



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING


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MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 5, 2020

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Venessa A. Keesler, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent 
Division of Educator, Student, and School Supports

SUBJECT: Educator Evaluation Guidance for the 2020-21 School Year -
MEMO #COVID-19-134

This memo serves as guidance for common questions received by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) related to educator evaluation in accordance with [Michigan Compiled Law \(MCL\) 380.1249](#) for the 2020-21 school year. MDE has heard from district leadership and understands that, in many instances, the statutory requirements pose a burden to local education agencies, both traditional public schools and public school academies, during an already challenging academic year.

MDE has been working closely with several statewide education organizations on issues that school districts are facing during the pandemic. We will be working collectively to lobby the state legislature about changes to state law for this year on educator evaluations for both teachers and administrators.

We are not supportive of current law during the pandemic and are working on legislative amendments for recommendation to the state legislature. By contacting your own state legislators, you help us in this effort. That said, below is current law and this is what we will be required to enforce, with you, and what you will be required to implement unless the state law is amended by the state legislature.

Who must be evaluated this year?

Educators who did not receive an evaluation rating for the 2019-20 academic year must be evaluated under [Michigan Compiled Law \(MCL\) 380.1249](#) during the 2020-21 school year. If a highly effective rating was entered into the registry of educational personnel (REP) at the end of the 2019-20 evaluation cycle, resulting in a third consecutive highly effective rating, the district may choose not to conduct a year-end evaluation for that educator during the 2020-21 evaluation cycle, enacting the biennial evaluation allowance provided in [MCL380.1249\(2\)\(k\)](#).

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How do we calculate student growth ratings without 2019-20 state assessment data?

LEAs may choose to utilize local assessment data to comprise the entirety of the student growth component for 2020-21 teacher and administrator summative evaluations, or may opt to use state assessment student growth data for teachers of English language arts (ELA) and math in grades 4-8 from the 2017-18 and 2018-19 academic years.

What recommendations does MDE have for developing new procedures for measuring student growth without state assessment data?

Districts can invite a variety of stakeholders to participate in an ongoing educator evaluation planning team. This team should meet at least annually to review and adjust educator evaluation practices to continuously align practices with LEA and school improvement goals and improve observation and feedback, student growth measurement, and professional learning connected to evaluation goals and outcomes.

Interim/benchmark assessments are recommended for consideration for ELA and math subjects but are not required within the educator evaluation law. When considering assessments for student growth, consider assessments that are comparable across educators, relevant to the content and standards of the educators being evaluated, and useful for other instructional and continuous improvement purposes.

LEAs should use professional judgment when considering student growth goals from locally selected assessments. Using norms and growth targets from previous school years to determine success criteria for this year may be invalid and unfair to educators given the potential of significant interruptions to instruction.

LEAs should set student growth goals that allow for the opportunity for success despite interruptions to instruction that are outside of the control of the educator.

Can we change an educator evaluation rating once it is reported in the REP?

Yes. Annually, a [data appeals window](#) is open between September 1 and the first business day in December. During this time, LEAs may update inaccurately reported ratings in REP for the last 5 years of data.

What guidance does MDE have regarding educator evaluations for online/virtual instruction?

Excellent educators are essential to improving student outcomes. High-quality evaluations provide teachers with critical feedback on how they can improve their own practice to affect the lives of students. Focus on a feedback process that is rigorous, transparent, and fair, while highlighting the elements of the evaluation tool that are most relevant in a virtual environment to create a professional growth and evaluation plan.

Refer to [Resources Available to Support Educator Evaluation](#) in an online/virtual environment for additional information.

How are evaluations handled for contracted virtual educators? Is it allowable to hire an outside entity to conduct teacher observations and evaluations?

[MCL 380.1249\(2\)\(e\)\(iv\)](#) requires that at least one observation annually must be conducted by the building administrator responsible for the teacher's year-end evaluation. Other observations may be conducted by individuals trained in the use of the LEA's adopted observation tool(s). This could include, but is not limited to, teacher leaders, master teachers, instructional specialists, and/or other LEA administrators. Compiled evaluations must be completed by the building administrator or supervising administrator.

Questions related to educator evaluation may be directed based on topic:

Educator Evaluation Administration: MDE-EdEvals@Michigan.gov

Reporting Educator Evaluation in the REP: CEPI@Michigan.gov

Educator Evaluation and Certification: MDE-EducatorHelp@Michigan.gov

Educator Evaluation and Teacher Tenure: MDE-AdminLaw@Michigan.gov

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors