

Georgia's Teacher Keys Effectiveness System

Meaningful Feedback – Professional Growth – Flexibility to Innovate

2026 - 2027 Implementation Handbook



Acknowledgments

The Georgia Department of Education's (GaDOE) Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) Handbook was developed with the thoughtful contributions of the Georgia State Evaluation Steering Committees, each of which focused on one component of the evaluation system. We wish to express our appreciation for their conscientious and insightful efforts.

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Teacher Keys Effectiveness System Usage Statement

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Every child in every community deserves excellent, effective classroom teachers. That is why Georgia developed the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) to provide teachers with more meaningful feedback and support so they can achieve the goal of increasing academic learning and achievement for all students. We believe students have the greatest chance to succeed when teachers receive support to continuously improve their knowledge and skills.

Ongoing feedback and targeted professional development help teachers meet the changing needs of their students. We believe TKES provides teachers with meaningful information about how their practice and performance impact student learning. TKES acknowledges the central role of teachers and provides the opportunity to refine their practice to continually and effectively meet the needs of all students.

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Components of the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES)

The Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) is comprised of three components which contribute to an overall Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM): Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS), Student Growth, and Professional Growth.

Annual Evaluation Notification

Official Code of Georgia 20-2-210 requires that in advance of each school year, every LEA provides written notice to all teachers of record of the evaluation measures and any specific indicators that will be used for evaluation purposes. To comply with this, it is suggested that LEAs address this in the contract or an attached document disseminated with the contract. The suggested language follows:

Your annual evaluation for next year will be based on the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System in accordance with Official Code of Georgia 20-2-210, all applicable rules of the State Board of Education, and the Implementation Handbook for TKES.

Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS)

- TAPS provide evaluators with a qualitative, rubrics-based evaluation method by which they can measure teacher performance related to quality Performance Standards.
- All ten Performance Standards shall be rated on two Formative Assessments with the Full Formative Process.
- All ten Performance Standards must be rated across the combination of observations with the Flexible Process.
- Observations by a credentialed evaluator shall inform the Summative Performance Evaluation each year.
- All ten Performance Standards shall be rated on the Summative Performance Evaluation.

Student Growth

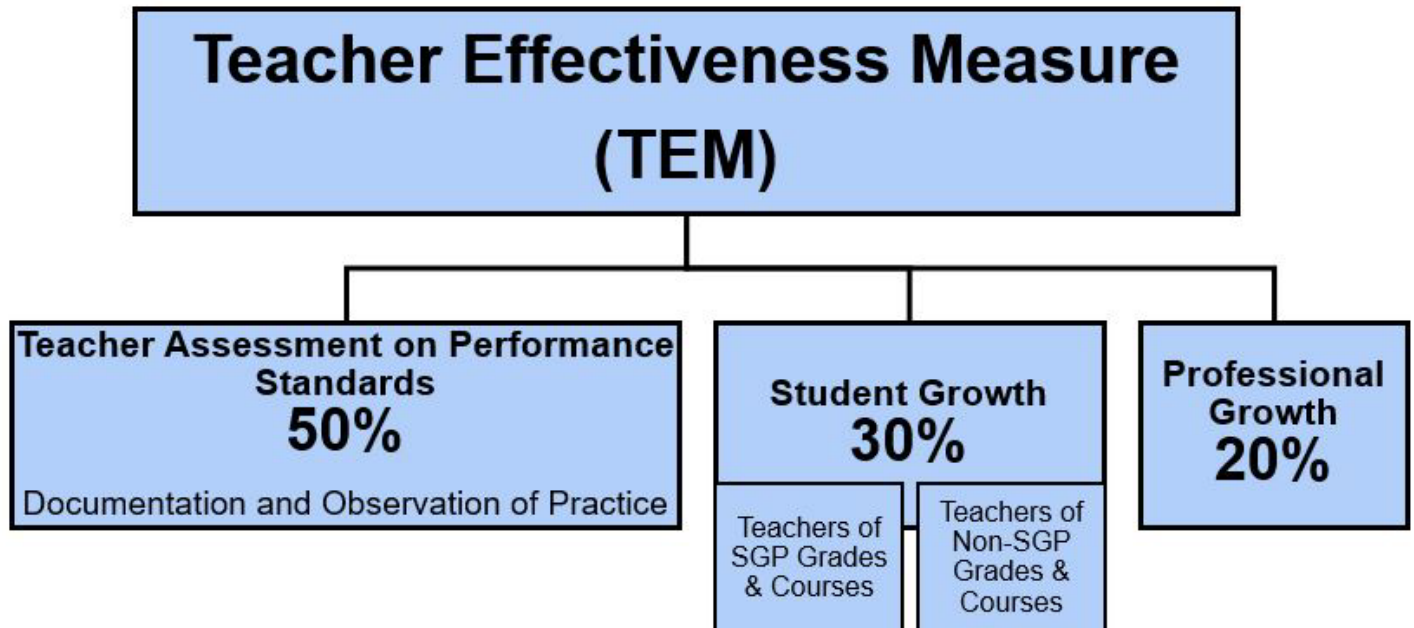
- **Student Growth Percentile Measures:** For teachers of SGP grades and courses, this component is comprised of a Student Growth Percentile which shall be calculated annually for student growth based on state assessment data.
- **LEA Determined Measures:** For teachers of non-SGP grades and courses, this component is comprised of LEA determined measures which may be a pre- to post- measure, the School or District Mean Growth Percentile, or another measure identified/developed and implemented by the LEA which measures student growth.
- **Student Growth** data shall be a lagging measure; when available, the prior year's growth measures will inform the current annual Summative Performance Evaluation.

Professional Growth

- Professional Growth may be measured by progress toward or attainment of Professional Growth Goal(s) or Professional Growth Plan(s). These goal(s) or plan(s) may or may not be reflective of the Professional Learning Goal(s) or Professional Learning Plan(s) as defined by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC).

The Teacher Keys Effectiveness System is depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Teacher Keys Effectiveness System



Part I: Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS) – 50%

The Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS) was included in TKES to provide a fair and comprehensive evaluation system that provides sufficient detail and accuracy so both teachers and evaluators fully understand their job expectations. Clearly defined professional responsibilities for teachers constitute the foundation for TAPS. Evaluators should be appropriately trained and credentialed.

TAPS define the expectations for teacher performance consisting of 5 domains and 10 Performance Standards (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Essential Parts of the Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS)

Domain			
Instructional Delivery			
Performance Standard			
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			
Level IV	Level III	Level II	Level I
In addition to meeting Level III requirements	is the expected level of performance.		
The teacher continually facilitates students' engagement in metacognitive learning, higher-order thinking skills, and application of learning in current and relevant ways. (Teachers rated at Level IV 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.
Performance Appraisal Rubric			

Domains and Performance Standards

Performance Standards refer to the major duties performed by a teacher. There are ten Performance Standards that serve as the basis for the evaluation. Figure 3 shows the five domains and the associated standards that comprise the TAPS components of TKES. Evaluators should always refer to the Performance Standards when rating a teacher.

Figure 3: TAPS Performance Standards

Planning
Professional Knowledge The teacher demonstrates an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, and the needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.
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.
Instructional Delivery
Instructional Strategies The teacher promotes student learning by using research-based instructional strategies relevant to the content area to engage students in active learning and to facilitate the students' acquisition of key knowledge and skills.
Differentiated Instruction The teacher challenges and supports each student's learning by providing appropriate content and developing skills which address individual learning differences.
Assessment of and for Learning
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.
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.
Learning Environment
Positive Learning Environment The teacher provides a well-managed, safe, and orderly environment that is conducive to learning and encourages respect for all.
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.
Professionalism and Communication
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.
Communication The teacher communicates effectively with students, parents or guardians, district and school personnel, and other stakeholders in ways that enhance student learning.

Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators provide examples of observable behaviors for each standard. The Performance Indicators are examples of the types of performance that will occur if a standard is successfully met. While it is likely the evaluator will observe many of the indicators during an observation, the list of Performance Indicators is not exhaustive. The evaluator may also observe many appropriate Performance Indicators that are not listed. Performance Standards and Performance Indicators can be found in the Appendix.

Performance Appraisal Rubrics

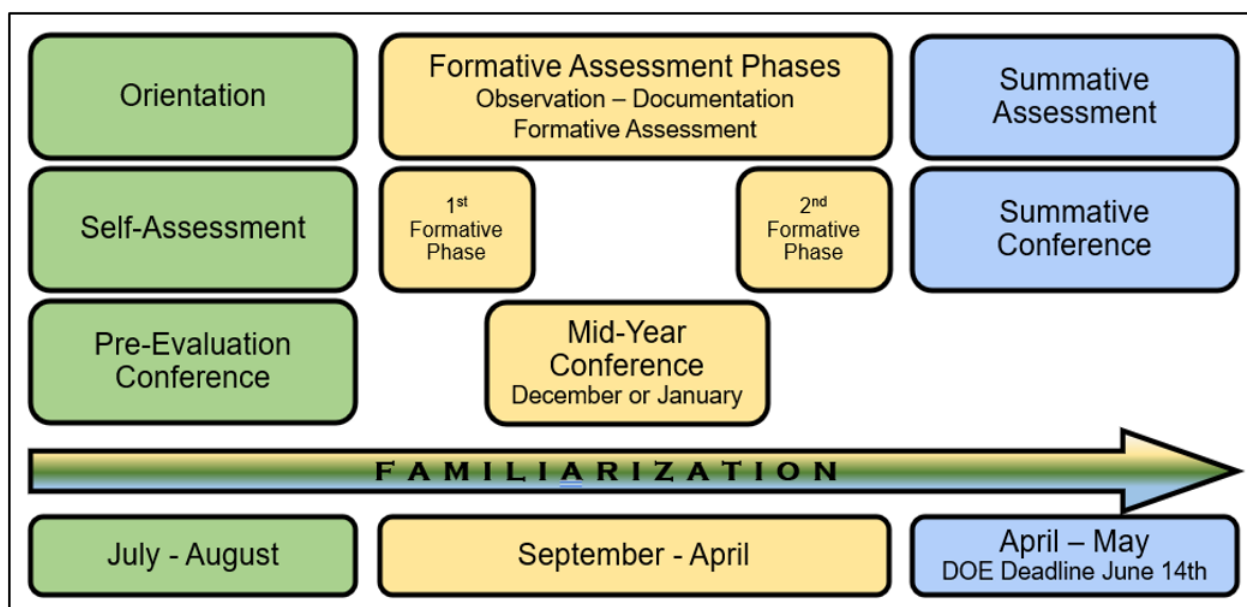
Teachers shall be rated using the Performance Appraisal Rubrics. The Performance Appraisal Rubric is a behavioral summary scale that guides evaluators in assessing *how well* a standard is performed. It states the measure of performance expected of teachers and provides a qualitative description of performance at each level. The resulting Performance Appraisal Rubric provides a clearly delineated stepwise progression, moving from highest to lowest levels of performance.

Each level is intended to be qualitatively superior to all lower levels. The description provided for Level III of the Performance Appraisal Rubric is the actual performance standard; thus, Level III is the expected level of performance. Teachers who earn a Level IV rating must meet the requirements for Level III and Level IV. The Appendix includes Performance Appraisal Rubrics related to each Performance Standard.

TAPS Process

A recommended process by which LEAs shall implement the TAPS portion of the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System is depicted in Figure 4. This chart provides guidance for the TAPS process, but LEAs should consider developing internal timelines for completion of steps.

Figure 4: Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards Process



Step 1: Orientation

To ensure both teachers and evaluators have a clear understanding of expectations, building administrators shall annually conduct an Orientation prior to observations. This orientation should be scheduled as soon as possible once school begins or within the first month of hiring a new teacher. Resources are available in the TKES/LKES Platform. After the Orientation is completed, teacher sign-off is required in the TKES/LKES Platform or a GaDOE-approved data system.

Step 2: Familiarization

Once teachers have completed the TKES Orientation, it is important they be provided with opportunities to become more familiar with the TAPS Standards and the TKES process. Familiarization is not intended to be a single event. Ongoing familiarization dialogue and professional learning opportunities will increase understanding. Professional learning modules are located in the TKES/LKES Platform.

Step 3: Self-Assessment

Reflecting on professional practice is an important step in the TAPS process. Teachers will complete a Self-Assessment prior to the Pre-Evaluation Conference. The ten Performance Standards will be used to determine professional strengths and areas for growth. The Self-Assessment, in the TKES/LKES Platform, will be available to the teacher and the school evaluator for review and professional growth planning. This information should be used to inform Professional Growth Goal(s) or Professional Growth Plan(s).

Step 4: Pre-Evaluation Conference

Evaluators shall conduct a Pre-Evaluation Conference for all TKES evaluated teachers. This conference follows Orientation and Self-Assessment. The conference shall be used to inform the teacher of his or her expectations and to finalize the Professional Growth Goal(s) or Professional Growth Plan(s). The Performance Standards and Performance Appraisal Rubrics shall be included in the Pre-Evaluation Conference discussion. Professional learning opportunities which align to the teacher's needs should also be addressed during the conference.

The Pre-Evaluation Conference may be held individually or in small groups and must occur before any observations begin. The conference shall be recorded in the TKES/LKES Platform or a GaDOE-approved data system.

Types of Implementations

O.C.G.A. §20-2-210 allows districts to implement a process that reduces the number of observations. Highly effective teachers are eligible to receive fewer observations, while teachers that are part of the six groups listed below will receive the standard six classroom observations.

Step 5a: Full Formative Assessment Process

Appropriately trained and credentialed evaluators shall conduct six classroom observations. The full Formative Assessment Process shall be completed with the following groups of educators:

- Induction (three or fewer years of teaching experience),
- Teaching out-of-field,
- New position (change in field certification),
- Out of the profession for longer than one year,
- Moving into the state, and
- Evaluation performance of Needs Development or Ineffective.

Observations

The identified categories of educators shall receive full implementation including four classroom Walkthrough Observations and two Formative Observations/Assessments. The Formative Assessment Process includes the Formative Observation. All ten Performance Standards must be rated on the Formative Assessment. Observations may be announced or unannounced. It is strongly recommended that all observations include commentary on all the rated standards. Walkthrough Observations should be at least ten minutes based on a limited number of Performance Standards and shall inform the Formative Assessment. Formative Observations should be at least thirty minutes and are based on all ten Performance Standards. Additional observations may be conducted at the building administrator's discretion.

Step 5b: Flexible Process

Appropriately trained and credentialed evaluators shall conduct classroom observations. The Flexible Process shall consist of a minimum of two classroom observations per teacher. The differentiated implementation requirements are based on years of experience, previous year's annual Summative Evaluation ratings, and specific categories of educators as defined by the GaPSC.

The Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS) focuses on two data sources, **observations** and **documentation**. The totality of evidence and consistency of practice will be considered when an evaluator rates a teacher on all ten Performance Standards.

Observations

All teachers with more than three years of experience and who have received a Level III (Proficient) or Level IV (Exemplary) rating on the previous year's annual Summative Evaluation must receive a minimum of two classroom observations (Walkthroughs and/or Formative Observations/Assessments) as determined by the LEA. It is recommended that a minimum of one Walkthrough and one Formative Observation/Assessment is completed as the required observations per teacher. The Formative Assessment Process includes the Formative Observation. All ten Performance Standards shall be rated in the Formative Assessment Process. Walkthrough Observations shall be at least ten minutes and Formative Observations shall be at least thirty minutes. If a Walkthrough Observation and a Formative Observation/Assessment are selected as the two observations, the Walkthrough Observation shall inform the Formative Assessment. If Walkthrough Observations are selected as the two observations, all ten Performance Standards must be rated across the combination of both observations.

Documentation

Documentation of teacher practice and process shall be the second data source for TAPS. The primary source of information for teacher evaluation should be observation. The request for documentation is at the discretion of the evaluator. Evaluators **may** request documentation from a teacher when a standard is not observed during a Formative Observation(s), Walkthrough(s) or when the consistency of a teacher's practice cannot be established. The teacher is responsible for submitting requested documentation in a timely manner. For it to be considered, requested documentation must be submitted prior to the completion of the Formative Assessment and/or Summative Assessment.

Additionally, teachers **may** elect to submit documentation at any time during the evaluation process for consideration by the evaluator. However, an evaluator is not required to consider the submitted documents when finalizing ratings. Documentation should be submitted for review in the TKES/LKES Platform or GaDOE-approved data system. **Note: No documentation should be created specifically for the evaluation system. Rather, it should reflect normal instructional practices.**

Full Formative Assessment Process and Flexible Process

Performance Appraisal Rubrics are behavioral summary scales that describe performance levels for each Performance Standard. Ratings of Level IV, Level III, Level II, or Level I shall be provided for each of the ten Performance Standards on each Formative Assessment. If sufficient evidence is not present to rate a teacher's performance on any of the ten Performance Standards, evaluators may request additional documentation relevant to the identified standard(s). In addition, knowledge gained through professional interaction with teachers may also be considered as evidence to rate any of the ten Performance Standards. This knowledge should be documented in commentary for the appropriate standard(s).

It is strongly recommended that evaluators provide specific commentary to acknowledge performance strengths as well as Level II or Level I ratings for any of the ten Performance Standards. Commentary should include specific feedback which will promote professional growth.

A teacher's classroom observation shall be shared within ten working days from the date of each observation. The results of each observation shall be recorded in the TKES/LKES Platform or GaDOE-approved data system.

Step 6: Mid-Year Conference

The Mid-Year Conference shall be used to inform the teacher of his or her progress on the TKES components. The conference will focus on Student Growth data, the ten Performance Standards, and Professional Growth. Teachers will sign off on the Teacher's Assurances during the Mid-Year Conference.

The Mid-Year Conference may be held individually or in small groups when appropriate. It shall be recorded electronically via the GaDOE TKES/LKES Electronic Platform or a GaDOE-approved data system.

Step 7: Summative Assessment

The Summative Assessment shall be based on observational data and documentation.

Summative Assessment Process

A Summative Evaluation shall be completed for each teacher which establishes a final rating on all ten Performance Standards. These ratings should consider ALL available data sources.

Ratings of Level IV, Level III, Level II, or Level I shall be provided for each of the ten Performance Standards using the Performance Appraisal Rubrics. The evaluator will rate each of the ten Performance Standards based on the **totality of evidence and consistency of practice**.

Evaluators shall document the Summative Assessment Evaluation using the TKES/LKES Platform or another GaDOE-approved data system.

Figure 5: TAPS Summative Cut Scores

Level I ratings = 0 Level II ratings = 1 Level III ratings = 2 Level IV ratings = 3

Final Ratings	TAPS Summative Cut Scores
Level I	0 - 6
Level II	7 – 16
Level III	17 – 26
Level IV	27 - 30

Step 8: Summative Conference

The Summative Conference shall be used to inform the teacher of his or her Summative Assessment Evaluation results. Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards and student data trends will be included in the Summative Conference discussion. Professional Growth Goal(s) and/or Professional Growth Plan(s) should also be addressed during the conference.

Evaluators should utilize evaluation results to provide high-quality, job-embedded, and ongoing mentoring, support, and professional development for teachers as identified in his or her evaluation.

A Remediation Plan is required if a teacher earns a Level I or Level II on the TAPS Summative Assessment rating.

The Summative Conference will be held individually with each teacher so specific feedback can be provided during the conference. The conference notes should be recorded in the TKES/LKES Platform or a GaDOE-approved data system.

Part II: Student Growth – 30%

Student Growth is comprised of Student Growth Percentiles (SGP) for teachers of SGP grades and courses and LEA Determined Measure(s) for teachers of non-SGP grades and courses. **Note: A minimum of one growth measure per teacher is required.**

Student Growth Percentile: For teachers of SGP grades and courses, this component is comprised of a Student Growth Percentile which shall be calculated annually by GaDOE for student growth based on state assessment data.

LEA Determined Measure(s): For teachers of non-SGP grades and courses, this component is comprised of LEA Determined Measure(s) which may be Pre- and Post- Assessments, the School or District Mean Growth Percentile, or another measure identified/developed and implemented by the LEA.

Teachers of SGP Grades and Courses

Student Growth Percentiles (SGP)

Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs) shall be used as the student growth component of the Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM) for teachers of SGP grades and courses. Annual calculations of student growth for SGP grades and courses are based on state assessment data (Georgia Milestones). The following courses will result in growth percentiles. All other courses are considered non-SGP courses.

- **Elementary Grades and Courses**
 - Grades 4 & 5: English Language Arts & Mathematics
- **Middle School Grades and Courses**
 - Grades 6, 7, & 8: English Language Arts and Mathematics
- **High School Mathematics**
 - Algebra: Concepts and Connections
 - Enhanced Algebra: Concepts and Connections
- **High School English Language Arts**
 - Literature and Composition II

SGPs describe a student's growth relative to academically similar students with similar prior achievement on state tests. A growth percentile can range from 1 to 99. All students of all prior achievement levels have the opportunity to demonstrate all levels of growth. For more information, please visit gadoe.org.

The growth model uses two years of prior test data as pretest scores (one year is used when multiple years are not available). For example, growth percentiles for 5th grade students on the 5th grade state assessment are generated using 3rd and 4th grade state assessment results as priors. At least one prior test score is necessary to model growth. Therefore, students in grades 4-8 and in EOC courses can receive growth scores. Students in 3rd grade will not have a prior year state assessment score to determine a growth percentile.

Students shall attend 90% of the instructional length of the course in order for the student's data to be included in the growth score for evaluation.

As a reminder, the application of the teacher 90% attendance rule is at the discretion of the LEA. If an LEA chooses NOT to apply the 90% attendance rule, check A (ALL) in the LEA's Student Information System. SGPs will be attached to all teachers.

SGPs capture the progress students make throughout the course of an academic year and provide Georgia with a comprehensive indicator system that can be used at multiple levels (class, school, system, and state).

To be eligible to receive a Student Growth Percentile (SGP) measure, a teacher must be accurately coded in the Certified Personnel Information (CPI) system as serving 100% of their time at a single school during the applicable evaluation period. Teachers who are split between multiple schools or who are not coded at 100% at one school in CPI will not receive an SGP measure, even if they teach SGP-eligible grades or courses. CPI data is used to determine school assignment and to ensure that student growth measures are attributed accurately and fairly.

Teachers of Non-SGP Grades and Courses

LEA Determined Measures

For teachers of non-SGP grades and courses, this component is comprised of:

- 1) a measure identified or developed and implemented by the LEA (e.g., pre- to post- measure),
- 2) the School Mean Growth Percentile, or
- 3) the District Mean Growth Percentile.

Note: A minimum of one growth measure per teacher is required. These measures do not have to be administered to students district wide.

OPTION 1: Measure identified or developed and implemented by LEA (e.g., Pre- to Post-Measure)

LEAs may utilize additional measures to demonstrate student growth. These may include locally developed pre- to post- measures, commercial products, formative assessments, computer adaptive assessments, portfolios, project-based assessments, final examinations, etc. The primary purpose is to improve student learning at the classroom level. An equally important purpose is to provide evidence of each teacher's instructional impact on student learning. The measures should be course specific, include measurable grade level learning objectives, focus on student growth, and align to curriculum standards.

Note: Any measure used in teacher evaluation should provide pre- and post-data that can be used to establish targets and determine growth. LEAs must determine the criteria for rating this component.

*To assist LEAs in determining criteria for the purpose of rating Option 1, please see the sample *rubric on the next page. The LEA determines the student growth target and expected growth for the rubric. In the sample rubric, the expected growth target is 50%.*

**Use of this rubric is OPTIONAL, and the development is meant only as a support.*

Figure 6: TKES Non-SGP Student Growth Rubric for Option 1

Level IV	Level III	Level II	Level I
<i>90%+ of students demonstrate expected growth of 50%</i>	<i>66% – 89% of students demonstrate expected growth of 50%</i>	<i>50% – 65% of students demonstrate expected growth of 50%</i>	<i>Below 50% of students demonstrate expected growth of 50%</i>

OPTIONS 2 & 3: School or District Mean Growth Percentile

SGPs describe a student's growth relative to academically similar students with similar prior achievement on state tests. A growth percentile can range from 1 to 99. From the 1st to the 99th percentile, growth is possible for all students regardless of previous achievement scores. Annual calculations of student growth for SGP grades and courses are based on state assessment data (Georgia Milestones EOGs in grades 4-8 ELA/Reading and Mathematics and EOCs in ELA and Mathematics).

SGPs can be compared across grade levels and across subject areas, meaning summary measures also can be aggregated across grade levels and content areas and describe growth in terms of how a student performed in the current year relative to other students who have a similar academic history.

SGPs capture the progress students make throughout the course of an academic year and provide a comprehensive indicator system that can be used at multiple levels (class, school, and district).

- **Option 2:** The grand mean of SGP performance for all SGP grades and courses taught in the school will constitute the School Mean Growth Percentile.
- **Option 3:** The grand mean of SGP performance for all SGP grades and courses taught in the district will constitute the District Mean Growth Percentile.

Figure 7: SGP Grades and Courses/Non-SGP Grades and Courses

SGP Grades and Courses	Non-SGP Grades and Courses
GaDOE will collect data through the Division of Assessment and Accountability to be utilized by Educator Support and Development.	Districts will internally collect and use data to determine teacher ratings on Student Growth.

Part III: Professional Growth – 20%

Professional Growth shall be measured by progress toward or attainment of Professional Growth Goal(s) or Professional Growth Plan(s). These goals or plans may or may not be reflective of the Professional Learning Goals or Professional Learning Plans as defined by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC). For additional information concerning GaPSC recertification requirements, contact the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (gapsc.com).

LEAs must determine the criteria for rating this component. **It is highly recommended this component mirrors the expectation of the GaPSC recertification requirements.** Professional Growth Goal(s) or Plan(s) may extend beyond a single school year. This component should be rated based on progress toward or attainment of the goal(s) and/or completion of the plan(s).

Professional Growth Goal(s) and Professional Growth Plan(s) may address the following:

- Weaknesses identified through the TAPS process,
- Teacher's individual professional goals,
- School Improvement Goals,
- District Improvement Goals, or
- Any other district or school identified need.

To assist LEAs in determining criteria for the purpose of rating this component, please see the sample *rubric below.

**Use of this rubric is OPTIONAL, and the development is meant only as a support.*

Figure 8: TKES Professional Growth Rubric

Level IV	Level III	Level II	Level I
The teacher leader continually applies the knowledge and/or skills in classroom practice and provides evidence that the professional growth experience has been extended to lead others in acquisition and application of the knowledge and skills.	The teacher provides evidence that classroom practice has been changed. The knowledge and/or skills is (are) applied in the classroom on a consistent basis.	The teacher provides evidence of use of knowledge and/or skills acquired through the professional growth activity in classroom practice.	The teacher participates in a professional growth activity. Sign-in sheets verify attendance.

Part IV: Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM)

The Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM) is the annual evaluation which consists of three components: (1) Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS), (2) Professional Growth, and (3) Student Growth. These three components contribute to the overall TEM for each teacher. Teachers of record shall receive a TEM based on ratings from all three components of the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES). The weights of each component are as follows:

- TAPS – 50%
- Professional Growth – 20%
- Student Growth – 30%

Teachers will receive an overall rating of Exemplary, Proficient, Needs Development, or Ineffective on the TEM. The TEM for a teacher of record will be determined by multiplying the rating level of each component by the respective weight; this result will be compared to the rubric below. Standard rounding rules will be used where applicable. See Figures 8 and 9 for the TEM Rating Rubric and an example of how a teacher's TEM would be calculated.

Figure 9: TEM Determination Example

TAPS Rating	Level IV	Professional Growth Rating	Level III	Student Growth Rating	Level II
TAPS Weight	50%	Professional Growth Weight	20%	Student Growth Weight	30%
Calculations	4 x 0.5	Calculations	3 x .02	Calculations	2 x 0.3
Results	2.0	Results	0.6	Results	0.6

Sum of Component Parts 2.0 + 0.6 + 0.6

TEM Determination	3.2	Proficient
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Figure 10: TEM Rating Rubric

TEM Rating	Sum of Component Parts
Exemplary	≥ 3.5
Proficient	≥ 2.5 and < 3.5
Needs Development	≥ 1.5 and < 2.5
Ineffective	< 1.5

Components of the TEM

TAPS (50%): The TAPS component of TKES 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).

Figure 11: TAPS Summative Cut Scores

Level I ratings = 0	Level II ratings = 1	Level III ratings = 2	Level IV ratings = 3
Final Ratings		TAPS Summative Cut Scores	
Level I		0 - 6	
Level II		7 – 16	
Level III		17 – 26	
Level IV		27 - 30	

Student Growth (30%): The Student Growth component of the TKES shall be a lagging measure; when available, the prior year's growth measures will inform the current Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM).

Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs) – Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs) shall be used as the student growth component of the Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM) for teachers of SGP grades and courses. Annual calculations of student growth for SGP grades and courses are based on state assessment data (Georgia Milestones EOGs in grades 4-8 ELA/Reading and Mathematics and EOCs in ELA and Mathematics). The grand mean of SGP performance for SGP grades and courses taught in the school will be used in calculating the TEM.

Figure 12: Student Growth Percentile Levels (Individual Teacher Level)

MeanGP Growth Rating Levels	MeanGP Score Range
Level I	MeanGP < 30
Level II	MeanGP ≥ 30 and ≤ 40
Level III	MeanGP > 40 and ≤ 65
Level IV	MeanGP > 65

LEA Determined Measures-The measure of student growth for non-SGP grades and courses. If the LEA decides to utilize the School or District SGP results as student growth for teachers of non-SGP grades and courses, the Student Growth Percentile Levels (District and School Level) will be used.

Figure 13: Student Growth Percentile Levels (District and School Level)

MeanGP Growth Rating Levels	MeanGP Score Range
Level I	MeanGP < 35
Level II	MeanGP ≥ 35 and ≤ 45
Level III	MeanGP > 45 and ≤ 60
Level IV	MeanGP > 60

Professional Growth (20%): The Professional Growth component of TKES shall be measured by progress toward or attainment of Professional Growth Goal(s) or Professional Growth Plan(s) as determined by the results of the Self-Assessment, Pre-Evaluation Conference, Mid-year Evaluation Conference, and the Summative Conference. LEAs must determine the criteria for rating this component utilizing a rubric that reflects Levels I, II, III, and IV.

TEM Considerations

- Teachers are permitted to use the school district's local complaint process to file grievances related to procedural deficiencies on the part of the local school system or charter school in conducting TKES evaluations. A teacher's performance rating(s), Professional Growth Goal(s) and/or Professional Growth Plan(s), and job performance cannot be disputed through the complaint process.
- Districts must determine the definition of extended leave as it applies to the use of Student Growth data in a TEM (Annual Evaluation). Teachers must be notified of these criteria no later than the last day of the first school month.
- When Student Growth data is not available, the TAPS rating will inform the Summative Performance Evaluation rating and will constitute the annual evaluation, and the teacher will not receive a TEM.
- Teachers who are contracted as 49% employees and teachers who are employed for 90 days or less will receive an adjusted TAPS process consisting of, at a minimum, one observation (Walkthrough or Formative Assessment/Observation), a Summative Assessment Evaluation, and applicable conferences. If Student Growth data are available, a TEM (Annual Evaluation) will be generated.
- In addition, teachers who are contracted as 49% employees and teachers who are employed for 90 days or less, the Orientation and Self-Assessment steps must be conducted within the first month of hiring. Familiarization should follow the Orientation, providing teachers with opportunities to become more familiar with the TKES process. Evaluators shall conduct a Pre-Evaluation Conference following Orientation and Self-Assessment. The Pre-Evaluation Conference must occur before any observations begin. All steps should be recorded in the TKES/LKES Platform or a GaDOE-approved data system.
- For student growth measures, a student must be in attendance for 90% of the course for the data to be included in the calculation of the teacher's TEM. A teacher must have a minimum of 15 student measures for growth to be included in the TEM. Principals and superintendents will verify student attendance and teacher assignments.

- Student Growth Data shall be a lagging measure; when available, the prior year's growth measures will inform the current year's TEM.
- District Roster Verification processes will be determined by the LEA. The GaDOE State Data Collection process will ensure accurate student/teacher linkages for the purposes of evaluating teachers' effectiveness. It is highly recommended that districts provide teachers the opportunity to periodically verify their rosters. This may be part of the district FTE verification process.
- Each teacher of record, assistant principal, and principal shall be evaluated on his or her own individual merit and neither the state board of education, a local school system, nor a charter school shall impose or require any quota system or predetermined distribution of ratings for teachers of record, assistant principals, or principals.
- Application of the teacher 90% attendance rule is at the discretion of the LEA. If an LEA chooses NOT to apply the 90% attendance rule, check A (ALL) in the LEA's Student Information System. SGPs will be attached to all teachers.

Part V: TKES Logistics

Positions to be Evaluated

The Teacher Keys Effectiveness System is designed for use with all teachers of record, grades Pre-K through 12, who are full-time or part-time. For this purpose, teachers of record are educators who are responsible for a specified portion of a student's learning within a course aligned to performance measures. Generally, substitute teachers are not evaluated with TKES because they are not the teacher of record.

TKES is not designed to be used with personnel in positions identified as *Contributing Professionals* unless they are required by the LEA to provide direct instruction to students.

LEAs should continue to use appropriate instruments to evaluate the following positions designated as ***Contributing Professionals***.

Contributing Professionals include but are not limited to:

- Adaptive Physical Education Teachers
- Behavior Interventionists
- Behavior Specialists
- Career Technical Instruction (CTI)
- Graduation Coaches
- School Counselors
- Gifted Collaborative
- Gifted Instructional Facilitator
- Hospital/Homebound Teachers
- In-school Suspension Teachers
- Instructional Coaches, Instructional Lead Teachers, and Academic Coaches who do **not** have responsibility for direct instruction
- Instructional Technology Specialists
- Interpreters (sign language and other language)
- Media Specialists
- Mobility Training Specialists
- Occupational Therapists
- Paraprofessionals, even if certified
- Physical Therapists
- Psychologists*
- School Social Workers
- Special Education Coordinators / Case Managers who do **not** provide direct instruction
- Speech Language Pathologists
- Teachers on Special Assignment who do **not** have responsibility for direct instruction
- Translators
- Virtual School Teachers who do not provide direct instruction to students
- Work-based Learning

Complaint Process

Except as provided in the next paragraph, teachers are permitted to use the school system's local complaint process to file TKES grievances related to procedural deficiencies on the part of the local school system or charter school. The performance ratings contained in personnel evaluations conducted pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-210, professional development plans, and job performance shall not be subject to complaint under the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-989.5, et seq.; provided, however, this shall not apply to procedural deficiencies on the part of the local school system or charter school in conducting an evaluation pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-210. See O.C.G.A. § 20-2-989.7(a).

For teachers who have accepted a school year contract for the fourth or subsequent consecutive school year, summative performance ratings of 'Unsatisfactory' or 'Ineffective' contained in personnel evaluations conducted pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-210, procedural deficiencies on the part of the local school system or charter school in conducting an evaluation pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-210, and job performance shall be subject to appeal pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-989.7(b).

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are required to establish an appeals policy that shall allow a teacher to appeal a summative performance rating of *Unsatisfactory* or *Ineffective*.

Part VI: GaDOE TKES/LKES Electronic Platform

The TKES/LKES Platform shall provide web-based access to multiple components of the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System. The TKES/LKES Platform will be provided to school LEAs and schools; however, a school LEA may choose to use a GaDOE-approved data system.

The TKES/LKES Platform can be accessed through the GaDOE Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). The User Guides tab provides detailed instructions for both teachers and evaluators to utilize the platform to effectively complete the TKES process.

In the platform, the following will be provided:

- TAPS Formative and Summative Assessment Evaluation ratings
- Student Growth Percentile (SGP) results
- Teacher Effectiveness Measure
- Conference Tools (Pre-Conference, Mid-Year Conference, Summative Conference)

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.

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level III	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance.	Level II	Level I
The teacher continually demonstrates extensive content and pedagogical knowledge, enriches the curriculum, and guides others in enriching the curriculum. (<i>Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.</i>)	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.

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, and can adapt plans when needed.

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level III	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance.	Level II	Level I
The teacher continually seeks and uses multiple data and real-world resources to plan differentiated instruction to meet the individual student's needs and interests in order to promote student accountability and engagement. <i>(Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)</i>	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.

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.

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level III	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance.	Level II	Level I
The teacher continually facilitates students' engagement in metacognitive learning, higher-order thinking skills, and application of learning in current and relevant ways. <i>(Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)</i>	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.

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.

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level III	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance.	Level II	Level I
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. <i>(Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)</i>	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.

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.

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level III	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance.	Level II	Level I
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. <i>(Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)</i>	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.
- Teaches students how to self-assess and to use metacognitive strategies in support of lifelong learning.

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level III	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance.	Level II	Level I
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. <i>(Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)</i>	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.

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 care, 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.

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level III	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance.	Level II	Level I
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. <i>(Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)</i>	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.

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.

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level III	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance.	Level II	Level I
The teacher continually creates an academic learning environment where students are encouraged to set challenging learning goals and tackle challenging materials. <i>(Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)</i>	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.

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.

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level III	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance.	Level II	Level I
The teacher continually engages in a high level of professional growth and application of skills and contributes to the development of others and the wellbeing of the school and community. <i>(Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)</i>	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.

Across all levels, teachers are expected to abide by the [Code of Ethics](#).

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 the 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.
- Explains directions, concepts, and lesson content to students in a logical, sequential, and age-appropriate manner.
- 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.
- Listens and responds with cultural awareness, empathy, and understanding to the voice and opinions of stakeholders (parents, community, students, and colleagues).
- Uses modes of communication that are appropriate for a given situation.

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level III	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance.	Level II	Level I
The teacher continually uses communication techniques in a variety of situations to proactively inform, network, and collaborate with stakeholders to enhance student learning. <i>(Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)</i>	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.