Gwinnett Effectiveness Initiative
TEACHER

A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS

2026-27

About the Evaluation System

We know that we cannot improve what we do not measure, and a teacher's effectiveness has a powerful impact on student achievement. In order to measure teacher effectiveness and to increase student achievement, Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) partnered with the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) to develop an evaluation system that includes multiple components to provide data and feedback regarding teacher performance. GCPS is one of 26 school districts that has worked with the GaDOE and the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) to develop a fair and equitable system that will help teachers become even more effective in the classroom and lead to improved student learning and achievement gains. Teacher and leader focus groups indicated that an evaluation system should be based on multiple measures of teacher effectiveness.

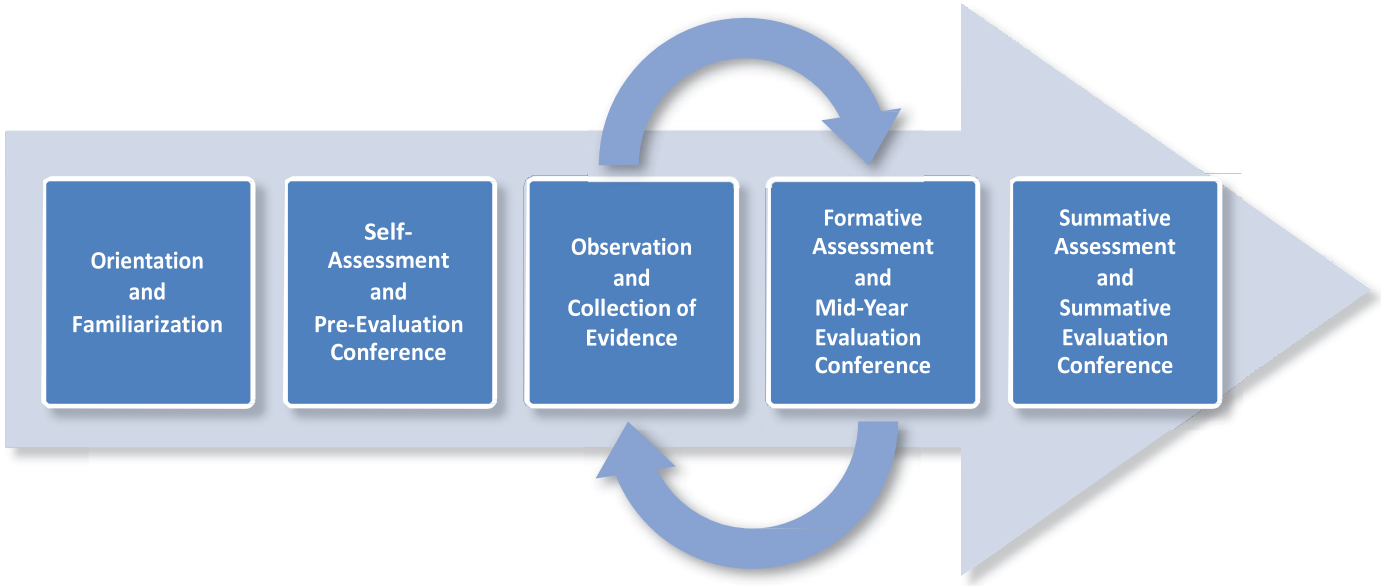
In Gwinnett, we call it the Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System. *Why the focus on "effectiveness"?* Because the goal is to implement a system that is more than an evaluation tool. It also should increase the effectiveness of our employees by identifying areas of strength and growth and individualizing professional development based on specific needs.

The primary purposes of the Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System are to:

- Increase student achievement for all students;
- Identify areas of strength and growth for each teacher; and
- Individualize professional growth based on specific needs.

The Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System (GTES) is used by schools to provide multiple measures of teacher effectiveness along with specific support for areas of indicated growth. Teachers and administrators have access to learning opportunities directly aligned with each performance standard assessed in the Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System. The evaluation system provides teachers and administrators with the tools to determine strengths and areas for needed improvement, enabling instructional leaders to individualize professional learning opportunities for each teacher, based on specific needs. This collaborative improvement process supports teachers and leaders in pursuing excellence in academic knowledge, skills, and behavior for each student, resulting in measured improvement against local, national, and world-class standards.

GTES Full Evaluation Cycle



About the Standards

Grouped under five Key Domains, the 10 research-based performance standards are assessed through observations and documentation of teacher practice. Effectively implementing these performance standards leads to increased student achievement.

Standard 1: Professional Knowledge

The teacher demonstrates an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, and the needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.

Standard 2: Instructional Planning

The teacher plans using state and local school district curricula and standards, effective strategies, resources, and data to address the differentiated needs of all students.

Standard 3: Instructional Strategies

The teacher promotes student learning by using research-based instructional strategies relevant to the content to engage students in active learning and to facilitate students' acquisition of key knowledge and skills.

