

Flexibilities for Implementing the CT Guidelines for Educator Evaluation 2017 (Guidelines 2017) for the 2021-2022 School Year

As the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will continue into the 2021-22 school year, a balanced approach to returning educators, staff and students back to in-person teaching and learning, and to support student and educator growth and improvement, will be necessary. As such, the Flexibilities for Implementing the [Guidelines 2017](#) for 2021-22 (*Flexibilities 2021-22*) prioritize the need to focus on:

- social and emotional learning and overall well-being of students, staff, and educators;
- equitable learning opportunities for all students;
- culturally responsive teaching and learning practices;
- academic achievement; and
- engagement with families.

These flexibilities are provided to facilitate support, feedback, and growth for CT educators, in order to best meet the needs of students.

Student Learning Indicators and measures of accomplishment will prioritize students with the most significant needs and will align with the following:

- the school's focus on social and emotional learning;
- school and/or district improvement goals,
- addressing identified areas of need based on current data, and/or
- content-related standards.

Student Learning Indicators (45%)

Justification: As educators begin the new school year, following a year that has been very different from the traditional approach to teaching and learning, it is important for educators to focus on:

- supporting the wellness of the whole child,
- equitable learning opportunities for all students, and
- providing support to students who have challenges in attaining learning goals.

It is also important for school and district leaders to focus on supporting educators and staff, as well as to be supported, regarding their overall wellbeing and that of their staff.

Teachers will develop a minimum of one student learning goal with a minimum of two indicators, or measures of accomplishment, focused on:

- social and emotional learning for students,
- student engagement,
- engaging families,
- cultural responsiveness, and/or
- academic achievement.

Indicators or measures of accomplishment could be demonstrated by implementation of school-wide, grade-level, or individual strategies mutually agreed upon between the teacher and evaluator during the goal-setting process.

Administrators will develop a minimum of two student learning indicators, or measures of accomplishment, including, but not limited to:

- supporting the health, safety, and social and emotional well-being, of staff and students,
- ensuring equity for the most vulnerable students and their families,
- mastery-based learning, and/or
- developing systematic approaches to incorporating social and emotional practices and/or culturally responsive practices into the teaching and learning process.

Indicators or measures of accomplishment could be demonstrated by implementation of district-wide or individual strategies that are mutually agreed upon between the administrator and evaluator during the goal-setting process.

Observation of Performance and Practice (40%)

Justification: As the social and emotional well-being of students and staff will be a priority during 2021-2022, it is recommended that observations of performance and practice be formative in nature, and take place more frequently and for shorter amounts of time throughout the school year for the purpose of providing feedback and support. Evaluators are encouraged to focus on educator practice that supports social and emotional learning, the health and well-being of staff and students, and student learning.

Written feedback from observations should be based on evidence collected, and current CSDE-approved rubrics. Feedback should be formative in nature and include recommendations for growth and professional learning.

Observation Process for Teachers:

Districts may adjust the requirement for formal in-class observations, as appropriate, if shorter, more frequent observations will take place. For first and second year teachers, and teachers on an improvement and remediation plan, a post-conference is recommended.

Informal Observation: In-class observations less than 20 minutes may be unannounced, with verbal and/or written feedback within a timely manner.

Formal Observation: In-class observations of at least 20 minutes, may be unannounced, with verbal and/or written feedback within a timely manner.

- A minimum of two informal observations and a minimum of one review of practice for teachers with more than two years of experience and who were rated Proficient or Exemplary during the 2018-19 school year and/or maintained Proficient or Exemplary practice during 2020-2021.
- A minimum of three informal observations and a minimum of one review of practice for first and second year teachers and teachers who demonstrated Developing or Below Standard practice during 2020-2021.

- For those educators serving in non-classroom roles being evaluated under the SESS rubric, reviews of practice may be used in place of informal observations.

Evaluators are encouraged to provide additional opportunities to check in with staff regarding social and emotional well-being and support, and may implement additional observations and/or reviews of practice as needed.

Observation Process for Administrators:

Artifact reviews may replace one of the required site visits required in the *Guidelines 2017*.

- A minimum of two site visits and one artifact review for administrators with two or more years of experience and who were rated Proficient or Exemplary during the 2018-19 school year and/or maintained Proficient or Exemplary practice during 2020-2021. .
- A minimum of three site visits and two artifact reviews, with additional site visits/artifact reviews, as needed, for administrators who are new to the profession or the district, or who demonstrated Developing or Below Standard practice during 2020-2021.

Evaluators are encouraged to provide additional opportunities to check in with administrators regarding social and emotional well-being and support, and may implement additional site visits/artifact reviews as needed.

Stakeholder Feedback (10%)

Justification: Engaging with families continues to be essential in supporting the social and emotional well-being of students and their academic learning. The CSDE is committed to supporting educators in their support of, and engagement with, the families of our students. It is recommended that educators prioritize the focus on implementing strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with families.

Whole-School Student Learning Indicators/Teacher Effectiveness Outcomes (5%)

Flexibility is provided to districts, with consensus of their PDECs, to:

- follow their most recently approved CSDE-EESP, or
- for educators to focus on one of the following special areas of focus to support their professional practice and/or to support a school-wide area of focus, including, but not limited to:
 - social and emotional learning,
 - providing equitable learning opportunities for all students,
 - professional learning to improve practice,
 - professional learning communities, and
 - best practices for hybrid or remote learning.

4-Level Matrix Rating System

Summative ratings will be required for the 2021-2022 school year.

- End-of-year summative reviews shall include a teacher/administrator self-assessment and an end-of-year conference.

- Summative ratings shall be determined by:
 - a holistic review of evidence in each component,
 - combining the rating for student learning goals and whole-school student learning indicators/educator effectiveness/special area of focus for an Outcomes Rating,
 - combining educator practice and stakeholder feedback for a Practice Rating, and
 - combining the Outcomes Rating and the Practice Rating to a Final Rating aligned to one of four performance designations:
 - Exemplary
 - Proficient
 - Developing
 - Below Standard
- Districts shall report to their local or regional board of education the status of educator evaluations by June 1, 2022.
- The reporting of aggregate evaluation ratings will be due to the CSDE by September 15, 2022.

Within the current rating system, districts may consider performance levels based on levels of engagement/implementation of strategies to accomplish goals.

Evaluation-based Professional Learning

It is recommended that Professional Learning needs be discussed during the goal-setting conference, and be reviewed as part of mid-year check-ins. This will ensure ongoing support as educators adapt and adjust to the potential for varied teaching and learning environments due to the monitoring of COVID-19 factors.

Individual Improvement and Remediation Plans

Communication between evaluators, educators, and the exclusive bargaining representative should take place regarding the status of existing plans. Primary evaluators should provide formative documentation when developing a plan in consultation with the educator and exclusive bargaining representative.