



Thrive for Teachers

Evaluation Overview & Administrator Training Plan

PART I: EVALUATION OVERVIEW

Thrive for Teachers is DPSCD's teacher evaluation system, designed to give a comprehensive, evidence-based picture of instructional practice while connecting teachers to targeted professional development. It blends four components, Classroom Observations, Commitment to School Community, Student Surveys, and Student Growth, into a single summative score, delivered through an ongoing cycle of conversations between teachers and evaluators rather than a single end-of-year event.

EVALUATION COMPONENTS

Teachers earn a summative rating out of 100 possible points, drawn from four weighted components:

Component	Weight	Purpose
Classroom Observations	70%	Cultivates content-specific, student-centered instructional practice aligned to the District's Vision of Excellent Instruction. Scored using a rubric with four domains.
Commitment to School Community	5% (10% if no survey data)	Measures conduct expectations for teachers as members of a school community: initiative support, collaboration, high expectations, and family partnership.
Student Surveys	5%	Captures student voice on pedagogical effectiveness, rigor, relationships, and engagement. Requires a minimum of 10 attributable students.
Student Growth	20%	Holds teachers accountable for measurable student learning via state, District, and/or locally identified assessments, per state statutory requirements.

SCORING & PERFORMANCE RATINGS

Component scores are combined into an overall score out of 100 points, then translated into one of three summative ratings for state reporting:

Needing Support	Developing	Effective
Less than 35 points	35 to less than 70 points	70 or more points

Observation ratings use a four-level scale (Level 1–Level 4). Level 3 reflects proficient practice and is used in domain averages; Level 4 (exemplary) is excluded from the average but triggers bonus points: 3 raw points for Domains 1–3, and 5.5 raw points for Domain 4.

OBSERVATION RUBRIC: FOUR DOMAINS

The observation rubric is organized around four domains aligned to the District's Vision of Excellent Instruction. Each domain is anchored by an essential question that should be answerable “yes” in an effective classroom.

Domain	Essential Question	Indicators	Points (Level 3 / Level 4 bonus)
1	Do the expectations, systems, and routines in the classroom promote student learning and personal growth? (Management, Culture & Climate)	Classroom Environment; Transitions/Routines/Procedures; Instructional Norms; Community Norms	14.8 pts / +3
2	Is the content aligned to grade-level standards and/or IEP goals? (Rigorous Content)	Standards-Aligned Content; High-Quality Instructional Materials; Questions and Tasks; Sequential Activities	14.8 pts / +3
3	Are all students responsible for doing the thinking in this classroom? (Academic Ownership)	Cognitive Work; Persistence; Academic Discourse; Providing Feedback	14.8 pts / +3
4	Do all students demonstrate that they are learning? (Demonstration of Learning)	Tasks Yield Data; Check for Understanding; Student Learning	11.1 pts / +5.5

EVALUATION CYCLE & 2026–27 TIMELINE

The year unfolds across five checkpoints, each designed so no evaluation score is a surprise. Only Cycle 1, Cycle 2, and (if used) Cycle 2+ observations count toward the summative score.

Checkpoint	2026–27 Window	Key Features
Goal-Setting Conference	Sep 8 – Oct 23	Review available assessments; align on development priorities and Student Growth measures; not included in summative score.

Checkpoint	2026–27 Window	Key Features
Cycle 1 Observation	Nov 2 – Jan 22	Announced observation; debrief within 10 school days; written feedback within 5 school days; first Commitment to School Community rating.
Cycle 2 Observation	Feb 1 – Apr 16	May be unannounced; same feedback/debrief windows as Cycle 1; second Commitment to School Community rating.
Cycle 2+ (optional)	Mar 1 – Apr 16	At principal's discretion; scheduled 3+ weeks after Cycle 2; can substitute a missed Cycle 1 observation.
End-of-Year Debrief	Apr 19 – May 28	In-person discussion of scores and local assessment data; next steps for professional growth.
Summative Form Published / Appeals Open	Jun 30	Final scores posted in Frontline; appeals window opens.

PART II: ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING PLAN

The guidebook establishes that “all evaluators are required to complete a certification-style training” culminating in accurate rubric-based ratings and a feedback simulation, but leaves the content, cadence, and calibration structure undefined. This plan fills that gap: it gives evaluators a repeatable, evidence-based path to rating consistency and stronger feedback conversations, and ties each training touchpoint to the existing Thrive for Teachers calendar so nothing competes with the observation cycles themselves.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- Anchor every session to rubric evidence so that no rating discussion happens without looking at real (or de-identified sample) classroom evidence.
- Build inter-rater reliability deliberately, through repeated independent rating followed by group calibration instead of a one-time certification event.
- Treat feedback delivery as a skill to be practiced, not assumed; evaluators have an opportunity to rehearse debrief conversations before they matter.
- Sequence training just ahead of each point in the evaluation calendar where evaluators need it, rather than front-loading everything in August.

TRAINING PLAN AT A GLANCE

Phase	Focus	Core Activities	Timing
1	Foundational Certification	Rubric orientation by domain; content-specific companion guide walkthroughs; certification assessment (rubric-based ratings + feedback simulation)	Late Aug – before Sep 8
2	Calibration & Inter-Rater Reliability	Joint “learning walks” (live or video lessons); independent rating, then consensus discussion; inter-rater agreement tracking	Before each observation cycle
3	Feedback & Coaching Conversations	Debrief rehearsal/role-play; evidence-to-feedback scripting; alignment to development priorities	Within the 5–10 day feedback window after each cycle
4	Mid-Year Recalibration	Commitment to School Community refresher; review of Phase 2 reliability data; address scoring drift	Jan – Feb, before Cycle 2

Phase	Focus	Core Activities	Timing
5	End-of-Year Synthesis	Summative scoring walkthrough; local assessment data entry in Frontline; appeals-readiness documentation	Apr – May, before EOY Debrief

PHASE 1: FOUNDATIONAL CERTIFICATION

Every evaluator completes this before the Goal-Setting Conference window opens on September 8.

- Domain-by-domain rubric orientation for all four Observation domains and the Commitment to School Community rubric, using Appendix A and B as the source texts.
- A walkthrough of the content-specific companion guide(s) relevant to each evaluator's building, focused on Samples of Evidence and Coaching Points.
- Completion of the certification assessment: evaluators rate sample classroom evidence against the rubric and complete a feedback and support simulation; results are reviewed before an evaluator is cleared to conduct Cycle 1 observations.

PHASE 2: FEEDBACK & COACHING CONVERSATIONS

The guidebook requires written feedback within 5 school days and a debrief within 10 school days of every counted observation; this phase prepares evaluators to use that window well.

- Rehearsal of debrief conversations using real (de-identified) evidence, with a focus on tying feedback directly to rubric language rather than general impressions.
- Practice framing feedback around the teacher's development priorities set at the Goal-Setting Conference, so each cycle visibly builds on the last.
- Specific attention to Commitment to School Community conversations, which are rated at both the Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 debriefs.

PHASE 3: END-OF-YEAR SYNTHESIS

Prepares evaluators for the End-of-Year Debrief and summative scoring, including the parts of the process most likely to generate appeals.

- Walkthrough of how domain, survey, and growth scores roll up into the 100-point summative score and the three-tier rating.
- Guided practice entering local assessment data into KickUp Growth, since evaluators enter this score directly.
- Review of the Allowable Appeals categories (data entry error, ratings dispute, process implementation)

2026–27 TRAINING CALENDAR

Training Activity	Target Window	Tied to Evaluation Milestone
Phase 1: Foundational Certification	Late Aug – Sep 4	Before Goal-Setting Conference (Sep 8 – Oct 23)
Phase 2: Calibration Walk #1	Mid-to-late Oct	Before Cycle 1 Observation (Nov 2 – Jan 22)
Phase 3: Feedback Rehearsal #1	Late Oct	Ahead of Cycle 1 debrief window
Phase 4: Mid-Year Recalibration	Mid-to-late Jan	Before Cycle 2 Observation (Feb 1 – Apr 16)
Phase 2: Calibration Walk #2	Late Jan – early Feb	Before Cycle 2 / Cycle 2+ Observations
Phase 3: Feedback Rehearsal #2	Early Feb	Ahead of Cycle 2 debrief window
Phase 5: End-of-Year Synthesis	Early-to-mid Apr	Before End-of-Year Debrief (Apr 19 – May 28)