"The 10 standards for which the teachers are held accountable encourage professional growth. The administrator/teacher conversations provide valuable feedback."
Principal

Standard 4: Differentiated Instruction

The teacher challenges and supports each student's learning by providing appropriate content and developing skills which address individual learning differences.

Standard 5: Assessment Strategies

The teacher systematically chooses a variety of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment strategies and instruments that are valid and appropriate for the content and student population.

Standard 6: Assessment Uses

The teacher systematically gathers, analyzes, and uses relevant data to measure student progress, to inform instructional content and delivery methods, and to provide timely and constructive feedback to both students and parents.

Standard 7: Positive Learning Environment

The teacher provides a well-managed, safe and orderly environment that is conducive to learning and encourages respect for all.

Standard 8: Academically Challenging Environment

The teacher creates a student-centered academic environment in which teaching and learning occur at high levels and students are self-directed learners.

Standard 9: Professionalism

The teacher exhibits a commitment to professional ethics and the school's mission, participates in professional growth opportunities to support student learning, and contributes to the profession.

Standard 10: Communication

The teacher communicates effectively with students, parents or guardians, district and school personnel, and other stakeholders in ways that enhance student learning.

KEY DOMAINS AND STANDARDS
Planning
1) Professional Knowledge 2) Instructional Planning
Instructional Delivery
3) Instructional Strategies 4) Differentiated Instruction
Assessment of and for learning
5) Assessment Strategies 6) Assessment Uses
Learning environment
7) Positive Learning Environment 8) Academically Challenging Environment
Professionalism and communication
9) Professionalism 10) Communication

Aligning the Standards

The 10 research-based performance standards are assessed through observations and documentation of teacher practice. The following alignment between the performance standards and the Quality-Plus Teaching Strategies (QPTS) helps teachers know how to focus their instruction. It also represents the priority instructional methods Gwinnett teachers are expected to use for students to learn the Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS).

Standard 1: Professional Knowledge

The teacher demonstrates an understanding of the ***Academic Knowledge and Skills,*** subject content, pedagogical knowledge, ***Quality-Plus Teaching Strategies,*** and the needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.

Standard 2: Instructional Planning

The teacher plans using ***Academic Knowledge and Skills, Quality-Plus Teaching Strategies, online communication center resources,*** and data to address the differentiated needs of all students.

It is important for teachers to understand the alignment of the standards to the AKS and the QPTS.

Standard 3: Instructional Strategies

The teacher promotes student learning by using ***Quality-Plus Teaching Strategies*** relevant to the content to engage students in active learning and to facilitate students' acquisition of ***Academic Knowledge and Skills.***

Standard 4: Differentiated Instruction

The teacher challenges and supports each student's learning by teaching the ***Academic Knowledge and Skills*** through differentiated instruction, with appropriate interventions and extensions which address individual student learning needs.

AKS
ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
GWINNETT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Standard 5: Assessment Strategies

The teacher systematically chooses a variety of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment strategies and instruments that are valid and appropriate ***for the mastery of the Academic Knowledge and Skills*** and student population.

Standard 6: Assessment Uses

The teacher systematically gathers, analyzes, and uses relevant data to measure student progress toward mastery of the ***Academic Knowledge and Skills,*** to inform ***instruction, and*** to provide ***consistent,*** timely feedback to both students and parents.

Standard 7: Positive Learning Environment

The teacher provides a well-managed, safe and orderly environment that is conducive to learning and encourages respect for all.

Standard 8: Academically Challenging Environment

The teacher creates a student-centered academic environment in which teaching and learning occur at high levels and students are self-directed learners.

Standard 9: Professionalism

The teacher exhibits a commitment to professional ethics and the school's mission, participates in professional growth opportunities to support student learning, and contributes to the profession.

Standard 10: Communication

The teacher communicates effectively with students, parents or guardians, district and school personnel, and other stakeholders in ways that enhance student learning.

Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS)

A fair and comprehensive evaluation system provides sufficient detail and accuracy so that both teachers and evaluators will fully understand their job expectations. Evaluators shall be appropriately trained and credentialed. The Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS) provides evaluators with a qualitative, rubrics-based evaluation method by which they can measure teacher performance related to quality Performance Standards. GTES is a three-tiered approach which defines the expectations for leader performance consisting of 5 domains, 10 Performance Standards.

The Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System consists of four components which contribute to an overall rating of Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS). Summative ratings are assigned to each standard. Summative assessment is not an average of ratings on the standards during formative evaluations.

