



Educators Overview: New Teacher and Principal Evaluation

Evaluation and Support

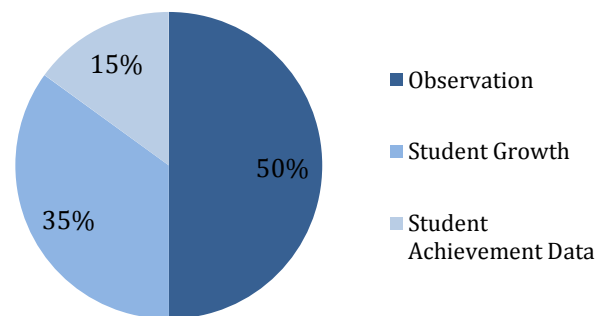
Beginning in the 2011-12 school year, all certified educators will receive annual evaluations as required under Tennessee's First to the Top Act. The state's new system will include multiple measures for looking at performance and will provide a way to individualize both support and recognition for educators. Furthermore, like the reflective practices this new system will promote for educators, the state is committed to reflecting on and refining the new evaluation system through feedback loops and careful study during year one and over time.

This document provides answers to several common questions around the new evaluation system. Over the spring and summer, the state will continue to provide information as we develop additional guidelines. We will send emails to teachers and administrators with updates, and will keep updated information on our website.

Q: What are the 'multiple measures' in the new teacher evaluation?

A: Educator evaluations will be made up of three components: 50% will be observation data; 35% will be a student growth score; 15% will be student achievement data selected by the educator and his/her supervisor from a list of state board approved options.

Teacher Evaluation Breakdown for Year 1



Q: How will the 35% growth component be determined?

A: All educators who teach grades and subjects for which there is a state assessment will use their individual TVAAS teacher effect data for the 35% component.

For educators in non-tested areas, the Department of Education, in consultation with educators and evaluation experts, is working to provide subject-specific growth measures for non-TCAP subjects and grade levels. We anticipate that some non-tested areas will have measures available for the coming school year, and others for the 2012-13 school year. While additional assessments are under development and review, school-wide value-added (TVAAS) data will be used for the 35%. In all cases, we are committed to providing timely communication and information about the options.

For teachers in special school or instructional situations (e.g. instructors teaching in multiple schools), careful work is under way, in consultation with educators, to determine how the 35% will be calculated in year one, and the state will release guidance this summer.



Q: How will I be observed?

A: Under the state model, all educators except administrators will be observed by principals, assistant principals or other instructional leaders trained in the observation protocol. All observers will use the TAP™ rubric, which focuses on four areas: Planning, Environment, Professionalism, and Instruction. The rubric itself can be found on the First to the Top website, link below.

Q: Why use the TAP™ rubric?

A: The selection the TAP™ rubric came down to two important factors: research and resources. The Department has chosen to use the TAP™ rubric as the state model for the 50% observation component based on positive field test results, research that links the instrument to increases in student achievement, and the capacity that TAP™ has to provide expert trainers for high-quality direct training and certification of all observers and evaluators statewide. Furthermore, in year one, the Department has committed to providing all schools with the TAP™ System Training portal, containing a host of scored lesson videos and linked instructional strategies, which we hope will be a helpful resource for both evaluators and teachers.

Q: How many observations will I have each year?

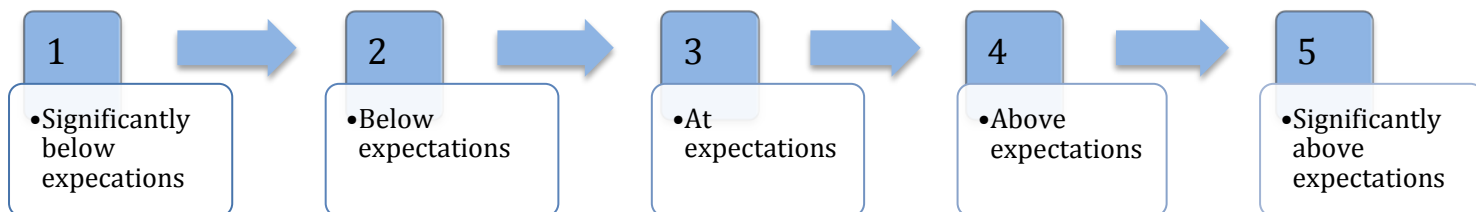
A: All teachers on professional licenses will be observed four times annually, with two observations occurring in each semester and at least half of all observations unannounced. Apprentice teachers will be observed six times annually, three in each semester and at least half unannounced.

Q: How will observers be trained?

A: This summer, all observers will be trained directly by expert trainers in four-day training sessions across the state. At the end of the four days, observers will be required to pass a certification test; additional refresher trainings and support will also be provided throughout the year.

Q: How will overall evaluation scores be calculated?

A: The three components (35% growth, 15% student achievement and 50% observation), will be combined into a single rating on a 5-category scale. Each teacher will receive a final score on this scale:



The state will release guidance to districts this summer explaining how to combine the three components into a final rating.



Q: How will my evaluation scores be used?

A: The First to the Top Act requires evaluations to be used as a factor in personnel decisions, including professional development, tenure attainment and dismissal. The state will provide guidance to districts for using evaluations in these decisions, including how to best align professional development and other supports to evaluation results. Ultimately, the primary function of the new evaluation system is to help improve instruction by developing instructional skills, increasing collaboration and communication, determining needed assistance, and differentiating effective practices.

Q. Will all districts use the same evaluation system?

A. Under state law, all districts must use an evaluation system with that includes the student growth and student achievement components as described above. However, districts may implement their own observation systems if they are approved by the state board. Currently, Memphis City, Hamilton County and AIMS have all expressed interest in using different observation systems. Districts will communicate with their staff if they use a different observation structure. The overall ratings system will also follow the process described in this document.

Q. How does the new evaluation intersect with the tenure legislation?

A: Under the new tenure legislation, teachers become eligible for tenure if they have taught for at least five years in the same LEA and have attained a rating in the top two evaluation categories in each of the previous two years. Teachers who are not rated in the top two evaluation categories may continue to teach on their current contract status even though they have not become eligible for tenure. A teacher who currently has tenure, or is granted tenure by July 1, 2011, will not lose tenure status under this new legislation.

Q. How will the state ensure that the evaluation system is implemented fairly?

A. First, only principals, assistant principals and other instructional leaders who have been trained and who have passed a certification test on the observation rubric may conduct observations for purposes of the evaluation. Second, the state will provide guidance to districts this summer to ensure consistent scoring and calculations. Most importantly, the state will analyze the evaluation implementation and results each year to ensure that we provide the right training and the right guidance to continuously improve the evaluation system. We will use survey data, focus groups, and the data from the evaluations themselves to make the system better each year.

Web Resources:

- [Teacher and Principal Evaluation resources](#)
- [More First to the Top resources](#)