

## **NCLB WAIVER SUMMARY: EDUCATOR EVALUATION**

While the application developed by the U.S. Department of Education for states seeking waivers from the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) required many specific details about states' efforts to improve education, it did not require a comprehensive list of such endeavors. Therefore, Florida's approved waiver plan may not capture all that the state is doing to improve education. State officials also note that they must resolve some details before implementing the new evaluation system. The following summary covers the evaluation aspects of Florida's waiver plan as it stood when approved. It may not tell the complete story of educator evaluation in the state, however, as that work continues to evolve.

### **PROMISING ASPECTS OF PLAN:**

- Florida's plan reflects the intended purpose of teacher and principal evaluation systems: to improve teaching quality. The state ensures that evaluations factor into educators' professional growth by requiring the development of individual plans for every teacher and principal based both on evaluation results and student performance data. The state also details the ways in which evaluation results must influence teacher compensation, dismissal, and layoffs.
- The Department of Education did not require states to address the issue of equitable access to effective teachers as part of their waiver plan. Yet, for those students most in need of effective teachers, this is an important part of improving teacher quality. It is critical to view each state's plan in this context. Florida took the issue of equity seriously, prohibiting districts from disproportionately assigning poorly performing teachers to the lowest performing schools.
- While systems for meaningfully assessing student growth in non-tested subject areas are not fully functional yet, the state articulates a clear plan for developing and implementing tools and resources to accurately measure teacher impact on student growth in these subjects and grades.

### **ISSUES FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION:**

- While the plan does contain some references to ensuring the reliability and validity of different components of evaluation, there are not many details about how the state will monitor implementation (such as the assignment of evaluation ratings) to ensure that it is consistent and reliable across and within districts.
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## **EVALUATION DESIGN**

### **What are the components of the state’s proposed teacher and principal evaluation system, and how are those components weighted?**

- For all teachers:
  - 50 percent based on student growth measures
  - 50 percent based on other evidence of practice
- For all principals:
  - 50 percent based on student growth measures
  - 50 percent based on other evidence of practice

### **What roles will the state and districts play in developing and implementing an evaluation system?**

- The state developed a model evaluation system based on the research of Robert Marzano.
- All districts have begun implementing new systems, with 30 adopting the state model, 14 adopting a hybrid state-local model, and 14 adopting the Danielson Framework for Teaching.
- The state developed and issued a Review and Approval Checklist for Teacher Evaluation System for all local education agencies (LEAs) and reviewed all LEA models before their implementation.

### **How will the state measure student growth in tested grades and subjects? Will the measure be comparable across LEAs within the state?**

- For all courses in state-tested subject areas, evaluations must use the statewide value-added formula for measuring growth.
- The student-learning growth portion must include three years of data, where available.
- Because the measure is developed and calculated at the state level, it is comparable across LEAs.

### **How will the state guide development of student growth measures for non-tested grades and subjects?**

- State law requires that evaluations of teachers in non-state-tested subjects use an “equally appropriate” measure to the value-added measure.
- The application outlines the state’s approach to non-state-tested subjects, including plans to develop a statewide assessment bank, and plans to provide example growth models and local assessments developed from the assessment bank.

### **How will the state approach observations of classroom instruction and other measures of teacher and leader practice?**

- The model evaluation system uses Marzano’s observation tool for the teacher practice component.

- For those districts adopting a different qualitative model, the state requires specific components and provides recommendations on details such as the number of observations for various groups of teachers.
- For principals, evaluation criteria must include indicators based on the leadership standards adopted by the State Board of Education.

**Will all educators be evaluated at least annually?**

- All educators are evaluated annually, and newly hired teachers are evaluated twice annually.

**USE OF EVALUATIONS**

**How will the state use teacher and principal evaluations to inform individual professional development and to improve instructional practice?**

- The evaluation results must be used to develop an Individual Professional Development Plan for each teacher.
- For principals, evaluation results must be used to develop an Individual Leadership Development Plan.

**How will the results of teacher and principal evaluations inform personnel decisions?**

- Two consecutive unsatisfactory ratings, two such ratings within three years, or three consecutive ‘needs improvement’ ratings constitute just cause for dismissal or non-renewal of contract.
- Workforce reductions must be based on performance evaluations.
- Only highly effective and effective teachers can be eligible for salary increases and highly effective teachers must receive the greatest salary increase.
- For principals, two consecutive unsatisfactory ratings, two such ratings within three “years, or three consecutive “needs improvement’ ratings constitute just cause for dismissal.
- For principals, salary schedules adopted by the district must be based on performance and tie the most significant gains in salary to effectiveness.

**Will the state use educator evaluations to ensure students have equitable access to effective teachers?**

- The Department of Education did not require states to address the issue of equitable access to effective teachers as part of their waiver plan. Yet, for those students most in need of effective teachers, this is an important part of improving teacher quality. It is critical to view each state’s plan in this context. Florida’s plan prohibits inequitable distribution of teachers who are temporarily certified, out-of-field, or need improvement.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF EVALUATIONS**

### **How will the state train educators and evaluators in the new evaluation system?**

- The state provided technical assistance to districts to help them align model instructional practice frameworks to Florida's educator practice standards.
- District superintendents and other LEA team members who supervise principals were trained on how to identify and support principals who are struggling to implement the new teacher evaluation system.

### **How will the state ensure the reliability and validity of LEA evaluation systems?**

- The application includes some information on plans to ensure the reliability and validity of different components of evaluation but provides no details.

### **How does the state address other implementation considerations, such as ensuring a robust teacher-student data link or managing the rollout timeline?**

- The state has a teacher-student data link and a statewide value-added data system in place.