The Performance Appraisal Rubric describes acceptable performance levels for each teacher performance standard. Proficient is the expected level of performance

Overall performance is rated using the following calculations:

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TAPS Rating	Summative rating points range
Exemplary	27 - 30 points
Proficient	17 - 26 points
Needs Development	7- 16 points
Ineffective	0 - 6 points

SAMPLE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL RUBRIC			
Exemplary *In addition to meeting the requirements for Proficient.*	**Proficient** *Proficient is the expected level of performance.*	**Needs Development**	**Ineffective**
The teacher continually demonstrates extensive content and pedagogical knowledge, enriches the curriculum, **and** guides others in enriching the curriculum. *(Teachers rated as Exemplary – Level 4 continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)*	The teacher consistently demonstrates an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, **and** the needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.	The teacher inconsistently demonstrates understanding of curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, **and** student needs, **or** lacks fluidity in using the knowledge in practice.	The teacher inadequately demonstrates understanding of curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge **and** student needs, **or** does not use the knowledge in practice.

About the Standards

Appendix: TAPS Performance Standards and Performance Appraisal Rubrics

Performance Standard 1: Professional Knowledge:

The teacher demonstrates an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, and the needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.

Sample Performance Indicators

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

The teacher:

- Addresses appropriate curriculum standards and integrates key content elements.
- Facilitates students' use of higher-level thinking skills in instruction.
- Demonstrates ability to link present content with past and future learning experiences, other subject areas, and real world experiences and applications.
- Demonstrates accurate, deep, and current knowledge of subject matter.
- Exhibits pedagogical skills relevant to the subject area(s) taught and best practices based on current research.
- Bases instruction on goals that reflect high expectations for all students and a clear understanding of the curriculum.
- Displays an understanding of the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development of the age group

Exemplary *In addition to meeting the requirements for Proficient.*	**Proficient** *Proficient is the expected level of performance.*	**Needs Development**	**Ineffective**
The teacher **continually** demonstrates extensive content and pedagogical knowledge, enriches the curriculum, and guides others in enriching the curriculum. *(Teachers rated as Exemplary continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)*	The teacher **consistently** demonstrates an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, and the needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.	The teacher **inconsistently** demonstrates understanding of curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, and student needs, **or** lacks fluidity in using the knowledge in practice.	The teacher **inadequately** demonstrates understanding of curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge **and** student needs, **or** does not use the knowledge in practice.

About the Standards

Performance Standard 2: Instructional Planning

The teacher plans using state and local school district curricula and standards, effective strategies, resources, and data to address the differentiated needs of all students.

Sample Performance Indicators

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

The teacher:

- Analyzes and uses student learning data to inform planning.
- Develops plans that are clear, logical, sequential, and integrated across the curriculum (e.g., long-term goals, lesson plans, and syllabi).
- Plans instruction effectively for content mastery, pacing, and transitions.
- Plans for instruction to meet the needs of all students.
- Aligns and connects lesson objectives to state and local school district curricula and standards, and student learning needs.
- Develops appropriate course, unit, and daily plans

Exemplary *In addition to meeting the requirements for Proficient.*	**Proficient** *Proficient is the expected level of performance.*	**Needs Development**	**Ineffective**
The teacher **continually** seeks and uses multiple data and real world resources to plan differentiated instruction to meet the individual student needs and interests in order to promote student accountability and engagement. *(Teachers rated as Exemplary continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)*	The teacher **consistently** plans using state and local school district curricula and standards, effective strategies, resources, and data to address the differentiated needs of all students.	The teacher **inconsistently** uses state and local school district curricula and standards, **or** inconsistently uses effective strategies, resources, **or** data in planning to meet the needs of all students.	The teacher **does not** plan, or plans without adequately using state and local school district curricula and standards, **or** without using effective strategies, resources, **or** data to meet the needs of all students.

About the Standards

Performance Standard 3: Instructional Strategies

The teacher promotes student learning by using research-based instructional strategies relevant to the content to engage students in active learning and to facilitate the students' acquisition of key knowledge and skills.

Sample Performance Indicators

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

The teacher:

- Engages students in active learning and maintains interest.
- Builds upon students' existing knowledge and skills.
- Reinforces learning goals consistently throughout the lesson.
- Uses a variety of research-based instructional strategies and resources.
- Effectively uses appropriate instructional technology to enhance student learning.
- Communicates and presents material clearly, and checks for understanding.
- Develops higher-order thinking through questioning and problem-solving activities.
- Engages students in authentic learning by providing real-life examples and interdisciplinary connections

Exemplary *In addition to meeting the requirements for Proficient.*	**Proficient** *Proficient is the expected level of performance.*	**Needs Development**	**Ineffective**
The teacher **continually** facilitates students' engagement in metacognitive learning, higher-order thinking skills, and application of learning in current and relevant ways. *(Teachers rated as Exemplary continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)*	The teacher **consistently** promotes student learning by using research-based instructional strategies relevant to the content to engage students in active learning, and to facilitate the students' acquisition of key skills.	The teacher **inconsistently** uses research-based instructional strategies. The strategies used are sometimes not appropriate for the content area **or** for engaging students in active learning **or** for the acquisition of key skills.	The teacher **does not** use research-based instructional strategies, nor are the instructional strategies relevant to the content area. The strategies do not engage students in active learning **or** acquisition of key skills.

About the Standards

Performance Standard 4: Differentiated Instruction

The teacher challenges and supports each student's learning by providing appropriate content and developing skills which address individual learning differences.

Sample Performance Indicators

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

The teacher:

- Differentiates the instructional content, process, product, and learning environment to meet individual developmental needs.
- Provides remediation, enrichment, and acceleration to further student understanding of material.
- Uses flexible grouping strategies to encourage appropriate peer interaction and to accommodate learning needs/goals.
- Uses diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment data to inform instructional modifications for individual students.
- Develops critical and creative thinking by providing activities at the appropriate level of challenge for students.
- Demonstrates high learning expectations for all students commensurate with their developmental levels.

Exemplary *In addition to meeting the requirements for Proficient.*	**Proficient** *Proficient is the expected level of performance.*	**Needs Development**	**Ineffective**
The teacher **continually** facilitates each student's opportunities to learn by engaging him/her in critical and creative thinking and challenging activities tailored to address individual learning needs and interests. *(Teachers rated as Exemplary continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)*	The teacher **consistently** challenges and supports each student's learning by providing appropriate content and developing skills which address individual learning differences.	The teacher **inconsistently** challenges students by providing appropriate content **or** by developing skills which address individual learning differences.	The teacher **does not** challenge students by providing appropriate content **or** by developing skills which address individual learning differences.

About the Standards

Performance Standard 5: Assessment Strategies

The teacher systematically chooses a variety of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment strategies and instruments that are valid and appropriate for the content and student population.

Sample Performance Indicators

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

The teacher:

- Aligns student assessment with the established curriculum and benchmarks.
- Involves students in setting learning goals and monitoring their own progress.
- Varies and modifies assessments to determine individual student needs and progress.
- Uses formal and informal assessments for diagnostic, formative, and summative purposes.
- Uses grading practices that report final mastery in relationship to content goals and objectives.
- Uses assessment techniques that are appropriate for the developmental level of students.
- Collaborates with others to develop common assessments, when appropriate.

Exemplary *In addition to meeting the requirements for Proficient.*	**Proficient** *Proficient is the expected level of performance.*	**Needs Development**	**Ineffective**
The teacher **continually** demonstrates expertise and leads others to determine and develop a variety of strategies and instruments that are valid and appropriate for the content and student population and guides students to monitor and reflect on their own academic progress. *(Teachers rated as Exemplary continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)*	The teacher systematically and **consistently** chooses a variety of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment strategies and instruments that are valid and appropriate for the content and student population.	The teacher **inconsistently** chooses a variety of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment strategies **or** the instruments are sometimes not appropriate for the content or student population.	The teacher chooses an **inadequate** variety of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment strategies **or** the instruments are not appropriate for the content or student population.

Performance Standard 6: Assessment Uses

The teacher systematically gathers, analyzes, and uses relevant data to measure student progress, to inform instructional content and delivery methods, and to provide timely and constructive feedback to both students and parents.

Sample Performance Indicators

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

The teacher:

- Uses diagnostic assessment data to develop learning goals for students, to differentiate instruction, and to document learning.
- Plans a variety of formal and informal assessments aligned with instructional results to measure student mastery of learning objectives.
- Uses assessment tools for both formative and summative purposes to inform, guide, and adjust instruction.
- Systematically analyzes and uses data to measure student progress, to design appropriate interventions, and to inform long- and short-term instructional decisions.
- Shares accurate results of student progress with students, parents, and key school personnel.
- Provides constructive and frequent feedback to students on their progress toward their learning goals.

Exemplary *In addition to meeting the requirements for Proficient.*	**Proficient** *Proficient is the expected level of performance.*	**Needs Development**	**Ineffective**
The teacher **continually** demonstrates expertise in using data to measure student progress and leads others in the effective use of data to inform instructional decisions. *(Teachers rated as Exemplary continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)*	The teacher systematically and **consistently** gathers, analyzes, and uses relevant data to measure student progress, to inform instructional content and delivery methods, and to provide timely and constructive feedback to both students and parents.	The teacher **inconsistently** gathers, analyzes, or uses relevant data to measure student progress, inconsistently uses data to inform instructional content and delivery methods, **or** inconsistently provides timely or constructive feedback.	The teacher **does not** gather, analyze, or use relevant data to measure student progress, to inform instructional content and delivery methods, **or** to provide feedback in a constructive or timely manner.

About the Standards

Performance Standard 7: Positive Learning Environment

The teacher provides a well-managed, safe, and orderly environment that is conducive to learning and encourages respect for all.

Sample Performance Indicators

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

The teacher:

- Responds to disruptions in a timely, appropriate manner.
- Establishes clear expectations for classroom rules, routines, and procedures and enforces them consistently and appropriately.
- Models caring, fairness, respect, and enthusiasm for learning.
- Promotes a climate of trust and teamwork within the classroom.
- Promotes respect for and understanding of students' diversity, including – but not limited to – race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or disability.
- Actively listens and pays attention to students' needs and responses.
- Creates a warm, attractive, inviting, and supportive classroom environment.
- Arranges the classroom materials and resources to facilitate group and individual activities.

