



**A PRIMER FOR**  
**TEACHERS**

2015–16

# Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System: About the Evaluation System

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We know that we cannot improve what we do not measure, and a teacher's effectiveness has a powerful impact on student achievement. In order to measure teacher effectiveness and to increase student achievement, Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) partnered with the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) to develop an evaluation system that includes multiple components to provide data and feedback regarding teacher performance. GCPS is one of 26 school districts that has worked with the GaDOE and the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) to develop a fair and equitable system that will help teachers become even more effective in the classroom and lead to improved student learning and achievement gains. This evaluation initiative was funded through Georgia's Race to the Top (RT3) grant.

GCPS' work on a new evaluation system for teachers actually began in 2009 as one of the strategic initiatives of CEO/Superintendent J. Alvin Wilbanks. Teacher and leader focus groups indicated that a new evaluation system should be based on multiple measures of teacher effectiveness. The resulting system uses observation data, growth in student achievement, and student perception surveys to determine a teacher's effectiveness.

As part of the RT3 Initiative, Georgia— in collaboration with RT3 districts, educational partners, and the Evaluation Task Force Committee— developed a new effectiveness system for teacher evaluation and professional growth.

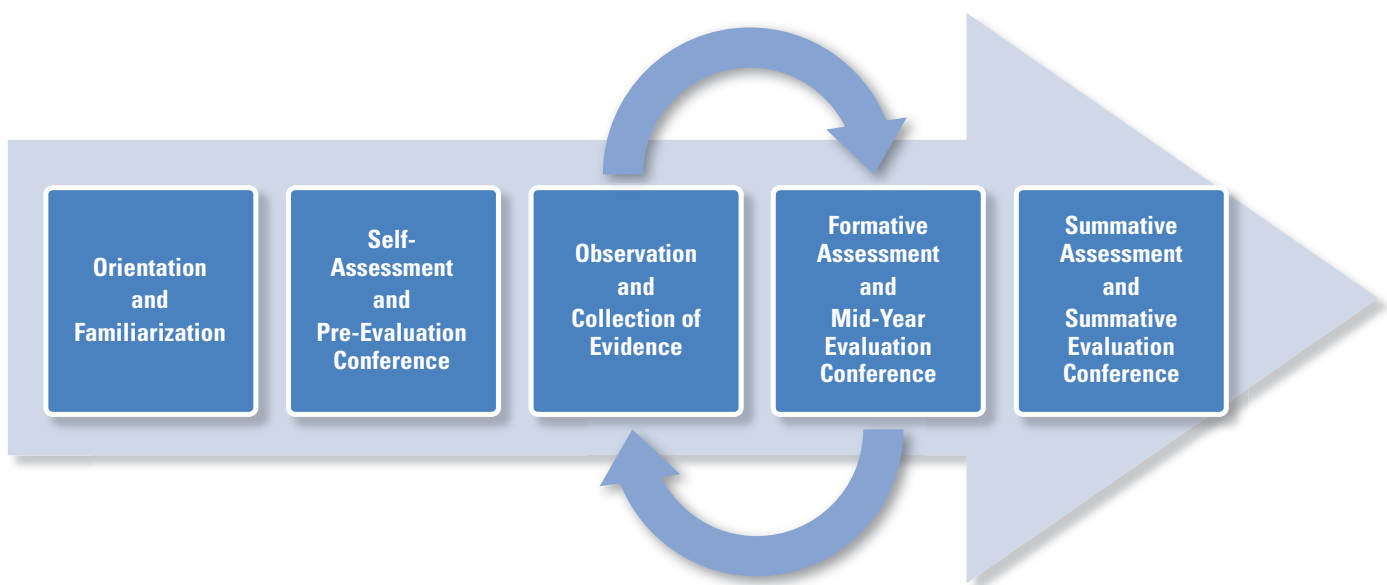
In Gwinnett, we call it the Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System. *Why the focus on "effectiveness"?* Because the goal is to implement a system that is more than an evaluation tool. It also should increase the effectiveness of our employees by identifying areas of strength and growth and individualizing professional development based on specific needs.

The primary purposes of the Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System are to:

- Increase student achievement for all students;
- Identify areas of strength and growth for each teacher; and
- Individualize professional growth based on specific needs.

The Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System (GTES) is used by schools to provide multiple measures of teacher effectiveness along with specific support for areas of indicated growth. Teachers and administrators have access to learning opportunities directly aligned with each performance standard assessed in the Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System. The evaluation system provides teachers and administrators with the tools to determine strengths and areas for needed improvement, enabling instructional leaders to individualize professional learning opportunities for each teacher, based on specific needs. This collaborative improvement process supports teachers and leaders in pursuing excellence in academic knowledge, skills, and behavior for each student, resulting in measured improvement against local, national, and world-class standards.

## GTES Evaluation Cycle



# Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System: About the Standards

Grouped under five Key Domains, the 10 research-based performance standards are assessed through observations and documentation of teacher practice. Effectively implementing these performance standards leads to increased student achievement.

## Standard 1: Professional Knowledge

The teacher demonstrates an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, and the needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.

## Standard 2: Instructional Planning

The teacher plans using state and local school district curricula and standards, effective strategies, resources, and data to address the differentiated needs of all students.

## Standard 3: Instructional Strategies

The teacher promotes student learning by using research-based instructional strategies relevant to the content to engage students in active learning and to facilitate students' acquisition of key knowledge and skills.

## Standard 4: Differentiated Instruction

The teacher challenges and supports each student's learning by providing appropriate content and developing skills which address individual learning differences.

## Standard 5: Assessment Strategies

The teacher systematically chooses a variety of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment strategies and instruments that are valid and appropriate for the content and student population.

## Standard 6: Assessment Uses

The teacher systematically gathers, analyzes, and uses relevant data to measure student progress, to inform instructional content and delivery methods, and to provide timely and constructive feedback to both students and parents.

## Standard 7: Positive Learning Environment

The teacher provides a well-managed, safe and orderly environment that is conducive to learning and encourages respect for all.

## Standard 8: Academically Challenging Environment

The teacher creates a student-centered academic environment in which teaching and learning occur at high levels and students are self-directed learners.

## Standard 9: Professionalism

The teacher exhibits a commitment to professional ethics and the school's mission, participates in professional growth opportunities to support student learning, and contributes to the profession.

## Standard 10: Communication

The teacher communicates effectively with students, parents or guardians, district and school personnel, and other stakeholders in ways that enhance student learning.



*"The 10 standards for which the teachers are held accountable encourage professional growth. The administrator/teacher conversations provide valuable feedback."*

Principal

KEY DOMAINS AND STANDARDS
PLANNING
1) Professional Knowledge 2) Instructional Planning
INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY
3) Instructional Strategies 4) Differentiated Instruction
ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR LEARNING
5) Assessment Strategies 6) Assessment Uses
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
7) Positive Learning Environment 8) Academically Challenging Environment
PROFESSIONALISM AND COMMUNICATION
9) Professionalism 10) Communication

# Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System: About the Components



The evaluation system consists of two components which contribute to an overall Teacher Effectiveness Measure. The components include:

- **Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS)**

Observations, including frequent, brief observations, documentation of a teacher’s practice, and student perception surveys will inform multiple formative assessments and one summative assessment each year; and

- **Student Growth and Academic Achievement**

*The following models measure achievement growth during the course rather than an absolute achievement score.*

- **Student Growth Percentile Measures (SGPs):** These annual calculations of student growth are based on state assessment data— Georgia Milestones Assessments for grades 4–8 and designated high school courses— which are indicators of effectiveness for teachers of state-tested subjects. Growth in student achievement is measured using a value-added model called Student Growth Percentiles.
- **Student Performance Goal Measures (SPGs):** These annual calculations of student growth are based on district-determined Student Growth Goals in subjects that do not use state assessments, a method similar to Gwinnett’s Results-Based Evaluation System. Teachers develop an implementation plan to accomplish learning goals established at the district level.

TAPS provides evaluators with a qualitative, rubrics-based evaluation tool with which to measure teacher performance on 10 performance standards. The primary data source for the standards is teacher observations. During the school year, trained evaluators will conduct a minimum of two formative observations of 30 or more minutes. Four brief observations (a minimum of 10 minutes each) also will occur throughout the school year and the resulting data will be used as an additional data source for the performance standards. A review of existing teacher documentation may be necessary if all of the performance standards are not assessed. The Performance Appraisal Rubric describes acceptable performance levels for each teacher performance standard. The categories include Exemplary- Level 4, Proficient- Level 3, Needs Development- Level 2, and Ineffective- Level 1. Proficient-Level 3 is the expected level of performance.

