate Bill 1 states that a student may not have a teacher rated as ineffective for two consecutive years. If such a situation is unavoidable, the school must notify the student’s parents.

In an effort to aid LSCs in developing teacher evaluation systems that comply with the criteria for teacher evaluation systems established in Senate Bill 1, IDOE is in the process of developing a model teacher effectiveness rubric called RISE to evaluate teachers annually on all criteria established in Senate Bill 1, except for student growth measures. RISE evaluates teachers on four domains—planning, instruction, leadership, and core professionalism—for which IDOE created rubrics for rating teachers on a four-point scale. IDOE released its latest draft version of the
evaluation system in July 2011. The RISE Evaluation and Development System recommends that evaluators:

- Conduct multiple observations and drop-ins throughout the year, as well as examine evidence of effectiveness provided by the teacher, such as lesson plans, student work, and parent/teacher conference notes. Evaluators may choose to examine evidence twice a year and host a midyear conference with teachers to discuss their progress thus far.
- Establish three separate ratings of a teacher’s competencies in planning, instruction, and leadership based on the body of evidence. The evaluator should discuss the ratings for the first three domains with the teacher in a summative conference, citing the evidence supporting the final rating.
- Use established weights (planning at 10 percent, instruction at 75 percent, leadership at 15 percent) to combine the three domain ratings into one rating for domains 1–3.
- Rate the teacher on core professionalism as either “does not meet standard” or “meets standard” (Indiana Department of Education, 2011a).  

Senate Bill 1 also establishes a pilot program for several school districts to implement new teacher evaluation systems during the 2011–12 school year. IDOE announced the school districts that will participate in the pilot program in May, 2011 (Indiana Department of Education, 2011b).  

The statewide pilot program for the 2011–12 school year consists of two tracks:
1. Track 1 school districts will pilot the model teacher evaluation system developed by the state.
2. Track 2 districts will pilot their own locally developed teacher evaluation systems that meet the standards set by Senate Bill 1.

For Track 2 school districts, IDOE and the New Teacher Project will host a learning community to provide support and feedback on implementation logistics, including a midyear and a year-end report on lessons learned during the pilot.

The goals of the pilot program are as follows:
- To determine that evaluation systems—both those developed by the state and locally developed models—can incorporate state priorities in a fair, accurate, and feasible way.
- To identify areas for improvement in advance of statewide implementation.
- To learn from the experiences of the early adopters and make changes to the system accordingly.

Districts statewide are required to implement either their own locally developed evaluation systems that meet state-mandated criteria or the RISE evaluation model in the 2012–13 school year. Throughout the next year, IDOE will provide several supports to districts to aid their planning efforts to implement their new systems in the 2012–13 school year. These supports include providing:

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6 For more information on the evaluation rubrics and directions for determining scores, see the draft version of the RISE Evaluation Model (Indiana Department of Education, 2011a).
7 For updated information on Senate Bill 1, see the updates on the proposed legislation.
• An assessment audit tool to help local school corporations identify the gaps between their current evaluation systems and the requirements for the new evaluation system
• A midyear report on the progress of the pilot schools
• Guidance on timelines, multiple measures, weighting of student performance data, professional development alignment, evaluator training, etc. (Indiana Department of Education, 2011e).

Committees

The Indiana Education Reform Cabinet (IERC) was established in September 2010 (Indiana Department of Education, 2010b). It consists of classroom teachers from different school corporations around the state. This cabinet provides a forum for members to ask questions and provide feedback about IDOE’s education initiatives, including teacher evaluation. The members of the IERC also host regional meetings with teachers to inform them about education reform initiatives.

The Educator Evaluation Cabinet—consisting of teachers, administrators, and other education stakeholders from around the state—works with IDOE staff and national experts to help design the state model teacher evaluation system called RISE (Indiana Department of Education, 2011d). Throughout the process of developing the model teacher evaluation system and effectiveness rubrics, the group has shared drafts with local school corporations and educator groups and posted the rubrics online so that teachers could view them and offer feedback. The final model rubrics will be released in January 2012 (Indiana Department of Education, 2011d).

Timeline

The timeline for the pilot program is as follows:
• April 15, 2011. Applications to participate were due.
• May 18, 2011. Participants were announced.
• May–August 2011. Training was conducted.
• Fall 2011. The pilot program was launched.

The statewide implementation timeline is as follows:
• January 31, 2012. IDOE must release the finalized model teacher evaluation rubrics and plan.
• 2012–13 School Year. The new evaluation systems will be implemented in all school districts across the state.

Iowa

Overview

In its Race to the Top application, Iowa amended one of the eight teaching standards on which teachers are evaluated to include a requirement that teachers provide “an analysis of student
learning and growth based on teacher-created tests and authentic measures, as well as any standardized and district-wide tests” (Iowa Department of Education, n.d.). More recently, Iowa held an education-focused state summit in July 2011, which featured a keynote address from U.S. Department of Education Secretary Arne Duncan and presentations by national experts in teacher evaluation. Culling from the discussions and presentations at the summit, Governor Branstad released an education reform blueprint in September 2011, which, among other recommendations, outlined his administration’s proposal for a new statewide teacher evaluation system with performance-based compensation.

Background

In 2001, the Iowa legislature passed the Student Achievement and Teacher Quality Act, which defined the following:

- Statewide teaching standards
- Upgrades for the professional development system
- Career paths for teachers
- Plans to implement a comprehensive teacher evaluation system with trained evaluators

The current teacher evaluation system links teacher performance to specific teaching standards for different stages of a teacher’s career. The Iowa Professional Development Model provides guidance to school districts on how to review teacher evaluation results and student growth data to better target the content of professional development programs.

In 2006, the Iowa General Assembly established a Pay-for-Performance Commission, whose recommendations served as the guidelines for implementing state-funded pay-for-performance pilot programs in the 2008–09 school year. Three school districts took part in the pilot programs, with each school district adopting one of three pay-for-performance designs: a career-ladder program, a pay-for-performance program, and a hybrid program with both career ladders and pay-for-performance components. State funding for the pilot programs concluded at the end of the 2008–09 school year.

In support of its Race to the Top application in 2010, the Iowa Department of Education amended Chapter 83 of the Iowa Administrative Code, “Teacher and Administrator Quality Programs,” adding the requirement that teachers provide multiple measures of student growth as one of the eight teaching standards on which teachers are evaluated. Student growth measures must be based on teacher-created tests or standardized and district-wide tests.

Iowa held an education-focused state summit in July 2011, which included presentations by national experts on teacher evaluation. In his January 2011 annual budget address, Governor Branstad stated that a newly created education policy team would work collaboratively with the education reform leaders at the summit to craft a major education reform initiative for the 2012 legislative session.

In September 2011, Governor Branstad released an education reform blueprint based on the discussions and presentations at the education summit. One of the proposals included in the
blueprint is to establish a new statewide teacher evaluation system with the following characteristics:

- Annual evaluations
- Peer reviews
- Coaching system to help teachers improve based on their evaluation results
- Four-tiered, performance-based teacher compensation system that designates teachers as Apprentice (approximately 20 percent), Career (approximately 60 percent), Mentor (approximately 15–20 percent of teachers), or Master (approximately 5 percent),

Mentor and Master teachers would be positions that teachers could choose to apply for through a competitive process. Mentor teachers would spend 20 to 30 percent of their day coaching teachers to help them improve their instructional practices. Master teachers would spend as much as 50 percent of their day helping with peer evaluation and serving as instructional leaders.

Within the proposed evaluation system, teachers could be recommended for dismissal after two consecutive years of ineffective performance ratings.

Committees

Not applicable

Timeline

- **Fall 2011.** The governor plans to present his proposals to revise the statewide teacher evaluation system at a series of town-hall meetings.
- **January 2012.** The governor plans to submit a legislative package to the Iowa General Assembly.

Michigan

Overview

Michigan passed legislation in December 2010 that makes significant changes to its teacher evaluation system. *Public Act No. 205* requires districts to design and implement a “rigorous, transparent, and fair performance evaluation system” for teachers that includes measures of student growth as a significant factor. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has released several memoranda and presentations to help guide school districts in meeting implementation timelines. These resources provide information about the logistics of developing revised evaluation systems according to state-mandated criteria (Michigan Department of Education, 2011a; Michigan Department of Education, 2011c).