Exemplary *In addition to meeting the requirements for Proficient.*	**Proficient** *Proficient is the expected level of performance.*	**Needs Development**	**Ineffective**
The teacher **continually** engages students in a collaborative and self-directed learning environment where students are encouraged to take risks and ownership of their own learning behavior. *(Teachers rated as Exemplary continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)*	The teacher **consistently** provides a well-managed, safe, and orderly environment that is conducive to learning and encourages respect for all.	The teacher **inconsistently** provides a well-managed, safe, **and** orderly environment that is conducive to learning and encourages respect for all.	The teacher **inadequately** addresses student behavior, displays a negative attitude toward students, ignores safety standards, **or** does not otherwise provide an orderly environment that is conducive to learning or encourages respect for all.

About the Standards

Performance Standard 8: Academically Challenging Environment

The teacher creates a student-centered, academic environment in which teaching and learning occur at high levels and students are self-directed learners.

Sample Performance Indicators

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

The teacher:

- Maximizes instructional time.
- Conveys the message that mistakes should be embraced as a valuable part of learning.
- Encourages productivity by providing students with appropriately challenging and relevant material and assignments.
- Provides transitions that minimize loss of instructional time.
- Communicates high, but reasonable, expectations for student learning.
- Provides academic rigor, encourages critical and creative thinking, and pushes students to achieve goals.
- Encourages students to explore new ideas and take academic risks.

Exemplary *In addition to meeting the requirements for Proficient.*	**Proficient** *Proficient is the expected level of performance.*	**Needs Development**	**Ineffective**
The teacher **continually** creates an academic learning environment where students are encouraged to set challenging learning goals and tackle challenging materials. *(Teachers rated as Exemplary continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)*	The teacher **consistently** creates a student-centered, academic environment in which teaching and learning occur at high levels and students are self-directed learners.	The teacher **inconsistently** provides a student-centered, academic environment in which teaching and learning occur at high levels **or** where students are self-directed learners.	The teacher **does not** provide a student-centered, academic environment in which teaching and learning occur at high levels, **or** where students are self-directed learners.

About the Standards

Performance Standard 9: Professionalism

The teacher exhibits a commitment to professional ethics and the school's mission, participates in professional growth opportunities to support student learning, and contributes to the profession.

Sample Performance Indicators

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

The teacher:

- Carries out duties in accordance with federal and state laws, Code of Ethics, and established state and local school board policies, regulations, and practices.
- Maintains professional demeanor and behavior (e.g., appearance, punctuality and attendance).
- Respects and maintains confidentiality.
- Evaluates and identifies areas of personal strengths and weaknesses related to professional skills and their impact on student learning and sets goals for improvement.
- Participates in ongoing professional growth activities based on identified areas for improvement (e.g., mentoring, peer coaching, course work, conferences) and incorporates learning into classroom activities.
- Demonstrates flexibility in adapting to school change.
- Engages in activities outside the classroom intended for school and student enhancement.

Exemplary *In addition to meeting the requirements for Proficient.*	**Proficient** *Proficient is the expected level of performance.*	**Needs Development**	**Ineffective**
The teacher **continually** engages in a high level of professional growth and application of skills and contributes to the development of others and the well-being of the school and community. *(Teachers rated as Exemplary continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)*	The teacher **consistently** exhibits a commitment to professional ethics and the school's mission, participates in professional growth opportunities to support student learning, and contributes to the profession.	The teacher **inconsistently** supports the school's mission **or** seldom participates in professional growth opportunities.	The teacher shows a **disregard** toward professional ethics **or** the school's mission **or** rarely takes advantage of professional growth opportunities.

About the Standards

Performance Standard 10: Communication

The teacher communicates effectively with students, parents or guardians, district and school personnel, and other stakeholders in ways that enhance student learning.

Sample Performance Indicators

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

The teacher:

- Uses verbal and non-verbal communication techniques to foster positive interactions and promote learning in the classroom and school environment.
- Engages in ongoing communication and shares instructional goals, expectations, and student progress with families in a timely and constructive manner.
- Collaborates and networks with colleagues and community to reach educational decisions that enhance and promote student learning.
- Uses precise language, correct vocabulary and grammar, and appropriate forms of oral and written communication.
- Adheres to school and district policies regarding communication of student information.
- Creates a climate of accessibility for parents and students by demonstrating a collaborative and approachable style.

