



Educators Guide: New Teacher and Principal Evaluation

What does the new teacher and principal evaluation mean for educators?

Tennessee's new teacher and principal evaluation system is designed to significantly improve student success by identifying and supporting effective instruction. The evaluation process will allow districts and educators to determine where teachers are working effectively and where areas of need exist, then offer opportunities for real and meaningful support for professional growth.

We know the system's success depends on effective training of evaluators, and extensive, ongoing training will be provided for all evaluators and educators. Though the First to the Top Act requires districts to use the new system as a factor in human capital decisions, most importantly, this process is about building support and creating success for educators and students.

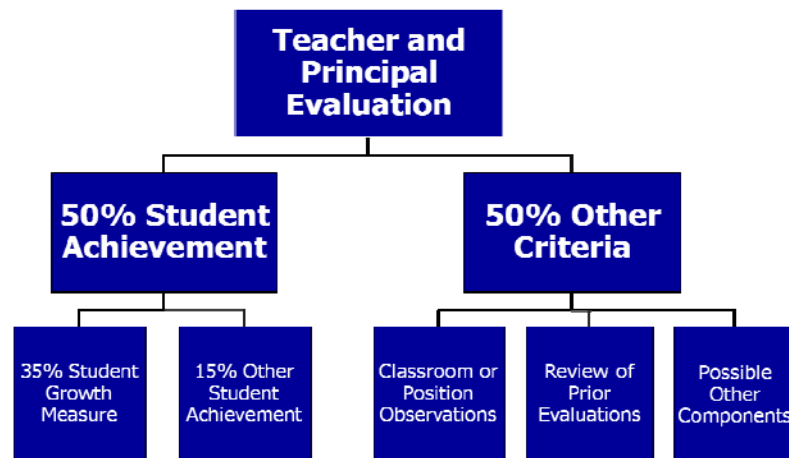
The First to the Top Act Changed State Law

Under the Tennessee First to the Top Act, several changes were made to state law regarding educator evaluations. These include:

- Annual evaluation of teachers and principals
- A new teacher and principal evaluation framework that requires 50 percent of evaluation be based on student achievement measures – including 35 percent of TVAAS where available
- Creating a 15-member Teacher Evaluation Advisory Committee to recommend guidelines and criteria for the new evaluation

Breakout of the New Evaluation Framework

Below is a diagram of Tennessee's new Teacher and Principal Evaluation:





The Work of the Teacher Evaluation Advisory Committee

The Teacher Evaluation Advisory Committee was created by the First to the Top Act to recommend guidelines and criteria for the new evaluation system. Committee members include teachers, principals, legislators, business leaders and Tennessee Department of Education officials. The committee has met since March to discuss the following components that will ultimately be included in their recommendations: (A) categories of educators, (B) components of the evaluation, i.e. growth and achievement measures, (C) guidelines around process for the evaluation, (D) desired outcomes of the new evaluation and (E) the use of the new evaluation system as a factor in human capital decisions.

Why Now?

Revising the way we evaluate educators is the first step in implementing the overall education reforms called for in our First to the Top plan. The new evaluation will help educators identify strengths and opportunities for improvement so they may be better able to take advantage of the kinds of relevant, meaningful professional development that will ultimately lead to increased student achievement.

Timeline

The Tennessee Department of Education plans to field test components of the new evaluation system in accord with the TEAC's recommendations over the course of the 2010-11 school year. In spring 2011, the evaluation process and practices will be reviewed and refined. The new evaluation system will launch statewide, following approval by the State Board of Education, in July 2011.

Is Now Really the Right Time?

With new, tougher standards, is now the right time to use student achievement data as a measure of effective teaching? Yes.

As we ask and expect more from our children, we must also ask and expect more from teachers and principals. Tennessee can only successfully rise to the top, preparing every child for college and career in the 21st century, by significantly improving student achievement. First to the Top will give the state and districts resources to provide more support and development opportunities for teachers and principals to ensure everyone has the opportunity to grow and succeed.

How can I stay informed about Tennessee First to the Top?

The success of Tennessee First to the Top will depend on the involvement of educators, parents and other education stakeholders across the state and nation.

In August, we'll launch a dedicated First to the Top website where you can sign up to receive periodic news and updates. Watch for this new source of information at www.tn.gov/firsttothetop in the days ahead. We are also establishing a teacher email listserv to distribute timely information to all educators about our First to the Top efforts.