The Michigan legislature also recently made amendments to its *Teachers’ Tenure Act* (passed as Public Acts 100–103), which went into effect July 19, 2011. This legislation aligned the results of the evaluation system with decisions to award tenure and dismiss teachers.
Background

Public Act No. 205, which took effect in January 2010, makes significant changes to the teacher evaluation system in Michigan. It requires school districts to adopt and implement a “rigorous, transparent, and fair performance evaluation system” for all teachers and administrators using student growth data as a “significant factor” (Public Act No. 205, Section 1249). Evaluations must occur at least once a year, an increase from the previous schedule of once every three years, and provide teachers with specific feedback, including performance goals and recommendations for training. Teachers will be rated as “highly effective,” “effective,” “minimally effective,” or “ineffective.” Additionally, school districts must develop a clear approach for measuring student growth using national, state, or local assessments or other “objective criteria.”

The legislation states that teacher effectiveness ratings must be used to inform decisions on tenure, certification, promotion, professional development, and dismissal (Public Act No. 205, Section 1249). Evaluation results must also play a significant role in determining compensation. However, if a collective bargaining agreement was in effect as of January 4, 2010, that prevents a school district from complying with the new evaluation requirements within the stated timeline, that district may wait until after the contract expires to implement a system aligned with the new standards (Michigan Department of Education, 2011a).

More recently, the Michigan legislature made amendments to its Teachers’ Tenure Act, which went into effect July 19, 2011. In addition to the annual evaluation required by Public Act No. 205, the changes to the Teachers’ Tenure Act require teachers to receive a mid-year progress report, beginning in the 2013–14 school year.

The new provisions in the Teachers’ Tenure Act lengthened the probationary period for new teachers from four to five years. Teachers must be rated “effective” or “highly effective” on their annual evaluation in the last three years of their probationary period and have completed five full school years of employment to complete the probationary period. If a teacher has been rated “highly effective” on three consecutive year-end evaluations but has only completed four full school years of employment, however, he or she will have successfully completed the probationary period.

The provisions also have implications for tenure and length of service decisions; length of service or tenure cannot be a factor in reduction or recall decisions, unless it is used as a tiebreaker between two candidates who are equal on all other distinguishing factors. A probationary teacher who is rated “effective” or “highly effective” on his or her most recent annual year-end performance evaluation is not subject to being displaced by a teacher on continuing tenure solely because the other teacher has continuing tenure. Decisions about reduction or recall decisions should be based on individual performance, relevant accomplishments and contributions, and relevant special training. Individual performance should be evaluated according to the following measures:

- Evidence of student growth

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8 This provision does not apply until the current collective bargaining agreement expires.
• Instructional leadership abilities
• Demonstrated pedagogical skills
• Classroom management
• Rapport with parents and other teachers
• Teacher attendance and disciplinary record, if any

If a teacher receives a rating of ineffective or minimally effective, the district must provide that teacher with an individualized development plan (IDP) that requires the teacher to make progress towards attaining specific goals within a time period that is no longer than 180 days. A teacher who is rated as ineffective on three consecutive year-end evaluations must be dismissed. Beginning in the 2015–16 school year, if a student is assigned to a teacher whose last two year-end ratings were ineffective, the school must notify the student’s parents.

The new provisions in the Teachers’ Tenure Act also specify the types of measures that districts can use in their teacher evaluation systems, as well as the appropriate weights of some of the measures. Year-end evaluations should be based at least 25 percent on student growth and assessment data in 2013–14, 40 percent in 2014–15, and 50 percent in 2015–16.

The Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI), which is located within the Department of Management and Budget, must also create a teacher identification system to collect teacher-student linked data (S.B. 926 - Sec. 94a(1)(i)). Districts will submit student course-taking and academic progress data along with a reported teacher of record.

MDE continually updates its website to provide information on revising and implementing teacher evaluation systems.

Committees

Public Act No. 102 requires that a Governor’s Council on Educator Effectiveness convene by October 31, 2011. The governor appointed three members to the council, and the speaker of the House, the Senate majority leader, and the state superintendent of public instruction will each appoint an additional member to the council (Michigan Department of Education, 2011c). The members appointed to the council must have expertise in one or more of the following areas: psychometrics, measurement, performance-based teacher evaluation models, teacher effectiveness, or the development of teacher evaluation frameworks in other states. In addition, the governor will appoint an advisory committee that consists of public school teachers, administrators, and parents to provide input on the council’s recommendations.

The Council must produce a report by April 30, 2012, with recommendations for a model state teacher and administrator evaluation tool that includes a student growth/assessment tool. In addition to the student growth measures, the evaluation system that the council recommends may also include the use of the following measures:

• Instructional leadership abilities
• Teacher and pupil attendance
• Professional contributions
Summary of Current Teacher Evaluation Policies and Initiatives

- Training
- Progress report achievement
- School improvement plan progress
- Peer input
- Pupil and parent feedback

Districts will implement that tool or a tool that is consistent with the state-provided model beginning in the 2013–14 school year (Michigan Department of Education, 2011d).

In addition, MDE and Center for Educational Performance and Information also intend to convene groups to do the following:

- “Identify metrics and methods for evaluating educators in currently non-assessed content areas and/or grades, and provide samples of those metrics and methods to districts”
- “Discuss the use of state assessment data and state-produced measures of student growth in ‘value-added models’ and develop a recommended model that will be used to generate state-determined measures of educator effectiveness for internal validation studies” (Michigan Department of Education, 2010, p. 4).

Timeline

The timeline for implementation is as follows:

- **Fall 2011.** School districts will implement their locally determined educator evaluation systems that include student growth measures as a “significant factor.”
- **Spring 2012.** The Governor’s Council on Educator Effectiveness publishes a report that includes a model teacher evaluation system with a student growth tool for both tested and nontested subjects.
- **2013–14 school year.** Districts implement the model teacher evaluation system recommended by the Governor’s Council on Educator Effectiveness or another system that is consistent with the state model.

Minnesota

Overview

In July 2011, Minnesota passed House File No. 26, which revised the statewide teacher evaluation system in Minnesota. The legislation allows local school districts to design their own evaluation systems that meet specific state-mandated criteria or implement a model evaluation system that the Minnesota Department of Education (MDOE) will develop. Prior to this legislation, Minnesota’s Quality Compensation (Q Comp) program enabled school districts to voluntarily implement performance-based teacher evaluation and compensation systems in exchange for additional state funding.

Background
In 2005, Minnesota implemented a voluntary, state-funded, performance-based teacher evaluation and compensation system called Q Comp, which is based on the Teacher Advancement Program model. School districts or charter schools must apply to the state and propose a pay-for-performance teacher evaluation system that meets certain criteria. The five components that school districts or charter schools must include in their Q Comp proposal to qualify for funding are as follows:

1. Career pathways and advancement options for teachers
2. Job-embedded professional development aligned with student achievement goals
3. Formative teacher evaluations or observations based on a standardized rubric
4. Performance pay bonuses, for which at least 60 percent must be based on measures of student achievement
5. An alternative salary schedule that replaces the traditional “steps and lanes” compensation schedules with performance-based increases

In 2010-11, approved applicants received up to $260 per student ($169 per student in state aid and $91 per student in a board-approved levy) for the program. In the 2010–11 school year, 50 Minnesota school districts and 54 charter schools participated in Q Comp, which collectively account for approximately one third of the students served by Minnesota public schools.

In contrast to the voluntary Q Comp program, House File No. 26 established criteria that all local teacher evaluation systems must follow. Districts are allowed to either design their own annual evaluation system or implement a model teacher evaluation system developed by the Minnesota Department of Education. House File No. 26 stipulates that:

- Thirty-five percent of the teacher effectiveness rating be based on teacher value-added assessment models and/or state and local measures of student growth.
- The evaluation system includes a three-year professional review cycle, during which at least one summative evaluation must be performed by a trained evaluator such as a school administrator.
- Teachers be evaluated by a trained peer reviewer during the years that they do not receive a summative evaluation.
- Teachers have the option of submitting a portfolio as part of the summative evaluation demonstrating evidence of reflection and professional growth and a self-assessment of performance based on student work samples and examples of their other work.
- The evaluation systems consider longitudinal data on student engagement and other student outcome measures.

Districts must provide teachers who do not meet the professional standards established in the evaluation system with support to meet specified goals over a defined timeline.

Committees

House File No. 26 requires the Minnesota Department of Education to convene a committee that includes representatives from parent, teacher, and administrator organizations; the Board of
Teaching; the Minnesota Association of School Administrators; the Minnesota School Boards Association; the Minnesota Elementary and Secondary Principals Associations; Education Minnesota; the Minnesota Assessment Group; the Minnesota Business Partnership; the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce; and Minnesota postsecondary institutions to create and publish a model annual teacher evaluation system that meets the criteria stated in the legislation.

**Timeline**

Districts must implement the new evaluation systems by the 2014–15 school year. MDOE is still in the process of establishing timelines to create its own model evaluation system.

**Ohio**

**Overview**

Ohio was one of 12 states to win a Race to the Top grant in August 2010, receiving $400 million in funds to enact the reform measures outlined in its application. Much of the state’s Race to the Top application (Ohio Department of Education, 2010a) focuses on reforming the state’s teacher evaluation system, building on at least five years of legislative efforts at the state level to improve the teacher evaluation and licensure systems. Most recently, the governor signed Senate Bill 5, also known as the Public Employee Collective Bargaining Law, on March 31, 2011, which eliminates the automatic pay schedule for public school teachers and replaces it with a merit-pay system based on the results of teacher evaluations, part of which is determined by a teacher’s impact on student growth. The law was scheduled to go into effect on July 1, 2013, but a statewide campaign to repeal the law collected enough signatures to put it up for referendum. Its provisions have been suspended until after the election on November 8, 2011. On June 30, 2011, the governor of Ohio signed the Biennial Budget, House Bill 153, into law, which included provisions related to teacher evaluation systems.

**Background**

**Senate Bill 2**

In 2004, Ohio passed Senate Bill 2, which created an Educator Standards Board to develop the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession and the Ohio Standards for Professional Development. These standards specify the knowledge and skills that teachers in Ohio are expected to demonstrate at various points of their careers and the corresponding standards for teacher professional development to support teachers in their professional growth. In 2005, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) adopted the proposed teaching standards and aligned standards for professional development.

**House Bill 1**

In July 2009, the former governor of Ohio signed House Bill 1, also known as the Education Reform Plan, into law. The bill directed the Educator Standards Board to develop a method for
measuring student academic growth over a one-year period and incorporating those measures into a recommended model Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES). The OTES model is intended to act as a guide for districts in the design and implementation of a high-quality, performance-based teacher evaluation system. The most recent draft of the OTES model:

- Utilizes multiple measures of teacher effectiveness, including student growth, as 50 percent of the evaluation rating.
- Is aligned with the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession.
- Rates teachers as “accomplished,” “proficient,” “developing,” or “ineffective.”
- Requires that teachers receive a written report explaining the results of their evaluation.
- Identifies measures of student growth in subjects and grade levels for which standardized test scores are not available.
- Requires and provides funding for professional development to promote teacher growth (Ohio Department of Education, 2011b).

The components of the model are: 1) goal-setting; 2) assessment of teacher performance; 3) communication and professionalism; and 4) student growth measures.

An early version of the OTES model was piloted in 37 school districts around the state during the 2010–11 school year. In April, the Capacity Committee of the State Board of Education received a first draft of the full teacher evaluation system model. ODE sought feedback from participating superintendents, principals, and teachers as well as other stakeholders and released the most recent draft of the evaluation system in August 2011. The OTES will be piloted by participating RttT Local Education Agencies (LEAs) during the 2011–12 school year.

House Bill 1 also mandated the creation of a new four-tier, evaluation-based teacher licensure system aligned with the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession. ODE was tasked with determining the criteria for obtaining a resident educator license, a professional educator license, a senior professional educator license, and a lead professional educator license. ODE had to develop a resident educator license to take effect by January 2011 and a corresponding Ohio resident educator program for the fall of 2011.