Exemplary *In addition to meeting the requirements for Proficient.*	**Proficient** *Proficient is the expected level of performance.*	**Needs Development**	**Ineffective**
The teacher **continually** uses communication techniques in a variety of situations to proactively inform, network, and collaborate with stakeholders to enhance student learning. *(Teachers rated as Exemplary continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)*	The teacher communicates effectively and **consistently** with students, parents or guardians, district and school personnel, and other stakeholders in ways that enhance student learning.	The teacher **inconsistently** communicates with students, parents or guardians, district and school personnel or other stakeholders **or** communicates in ways that only partially enhance student learning.	The teacher **inadequately** communicates with students, parents or guardians, district and school personnel, or other stakeholders by poorly acknowledging concerns, responding to inquiries, or encouraging involvement.

About the Components

The effectiveness system consists of two components:

Part I: Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS)

Observations and documentation of a teacher's practice will inform one summative assessment each year. TAPS provides evaluators with a qualitative, rubrics-based evaluation tool with which to measure teacher performance on 10 performance standards. The primary data source for the standards is teacher observations. During the school year, trained evaluators will conduct a minimum of two formative observations of 30 or more minutes for tenured teachers. In addition, non-tenured teachers and those teachers with identified performance concerns will receive four brief observations (a minimum of 10 minutes each) throughout the school year and the resulting data will be used as an additional data source for the performance standards. A review of existing teacher documentation may be necessary if all of the performance standards are not assessed. The Performance Appraisal Rubric describes acceptable performance levels for each teacher performance standard.

The categories include Exemplary, Proficient-, Needs Development, and Ineffective. **Proficient is the expected level of performance.**

SAMPLE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL RUBRIC			
Exemplary In addition to meeting the requirements for Proficient.	**Proficient** Proficient is the expected level of performance.	**Needs Development**	**Ineffective**
The teacher continually demonstrates extensive content and pedagogical knowledge, enriches the curriculum, and guides others in enriching the curriculum. (Teachers rated as Exemplary continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher	The teacher consistently demonstrates an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, and the needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.	The teacher inconsistently demonstrates understanding of curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, and student needs, or lacks fluidity in using the knowledge in practice.	The teacher inadequately demonstrates understanding of curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge and student needs, or does not use the knowledge in practice.

Prior to the beginning of the annual evaluation cycle, each teacher will have a pre-evaluation conference with an evaluator to review the teacher's self-assessment and set expectations for the school year. The purpose of the mid-year conference is to monitor progress relative to performance goals. The teacher and evaluator review relevant data and modify implementation plans as needed. The annual evaluation conference provides an opportunity to review the TAPS and RBES evaluation results for the school year. This is a time to celebrate accomplishments and plan for the upcoming school year.

"I really liked that the administrator stayed in my classroom for an extended period of time [during the observation] so that he could see not just how I run things but how things develop."

Teacher

Part II: Professional Learning Goal

GTES serves as an evaluation system that is a true coaching tool. Gwinnett's Results-Based Evaluation System (RBES) shall be the tool in which the **Professional Learning Goal** will be paired with the **Student Achievement Goal** in order to paint a more complete picture of how these two go together. The professional learning goal makes GTES a better tool for teachers because it gives credit for meeting important professional development goals that ultimately help students in the classroom. These goals are reflective of the Professional Learning Goals as defined by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC). For additional information concerning GaPSC recertification requirements, see GaPSC adopted rule 505-2-.36.

- **Student Achievement Goals** are aligned with the school's Local School Plan for Improvement (LSPI). These goals are based upon student achievement needs and are approved by administrators. Accompanying each goal is an implementation plan that describes the steps a teacher plans to take throughout the year that will support the Student Achievement Goal.
- **Professional Learning Goals (PLGs)** are created by teachers and should be based upon a variety of data including GTES self-assessment, previous performance evaluations, student learning data, and school improvement goals. Teachers' PLGs should reflect their individual learning needs and are approved by their administrators. These goals should align with Student Achievement Goals established by the teacher. Each goal includes an implementation plan which outlines the professional learning the teacher will actively participate in for professional growth and the steps the teacher will take to transfer the learning to classroom practice. While teachers are not required to fully meet their professional goals, they are expected to make progress toward meeting their goals.

Overall performance is rated using the following categories:

Exemplary, Proficient, Needs Development, and Ineffective

1. Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS)

The TAPS component of GTES provides evaluators with a qualitative, rubrics-based evaluation method by which they can measure teacher performance related to ten quality performance standards that are scored from 0 to 3 (sum score can range from 0–30).

Final Ratings	TAPS Summative
Ineffective	0–6
Needs Development	7–16
Proficient	17–26
Exemplary	27–30

2. Professional Learning Goal

Gwinnett's Results-Based Evaluation System (RBES) is the tool in which the Professional Learning Goal will be housed. The teacher will share how these goals have supported Student Achievement Goals during the Summative Conference. While teachers are not required to fully meet their professional goals, they are expected to make progress toward meeting their goals.

Glossary– Acronyms and terms you need to know

Conferencing: Discussions between the teacher and evaluator(s) that take place throughout the school year. A pre-evaluation conference, mid-year conference, and annual conference are required in the Teacher Effectiveness System process, but additional conferences may occur as needed.

Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System (GTES): GCPS' method of evaluating teacher of record performance, based on multiple components that provide data and feedback from different sources and perspectives. The Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System is consistent with the state's Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) model, but with minor procedural differences.

Key Domains: A realm of knowledge or responsibility. A strategy for grouping the content of a particular field of knowledge. The 10 standards are grouped under five domains.

"I feel with the system we as teachers will grow and become better teachers. Just as we want our students to grow and learn, we should too."

Teacher

Observation: An in-classroom review of a teacher's performance. Trained evaluators will conduct a minimum of two formative observations annually. These observations are at least 30 minutes in length and will inform the teacher's performance on the 10 performance standards. Four brief observations (a minimum of 10 minutes each) also will occur throughout the school year and the resulting data will be used as an additional data source for the performance standards.

Performance Appraisal Rubric: A behavioral summary scale that describes acceptable performance levels for each teacher performance standard. The categories include Exemplary- Level 4, Proficient- Level 3, Needs Development- Level 2, and Ineffective- Level 1. *Proficient- Level 3 is the expected level of performance.*

Performance Indicator: Examples of observable, tangible behaviors for each standard. Examples of the types of performance that will occur if a standard is being successfully met. Listings are neither exhaustive nor intended to be prescriptive.

Performance Standard: Qualitative, rubrics-based performance standards. Also known as Teacher Performance Standards. These standards are supported by extensive research and are proven to help increase student achievement.

Professional Learning Goal: A goal-setting process that focuses on teacher professional growth and includes a student achievement component to measure progress toward goal attainment as written in each teacher's RBES plan. Professional Growth shall be measured by progress toward or attainment of Professional Learning Goals as written in each staff member's Results-Based Evaluation System (RBES) plan.

RBES: The Results-Based Evaluation System, a tool for student achievement goal-setting, evaluation, and instructional planning in Gwinnett. GCPS teachers continue to use this process with the Teacher Effectiveness System.

Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS): The qualitative, observation component of the Teacher Effectiveness System. Evaluators assess each teacher's performance, using multiple data sources, on the 10 performance standards. Ratings— Exemplary- Level 4, Proficient- Level 3, Needs Development- Level 2, and Ineffective- Level 1— are given on each standard.

Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES): Georgia's teacher evaluation system developed through Race to the Top.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who developed the evaluation system?

The evaluation system was developed by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA), and the 26 Race to the Top (RT3) partner school districts, including Gwinnett County Public Schools. Race to the Top was a school improvement program administered by the GaDOE and funded by competitive grants from the U.S. DOE. The evaluation system was one component of RT3. Dr. James Stronge of the College of William and Mary guided much of the work around the teacher performance standards.

How will the system affect my work in the classroom?

The Teacher Effectiveness System is designed to help identify teachers' strengths and areas for growth. Once these areas are identified, teachers are provided with specific professional development individualized to support professional growth as needed.

How does the evaluation process work?

Observations:

- Observations are the basis of ratings on 10 research-based performance standards.
- Observations generate specific feedback to help teachers improve classroom effectiveness.
- Teachers also complete a self-assessment.
- Teachers are observed under one of two plans:
  - **Full Evaluation Plan—** Non-tenured teachers and those teachers who have been identified as having performance concerns have two formative observations (30 minutes each) during the school year as well as a minimum of four additional brief observations (a minimum of 10 minutes each).
  - **Modified Evaluation Plan—** All other teachers have two formative observations (at least 30 minutes each) during the school year.

What is an observation like?

Trained evaluators observe instruction and provide feedback regarding the 10 performance standards. Evaluators formally observe teachers at least twice annually for 30 minutes each observation. Teachers receive specific feedback on each observed performance standard. Evaluators may ask teachers to provide existing documentation as evidence of standards not observed in the classroom.

What kind of documentation is used for TAPS?

If any of the 10 standards were not observed during the formative assessment, the teacher is responsible for submitting requested documentation to the evaluator that provides evidence of the teacher's level of performance on the standard.

"The effectiveness system allows administrators to give more specific feedback to the teachers about the instruction in the classroom. The standards are an excellent guide and when you conference with the teachers, there is a common vocabulary and rubric. The conference part is the most valuable piece of the system. The administrator can give specific praise to a teacher and give suggestions for improvement in a one-to-one conversation."