SAMPLE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL RUBRIC			
Exemplary- Level 4	Proficient- Level 3	Needs Development- Level 2	Ineffective- Level 1
In addition to meeting the requirements for Proficient.	Proficient is the expected level of performance.		
The teacher continually demonstrates extensive content and pedagogical knowledge, enriches the curriculum, and guides others in enriching the curriculum. (Teachers rated as Exemplary- Level 4 continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)	The teacher consistently demonstrates an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, and the needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.	The teacher inconsistently demonstrates understanding of curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, and student needs, or lacks fluidity in using the knowledge in practice.	The teacher inadequately demonstrates understanding of curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge and student needs, or does not use the knowledge in practice.

Student perception surveys for grades 3–12 also are used as a data source for assessment of standards 3, 4, 7 and 8. The surveys are designed to determine students’ perceptions of the learning environment created by their teacher(s). Student perception surveys are developmentally appropriate for grades 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12.

Prior to the beginning of the annual evaluation cycle, each teacher will have a pre-evaluation conference with an evaluator to review the teacher’s self-assessment and set expectations for the school year. The purpose of the mid-year conference is to monitor progress relative to performance goals. The teacher and evaluator review relevant data and modify implementation plans as needed. The annual evaluation conference provides an opportunity to review the TAPS evaluation results for the school year. This is a time to celebrate accomplishments and plan for the upcoming school year.

*“I really liked that the administrator stayed in my classroom for an extended period of time [during the observation] so that he could see not just how I run things but how things develop.”*

Teacher

# Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System: Glossary—Acronyms and terms you need to know

**Conferencing:** Discussions between the teacher and evaluator(s) that take place throughout the school year. A pre-evaluation conference, mid-year conference, and annual conference are required in the Teacher Effectiveness System process, but additional conferences may occur as needed.

**Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System (GTES):** GCPS' method of evaluating teacher of record performance, based on multiple components that provide data and feedback from different sources and perspectives. The Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System is consistent with the state's Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) model, but with minor procedural differences.

**Key Domains:** A realm of knowledge or responsibility. A strategy for grouping the content of a particular field of knowledge. The 10 standards are grouped under five domains.

**Observation:** An in-classroom review of a teacher's performance. Trained evaluators will conduct a minimum of two formative observations annually. These observations are at least 30 minutes in length and will inform the teacher's performance on the 10 performance standards. Four brief observations (a minimum of 10 minutes each) also will occur throughout the school year and the resulting data will be used as an additional data source for the performance standards.



**Performance Appraisal Rubric:** A behavioral summary scale that describes acceptable performance levels for each teacher performance standard. The categories include Exemplary- Level 4, Proficient- Level 3, Needs Development- Level 2, and Ineffective- Level 1. *Proficient- Level 3 is the expected level of performance.*

**Performance Indicator:** Examples of observable, tangible behaviors for each standard. Examples of the types of performance that will occur if a standard is being successfully met. Listings are neither exhaustive nor intended to be prescriptive.

**Performance Standard:** Qualitative, rubrics-based performance standards. Also known as Teacher Performance Standards. These standards are supported by extensive research and are proven to help increase student achievement.

**Race to the Top (RT3):** School improvement program administered by the Georgia Department of Education (DOE) and funded by competitive grants from the U.S. DOE. The evaluation system was one component of RT3.

**RBES:** The Results-Based Evaluation System, a tool for student achievement goal-setting, evaluation, and instructional planning in Gwinnett. GCPS teachers continue to use this process with the Teacher Effectiveness System.

**State-Tested Subject:** GCPS courses that are tested with the Georgia Milestones Assessment System. All other courses are considered Non-Tested Subjects.

**Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs):** A value-added model based on growth in student achievement measured with state-mandated tests in grades 4–12. Student Growth Percentile scores are calculated by the Georgia Department of Education. Once validated, this score will be used to inform the Teacher Effectiveness Measure.

**Student Perception Surveys:** A data source to inform the teacher performance standards. The surveys are designed to determine students' perceptions of the learning environment created by their teacher(s), and questions are aligned with TAPS. Student perception surveys are developmentally appropriate for grades 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12. Referred to as Surveys of Instructional Practice (SIP) at the state level.

**Student Performance Goals (SPGs):** A goal-setting process to measure growth in student achievement for teachers of non-state-tested subjects. Student Performance Goals are identified at the district level, by course, and teachers develop instructional plans to help students achieve the goals. Growth in student achievement is based on the difference between pre- and post-assessments. Referred to as Student Learning Objectives (SLO) in state model.

**Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS):** The qualitative, observation component of the Teacher Effectiveness System. Evaluators assess each teacher's performance, using multiple data sources, on the 10 performance standards. Ratings— Exemplary- Level 4, Proficient- Level 3, Needs Development- Level 2, and Ineffective- Level 1— are given on each standard.

**Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM):** The aggregate of scores from the individual components of the Teacher Effectiveness System. This score will determine a teacher's overall performance rating.

**Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES):** Georgia's teacher evaluation system developed through Race to the Top.

# Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System: Frequently Asked Questions

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## Who developed the evaluation system?

The evaluation system was developed by the Georgia Department of Education, the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA), and the 26 Race to the Top partner school districts, including Gwinnett County Public Schools. Dr. James Stronge of the College of William and Mary guided much of the work around the teacher performance standards.

## How will the system affect my work in the classroom?

The Teacher Effectiveness System is designed to help identify teachers' strengths and areas for growth. Once these areas are identified, teachers are provided with specific professional development individualized to support professional growth as needed.

## How does the evaluation process work?

### Observations:

- Two 30-minute observations are made for each teacher each year.
- A minimum of four additional brief observations (a minimum of 10 minutes each) occur during the year.
- Observations are the basis of ratings on 10 research-based performance standards.
- Observations generate specific feedback to help teachers improve classroom effectiveness.
- Teachers also complete a self-assessment.

## Student Growth and Academic Achievement:

- Student Growth Percentile Measures: Annual calculations of student growth based on state assessment data which are indicators of teacher effectiveness.
- Student Performance Goal Measures: Annual calculation of student growth based on district-determined student growth goals in subjects that are not assessed using state tests.

## Student Perception Surveys:

- Students in grades 3–12 complete developmentally appropriate surveys. The surveys provide a student perspective of the learning environment.

## What is an observation like?

Trained evaluators observe instruction and provide feedback regarding the 10 performance standards. Evaluators formally observe teachers at least twice annually for 30 minutes each observation. Teachers receive specific feedback on each observed performance standard. Evaluators may ask teachers to provide existing documentation as evidence of standards not observed in the classroom.

## What kind of documentation is used for TAPS?

If any of the 10 standards were not observed during the formative assessment, the teacher is responsible for submitting requested documentation to the evaluator that provides evidence of the teacher's level of performance on the standard.

*“The new system allows administrators to give more specific feedback to the teachers about the instruction in the classroom. The standards are an excellent guide and when you conference with the teachers, there is a common vocabulary and rubric. The conference part is the most valuable piece of the system. The administrator can give specific praise to a teacher and give suggestions for improvement in a one-to-one conversation.”*

Principal



# Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System: Update on TEM Calculations

During the summer of 2015, the state released additional information about how the different components of the evaluation system will be used to calculate the Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM). The TEM score calculations are based on lagging data. Therefore, in 2015–16, Gwinnett teachers will be evaluated on TAPS only. (In 2016–17, TEM scores will be calculated based on the 2015–16 school year data.) The following may help teachers to understand the state’s methodology in determining student growth and the overall TEM score.

## Components of the TEM

The Teacher Effectiveness Measure consists of two components:

1. Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS)—  
*Remember TAPS alone will be used for evaluation in 2015–16.*
2. Student Growth and Academic Achievement

*Additional information on how TEM scores are calculated will be shared as the district continues to receive information from the Georgia Department of Education. Details also can be found on the Georgia Department of Education website ([www.doe.k12.ga.us](http://www.doe.k12.ga.us)).*

**Overall performance is rated using the following categories:** Exemplary- Level 4, Proficient- Level 3, Needs Development- Level 2, and Ineffective- Level 1.

## Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS)

The TAPS component of GTES provides evaluators with a qualitative, rubrics-based evaluation method by which they can measure teacher performance related to ten quality performance standards that are scored from 0 to 3 (sum score can range from 0–30).

Final Ratings	TAPS Summative Cut Scores
Ineffective- Level 1	0–6
Needs Development- Level 2	7–16
Proficient- Level 3	17–26
Exemplary- Level 4	27–30

## Student Growth and Academic Achievement

**Student Performance Goals (SPGs)**— The measure of student growth for non-state-tested subjects with pre- and post-tests. The aggregate measure of SPG performance for all non-tested courses taught by a teacher will be used in calculating the TEM.

Exemplary - Level IV <i>In addition to meeting the requirements for Level III</i>	Proficient - Level III <i>Level III is the expected level of performance.</i>	Needs Development - Level II	Ineffective - Level I
The work of the teacher results in exceptional student growth. ≥90% of students demonstrated expected/high growth and ≥30% high growth	The work of the teacher results in appropriate student growth. 65-89% of students demonstrated expected/high growth <b>OR</b> ≥90% of students demonstrated expected/high growth and <30% high growth <b>OR</b> 65-89% of students demonstrated expected/high growth and ≥30% high growth	The work of the teacher does not result in appropriate student growth. 50-64% of students demonstrated expected/high growth	The work of the teacher results in minimal student growth. < 50% of students demonstrated expected/high growth on the SPG assessment.

**Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs)**— The measure of student growth for core state-tested subjects. A growth percentile can range from 1 to 99. The overall mean of SGP performance for all tested courses taught by the teacher will be used in calculating the TEM.

## How does it work for teachers who have both SPGs and SGP?

SGP	SPG
Rating: 3	Rating: 2
30 students	70 students
3 * 30 students = 90	2 * 70 students = 140
$(90 + 140) / (30 + 70 \text{ students}) = 230 / 100$	
2.3, rounded to 2 which equates to Level II- Needs Development	

Teacher Rating (MGP* Growth Levels)	Student Results
Ineffective- Level 1	MGP < 30
Needs Development- Level 2	MGP > = 30 and < = 40
Proficient- Level 3	MGP > 40 and < = 65
Exemplary- Level 4	MGP > 65

*\*Denotes Mean Growth Percentile (MGP) as defined by the GaDOE.*

When a teacher has both SPG and SGP students, a weighted average of the teacher’s SGP and SPG ratings will be calculated using the number of SGP and SPG student results in order to determine that teacher’s overall Student Growth score. This average will be rounded according to standard rounding rules. See the chart at left as an example.

# Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System: Professional Development and Evaluation (PD&E) Tool

The eCLASS Professional Development & Evaluation (PD&E) application aligns employee evaluation with professional development initiatives.

Click on this icon in the employee portal



PD&E

- Users can search for learning opportunities aligned with the teacher or leader effectiveness standards.
- Evaluators are able to view the professional learning transcript of their employees and conduct classroom observations either online or offline.
- In the PD&E system, all forms of professional learning are captured on an employee's transcript, including the Staff Development Log, courses, and self-paced online practice.
- The application allows users 24/7 online access and eliminates the need for manual or paper processing.
- Employees can easily search for learning opportunities that are specific to their school or have been recommended based on their roles.
- District leaders also can use the application to tailor specific announcements to different user groups to ensure any communication is meaningful for the recipients and reduce mass e-mails.
- Lastly, the applications reporting features inform decision making at both the school and district levels.

The summary page shows ratings and qualitative feedback on each of the performance standards. Teachers can see their evaluator's name and the dates items were completed. They can review the ratings received on various standards. In addition, a teacher can view his or her identified strengths along with comments about areas for growth.

Manage Plan						
<a href="#">&lt;&lt; Back</a> <a href="#">View Feedback</a>		Teacher Effectiveness System 2013-2014 <b>Formative Assessment</b> for Test Teacher11				
Menu	By	Created Date	Modified Date	Status	Shared	Activity
1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Test Principal10	05/17/2013	05/17/2013	Complete	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Formative Assessment
2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Test Principal7	06/11/2013	06/11/2013	In Progress	<input type="checkbox"/>	Formative Assessment
3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Test Principal10	06/12/2013	06/12/2013	Complete	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Formative Assessment
<a href="#">Start New</a>						

Planning	Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Development	Ineffective
1. Professional Knowledge <a href="#">View Feedback</a>	1 2 3			
2. Instructional Planning <a href="#">View Feedback</a>	3	1 2		
Instructional Delivery	Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Development	Ineffective
3. Instructional Strategies <a href="#">View Feedback</a>	3	1		
4. Differentiated Instruction <a href="#">View Feedback</a>	1	3		
Assessment of and for Learning	Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Development	Ineffective
5. Assessment Strategies <a href="#">View Feedback</a>		1 3		
6. Assessment Uses <a href="#">View Feedback</a>		1		
Learning Environment	Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Development	Ineffective
7. Positive Learning Environment <a href="#">View Feedback</a>	1		3	
8. Academically Challenging Environment <a href="#">View Feedback</a>	1 3			
Professionalism and Communication	Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Development	Ineffective
9. Professionalism <a href="#">View Feedback</a>	3	1		
10. Communication <a href="#">View Feedback</a>	3	1		

*"I feel with the new system we as teachers will grow and become better teachers. Just as we want our students to grow and learn, we should too."*

-Teacher

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