

Educator Evaluation: Frequently Asked Questions

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Section 1 – General Evaluation

1. What do state statutes say with regard to the frequency of educator evaluation?

The cyclical legislation, [RIGL 16-12-11](#) establishes provisions related to the frequency of evaluations. The legislation states that a teacher who obtains or earns a rating of “highly effective” should be evaluated not more than once every three years and that a teacher who obtains a rating of “effective” should be evaluated not more than once every two years. Furthermore, [field memo guidance dated 9-18-15](#) provided a pause that encouraged districts to develop a mechanism to distribute educators rated Effective and Highly Effective in 2013-14 into groups in order to stagger the completion of evaluations with all tenured educators rated as Effective in 2013-2014 being evaluated by the end of the 2016-2017 school year AND all educators rated Highly Effective in 2013-14 being evaluated by the end of 2017-2018. That said, the legislation also states that any teacher who requests an annual evaluation, any teacher during his or her first year teaching under a new certificate, and any non-tenured teacher should be evaluated annually.

Per the legislation, districts also have the ability to establish local policies that call for more frequent evaluations so long as such policies are in accordance with local district personnel policies and negotiated collective bargaining agreements. For example, some districts require a teacher who switches more than two grade levels to be evaluated and other districts require a full evaluation any time a teacher changes the certificate in use. Finally, a district can evaluate an educator more frequently if concerns about a teacher’s performance arise so long as it is in accordance with local policy. These provisions also apply to support professionals.

The cyclical legislation, [RIGL 16-12-11](#) does not apply to building administrators, who must continue to be evaluated annually. However, in 2019-20, the Building Administrator Multi-year Evaluation Cycle Option was introduced. In this, superintendents may now elect to evaluate experienced building administrators (BAs) through a differentiated, multi-year cycle. The system will include “informal” and “formal” years of activities that are designed to personalize the BA’s evaluation experiences. To learn more about this new option for BAs, please read the [BA Guidebook beginning on Page 3, the BA Multi-Year Differentiated One-pager](#), or the [BA Multi-Year Differentiated Cycle Presentation](#).

Please note that RIDE does not keep track of teachers’ and support professionals’ cyclical status. Therefore, if you have questions about when you should be evaluated, please contact your school or district administrator.

2. How does my evaluation differ if I am part time?

It doesn’t. Educators who are in regular assignments and have worked for 135 days or more should be evaluated. Regular employment is defined as any appointment to a tenure-track position in a public school that requires the individual to hold a certificate issued by RIDE irrespective of full-time or part-time status. While all components of the model will be implemented, it is under the discretion of the district evaluation committee to develop a timeframe for part-time employees.

3. Do educators on leave have to be evaluated?

It depends. If an educator in a regular assignment goes on leave during the school year, the educator should work with their evaluator to complete as much of the evaluation process as possible and appropriate. Each leave situation is unique, but any educator who works for 135 days or more during a full evaluation year will be expected to have a complete evaluation, including a Final Effectiveness Rating.

If an educator in a part-time position goes on leave during the school year, the 135 days should be prorated based on the FTE of the educator. For example, if the educator is .5 FTE, the educator would be expected to have a Final Effectiveness Rating (FER) if they worked the equivalent of 67.5 days.

Additionally, if an educator works less than 135 days but would still like to be fully evaluated, then the educator and the evaluator should attempt to work out a timeline that will allow for a full evaluation, if possible.

4. Do day-to-day substitute teachers need to be evaluated?

No. While districts have the flexibility to decide how to evaluate substitutes and individuals in temporary assignments, RIDE encourages LEAs to evaluate all of their educators. These substitute ratings are not reported to RIDE.

5. Are long-term substitutes and educators in short-term positions required to be evaluated?

Technically, no. While districts have the flexibility to decide how to evaluate long-term substitutes or teachers in year-long positions, RIDE encourages LEAs to evaluate all of their educators even though these substitute ratings will not be reported to RIDE. Participating in the evaluation process is a critical step toward improving teaching and learning and establishing a culture of high expectations for all.

6. Are evaluation ratings still tied to certification renewal?

No. Effective January 1, 2020, renewal decisions for all educator certifications will be based on the earned number of required Professional Learning Units (PLUs). For more information about PLU requirements each certification type, please visit [the certification webpage which contains many helpful resources](#).

Section 2 - Rhode Island Model Teacher Evaluation and Support System

1. What should I do differently when I am observed?

Nothing. You should teach as you do on every other day of the year. For announced observations, some evaluators may ask for a lesson plan beforehand if that is part of a locally-agreed requirement, and some teachers like to share what they will be teaching in advance, but you are not expected to do anything out of the ordinary. Observations are just one of multiple ways to collect data, along with the sources of evidence and measures of student learning submitted in other parts of this evaluation.

2. Should teachers collect additional evidence to support their Professional Practice rating?

No. The eight components on the Teacher Professional Practice Rubric are 100% observable, and each component is rated after each observation based on the collected evidence. No additional evidence is needed to determine component ratings on the Teacher Professional Practice Rubric.

3. Why are the components on the Teacher Professional Practice rubric labeled 2a through 3d?

RIDE adapted Charlotte Danielson's *2013 Framework for Teaching* to assess professional practice. The Rhode Island Model Teacher Professional Practice rubric adopted the same component numbering system used within the *Framework for Teaching*.

4. If I am observed more than three times, will the additional classroom observations be factored into my overall Professional Practice Rating?

