



Teacher Evaluation in Indiana

A Review of Public Law 90 and Its Implementation

May 2014

Summary

Effective teachers and principals are two critical in-school factors impacting student achievement. Strong, well-supported teachers and principals can close the achievement gap, help underserved students stay on track and ensure students graduate high school ready for college or career training. That is why measuring the effectiveness of teachers and principals is so important. Without regular, insightful and data-driven evaluation of school leaders, it's difficult to truly know whether educators are fulfilling their obligations to students and to taxpayers.

In 2011, Indiana enacted Public Law 90, which was aimed at addressing the very question of how effective our educators are in their respective classrooms. This brief policy memo is intended to evaluate the effectiveness of the state's evaluation system itself. Our review of Indiana's teacher evaluation system was three-fold:

- (1) Assess a sample set of district-developed evaluation plans for the 2012-2013 school year to determine if they complied with the law;
- (2) Review the impact the change in leadership at the Indiana Department of Education had on the implementation of Indiana's teacher evaluation model; and
- (3) Assess and analyze teacher effectiveness data, which was recently released for the first time since the implementation of Public Law 90.

Stand for Children Indiana contracted with Bellwether Education Partners¹ in 2013 and 2014 to research and review teacher evaluation models developed by individual school corporations to help assess the risks and benefits of these models.

Stand for Children Indiana and Bellwether Education Partners used information published on the Indiana Department of Education website, which was accessed in January 2013, October 2013, and March and April 2014. Information provided in this summary was based on districts' plans submitted during the 2012-2013 school year, which is consistent with the timeframe represented by the teacher effectiveness data released by the Indiana Department of Education earlier this year. Some districts may have since modified their plans regarding teacher evaluations for subsequent years.

Through this process, Stand identified several instances where the submitted district-developed evaluation models the 2012-2013 school year did not comply with the requirements under Public Law 90. Our review also identified ways in which districts are using the flexibility afforded to them under the law to lessen the rigor of the evaluation. Further, Stand identified anomalies in the reported teacher effectiveness data that support the case for a stronger, more uniform and centralized evaluation system.

¹ Bellwether Education Partners is a national nonprofit dedicated to helping education organizations achieve dramatic results for students. <http://bellwethereducation.org/>.

It was also clear from our research that the change in leadership in the IDOE has resulted in a modification to the state’s sample evaluation model that effectively lessens the impact of the objective student data components, which are key to Indiana maintaining its ESEA waiver agreement with the Federal Government.

Overview of Teacher Evaluation Requirements

In 2011, Public Law 90 created an evaluation system aimed at strengthening teacher and school leader performance and providing meaningful opportunities for professional growth. At the time, the legislation was promoted to position Indiana as a national leader in teacher accountability. Key tenets of the teacher evaluation system include:

- **Annual performance evaluations:** Districts and schools are required to develop or adopt performance evaluation systems that must be delivered and maintained on an annual basis for all teachers and school leaders by the 2012-2013 school year. In lieu of developing its own plan, a school corporation may adopt the State’s model plan (known as RISE), the System for Teacher and Student Advancement (TAP) or the Peer Assistance and Review Teacher Evaluation (PAR).
 - The TAP is a research-based system that was introduced in 1999 and is now operated by the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching. The TAP system uses a rubric of clearly defined standards to evaluate teachers through classroom observations and evaluations. The rubric uses a five-point scale and a set of clearly defined standards for “Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities Performance Standards”. This system measures student performance based on achievement gains over time.
 - The PAR system, developed in the early 1980s, is one in which teachers and administrators work together to develop and implement a teacher evaluation model. Representatives from both the teachers union and the district administration work together to jointly govern the program, with teachers typically having majority control. By its own admission, this system can be costly and burdensome to develop and implement.
- **Objective data:** In addition to using ISTEP+ (Indiana’s statewide assessment tool) scores for tested subjects, local corporations are able to define how to use and weight other data points (such as teacher/school/district-created assessments and exams) for untested ISTEP+ subjects.
- **Multiple measures to evaluate teachers and school leaders:** Teachers are to be evaluated using multiple measures, including objective data, observations by evaluators and other rigorous measures of effectiveness. These multiple measures may be defined by local school corporations.

- **Four performance categories:** Teachers and school leaders are to be evaluated using a system that rates along four categories: highly effective, effective, improvement necessary, and ineffective.
- **Feedback and opportunities for professional growth:** Once evaluated, teachers and school leaders are to receive meaningful feedback in a timely manner (seven days after the evaluation). Feedback should include recommendations for improvement, including tailored professional development options.

Public law 90 allows for a great deal of local control and flexibility. In an effort to assist local corporations, then-Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Tony Bennett worked with his team at the Indiana Department of Education to develop a sample evaluation model called RISE.

Presently, 115 of 314 districts in the State report using the RISE model of teacher effectiveness evaluation, while another 60 use a modified version of RISE².

Analysis of Independent Teacher Evaluation Models

While the majority of Hoosier school districts report using RISE or a modified version of the state model, at least 16 districts opted to create their own teacher evaluation models. A sample of these district-created evaluation plans is the focus of this section.³ Stand Indiana and Bellwether Education Partners researched and reviewed six school corporations' teacher evaluation models to help assess the risks and benefits of these models and to determine their levels of compliance with the law.

The selected six districts represent both urban and rural populations and have certified staffs that range in size from 100 to 2,000 employees:

- Alexandria Community Schools
- Brown County School Corporation
- Fort Wayne Community Schools
- Northwest Allen County Schools
- South Bend Community School Corporation
- South Central Community School Corporation (Note: While this district submitted an evaluation plan, it was not required under Indiana law to implement it in 2012-2013, nor did the district report evaluation data.)

Our findings below indicate that districts are both fully taking advantage of the flexibility provided under the law, and in some cases, stretching that flexibility to a point of failing to comply with some provisions of Public Law 90.

² Indiana Department of Education data via Rushville Republican. April 11, 2014.

³ Information was made available by the Indiana Department of Education: <http://www.doe.in.gov/evaluations/locally-developed-staff-evaluation-plans>.

Finding #1: Some districts are failing to perform annual evaluations

Of the six districts examined, two districts raise concern with noncompliance. South Bend's evaluation plan calls for a phase-in of annual evaluations, with the district failing to evaluate its entire staff of certified educators until 2014-15. Although South Bend did report data from the majority of its educators in the 2012-2013 school year, its phase-in approach calling for assistant principals and a remaining percentage of educators to not receive annual evaluations until after 2013 is in clear violation of the requirements set forth by Public Law 90.

South Central's submitted plan also raises questions around non-compliance. While it bases its teacher evaluation plan on researcher Charlotte Danielson's evaluation model, it modifies the plan based upon a teacher's tenure. Although the plan calls for summative evaluations for all educators, "permanent" educators will not be observed in their classroom practice unless they specifically request an observation. Per South Central's plan:

Non-permanent

Non-permanent teachers are beginning their educational careers. Beginning teachers need structure and direction as to how to improve their teacher effectiveness.

Semi-permanent

A semi-permanent teacher has had success as a beginning teacher. Danielson's evaluation instrument will be used in a modified form.

Observations will not be announced unless requested by teacher or administrator. There will be one formal observation per semester. Summative evaluation in May.

Permanent

Each permanent teacher will develop a continuous growth plan to improve student achievement and enhance teacher effectiveness. The continuous growth plan will be data driven with the data taken from the PL 221 School Improvement Plan, standardized test data and/or common assessments.

Administrators will have four classroom walk-throughs with written feedback if requested.

This evaluation method calls into question the validity of an evaluation for an educator whose instruction is not observed firsthand. Furthermore, the South Central model presumes that tenured teachers, because of years of experience, should be held to a different standard and face a less rigorous evaluation. This caveat appears to conflict with the legal requirement for every teacher to be evaluated annually.

Finding #2: Student growth is not a consistent factor in educator evaluations

Districts vary widely in their plans for incorporating student achievement data into educator evaluations, and this may be one factor in numerous anomalies that appeared in the recently released teacher evaluation data (see “Indiana Teacher Effectiveness Data” section). Because neither Public Law 90 nor the State Board of Education stipulate specific requirements for weighting student growth as a component of a teacher evaluation system, districts have tremendous flexibility in deciding to what extent teachers are held to account for student outcomes. Our review indicates that districts creating their own evaluation plans are using the full extent of the flexibility afforded to them, and in some cases they’re failing to specify whether or how much student growth will count toward an educator’s evaluation rating.

The state-created RISE system developed under former Indiana Superintendent Tony Bennett called for individual student growth to be weighted as 35% of a teacher’s total score. Four of the six districts reviewed for this analysis weighted student growth at a lower level or not at all. Alexandria and Fort Wayne were the only districts of the six reviewed that placed a higher weight on student growth. Alexandria’s plan, for example, based 40% of an educator’s evaluation rating on student growth.

On the other end of the spectrum, South Central’s submitted plan did not include student growth at all and appears to be in clear violation of Indiana state law. In addition, the South Bend plan asserts that it will use student growth to inform teacher evaluations, but the plan fails to provide detail regarding how the student growth data will be used and weighted.

South Bend cites the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) exam as the mechanism for which it will gauge student achievement, even though Indiana has not adopted that corresponding assessment tool.

The remaining three districts vary on how student achievement data is used. Northwest Allen County uses student growth data in teacher evaluations, but not until the 2015-16 school year, which is also in clear violation of the law’s requirement to use objective measures of student achievement and growth to significantly inform the evaluation beginning with the 2012-13 school year. When Northwest Allen County does plan to employ objective data, only 5% of a first-year teacher’s evaluation and 10% of all other teacher evaluation ratings will be based on student growth.

Brown County’s plan falls in the middle of the six district plans, specifying that student growth is 25% of the evaluation rating for teachers and other certified staff.

This sample of districts illustrates how just one component of the teacher evaluation system has the potential to impact the overall teacher rating outcomes. In the districts analyzed, we found that student growth as a factor of an evaluation was extremely inconsistent, ranging from 0% to 40% of a teacher’s overall evaluation. While the law does not stipulate a required percentage, it does require that “objective measures of student achievement and growth significantly inform the evaluation.” meaning that at least two districts appear to not comply with the law’s objective data provision.

Finding #3: Inconsistencies with compensation schedules

Regarding teacher compensation, Public Law 90 requires that a local salary scale must ensure that the number of years of experience and the attainment of additional degrees or credit hours account for no more than 33% of a teacher's annual salary. It also requires that salary increments must be based on the results of a teacher evaluation conducted under Public Law 90. The law further stipulates that a teacher rated ineffective or improvement necessary may not receive any raise or increment for the following year if the teacher's employment contract is continued.

Of the six districts analyzed for this report, four districts had compensation schedules publicly available – Alexandria, Brown County, South Central and South Bend Community School Corporation.

Both Alexandria and Brown County provide that a stipend will be awarded to teachers receiving a performance rating of effective or highly effective and that no teacher earning a needs improvement or ineffective rating is eligible for a stipend. However, no component of their respective policies describes the extent to which experience will impact annual salaries, thereby failing to provide enough information to determine whether the models fully comply with the law.

While the above-mentioned models lack clarity and specificity, the South Central model provided clear guidelines and the most detail of the models evaluated. The South Central district developed a system that states any base pay increase and/or performance pay stipend will change annually based upon the finances of the district. The determination for eligibility for performance pay is based upon a 10-point system that distributes points based upon experience/education (2 possible points), evaluation (5 possible points, with points only being awarded to highly effective or effective educators), instructional leadership (2 possible points), and attendance (1 possible point). Under this model, a teacher rated ineffective or needs improvement would not be eligible for a base pay increase or a performance pay stipend.

South Bend clearly does not comply with the compensation component of Public Law 90. Its salary schedule is based solely on tenure and degrees/credit hours attained. There is no mention of teacher performance or evaluation results as a component of annual compensation.

Finding #4: No consistent plan to ensure students have effective instruction

Public Law 90 allows the contract of a tenured teacher to be cancelled if a teacher receives two consecutive ineffective ratings or is rated ineffective three out of five years. Similarly, the law requires teachers to earn three effective or highly effective ratings in a five-year period in order to earn tenure.

Four out of the six districts surveyed included a short statement mirroring state law; Fort Wayne and South Central were silent on the issue.

None of the district submissions evaluated provide detail on *how* the teacher evaluation results will be used to revoke tenure for teachers rated ineffective over a number of years, nor do they outline a protocol for performance improvement or dismissal of ineffective teachers.

Public Law 90 also contains a provision that a student may not be instructed for two consecutive years by a teacher that has earned an ineffective rating. Three of the six districts—Brown, Fort Wayne and South Bend—acknowledged they must prevent this event from happening, but none of the six districts explained how they would go about shifting teachers or students to meet the requirements of the ineffective instruction clause.

Fort Wayne includes a brief letter that the district would send to parents whose child is being taught by an ineffective teacher for the second consecutive year. The letter states:

Dear Guardians/Parents,

This letter is being sent to inform you that <school name> has hired <teacher name> to teach <assignment>. Although <teacher name> is properly certified by the state of Indiana, she/he has a current evaluation rating of Ineffective according to Fort Wayne Community Schools Teacher Effectiveness Rubric. The state requires Fort Wayne Community Schools to notify parents if their student(s) is being assigned to a teacher with an ineffective rating for two consecutive years. <Teacher name> is attending professional development courses to ensure increased instructional effectiveness by the 2013-2014 school year. If you have questions, please contact me at 000-000-0000.

*Sincerely,
<Principal>*

Note that this letter gives parents no option to change the situation in which their child is being instructed.

Finding #5: Inconsistent or weak definitions of “negative impact on student achievement”

Indiana law requires districts to define “negative impact on student achievement” and then ensure that a teacher falling under this definition must not earn a summative evaluation rating of effective or highly effective. Most districts had vague or unclear definitions for this provision; South Central had none.

For example, Northwest Allen’s plan states that a teacher does not meet the minimum expectation if their absences or actions negatively impact a student’s learning. While Brown County and Fort Wayne did provide a specific definition, it was arguably weak. Both districts say, “In order for a teacher to be identified as negatively impacting student learning, the mean ISTEP+ scale score must drop by 15 or more scale points from one year to the next.”

To put this in context, students in Indiana averaged scale score increases of 10-15 points per year, but a teacher whose students did not grow at all over an entire year would be safe under this definition. Students would have to significantly *regress* under the definition provided by Brown County and Fort Wayne (an extremely unlikely scenario for even the worst-performing educators) in order to meet the standard for “negative impact” on student learning.

Summary of district plans

Overall, the analysis of the individual district plans demonstrates several findings of non-compliance that vary in severity. First, the district plans fail to explain how the districts' evaluation systems will address many provisions or requirements of Indiana's evaluation law. For example, none of the district submissions mention how they will use the evaluation results to make reduction-in-force decisions.

In other areas, the district-created plans fail to provide enough information to determine compliance with the law and in cases where the letter of the law is met, some could argue whether the spirit of the law is really being fulfilled. For example, Northwest Allen County's plan for weighting student growth as 10% of a teacher's evaluation could lead one to question whether this low level of emphasis on objective data truly meets the law's specification that student achievement and growth data must *significantly* inform the evaluation.

Finally, our evaluation identified several instances where a district's plan clearly does not meet statutory requirements of Public Law 90. For example, South Bend will not evaluate all certificated educators until the 2014-2015 school year and fails to address compensation as a component of teacher evaluation.

The RISE Model . . . Then and Now

While school corporations, as discussed above, can create their own teacher evaluation plans, most districts in Indiana have chosen to implement either the state's optional model known as RISE or a modified version of RISE. But even that model has seen changes due to shifts in leadership in Indiana, which raises the question as to whether the state today has a single consistent model. To understand the inconsistencies in Indiana's example model, one needs to understand how RISE was developed and how it is currently being implemented.

The development of RISE began in 2011 under then-Superintendent Dr. Tony Bennett and was led by the Indiana Teacher Evaluation Cabinet, a group of educators selected from across Indiana. School corporations were given several options regarding the adoption of the RISE system: they could choose to adopt RISE entirely, adopt certain components of RISE and supplement the model with corporation-developed components or not use RISE at all when creating their own model.

The goal of creating this system was to assist school corporations by developing an evaluation model that complied with Public Law 90. Public Law 90 required statewide implementation of compliant evaluation models by the 2012-2013 school year. The RISE model was piloted in select school corporations in 2011 and was refined during 2012. RISE 1.0 was released in early 2012, allowing school corporations time to further explore the model and decide whether they would develop an independent model. RISE 2.0 was released in advance of the 2012-2013 school year and is the refined model of the original version.

The RISE model of teacher evaluation incorporated aspects of both professional practice and student learning into a summative evaluation rating, which is performed by a trained evaluator. Professional practice is an assessment of the instructional knowledge and skills of Indiana educators, including performance in planning, instruction, leadership and core professionalism. Classroom observation and other evidence such as lesson plans are used to measure this component of effectiveness.

Student learning under the RISE model is defined as a teacher's contribution to academic progress over the course of the school year and is measured through such criteria as individual student growth model data, school-wide learning and student learning objectives. Measures of student learning include an assessment of both growth and achievement. The Indiana Growth Model uses a student's ISTEP+ (Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress - Plus) scores in the previous year(s) and finds all other students in the state who received the same score(s) in a certain content area (e.g., math). The model then assesses the same group of students to determine how the student scored compared to their respective cohort. Since student growth is reported in percentiles, it represents how a student's current ISTEP+ score compares to others who had scored similarly in previous ISTEP+ exams. Also included in the student learning component of the RISE evaluation model is a score that reflects the school-wide performance. All teachers in the school receive the same score in this area, as it is an indicator of school-wide learning.

The RISE model allows for two types of evaluators to collect the aforementioned evidence for teacher evaluations. Primary evaluators are responsible for collecting evidence themselves and reviewing evidence collected by any secondary evaluator. A secondary evaluator may supplement the work of the primary evaluator by conducting observations, providing feedback or gathering evidence of student learning.

Public Law 90 requires each certified employee be designated into four categories: highly effective, effective, improvement necessary, or ineffective. RISE uses the following definitions for each category:

- **Highly effective** – A teacher consistently exceeds expectations in both student achievement and professional contribution to the school. A highly effective teacher has demonstrated excellence in planning, instruction and leadership and is one whose students, in aggregate, have exceeded expectations for academic growth.
- **Effective** – A teacher consistently meets expectations - both in terms of student achievement as, well as professional contribution to the school. An effective teacher consistently meets expectations in planning, instruction and leadership and is one whose students, in aggregate, have achieved acceptable levels of academic growth.
- **Improvement necessary** – A teacher who needs improvement has room for growth in meeting expectations for student achievement and professional contribution to the school. A teacher that falls within this category needs improvement in planning, instruction and leadership and has achieved below acceptable rates of academic growth.
- **Ineffective** – A teacher who consistently fails to meet expectations for student achievement and professional contribution to the school. An ineffective teacher is one who has failed to meet expectations in planning, instruction and leadership and whose students, in aggregate, have achieved low levels of academic growth

The RISE model classifies teachers into different categories that vary based upon the type and amount of data available. The final score is comprised of individual scores in the following areas: Teacher Effectiveness Rubric (TER), Individual Growth Model (IGO), School-wide Learning Measure (SML) and Student Learning Objectives (SLO). Because IGO data is based upon ISTEP+ scores, this measure only applies to teachers of English/Language Arts and Math in grades 4-8. Under RISE 2.0, teachers belong to one of three categories (please see the table on the following page):

| Category | Definition | Percent of score based on Teacher Effectiveness Rubric | Percent of score based upon School-wide Learning Measure | Percent of score based upon Individual Growth Model Data | Percent of score based on Student Learning Objectives |
|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| Group 1: Most 4 th - 8 th grade teachers | At least half of classes taught have growth model data | 50% | 5% | 35% | 10% |
| Group 2: Some elementary and middle school teachers | Fewer than half of classes taught (but at least one) have growth model data | 60% | 5% | 20% | 15% |
| Group 3: Most PK-3 rd grade and high school teachers | No individual growth model data available | 75% | 5% | n/a | 20% |

RISE 2.5

In July 2013, Indiana’s newly-elected Superintendent of Public Instruction Glenda Ritz published a memo on the Department of Education website outlining changes to the RISE model implemented under Dr. Tony Bennett.

Per the memo, the modifications of RISE 2.5 reduced the weight of the objective measures of student achievement and growth used to calculate evaluation results. For all groups of teachers, the state model now reflects 25% significance for total objective measures of student achievement and growth and 75% significance for the teacher effectiveness rubric:

| Category | Definition | Percent of score based on teacher effectiveness rubric | Percent of score based upon School-wide Learning Measure | Percent of score based upon Individual Growth Model Data | Percent of score based on Student Learning Objectives |
|------------|--------------|--|--|--|---|
| All groups | All teachers | 75% | Combined total of 25%, with greatest emphasis on Individual Growth Model | | |

In addition, Superintendent Ritz provided direction allowing school districts to adjust the balance between Individual Growth Model (IGM) data, Student Learning Objective (SLO) data, and the School-Wide Learning Measure (SWL), allowing for IGM data to have a lesser overall impact on an educator’s evaluation, suggesting that IGM be weighted at 13% of the total 25%.

Superintendent Ritz has publicly supported a local evaluation model in her interpretation of Public Law 90, stating, “I have a unique perspective on the intent of that language and the intent was always to have local school districts develop their own evaluation systems within those parameters,” Ritz said. “(RISE) will not be the state model going forth. We will be putting out a model probably this summer that will be different from RISE.”

Under the Ritz administration, the use of objective data was significantly lessened and subjective feedback afforded under the observation rubric was strengthened. With a reduction in these objective student outcome measures, the importance of student outcomes as a measurement of teacher effectiveness appears to be de-emphasized.

Indiana Teacher Effectiveness Data

Despite districts establishing a four-tier evaluation system, there is evidence that corporations employ varying definitions for these tiers. According to recently-released staff performance evaluation results for the 2012-13 school year⁴ (the first year four-tier performance levels were mandatory), only 219 educators were rated ineffective, out of more than 50,000 total (less than 0.5%). The data show that more than 87% of public school educators (teachers and administrators combined) were rated as either effective or highly effective, while only 3% were rated as either needs improvement or ineffective. The remaining 10% did not receive a final evaluation due to circumstances such as resignation or retirement. Of the districts with sufficient data, 164 out of 247, or *over two-thirds*, did not identify a single ineffective educator.

Although the original RISE model placed an emphasis on student achievement as a measure of educator effectiveness, it’s clear from the data that anomalies exist, leading one to question whether the RISE model is being effectively implemented. Data from some districts that used a version of RISE appear to defy the results being seen in the classrooms. For example, the Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) district uses a version of the RISE evaluation model and rated 94% of their teachers as highly effective or effective. IPS has been rated an “F” under the state’s accountability model since 2010, with a 65% graduation and 51% pass rate on ISTEP+ in 2012.⁵

Only five total teachers in the entire IPS district were deemed ineffective. To put this anomaly into perspective, a single Indianapolis township school, which was awarded a “B” rating by the State of Indiana, also had five total teachers in their single school be deemed ineffective.

It is also important to note that any school corporation that did not include teacher evaluations as a component of their existing collective bargaining agreement was exempt from reporting data (South Central Community Schools is an example of this). These corporations will be required to include teacher performance evaluations as a component of any future contract at the time that the agreement is reopened for negotiation. Over 60 of Indiana’s 314 public school corporations were impacted by this

⁴ Data are available for download at: <http://www.doe.in.gov/evaluations>.

⁵ Graduation and ISTEP+ accountability data available at: <http://compass.doe.in.gov/dashboard>

loophole. Charter schools were also exempt from reporting teacher effectiveness data, although a law passed during the 2014 legislative session will require that charter school teachers undergo a similar protocol.

Details regarding the teacher effectiveness results for districts evaluated for this report can be found in the below table. These findings are consistent with the statewide report that indicates 87% of Indiana teachers are either highly effective or effective, and a mere 0.39% deemed ineffective.

| | 2012-2013 State Accountability Grade | Number of "Highly Effective" teachers | Number of "Effective" teachers | Number of "Needs Improvement" teachers | Number of "Ineffective" teachers | Percentage of educators rated "Highly Effective" or "Effective" | Percentage of educators rated "Needs Improvement" or "Ineffective" |
|------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Alexandria | C | 48 | 49 | 2 | 0 | 98% | 2% |
| Brown County | C | 129 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 100% | 0% |
| Fort Wayne | C | 756 | 1075 | 57 | 9 | 97% | 3% |
| Northwest Allen | A | 60 | 318 | 2 | 2 | 99% | 0.1% |
| South Bend | D | 0 | 1419 | 0 | 16 | 99% | 0.1% |
| South Central | This corporation was exempt from implementing its plan in 2012-13. | | | | | | |

Interestingly, the state accountability grade appears to have no major correlation with educator effectiveness ratings. Schools that received an "A" grade in 2012-2013 under the State's accountability model reported 0.34% of its educators as "ineffective;" schools that received "D" grade under the state accountability model reported an even lower percentage of "ineffective" educators at 0.30%. Further, schools rated "F" under the State's accountability model for the 2012-2013 school year rated 79% of its teachers as effective or highly effective. Specific examples of low-performing districts with a large percentage of highly rated teachers are demonstrated in the table on the following page.

| | 2012-2013 State Accountability Grade | Number of "Highly Effective" teachers | Number of "Effective" teachers | Number of "Needs Improvement" teachers | Number of "Ineffective" teachers | Percentage of educators rated "Highly Effective" or "Effective" | Percentage of educators rated "Needs Improvement" or "Ineffective" |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Indianapolis Public Schools | F | 347 | 2028 | 150 | 5 | 94% | 6% |
| Medora School Corporation | F | 0 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 100% | 0% |
| School City of East Chicago | F | 36 | 257 | 26 | 6 | 90% | 10% |
| River Forest | D | 21 | 69 | 4 | 0 | 96% | 4% |
| North Knox School Corporation | D | 8 | 70 | 8 | 0 | 91% | 9% |

The apparent misalignment between chronically low-performing schools and teachers rated highly effective or effective certainly raises questions about both the substance of the evaluation models being used, as well as the fidelity of their implementation.

Conclusion

Although the data and analysis of individual district plans certainly raise concerns about the integrity of the teacher evaluation system as a whole in Indiana, perhaps the greatest threat is the inability for the Department of Education or State Board of Education to enforce the law when non-compliance is evident. Public Law 90 does not allow the DOE or State Board to disapprove a school corporation's plan if it does not meet the requirements under the law.

Also, the IDOE's current reticence to support a State-developed model—in favor of encouraging a great deal of local flexibility on evaluations—could pose a threat to the rigor of future accountability models in the state of Indiana.

There is also concern that widely varying and noncompliant systems are fundamentally unfair to educators. Accurate, meaningful feedback on a teacher's strengths and weaknesses is an essential component of professional development.

Based upon the analysis of Public Law 90, Stand Indiana recommends the following action steps in 2014:

Immediate next steps:

- The Indiana Department of Education and State Board of Education conduct an audit of locally-developed plans to determine compliance with Public Law 90. Stand will provide evidence of non-compliance to support this request.
- The State Board of Education review RISE 2.5 to determine whether the new model itself complies with the law’s requirement that student outcome data comprise a “significant” portion of a teacher’s evaluation.
- The State Board of Education inquire about whether districts’ non-compliance with Public Law 90 further jeopardizes Indiana’s federal ESEA waiver, which requires student achievement data be used to measure teacher effectiveness. [Note: Washington State recently had its waiver revoked for non-compliance with a similar provision in its federal waiver, and Indiana now has a condition placed on its waiver, meaning immediate action is needed.]

Potential long-term steps:

- Stand will research and investigate a legislative solution that aims to address the concerns that arose as a result of this analysis, including:
 - The lack of uniformity among teacher evaluation models;
 - The lack of fairness to teachers in how evaluations are being carried out; and
 - The inability by the SBOE and IDOE to enforce the provisions of Public Law 90.