Teacher and Principal Evaluation Policy

Guidelines and Criteria

Local boards of education shall develop or adopt evaluation models for teachers and principals. To be approved, these evaluation models must meet the following guidelines and criteria.

General Guidelines

(1) The primary purpose of annual teacher and principal evaluations is to identify and support instruction that will lead to high levels of student achievement.

(2) Evaluations will be used to inform human capital decisions, including, but not limited to individual and group professional development plans, hiring, assignment and promotion, tenure and dismissal, and compensation.

(3) Annual evaluations will differentiate teacher and principal performance into five effectiveness groups according to the individual educator's evaluation results. The five effectiveness groups are: significantly above expectations, above expectations, at expectations, below expectations, significantly below expectations. The Department of Education will monitor observation scores throughout the year and enforce consistent application of standards across districts. Upon the conclusion of the school year and relevant data collection, the department will publish evaluation results by district. Districts *and schools* that fall outside the acceptable range of results, subject to student achievement scores, will be subject to additional training and monitoring by the department as outlined in section (4).

(4) For the purposes of these guidelines, performance level discrepancies between individual student achievement growth scores and observation scores of three or more will be considered outside the acceptable range of results. The 10 percent of schools with the highest percentage of teachers falling outside the acceptable range of results will be required to participate in additional training and support as determined by the department. Districts that have 20 percent or more of their teachers fall outside the acceptable range of results will, as determined by the commissioner, lose their ability to apply for or implement alternate evaluation models or TEAM Flexibility the following school year.

Local Evaluation of Teachers, Principals and Non-Instructional, Certified Staff.

Fifty percent of the evaluation criteria shall be comprised of student achievement data, including thirty-five percent based on student growth data and fifteen percent based on other measures of student achievement. The remaining fifty percent of the evaluation criteria shall be based on a rating using the qualitative appraisal instrument contained in each approved evaluation model.

(1) Fifty percent student achievement data. This portion of the evaluation model will use multiple data sources to evaluate educators' effectiveness in affecting student learning growth.

(a) Thirty-five percent student growth measures.

1. For teachers with individual value-added scores, the student growth measures shall be comprised of TVAAS scores.

For teachers, librarians, counselors and other groups of educators who do not have individual TVAAS scores, LEAs will choose from a list of options that have been shown capable of measuring student growth. The list of options will be approved by the Department of Education prior to the start of each school year.

The current list of options includes:

K-2 assessment
Fine Arts Portfolio Model
World Languages Portfolio Model
Physical Education Student Growth Model

The Department of Education will continually monitor and revise the list of options under this category based on increasing availability of higher-quality measures of performance. Additionally, the Department of Education will work to develop valid and reliable student growth measures for those areas that do not currently have them. In lieu of the availability of growth measures for all educators without individual TVAAS scores, school-level value-added scores will be the standard student growth measure while other growth measures are in development. LEAs must:

(i) Provide training to evaluators to assess whether the students instructed by the educator being evaluated have demonstrated sufficient growth for the chosen measure, and

(ii) Implement the state's multiple rating categories to measure levels of performance for the chosen measure.

2. For principals and other school administrators who spend at least fifty percent of their time on administrative duties, the student growth measure will be school-level value-added scores.

(b) Fifteen percent other measures of student achievement.

1. Principals and assistant principals, classroom teachers, librarians and all other educators in grades K-8 and 9-12 will select, in collaboration with the evaluator, from the following list of measures. The agreed-upon measure should be a measure aligned as closely as possible to the educator's primary responsibility. If the two parties do not agree on a measure, the educator being evaluated will select a measure.

Principals and teachers in the top three quintiles for student growth may elect to use their growth scores for fifty percent of their evaluation in lieu of selecting another achievement measure for the fifteen percent.

	State assessments (discipline-specific/TCAP)	School-wide TVAAS or individual TVAAS for teachers in top 3 quintiles	ACT suite of assessments/SAT suite of assessments	National/State-used "off the shelf" assessments based on criteria developed by the TDOE	AP/IB/NIC suites of assessments top 3 quintiles	Graduation Rate	Pre- and post-test for the SAT 10	End of year SAT 10 test for districts that adopted it during the previous school year	Peer-review portfolio model	CTE Concentrator Math/Literacy School-Wide Score	English Language Development Assessment (ELDA) School-Wide Score
Teachers with TVAAS (4-8)	X	X	X	X							
Teachers with TVAAS (9-12)	X	X	X	X	X	X					
Principals/ Assistant Principals	X	X	X	X	X	X					
PK-3	X	X	X	X			X*	X**			
Fine Arts	X	X	X	X	X	X			X		
Middle/High School non-assessed courses	X	X	X	X	X	X					
World Languages	X	X	X	X	X	X					
Computer Technology	X	X	X	X	X	X					

Academic Interventionists	X	X	X	X		X					
Library Media Specialists	X	X	X	X		X					
English Language Learner Specialists	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	
Special Education Specialists	X	X	X	X	X	X					
CTE	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	
Caseload Educators	X	X	X	X		X					
PE and Health Educators	X	X	X	X		X					

*First and Second Grade Only
** Third Grade Only

State assessments (discipline-specific/TCAP): Includes TCAP Achievement (all forms, grades 3-8), TCAP EOC (secondary), TCAP ELDA (K-12 ELL), TCAP Writing (Grades 5, 8, 11), TCAP Constructed Response (Grades 3 and 7), TCAP Alt (SpEd), TCAP MAAS (SpEd).

TVAAS: School-wide value added composite, Individual Teacher Effect composite for teachers in the top 3 quintiles.

National/State "off the shelf" tests: PreK-12 diagnostic or achievement/attainment assessments (e.g. SAT 10, Dibels, DRA, Kindergarten-readiness, end of course, etc.) The Department of Education will develop standard criteria for approval of tests submitted by LEAs.

AP/IB/NIC suites of assessments: Courses designed for Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), National Industry Certification (NIC) assessments.

Graduation rate: School level calculated secondary rates.

2. The State Department of Education will continually monitor and make recommendations to the State Board of Education for revising the menu of options under this category based on increasing availability of higher quality measures of performance.

(2) Fifty percent other mandatory criteria. This portion of the evaluation model will use multiple data sources to evaluate educator practice against the qualitative appraisal instrument contained in each approved evaluation model.

(a) For all classroom teachers and non-instructional, certified staff other than principals and assistant principals who spend at least fifty percent of their time on administrative duties, the State Board of

Education will approve an evaluation model by which to evaluate all educators' effectiveness. In lieu of the approved model, LEAs may select another model from an approved list. The list of currently approved options includes:

Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM)
The Teacher Instructional Growth for Effectiveness and Results (TIGER)
Project COACH
Teacher Effectiveness Model (TEM)
The Achievement Framework for Excellent Teaching (AFET)

All approved models must contain a qualitative appraisal instrument that addresses the following domains: Planning, Environment, Professionalism, and Instruction. All approved models shall include, but are not limited to: a review of prior evaluations, personal conferences to discuss strengths, weaknesses and remediation, and classroom or school observation visits.

(b) Principals and assistant principals who spend fifty percent or more of their time on administrative duties will be evaluated according to an approved evaluation model based on the Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards (TILS) and approved by the State Board of Education. The evaluation process will also include a review of the quality of the principals' teacher evaluations. Principal and assistant principal qualitative appraisals should include school climate and/or teaching and learning conditions surveys. The Department of Education will develop a list of approved surveys that LEAs can use. The list of currently approved evaluation models includes:

Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM)
Project COACH Administrator
Achievement School District Leadership Framework

(c) All evaluations shall be conducted by certified evaluators. To be certified, an evaluator must meet certification requirements as determined by the Department of Education.

(d) All educators, other than apprentice teachers, teachers with individual student growth scores who earned a level five on such growth scores or final evaluation in the preceding school year, and administrators, will have a minimum of four observations*, with at least two domains observed in a given semester, for a minimum total of at least sixty minutes each school year. At least half of all observations will be unannounced. Apprentice teachers, other than those with individual student growth scores who earned a level five on such growth scores or final evaluation in the preceding school

year, will have at least six observations*, with at least three domains observed in a given semester, for a minimum total of at least ninety minutes each school year. Any educator with individual student growth scores who earned a level five on such growth scores or final evaluation in the preceding school year will have a minimum of one observation that includes each of the three domains, as well as two walk-through observations during the second semester. Any educator with a professional license and with individual student scores who earned a level one on such growth scores or final evaluation in the preceding school year will have the same minimum number of observations as an educator with an apprentice license. An LEA may choose to allow principals to conduct a required observation relative to the instructional domain in conjunction with a required observation relative to the planning or environment domain, provided the requisite minimum time, semester, distribution and notice (announced versus unannounced) are met.

Licensure Status	*Previous Growth or Final Evaluation Score*	*Minimum Required Observations**	*Minimum Required Observations Per Domain**
Apprentice	*1-4*	*Six observations, with a minimum of three domains observed in each semester*	*3 Instruction 2 Planning 2 Environment*
	5	*One formal observation covering all domains first semester; two walk-throughs second semester*	*1 Instruction 1 Planning 1 Environment*
Professional	*1*	*Six observations, with a minimum of three domains observed in each semester*	*3 Instruction 2 Planning 2 Environment*
	2-4	*Four observations with a minimum of two domains observed in each semester*	*2 Instruction 1 Planning 1 Environment*
	5	*One formal observation covering all domains first semester; two walk-throughs second semester*	*1 Instruction 1 Planning 1 Environment*

***NOTE:** As per the policy revision adopted by the SBE in November 2011, an LEA may choose to allow principals to conduct an observation of the instruction domain in conjunction with an observation of either environment or planning domain.*

1. Principals will have at least two onsite observations annually, conducted by the director of schools or designee.

2. The Department of Education will provide user friendly, manageable standardized forms to document observation visits and/or personal conferences. The approved forms will provide space for feedback in enough detail to allow the teacher or principal to understand specific areas of strength and areas for development. LEAs that elect to use an alternative appraisal instrument for evaluation must submit the observation recording forms to the Department of Education for approval.

3. Evaluators will provide written feedback within one week of each observation visit to the educator, and schedule an in-person debrief with the educator within one week of each observation visit. At the end of each school year, evaluators will rate educators based on the selected evaluation model, using notes collected through observation visits, conferences, a review of progress made in relation to the prior year's evaluation (when available) and other means.

Approved Evaluation Models

The approved evaluation model for non-public school teachers is the state's evaluation framework used by all schools prior to 2011-12 school year.

Any charter or state agency school interested in proposing its own evaluation model may submit an application for approval to the Department of Education. The Commissioner of Education shall have the authority to approve the use of the evaluation model.

Local-Level Grievance Procedure

(1) Purpose.

(a) To comply with Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-1-302 which requires, "the development of a local-level evaluation grievance procedure to provide a means for evaluated teachers and principals to challenge only the accuracy of the data used in the evaluation and the adherence to the evaluation policies adopted by the State Board of Education."

1. "Accuracy of the data" means only that the data identified with a particular teacher is correct.

2. Minor procedural errors in implementing the evaluation model shall be resolved at the lowest possible step in the grievance procedure but shall not constitute grounds for challenging the final results of an evaluation. Minor procedural errors shall be defined as errors that do not materially affect or compromise the integrity of the evaluation results. The final results of an evaluation may only be challenged if the person being evaluated can demonstrate, no later than during step II of the grievance procedure, that the procedural errors made could materially affect or compromise the integrity of the evaluation results. The Department of Education shall provide guidance on which procedural errors may materially effect of compromise the results of the evaluation.

(b) To efficiently and fairly resolve grievances regarding procedural errors in the evaluation process, not to address disputes regarding employment actions taken based on the results of an evaluation. More significant due process rights are provided pursuant to state law to teachers when actual employment actions are taken.

(c) To ensure evaluations are fundamentally fair because correct procedures have been followed.

(d) To address grievances objectively, fairly, and expeditiously by resolving them at the lowest possible step in the procedure.

(e) To provide teachers and principals a process for resolving grievances without fear, discrimination, or reprisal.

(2) Responsibility.

(a) LEAs shall be responsible for the proper effectuation of this policy at the local level.

(b) Local Boards of Education shall charge Directors with the responsibility for ensuring that all teachers, principals and administrators are aware of the provisions of this policy, including the identification of the administrator designated to conduct Step I of this procedure.

(3) Basic Standards.

(a) To resolve grievances as expeditiously as possible pursuant to section (1)(d) above, grievances may be filed at the end of each of the three components of the evaluation model – 1) qualitative appraisal; 2) student growth measures; and 3) other measures of

student achievement. A grievance must be filed no later than fifteen (15) days from the date teachers and principals receive the results for each component, otherwise the grievance will be considered untimely and invalid. Nothing shall preclude a teacher or principal from filing a grievance at any time prior to the deadlines stated herein.

(b) The State Department of Education or LEAs may develop and make available to teachers standard grievance forms. No grievance may be denied because a standard form adopted by an LEA has not been used as long as the components required by this policy are included.

(c) At the informal hearing before the Director of Schools, an attorney or a representative of an employee may speak on behalf of the employee.

(d) An attorney may represent a grievant before the local board of education, which is the final step of this procedure. The grievant and the local board of education may have counsel present at discussions prior to the final step.

(e) Each grievance submitted at every step of the process provided below shall contain:

1. the teacher or principal's name, position, school, and additional title if any;

2. the name of the teacher or principal's immediate supervisor;

3. the name of the evaluator/reviewer;

4. the date the challenged evaluation was received;

5. the evaluation period in question;

6. the basis for the grievance;

7. the corrective action desired by grievant; and

8. sufficient facts or other information to begin an investigation.

(f) A failure to state specific reasons shall result in the grievance being considered improperly filed and invalid.

(g) All student achievement data used in evaluations must be made available to individual educators prior to the completion of their evaluations.

(4) Procedures. Grievances shall be processed by working through the three steps to finality as follows:

(a) Step I—Evaluator

1. Written grievance submitted to evaluator pursuant to the timeline listed in Section (3) (a).

2. Administrative investigation and fact finding.

3. Decision clearly communicated in writing to grievant within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the complaint.

4. To allow disputes to be resolved at the lowest level possible, the evaluator may take any action necessary, based on the circumstances, to immediately correct any procedural errors made in the evaluation process.

(b) Step II—The Director of Schools or his/her designee who shall have had no input or involvement in the evaluation for which the grievance has been filed.

1. Written grievance and prior step decision submitted to the Director of Schools or his/her designee within fifteen (15) days of receipt of decision from Step I. The designee cannot be used in cases involving a principal's evaluation.

2. Informal discussion or hearing of facts, allegations, and testimony by appropriate witnesses as soon as practical.

3. Investigation, fact finding, and written final decision communicated to grievant in writing within fifteen (15) days of discussion.

4. To allow disputes to be resolved at the lowest level possible, the Director of Schools may take any action necessary, based on the circumstances, to immediately correct any procedural errors made in the evaluation process.

(c) Step III—Local Board of Education

1. Teachers and principals may request a hearing before the local board of education by submitting a written grievance and all relevant documentation to the local board of education within fifteen (15) days of receipt of decision from Step II.

2. The board of education, based upon a review of the record, may grant or deny a request for a full board hearing and may affirm or overturn the decision of the Director of Schools with or without a hearing before the board;

3. Any hearing granted by the board of education shall be held no later than thirty (30) days after receipt of a request for a hearing.

4. The local board of education shall give written notice of the time and place of the hearing to the grievant, Director of Schools and all administrators involved.

5. The local board of education's decision shall be communicated in writing to all parties, no later than thirty (30) days after conclusion of the hearing.

6. The local board of education shall serve as the final step for all grievances.