Yes. Frontline's Educator Evaluation Management (EEM) system will average up to six classroom observation scores. If your district uses a different system to manage educator evaluation, up to six classroom observations may be averaged.

5. When/how will I receive feedback on Professional Responsibilities?

The Mid-Year and End-of-Year Conferences provide formal opportunities to receive formative scores and feedback but evaluators can provide ongoing, more informal feedback as well. The components of the Teacher Professional Responsibilities rubric are scored holistically at the end of the year.

6. How is student learning measured for teachers?

In addition to Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) that have been in use since 2011, RI LEAs now have the option to consider new student learning options for teachers. Beginning in the 2019-20 school year, there are [four student learning options](#) for LEAs to consider to measure student learning for teachers: *SLO Original*, *SLO Flex*, *Student Learning Goals*, and *Embedded Practice*. To learn more about these options, particularly the new scoring approach and rubric, and to review resources, please visit the [Student Learning page](#) of the RIDE website.

Section 3 - Rhode Island Model Support Professional Evaluation and Support System

1. Who will be evaluating support professionals?

Districts have the flexibility to decide who will complete evaluations of their support professionals. This could include building principals, assistant principals, central office staff, regional staff, or others as deemed appropriate by the district.

2. Where can I obtain information about the RI Model for Support Professionals Evaluation and Support System?

You can find the guidebook, rubrics, and online training modules for evaluators on the [RI Model Evaluation Resources page](#) on the RIDE website.

3. How is student learning measured for support professionals?

The vast majority of support professionals will set two Student Outcome Objectives (SOOs) for the student learning component (30%). The [‘decision tree’ on Page 15 of the SP Guidebook](#) is used to assist support professionals in determining whether they should set SLOs, SOOs, or a combination of both. Beginning with the 2019-20 school year, LEAs will be able to implement new student learning flexibilities: the *SLO Flex* and the *SOO Flex*. These offer flexible processes and procedures in measuring support professionals’ impact on student learning. To learn more about student learning flexibilities for support professionals, please consult [Page 20 of the SP Guidebook](#).

4. Who can I contact if I have questions?

You can contact your building administrator, your district’s evaluation committee (DEC) or access the [RI Model Evaluation Resources page](#) on the RIDE website.

For additional questions you may contact RIDE staff directly at edeval@ride.ri.gov.

Section 4 - Rhode Island Model Building Administrator Evaluation and Support System

1. What should I do differently during a site visit?

Nothing. You should act as you do on every other day of the year. For announced site visits, some evaluators may ask to observe something specific or review certain documents, but you are not expected to do anything out of the ordinary. Site visits are just one of multiple ways to collect data of practice.

2. When/how will I receive feedback on Professional Responsibilities?

The Mid-Year and End-of-Year Conferences provide formal opportunities to receive formative scores and feedback but evaluators can provide ongoing, more informal feedback as well. The components of the BA Professional Responsibilities rubric are scored holistically at the end of the year.

3. How is student learning measured for building administrators?

Building administrators may set two Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) or one SLO and one Student Outcome Objective (SOO). Beginning in the 2019-20 school year, BAs may use an SOO in place of one SLO as part of the student learning component (30%). As the instructional leaders of their schools, improving teaching and learning within their buildings is at the core of building administrators' responsibilities. Therefore, the SLO will measure a building administrator's impact on student learning through demonstrated progress toward academic goals, while an SOO will focus on the specific systems, structures, and programs that BAs provide to their schools that lead to a direct impact on student learning.

4. Are building administrators eligible for cyclical?

No. The cyclical legislation, [RIGL 16-12-11](#) does not apply to building administrators, who must continue to be evaluated annually. However, in 2019-20, the Building Administrator Multi-year Evaluation Cycle Option was introduced. In this, superintendents may now elect to evaluate experienced building administrators (BAs) through a differentiated, multi-year cycle. The system will include "informal" and "formal" years of activities that are designed to personalize the BA's evaluation experiences. To learn more about this new option for BAs, please read the [BA Guidebook beginning on Page 3, the BA Multi-Year Differentiated One-pager](#), or the [BA Multi-Year Differentiated Cycle Presentation](#).

Section 5 - Evaluation System Reporting Requirements

1. Why do LEAs need to submit evaluation data to RIDE?

[Standard Six of the Evaluation System Standards](#) establishes the expectation that LEAs report educator evaluation data to RIDE, annually. RIDE requires every LEA to report the Final Effectiveness Rating (FER) or reason for not being evaluated for all certified employed educators, including any person who is dismissed for performance-based related reasons.

2. What data elements will LEAs report to RIDE?

At the close of every school year in late June, District Configuration Administrators (DCAs)/data managers for each LEA will report specific data elements as identified in the [Educator Evaluation Data Collection Specifications document](#) to RIDE through the [Personnel Data Collection in eRIDE](#). In the springtime, further information and updates to this process will be communicated via the Commissioner's Field Memo as well as direct outreach to DCAs/data managers.

3. Will RIDE release evaluation data to the media?

The Access to Public Records Act in Rhode Island is clear that "information in personnel files maintained to hire, evaluate, promote, or discipline any employee of a public body" is "exempt from public disclosure." Educator evaluations definitely fall within this category, and therefore the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) will not release individual evaluation results to the public or to the media. Former RIDE Commissioner Deborah Gist sent a letter to all educators in March 2012 that further explained this safeguard.