Registration for the resident educator program is occurring from September 1, 2011, through November 15, 2011. The program is research-based and adaptable to the diverse needs of rural, urban, and suburban school districts. The four-year resident educator program provides new teachers with mentoring and guidance, three to four interim assessments per year, and an annual summative assessment based on multiple measures of effectiveness, including student growth. Teachers will be rated “ineffective,” “satisfactory,” “proficient,” “accomplished,” or “distinguished.” Successful completion of the residency program—achieving a rating of “proficient,” “accomplished,” or “distinguished”—is required to qualify for a five-year professional educator license.

To graduate to a five-year senior professional educator license, teachers must acquire a master’s degree, demonstrate nine years of successful teaching, and meet the criteria for accomplished or distinguished levels of performance, as described in the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession. The five-year lead professional educator license requires teachers to have
demonstrated effective practice at the “distinguished” level of performance, specifically by receiving national board certification or successfully completing the master teacher portfolio and the teacher leader endorsement.

Senate Bill 5

In March 2011, the current governor signed Senate Bill 5 into law, which incorporates the results of the annual teacher evaluations established by Senate Bill 1 into decisions about teacher compensation, termination, and reductions in force. This bill eliminates the salary schedule and replaces it with a performance-based system for which at least 50 percent of the evaluation score is based on measures of student academic growth as specified by ODE. Other factors that may be considered in evaluation ratings are as follows:

- The quality of instructional practice, which is determined by both announced and unannounced classroom observations and examinations of classroom artifacts, such as lesson plans or teacher-created assessments
- Communication and professionalism, including a teacher’s interactions with students, parents, other staff members at the school, and members of the community
- Parent and student satisfaction, as measured by surveys or other forms of feedback

The Superintendent of Public Instruction is tasked with developing a framework for the evaluation guidelines and will submit it to ODE by April 30, 2012. ODE must adopt finalized guidelines by July 1, 2012. Once the state framework is established, school districts will have one year, until July 1, 2013, to adopt their own guidelines that meet the criteria defined in the state framework. Each school district will also have to establish pay ranges for each level of teacher licensure, as well as determine how evaluation criteria will be weighted to further differentiate pay levels within each licensure level.

A statewide campaign to repeal Senate Bill 5 has successfully collected enough signatures to put the law up for referendum, so its provisions have been suspended until after the election on November 8, 2011.

House Bill 153

On June 30, 2011, the governor of Ohio signed the Biennial Budget, House Bill 153, into law, which included provisions related to teacher evaluation systems. The bill mandates that ODE develop a “standards-based” framework for evaluating teachers by December 31, 2011, that has the following characteristics:

- Uses multiple factors, of which at least 50 percent must be based on student academic growth
- Is aligned with the Educator Standards Board’s standards for teachers
- Requires at least two 30-minute classroom walk-throughs and teacher observations
- Provides teachers with a written report of evaluation results
- Implements classroom level, value-added programs, or identifies alternative measures of student academic growth for grade levels and subjects for which the value-added measure does not apply
• Offers professional development to accelerate teacher growth and allocates the financial resources to support it
• Identifies four performance levels: “accomplished,” “proficient,” “developing,” and “ineffective”
• Requires teachers to be evaluated annually, unless the teacher receives an “accomplished” rating, in which case the teacher may be evaluated every two years

House Bill 153 requires RttT LEAs to adopt and fully implement the suggested framework or another standards-based teacher evaluation system that aligns with state and federal criteria by the 2013–14 school year or earlier, per their RttT-approved scopes of work and timelines. Districts that are not receiving RttT funds must adopt a standards-based teacher evaluation policy that meets the requirements of the framework for teacher evaluation by no later than July 1, 2013, to be implemented in the 2013–14 school year.

HB 153 requires RttT LEAs that included performance-based compensation systems in their RttT scope of work to implement them according to their approved timelines for implementation. Traditional public schools who are not receiving RttT funds may choose to implement performance-based compensation systems, but it is not a requirement.

Guiding Principles

OTES serves as a model to aid school districts in designing and implementing high-quality teacher evaluation systems. According to current draft guidelines (Ohio Department of Education, 2010b, slides 16–17), the teacher evaluation system that is adopted by a district should have the following characteristics:

• Aligns with the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession
• Is systematic
• Provides ongoing support to promote professional development and student learning
• Considers experience, skill, and responsibility
• Uses a variety of measures to collect evidence of teacher expertise and performance
• Differentiates effectiveness using multiple rating categories for teachers and encourages continuous professional growth
• Uses teacher performance assessments that are specific and limited

Committees

In 2004, Senate Bill 2 created the Educator Standards Board—consisting of teachers, administrators, and other education stakeholders—to develop a model evaluation framework that school districts may choose to follow when designing their own teacher evaluation systems. ODE was required to appoint 10 teachers from public schools, one teacher from a chartered nonpublic school, five school administrators, one school board member, one parent representative, and three representatives from higher education to the new board. The Educator Standards Board was tasked with the following goals:

• Identify a research base delineating characteristics of high-quality teacher evaluation.
• Identify key policy issues that will serve as a guide or lever for change.
• Recommend a set of guidelines for teacher evaluation that is consistent with best practice.
• Identify best practices.

Within the Educator Standards Board, the Ohio Teacher Evaluation Writing Team extensively studied other model evaluation systems during the 2009–10 school year, including the District of Columbia Public Schools, Delaware, New Mexico, and Colorado, and also consulted with evaluation experts such as Charlotte Danielson, Laura Goe, the New Teacher Center, and Learning Point Associates. The group’s findings helped inform the design of the components, process, and tools included in the OTES (Ohio Department of Education, 2011a).

Timeline

According to Ohio’s draft scope of work for Race to the Top, the timeline for implementing the revised teacher performance management systems includes the following activities and deliverables:

- **March 2011.** Developed and conducted validity studies on the teacher evaluation model, such as field testing, and released a gap analysis tool for use by LEAs.
- **June 2011.** Developed the evaluation training and credentialing program.
- **2011–12 school year.** Begin piloting the OTES with early adopter LEAs.
- **April 30, 2012.** Senate Bill 5 requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to submit a framework for an evaluation system that meets the guidelines outlined in the bill.
- **July 1, 2012.** ODE must finalize the framework guidelines provided by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- **2013–14 school year.** House Bill 153 requires LEAs statewide to adopt and fully implement the state model evaluation system or another system that meets state-mandated criteria.

Wisconsin

Overview

Wisconsin is in the early stages of considering legislation to revise its teacher evaluation system. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (2010) has formed an Educator Effectiveness Design team to provide recommendations for a statewide performance-based teacher evaluation system.

Background

In December 2010, State Superintendent Tony Evers announced the formation of an Educator Effectiveness Design team, which is tasked with developing recommendations to revise the teacher evaluation system in Wisconsin. The group is responsible for developing criteria for evaluation that uses multiple indicators of effectiveness, including student academic growth data. The proposed standards for the evaluation system must align with the Common Core State Standards (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010). In June 2011, the group held the
Educator Effectiveness Symposium, which solicited feedback on the proposed guiding principles of the teacher evaluation system and the definitions of educator effectiveness from relevant stakeholders.

Committees

The Educator Effectiveness Design Team consists of leaders from the Association of Wisconsin School Administrators, the Wisconsin Association of School Boards, the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators, the Wisconsin Education Association Council, and representatives from educator preparation programs and national organizations. It is tasked with determining the recommendations for a teacher evaluation system, including clearly articulated criteria, multiple indicators of teacher effectiveness, and student growth data. The group is currently examining model state performance assessments for initial, professional, and master licensure; career ladder evaluations; and national board certification assessments. By October 2011, the committee will develop the following:

- Key guiding principles for a high-quality educator effectiveness program
- Model performance-based evaluation systems for teachers and principals
- A regulatory framework that includes how student achievement data will be used
- Recommendations for methods to support improvement and incentives for performance
Additional Resources

This report is updated as of October 10, 2011. To access additional information on teacher evaluation policies or implementation efforts in Midwest region states, please consult the following pages of SEA websites:

- Illinois State Board of Education
- Indiana Department of Education
- Iowa Department of Education
- Michigan Department of Education
- Minnesota Department of Education
- Ohio Department of Education
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

For updates on teacher evaluation systems nationally, the Education Commission of the States tracks recent state policy activity related to teacher evaluation and effectiveness. In addition, The National Comprehensive Center on Teacher Quality website includes tools and resources to aid policymakers in designing and implementing teacher evaluation systems as well as examples of teacher evaluation models in practice.
References


