

Tennessee Teacher Evaluation Overview

(As of April 23, 2012)

State Legislation Related to Teacher Evaluation

Title: SB 5 (Tennessee First to the Top Act)

This Act calls for a Teacher Evaluation Advisory Committee (TEAC) comprised of teachers and other education stakeholders to develop recommendations on annual teacher and principal evaluations to the state board of education. First to the Top mandates that annual evaluations include the following components. For more details, refer to [the legislation](#)

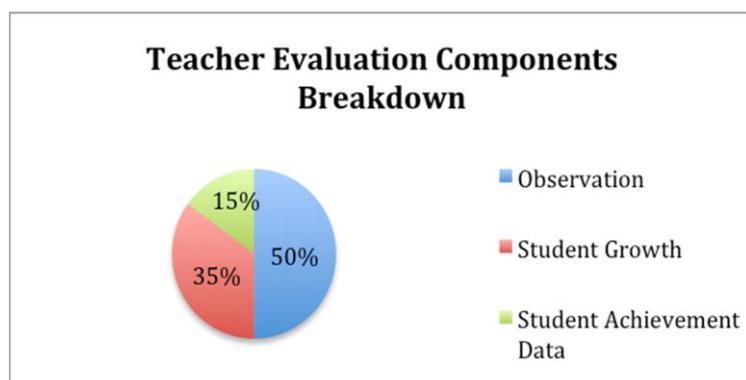
- Objective student achievement data will comprise 50% of the evaluation.
- For teachers and principals, 35% of the evaluation will be based on student growth (TVAAS where it is available, or some other comparable measure of student growth).
- 15% of the evaluation shall be based on other measures of student achievement selected from a list of such measures developed by the Committee.
- Review of prior evaluations.
- Personal conferences to include discussion of strengths, weaknesses and remediation.
- Relative to teachers, classroom or position observation followed by written assessment.

Race to the Top Application

Tennessee was one of the first states to be awarded a Race to the Top grant. In the state's application, it supports the First to the Top Act to create the Teacher Evaluation Advisory Committee (TEAC), calling on the committee to provide recommendations to the state board of education by July 2011. The application also states that the redesigned evaluation system will be aligned with multiple measures so as to truly measure student learning. The state plans to use evaluations as a factor in guiding employment decisions and also acknowledged the need for refinement of the system over time. Click [here](#) to read the entire Race to the Top Application.

Overview of Proposed Teacher Evaluation

Tennessee has declared a statewide teacher evaluation system that will be comprised of three components: 50% will be observation data; 35% will be a student growth score; and 15% will be student achievement data selected by the educator and his/her supervisor from a list of state board approved options.





The three components will be combined into a single rating on a 1-5 category scale. Each teacher will receive a final score rated at 1) significantly below expectations, 2) below expectations, 3) at expectations, 4) above expectations, 5) significantly above expectations.

Flexibility

Under state law, all districts must use an evaluation system that includes student growth and student achievement components. However, districts may implement their own observation systems if approved by the state board. Currently, Memphis City, Hamilton County and AIMS have all expressed interest in using different observation systems.

Measuring Student Growth

Since 1992, the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) has been used to measure the influence of a teacher, school, or district on academic growth rates of individual students from year-to-year. The state tracks each of Tennessee's students in grades 3-12.

Non-tested Grades and Subjects

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. The state plans to have measures available for these areas for the 2012-13 school year. While additional assessments are under development and review, currently, school-wide value-added (TVAAS) data will be used for the 35%.

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.

Personnel Decisions

The First to the Top Act requires evaluations to be used as a factor in personnel decisions, including professional development, tenure attainment and dismissal. Success on evaluations will also inform whether a teacher achieves tenure. Novice teachers must be in good standing for five years before they can be granted tenure.

Timeline for Implementation

Activity	Date
TEAC concluded its work and delivered recommendations to the State Board	July 1, 2010
Annual evaluation results are used to inform teacher and principal professional development	2011-2012 SY
LEAs to begin implementation. Share local innovations with TDOE and State Board to inform future direction/policymaking.	2011-2012 SY



Issue report on performance of LEAs and schools in developing more effective teachers and principals along with first-year observations and recommendations for action.	2011-2012 SY
LEAs continue to set annual improvement goals.	2012 and beyond
Board to gather data and input for any additional policy development to guide districts in their work.	2012 and beyond

Overview of Teacher Involvement

First to Top designated that the Teacher Evaluation Advisory Committee (TEAC) would create a new, annual teacher and principal evaluation framework. These recommendations were made to the State Board of Education in November 2010. This committee is comprised of 15 members, three of which are classroom teachers.

In addition, the Tennessee Department of Education convened 12 educator workgroups to develop recommendations for non-tested grades and subjects. Each working group made recommendations to the Teacher Evaluation Technical Advisory Group, which decided what recommendations to accept and pilot. The pilot programs are taking place now. Tennessee policymakers are still considering many possibilities and plan to make final decisions on its assessments by July of 2012 for next school year.

Tennessee also recently launched an educator engagement effort led by the State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE). The effort involves several regional roundtables and an on-line survey to collect feedback from teachers.

Additional Resources

[Tennessee First to the Top Website](#)

[First to the Top Educator Overview](#)

[SCORE Website](#)

[Tennessee Education Association](#)