Principal

GwinnettTeacher Effectiveness System:

Professional Development and Evaluation Tool

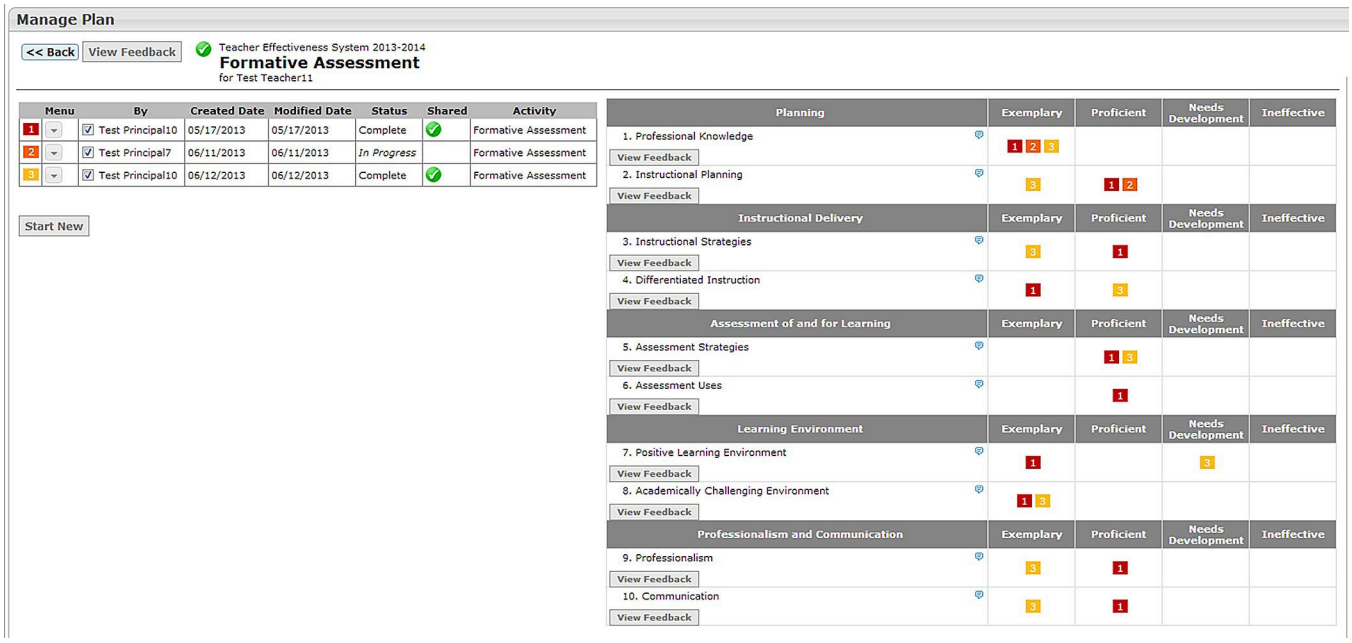
The *e*CLASS Professional Development & Evaluation (PD&E) application aligns employee evaluation with professional development initiatives.

Click on this icon in the employee portal

PD&E

- Users can search for learning opportunities aligned with the teacher or leader effectiveness standards.
- Evaluators are able to view the professional learning transcript of their employees and conduct classroom observations either online or offline.
- In the PD&E system, all forms of professional learning are captured on an employee's transcript, including the Staff Development Log, courses, and self-paced online practice.
- The application allows users 24/7 online access and eliminates the need for manual or paper processing.
- Employees can easily search for learning opportunities that are specific to their school or have been recommended based on their roles.
- District leaders also can use the application to tailor specific announcements to different user groups to ensure any communication is meaningful for the recipients and reduce mass e-mails.
- Lastly, the applications reporting features inform decision making at both the school and district levels.

The summary page shows ratings and qualitative feedback on each of the performance standards. Teachers can see their evaluator's name and the dates items were completed. They can review the ratings received on various standards. In addition, a teacher can view his or her identified strengths along with comments about areas for growth.



Manage Plan

<< Back | View Feedback

Teacher Effectiveness System 2013-2014
Formative Assessment
for Test Teacher11

Menu	By	Created Date	Modified Date	Status	Shared	Activity
1	Test Principal10	05/17/2013	05/17/2013	Complete	✓	Formative Assessment
2	Test Principal7	06/11/2013	06/11/2013	*In Progress*		Formative Assessment
3	Test Principal10	06/12/2013	06/12/2013	Complete	✓	Formative Assessment

Start New

Planning	Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Development	Ineffective
1. Professional Knowledge (View Feedback)	1 2 3			
2. Instructional Planning (View Feedback)	3	1 2		
Instructional Delivery	**Exemplary**	**Proficient**	**Needs Development**	**Ineffective**
3. Instructional Strategies (View Feedback)	3	1		
4. Differentiated Instruction (View Feedback)	1	3		
Assessment of and for Learning	**Exemplary**	**Proficient**	**Needs Development**	**Ineffective**
5. Assessment Strategies (View Feedback)		1 3		
6. Assessment Uses (View Feedback)		1		
Learning Environment	**Exemplary**	**Proficient**	**Needs Development**	**Ineffective**
7. Positive Learning Environment (View Feedback)	1		3	
8. Academically Challenging Environment (View Feedback)	1 3			
Professionalism and Communication	**Exemplary**	**Proficient**	**Needs Development**	**Ineffective**
9. Professionalism (View Feedback)	3	1		
10. Communication (View Feedback)	3	1		

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GWINNETT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS