



Trends in Teacher Perceptions of Educator Evaluation



A Tennessee Educator Survey Snapshot

June 2019

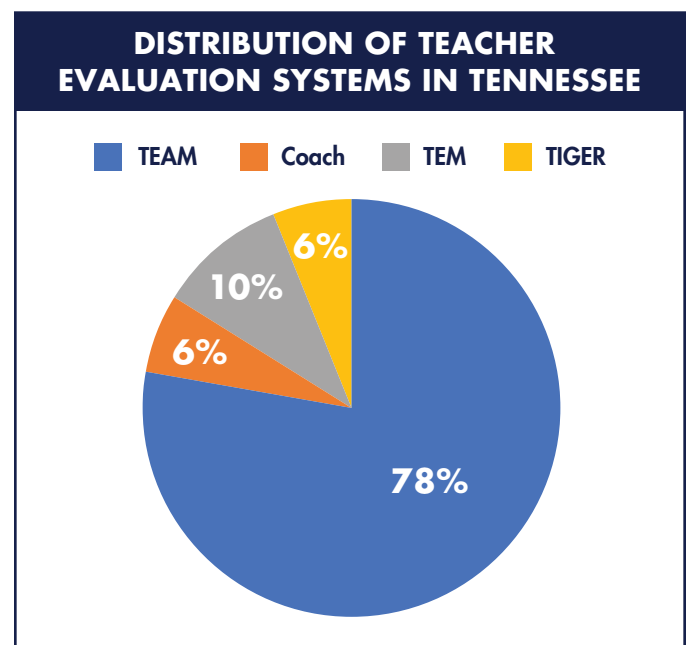
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ABOUT THIS SNAPSHOT

This snapshot helps build our understanding of how Tennessee teachers feel about the educator evaluation system. Using data from the 2018 Tennessee Educator Survey, we examine teachers' views on the teacher evaluation process and whether there are differences in perceptions of the evaluation process across key teacher characteristics such as race, gender, years of experience, and other factors.

Since 2012, the percentage of Tennessee teachers who agree that the evaluation process used in their school has led to improvements in their teaching has steadily increased, from 39% in the first year of the survey to almost 75% of teachers in 2018. Given how central the evaluation experience is for teachers, we look beyond how teachers feel on average to better understand whether there are differences between teachers in how they feel about the evaluation system. **In general, we find that the key teacher characteristics we examine explain only small differences between teachers in whether they feel Tennessee's educator evaluation system helps improve their teaching – a large majority of teachers indicate that it is a useful tool.**

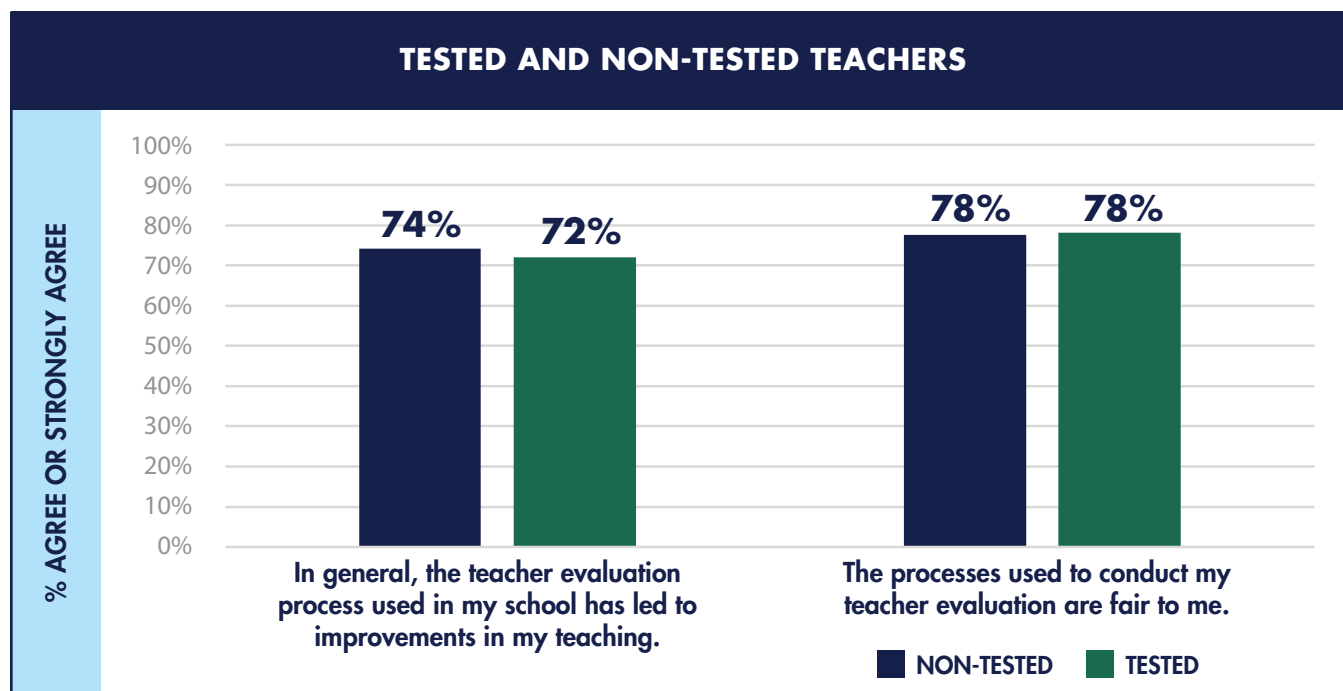
The most widely used teacher evaluation system is the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM), although some districts across the state use other evaluation systems.



KEY TRENDS

Teachers in both tested and non-tested grades and subjects generally believe that the evaluation system is fair and improves their teaching.

Since TEAM and other state teacher evaluation systems use student test score data as a percentage of teacher evaluation scores, education leaders have often wondered whether differences exist between the perceptions of teachers in tested grades or subjects versus those who teach in non-tested grades or subjects. For example, teachers in tested grades and subjects may feel unfairly targeted by having test scores as a part of their evaluation, while teachers in non-tested grades and subjects could resent having schoolwide test score data substitute for their lack of personal test score data. **Results from the 2018 Tennessee Educator Survey, however, show that both groups of teachers generally hold positive perceptions of the evaluation process. In fact over 70% of teachers in both tested and non-tested grades or subjects who responded to the survey believe the evaluation system is fair and improves their teaching.**

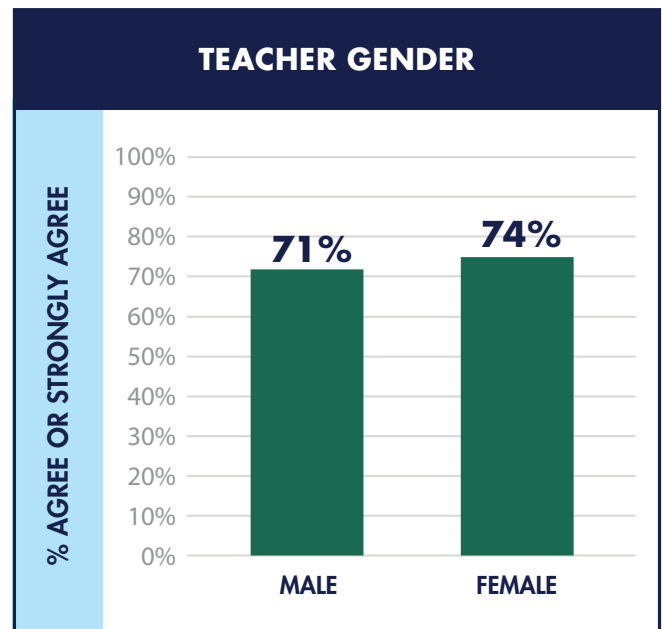
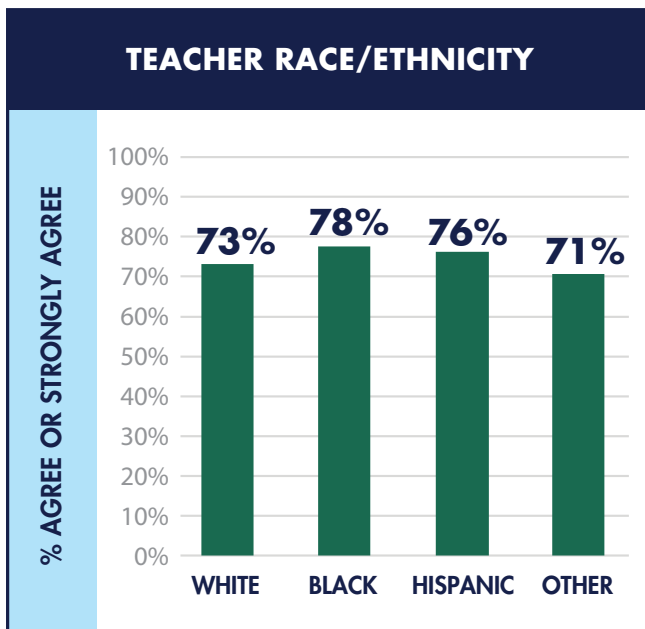


Teacher perceptions of evaluation are fairly similar across teacher race and ethnicity as well as gender.

Previous [TERA research](#) found that Black teachers in Tennessee work in very different school environments than their White peers. Therefore, we might expect varying perceptions of teacher evaluation across teachers of different races or ethnicities.

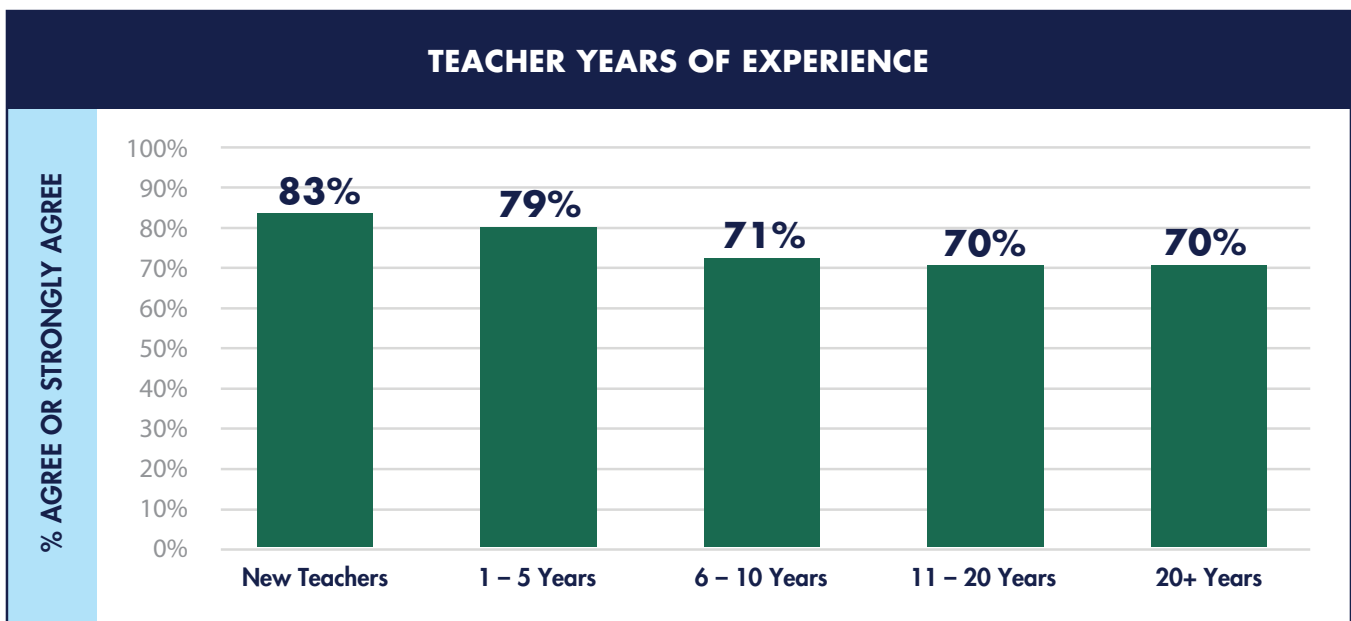
However, among 2018 survey respondents, teacher perceptions of evaluation are fairly similar across teacher race and ethnicity as well as gender. Overall, over 70% of teachers across these different demographic characteristics hold positive perceptions of evaluation, although Black and Hispanic teachers are slightly more likely to agree that the teacher evaluation process has led to improvements in their teaching. Female teachers are also slightly more likely to agree than males.

"In general, the teacher evaluation process used in my school has led to improvements in my teaching."



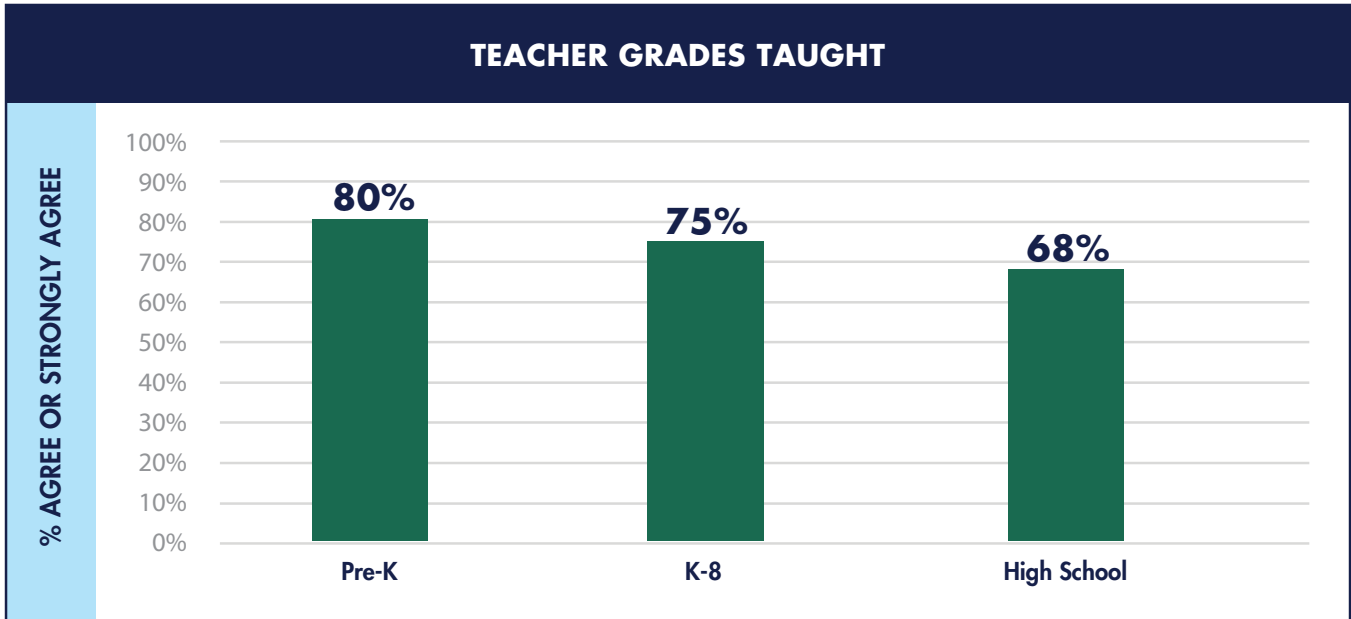
Veteran teachers are slightly less likely to agree that the process has led to improvements in their teaching than new teachers.

Perceptions of the teacher evaluation process are positive among teachers across all experience levels, but veteran teachers are slightly less likely to agree that the process has led to improvements in their teaching than new teachers. This finding supports prior research suggesting that first-year teachers are especially likely to hold more positive perceptions of evaluation than teachers with more years of experience (Bailey, 2017).



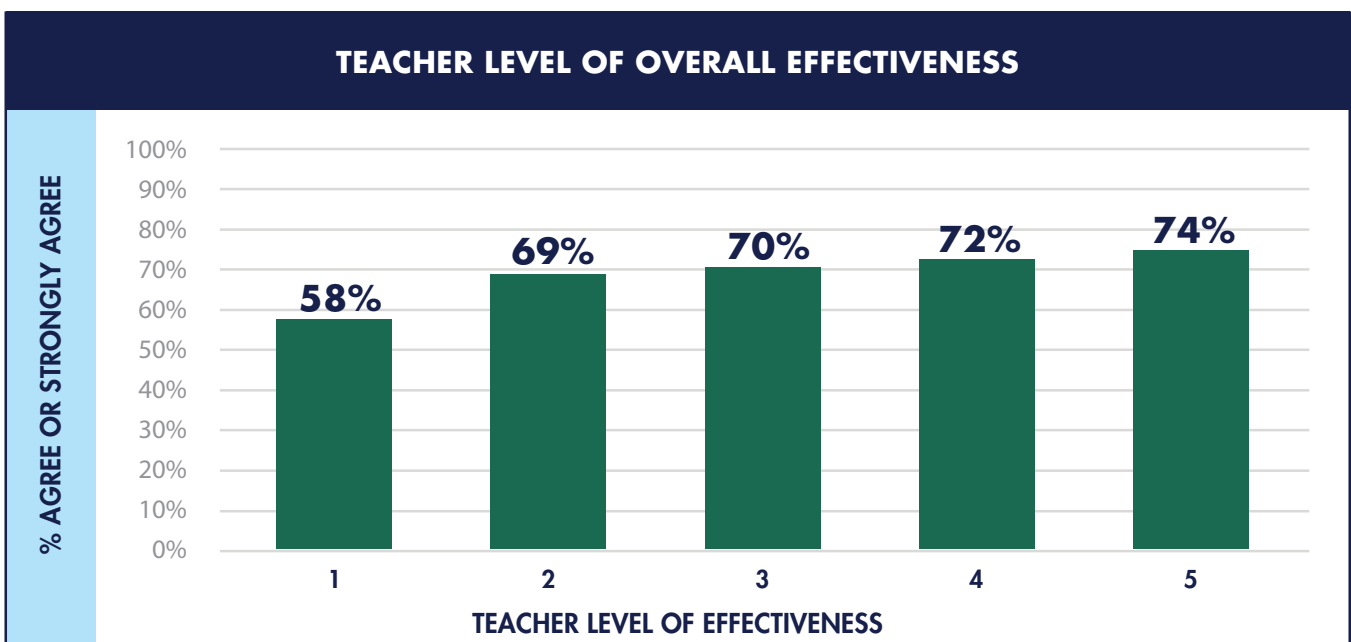
Teachers in earlier grades hold slightly more positive perceptions of evaluation.

Among teacher survey respondents in 2018, Pre-K teachers hold more positive perceptions of evaluation than any other group (80%). Teachers working in grades K-8 hold slightly less favorable perceptions than Pre-K teachers (75%) and high school teachers hold the lowest perceptions of the group at just under 68%.



A majority of teachers across all levels of effectiveness hold positive perceptions of evaluation.

Teachers across all levels of effectiveness generally believe that the evaluation system has led to improvements in their teaching. We do see a steep drop in agreement for level 1 teachers (58% compared to 69% or higher for all other evaluation scores), however relatively few teachers across the state receive this rating.





NEXT STEPS FOR RESEARCH

Results from the 2018 Tennessee Educator Survey provide insights into relationships between educator characteristics and their perceptions of the evaluation process. Generally, teachers hold positive perceptions of evaluation regardless of their race, gender, and other important characteristics.

Future TERA research will dig deeper into the upward trend of teacher perceptions of the evaluation process through the years to understand more about what has led to the steady increase over time.

REFERENCES

Bailey, I. (2017). Educator Insights: Reflections from the 2017 Tennessee Educator Survey. Tennessee Department of Education.

Ravenell, A., Grissom, J.A., & Bartanen, B. (2018). Exploring Retention and Turnover Patterns Among Tennessee Teachers of Color. Tennessee Education Research Alliance.

ABOUT THIS SERIES

The Tennessee Educator Survey is an annual joint effort by the Tennessee Department of Education and the Tennessee Education Research Alliance (TERA) to gather information about schools across the state. Open to all teachers, administrators, and certified staff, the survey is a way for educators to provide feedback about what's working and where improvements can be made in areas like school climate, educator evaluation, state initiatives, and more. Survey responses directly inform state research and decision-making processes and are a tool for schools and districts to inform their practice.

In a series of survey snapshots, TERA will provide a broad look at responses and trends from the 2018 survey in several key areas relating to educators in Tennessee. Topics include job satisfaction, hiring patterns, growth and professional learning, educator evaluation, aspects of school support roles (assistant principals and instructional coaches), and more.