



# Updates on the New York State Standards-based Educator Evaluation and Professional Support(NYS- STEPS) System

**S/CDN Meeting - December 2025**

**Alexander Trikalinos**

**Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Teacher and Leader Development**



**New York State  
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

**Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity**

# NYSED Mission and Vision

---

The mission of the New York State Education Department is to raise the knowledge, skill, and opportunity of all the people in New York. Our vision is to provide leadership for a system that yields the best educated people in the world.



# How Does the Office of Teacher and Leader Development Support This Mission?

---

If we want all students to be successful, we must work to provide them with equitable access to school communities and resources that support their development.

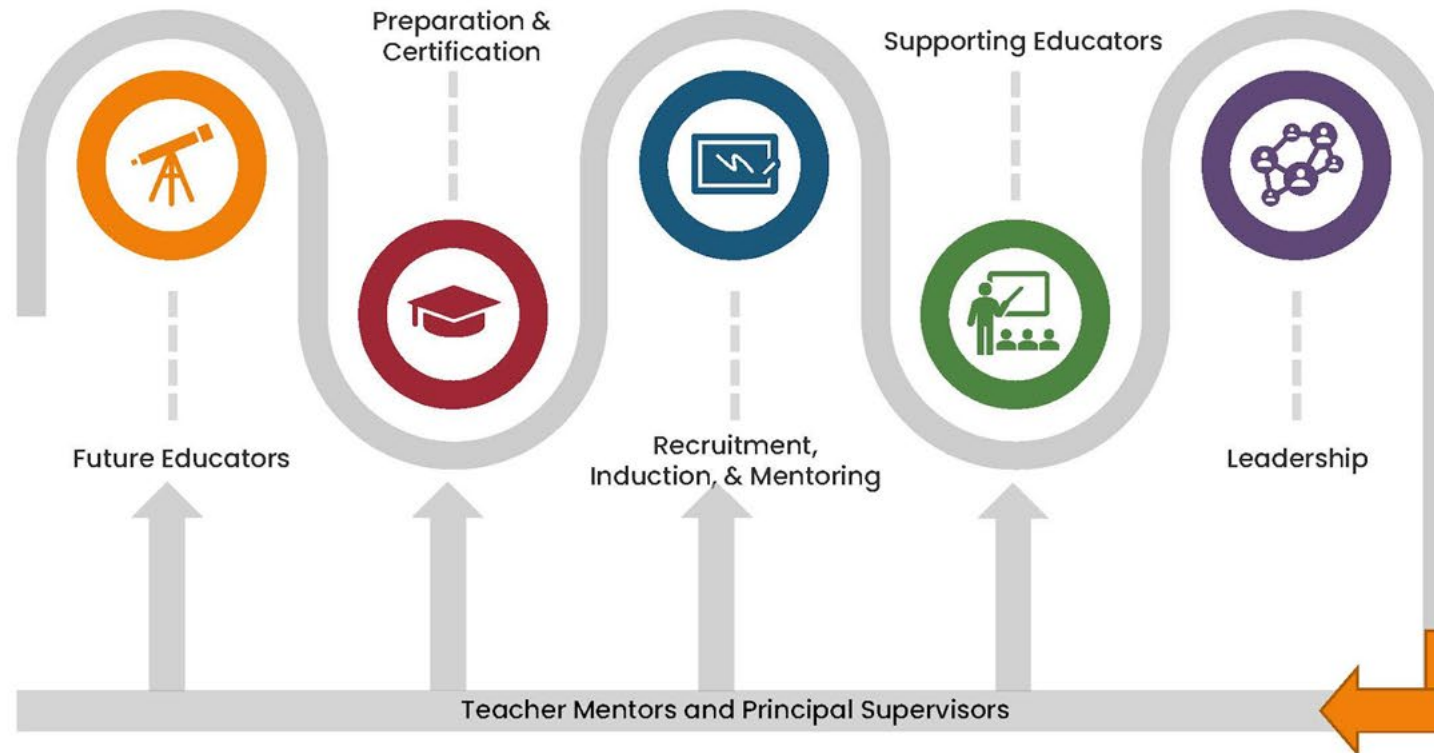
Teaching and school leadership are among the most important in-school factors that impact student success.



Therefore, we want to ensure that all students, regardless of demographics or zip code, have equitable access to great teachers and school leaders.

