
Teacher and Principal Evaluation Policy 5.201

The Background:

The 2012-13 school year was the second year of full implementation of the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM). At the conclusion of the 2011-12 school year, the Department of Education made a number of policy changes in response to feedback that was gathered throughout the first year of implementation. The department continued to collect feedback throughout the second year of implementation and has proposed additional policy changes as a result of that feedback.

1. Redefining the Acceptable Range of Results

In July 2012, the department recommended and the State Board of Education approved a policy change that allowed the department to monitor observation scores throughout the year and enforce consistent application of standards across schools and districts, particularly where there was a high percentage of misalignment between observation scores and individual growth scores. This policy specified that the relationship between value-added and observation scores should, at a minimum, be within one performance level (or in other words, that value-added and observation scores that were two or more levels apart would be outside the acceptable range of results).

The department conducted additional research on the relationship between value-added and observation scores and found that when excluding teachers who received a 1 on their individual TVAAS scores, the rates of misalignment dropped dramatically. Beginning in the 2013-14 school year, the department recommends that performance level discrepancies between individual student achievement growth scores and observation scores of three or more be considered outside the acceptable range of results, rather than the previous standard of two or more levels apart. This policy change would ensure that the department focuses its efforts on the schools and evaluators with the most significant rates of misalignment.

2. Approved Comparable Measures for Individual Growth

Since the implementation of the TEAM evaluation system, the department has been committed to identifying and developing ways of measuring student growth for teachers who do not have individual growth scores. In 2012-13, the department provided districts with the option of implementing the K-2 assessment (formerly known as SAT 10 or Stanford 10). The results of the assessment were used to generate value added scores. Additionally, the board approved the use of the Fine Arts portfolio model for the 2012-13 school year. Based on the results of pilot work conducted during the 2012-13 school year, the department recommends adding a portfolio model

in world languages to the list of approved growth options. This model has demonstrated the ability to provide important information about effective instruction in world language classes and based on pilot results, also capable of appropriately differentiating growth.

3. Approved Alternate Observation Models

Under SBE Teacher and Principal Evaluation Policy 5.201 “in lieu of the approved model, LEAs may select another model from an approved list.” The department recommends including the list of approved observation models in state board policy:

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)

The TEAM, TIGER, Project COACH, and TEM models have previously been approved for use by the board. For the 2013-14 school year, the department has two recommendations for board approval. First, the unified Shelby County school district has proposed modifications to the TEM model. The revised model includes minor modifications to language in the rubric, and replaces the “teacher content knowledge” component of the evaluation system with “professionalism.” Professionalism is 5 percent of a teacher’s overall evaluation score. Second, the Achievement School District has proposed and the department recommends approval of The Achievement Framework for Excellent Teaching (AFET) for adoption. AFET weights student perception surveys at 15 percent and observation scores at 35 percent in the model.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Education recommends adoption of this item on final reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.