Three key barriers to accomplishing this goal are: educator turnover, shortages, and educator quality.

## Sustaining Educator Pipeline





## Vision for NYS-STEPS system

- LEAs have the flexibility to design meaningful evaluation systems
  - Multiple Measures
  - Teaching Standards, Leadership Standards, and Culturally Responsive – Sustaining Education Framework
- Supporting Professional Learning & Growth
  - Comprehensive System of Professional Learning
  - LEAs will provide PL for areas of growth identified from STEPS plan

# STEPS Plan Requirements

Multiple  
Evaluation  
Measures

Teaching  
and  
Leadership  
Standards

Four  
Performanc  
e Levels

Systematic  
Professional  
Learning

Educator  
Training and  
Engagement

NYSED  
Review and  
Annual  
Reporting



# Key Differences in Education Law 3012-e

Locally-determined evaluation measures



LEA-designed observation system



Varying evaluation cycle lengths



LEA-defined expectations for teaching/leadership



Focus on professional growth and support





# Plan Development - Pitfalls to Avoid (Conceptual)

- Multiple instances of the same measure does not constitute multiple measures
  - For example: three observations does not constitute three measures
- Plans must meet all statutory and regulatory requirements
  - For example: you cannot have a single observations over the course of an evaluation cycle
- Educator ratings must be assigned at the standard level, not by measure
  - Each measure and the associated rubric/scoring instrument must be mapped to specific standards, and the result of each standard must be determined separately
  - You cannot have an 'observation score' and a 'portfolio score' that combined to determine the 'overall score'
- An educator's overall rating must be based on all of their standard-level ratings
- Each year of a multi-year evaluation cycle must include STEPS-related activities
  - You cannot have years of cycle where 'nothing happens'
- Rubrics must be designed with validity, reliability, and fairness in mind
  - Consider the specific standards that the instrument will address; ensure that expectations for practice are aligned with those standards and take into account evidence-based practices that support positive student outcomes; ensure that the expectations for each performance level are clearly defined and reflective the qualitative expectations included in the law and regulations; consider the extent to which rubrics must be adapted or modified for different groups of educators; account for evaluator bias by relying on specific, discrete, and measurable student and teacher behaviors
- Consider your implementation capacity and high-leverage practices for supporting teaching and learning

# Plan Development - Pitfalls to Avoid (Procedural)

- For plans that use a multi-year cycle for tenured educators, the “Cycle” page must indicate which standards are to be evaluated in each year of the cycle, and there cannot be years that do not have any associated standards
  - Related, if a particular measure assesses multiple standards and different standards will be focused on during different years of the cycle, only those standards being evaluated during the particular year should be selected
- The scoring methodology, for both individual standards and the overall rating, must be described with sufficient detail such that someone can understand both how the individual standard ratings are determined and how those standard ratings are used to determine an overall rating
  - This cannot typically be accomplished with a single sentence and often requires scoring rubrics, scoring scales, etc.
  - If LEAs are attempting to score by ‘measure’ rather than standard, these sections of the plan will typically require revision
- It is important to read and follow the instructions within the STEPS plan form, including the specific instructions/guiding questions that appear ahead of any text-based entries
- The responses provided in each section of the plan should only correspond to the specific prompts for that section of the plan
  - For example, scoring processes should not appear in the measure/standard rationale text boxes
- Please proofread plans before submitting them
  - NB: accepted plans must be posted on an LEA’s website and will be posted on the Department’s website
- Negotiating and entering into a collective bargaining agreement related to your STEPS plan without reading and understanding the law/regulations and field guidance is likely to create problems at a local level
  - If there are any questions or wonderings about the allowability of certain aspects of a potential plan, we strongly encourage LEAs to reach out to us prior to finalizing any agreements

# Contact Us

---

Evaluation Questions: [EducatorEval@nysed.gov](mailto:EducatorEval@nysed.gov)

Office of Teacher and Leader Development: [OTLD@nysed.gov](mailto:OTLD@nysed.gov)

Resources for Educator Evaluation Plans are available on the [Office of Educator Quality and Professional Development](#) website. For more information about the work of the Office of Teacher and Leader Development, please visit: [www.nysed.gov/teacher-leader-development](http://www.nysed.gov/teacher-leader-development)