Texas Principal Evaluation & Support System

User's Guide

Texas Education Agency

Acknowledgements

Many educational professionals and support staff contributed their time and expertise to this evaluation and support system. The authors express their gratitude to Texas Principal Evaluation Steering Committee members for their support and participation in the development efforts that led to the creation of the instrument and auxiliary support materials.

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Introduction

Texas recognizes that school leadership is critical to the success of recruiting and retaining top teachers and fostering an environment where student learning flourishes. To that end, Senate Bill 1383[1] (82nd Regular Legislative Session) was codified in Section 21.3541[2] of the Texas Education Code. This statue directed the Texas Education Agency to accomplish the following initiatives:

- establish and administer a comprehensive appraisal and professional development system for public school principals;
- assist in developing the system and make recommendations about the training, appraisal, professional development, and compensation of principals; and
- establish school leadership standards and a set of indicators of successful school leadership to align with such training, appraisal, and professional development.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Principal Evaluation Steering Committee completed the new principal standards in 2013. These new standards are found in Chapter 149 of the Texas Administrative Code[3] and are expected to serve as the foundation for the new leadership appraisal and support system.

The new standards involve best practices for principals to be effective leaders and improve student performance, primarily by reframing the central role of the principal as the instructional leader of a campus. The standards are not intended to be performance indicators used for appraisal, but instead they capture the practices toward which all principals can strive regardless of their level of experience or the context of their position. In that sense, the standards form the foundation on which the state appraisal system is built. Furthermore, the standards will assist in informing and supporting educator preparation, mentorship, professional development, and career pathway programs and systems that strengthen the educational leadership workforce in the state of Texas.

During the 2014-2015 school year TEA planned the development and pilot of the Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS) based on the new principal standards and in accordance with state statute. TEA is piloting T-PESS in approximately 54 school districts. The pilot participants represent a robust sample of urban, rural, and suburban schools of various sizes and geographic locations. The principal evaluation system is being planned, developed, and implemented thoughtfully with a focus on continuously improving educator performance, student results, and school productivity.

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[1] Senate Bill 1383. Retrieved from outside source, retrieved 11/2014:
http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/BillLookup/Text.aspx?LegSess=82R&Bill=SB1383
[2] Section 21.3541 Texas Education Code. Retrieved from outside source 11/2014:
http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.21.htm#21.3541
[3] Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 19, Part II Chapter §149.2001: Commissioner's Rules Concerning Educator Standards: Principal Standards. Retrieved from outside source, retrieved 11/14
(*http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter149/*

As expected, TEA convened a steering committee of leaders representative of all levels of the K-12 Texas educational system, representatives from higher education leadership preparation programs, and nationally recognized experts in the field of educator effectiveness and personnel evaluation. These educational professionals were charged to design and develop a research-based system for supporting and evaluating Texas principals. The committee convened in early 2014 to begin work on the development of an evaluation instrument and supporting system that reflected the newly developed Texas Principal Standards and met the fundamental tenets of the primary purposes for evaluation and support of school principals. The instrument, supporting process, and materials were drafted and tested in late May 2014 in preparation for the first year of a two-year pilot that began in fall of the 2014-2015 school year. Results of the pilot test will strengthen the evaluation instrument, evaluation process, and implementation of Section 21.3541 of the Texas Education Code.

Purposes of T-PESS

T-PESS standardizes the evaluation process and expresses what principals should know and be able to do. The system is intended to improve communication between a supervisor and a principal with fairness, transparency, and constructive feedback. By using the results of the evaluation to guide their own professional development, principals will be able to chart a course for professional growth and development from the novice principal who is developing to an effective school leader seeking to be influential throughout the profession.

Purposes of T-PESS

Clearly defined and communicated purposes strengthen the system

- ✓ *Ongoing improvement*
- ✓ *Systematically supporting performance*
- ✓ *Identify performance strengths and support gaps*
- ✓ *Provide constructive feedback*

Key Priorities

During the development of T-PESS, the Texas Principal Evaluation Steering Committee agreed on four key priorities. The successful implementation and effective use of the system is dependent upon all stakeholders systematically attending to the priorities. Using these priorities as operating principles offers the opportunity for T-PESS to fulfill the purposes of according to the Texas Administrative Code and strengthen leadership performance across the state of Texas. The Steering Committee's key priorities are:

- Personify continuous growth and improvement
- Guide self-reflection
- Inform professional development
- Improve leadership quality

Focused attention on principal support and evaluation provides the unique opportunity to redefine and strengthen the larger system of educator quality and effectiveness. Leadership is a complex task requiring a dynamic combination of knowledge, skills, and dispositions to realize a number of outcomes, most importantly the educational needs of all students. Positive outcomes are obtained when systems of evaluation have trustworthy information about effective teaching, leading, and learning and when align with other systems across the school district. T-PESS, its purposes, and key priorities exemplify TEA's commitment to the process of ensuring that this part of the larger system is meaningful and manageable, and operates in a way that is coherent and supportive of leadership effectiveness, school productivity, and student outcomes.

T-PESS

Orientation

Final Evaluation & Goal Setting

Self-assessment Goal Setting

Support Process

End-of-year Performance Discussion

Pre-evaluation Conference

Consolidate performance Data

Mid-year progress

Evaluation Process

T-PESS is comprised of a process (see Figure 1) that incorporates a series of actions and activities that

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should be applied as ongoing and systematic rather than inconsistent and compulsory simply to comply with a policy requirement. Although the T-PESS process results in an annual summary assessment of the principal, it is intended and best used as an iterative design based on an annual process of actions and activities that self-assess, establish performance goals, collect and analyze information, and provide constructive feedback resulting in the improvement and refinement of practice. This process is intended to ultimately improve the quality and effectiveness of the principal.

Steps of the Evaluation Process

Step 1: Orientation

Each school year, districts will conduct an orientation for all principals on T-PESS. At this orientation, each principal will receive a complete set of materials outlining the evaluation process, expectations for participation, an explanation of the timeline, and ways performance will be measured. Each principal should become thoroughly familiar with T-PESS and all of the materials associated with it, including definitions and forms.

FIGURE 1: ANNUAL PRINCIPAL EVALUATION PROCESS

Step 2: Self-assessment and Goal Setting

Principals will complete a Self-assessment using the T-PESS Rubric. This Self-assessment provides the

Figure 1: Steps of the T-PESS Process

opportunity for principals to reflect on their ability to fulfill the responsibilities of leadership according to the Texas Principal Standards. In addition, the Self-assessment provides the opportunity to reflect on the challenges presented in part by Campus Improvement Plans and how principal leadership will best serve to address those challenges. Furthermore, the Self-assessment will serve as the basis for establishing professional growth goals. Performance goals can be focused on specific leadership behaviors that are intended to improve principal practice. Performance goals can also be aligned with campus improvement priorities.

Step 3: Pre-evaluation Conference

The Pre-evaluation Conference provides the opportunity for the appraiser and the principal to discuss several critical topics including the principal's completed self-assessment and 1-3 goals aligned to the Campus Improvement Plans and to district priorities. The appraiser should also be able to pre-assess the principal using the T-PESS rubric, considering the current context of the school, community, and principal performance.

Principals will meet individually with the appraiser to discuss the results of the Self-assessment and the appraiser's ratings of the principal; establish performance goal(s); and discuss what artifacts and evidence the principal and appraiser believe are critical to understanding and fairly appraising the principal's performance. The principal and appraiser will agree on the data, evidence, and documentation applicable to the principal's goals.

Data Collection
The principal will collect the data agreed upon in Step 3. These data may include the artifacts listed for each standard on the rubric; feedback from parents, students, and the school community; documentation of professional development completed during the year; and other data to document achievement of performance goals. The appraiser will visit the school during this period in order to observe the environment and interact with teachers and other members of the school community. Data collection will happen throughout the evaluation cycle.

The Pre-evaluation Conference is not intended to determine final performance ratings of the principal, but to have an honest dialog about performance improvement, leadership effectiveness, and strategies to improve school productivity and student outcomes.

Step 4: Mid-year Progress Meeting

Principals will meet individually with the appraiser to discuss the principal's progress toward achieving his or her performance goal(s). This Mid-year Progress Meeting will focus on the status of goal attainment and mid-year adjustments to action plans that must be made in order to achieve goals by the end of the school year. This meeting should also include a review of the Principal Evaluation Rubric and should result in completion of the Mid-Year Progress Form. As a result of this discussion, every principal should have a clear understanding of his or her performance trajectory, final effectiveness ratings, and likelihood of accomplishing goal(s).

Step 5: Consolidated Performance Assessment

The principal will synthesize data (artifacts and evidence) as specified in his/her performance improvement goals. In addition, principals may collect additional information obtained throughout the evaluation cycle in order to prepare a Consolidated Performance Assessment or comprehensive view of their performance throughout the year. This brief summary is not intended as a portfolio but should be a concise review of artifacts, evidence, and information used in consideration to evaluate performance. The Consolidated Performance Assessment should be provided to the appraiser in advance of the performance discussion, at which final performance ratings will be discussed.

Step 6: End-of-year Performance Discussion

The principal and appraiser will meet at the school to discuss completing the evaluation process. They will discuss the Consolidated Performance Assessment information and the principal's attainment of his or her performance goals and any additional information that would assist in more accurate and fair summary ratings. The appraiser should prepare in advance of the meeting. Should additional information be needed for the discussion, the principal will have ample opportunity to make the information available. If time permits and the appraiser and principal agree on the final performance ratings and goals are attained, then Step 7 may be completed at this time.

Step 7: Final Evaluation and Goal Setting

Providing final ratings and goal attainment were not completed during the Step 6: End-of-year Performance Discussion, the appraiser will schedule the Final Evaluation and Goal Setting Meeting. At this meeting, the appraiser and the principal will review and discuss any additional information that may be relevant to fairly and accurately assign final performance ratings, draft performance goals, and discuss recommendations and support for performance improvement for the subsequent year based on the current year results. The appraiser and principal will then sign and submit all required forms to complete the evaluation process. The following forms are required during each evaluation cycle:
- Self-assessment using the T-PESS Rubric
- Appraiser assessment using the T-PESS Rubric
- Professional Development Plan:
    - Beginning-of-year Goal Setting Form
    - Mid-year Progress Form toward Goal Attainment
    - End-of-year Goal Attainment Form
- Summary Rating Form

Timeline and Schedule

It is important for districts to consider and establish timelines and schedules (see Table 1 for example) of when specific actions and activities should be completed related to the seven-step process. For example, consider your calendars (traditional or year-round) and make sure that all stakeholders involved with the evaluation of principals know, understand, and comply with your established schedules and timelines.

Table 1: Example of an estimated timeline for completing the T-PESS process

T-PESS Timeline					
Step 1: Prior to the beginning of the school year	Step 2: During the first three weeks of the school year	Step 3: During the first five weeks of the school year	Step 4: At or near the end of the 1st semester	Step 5: One month prior to the end of the school year	Step 6 & 7: At or near the end of the school year

T-PESS Timeline Checklist

The biggest advantage of a timeline (see Table 2 for an example timeline checklist) is to ensure fidelity and consistency to a process. The example below may not constitute all actions and activities required by a school district related to the support and evaluation of their principals, but it provides a starting point for consideration.

A set timeline should align with established and required policies and state statutes. Furthermore, the timeline must be congruent and not be in conflict with other district calendars, schedules, and timelines. Below is a checklist for school districts as they consider the T-PESS process.

Table 2: Example Evaluation Process Checklist

Activity	Date
Orientation	
Self-assessment Form	
Beginning-of-year Goal Setting Form	
Pre-evaluation Conference	
School Site Visit(s)	
Mid-year Progress toward Goal Attainment Form	

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Mid-year Progress Meeting	
Consolidated Performance Assessment	
Summary Rating Form	
End-of-year Performance Discussion	
End-of-year Goal Attainment Form	
Final Evaluation and Goal Setting Meeting	

Roles and Expectations

For T-PESS to fulfill the purpose of evaluation and realize the key priorities of the Texas Principal Evaluation Steering Committee, stakeholders need to know and understand their roles and expectations. Stakeholder responsibilities link directly to processes and practices associated with effective implementation and use of any system – specifically T-PESS.

T-PESS Expectations

Principal
- ☐ Know the Standards
- ☐ Understand T-PESS
- ☐ Gather data & artifacts
- ☐

Appraiser
- ☐ Know the Standards
- ☐ Participate in training
- ☐ Supervise T-PESS
- ☐

Principal Expectations:

- Know and understand the Texas Principal Standards.

- Understand T-PESS.

- Prepare for the Pre-evaluation Conference, including a Self-assessment, identification of performance goals, and identification of change initiatives underway at his or her school.

- Gather data, artifacts, evidence to support performance in relation to standards and progress in attaining goals.

- Develop and implement strategies to improve personal performance/attain goals in areas individually or collaboratively identified.

- Participate in the Mid-year Progress Meeting, the End-of-year Performance Discussion, and the Final Evaluation Goal Setting Meeting.

- Draft goal(s) for the subsequent year based on the final evaluation.

Appraiser Expectations:

- Know and understand the Texas Principal Standards.

- Participate in professional development to understand and implement T-PESS.

- Supervise T-PESS and ensure that all steps are conducted according to the approved process.

- Identify the principal's strengths and areas for improvement and make recommendations for improving performance.

- Ensure that the contents of the Summary Rating Form contain accurate information and accurately reflects the principal's performance.

- Understand the context and environment in which the principal must work and leverage skills and knowledge required to implement T-PESS to benefit leadership improvement and school performance.

- Effectively participate in the Mid-year Progress Meeting, the End-of-year Performance Discussion, and the Final Evaluation Goal Setting Meeting.

Texas Principal Standards

The Texas Principal Standards have been developed and utilized in T-PESS in accordance with Chapter 149 of the Texas Administrative Code. The standards imply what principals should know and be able to do in order to improve school productivity and increase student achievement and outcomes. When principals use the standards as a guide, they will have the opportunity to continually reflect upon and improve their effectiveness as leaders throughout all of the stages of their careers. Although there are many influences on a school leader's development, these standards will serve as an important tool for principals as they consider their growth and development as executives leading schools in the 21st century.

Standard 1 – Instructional Leadership: *The principal is responsible for ensuring every student receives high-quality instruction.*

Effective principals prioritize instruction and student achievement by developing and sharing a clear definition of high-quality instruction based on best practices from research. They implement a rigorous curriculum aligned with state standards. They analyze the curriculum to ensure that teachers align content across grades and that those curricular scopes and sequences meet the particular needs of their diverse student populations. They model instructional strategies and set expectations for the content, rigor, and structure of lessons and unit plans. They dedicate a part of each day to monitoring and improving instruction by visiting classrooms, giving formative feedback to teachers, and attending grade or team meetings.

In schools led by effective principals (instructional leaders), data are used to determine instructional decisions and monitor progress. Principals implement common interim assessment cycles to track classroom trends and determine appropriate interventions. Staff have the capacity to use data to drive effective instructional practices and interventions. The principal's focus on instruction results in a school filled with effective teachers who can describe, plan, and implement strong instruction and in classrooms filled with students actively engaged in cognitively challenging and differentiated activities.

Indicators

Rigorous and aligned curriculum and assessment
> 1a. The principal implements rigorous curricula and assessments aligned with state standards, including college and career readiness standards.

Effective instructional practices
> 1b. The principal develops high-quality instructional practices among teachers that improve student performance.

Data-driven instruction and interventions

1c. The principal monitors multiple forms of student data to inform instructional and intervention decisions to maximize student achievement.

Maximize learning for all students

1d. The principal ensures that effective instruction maximizes growth of individual students and student groups, supports equity, and eliminates the achievement gap.

Standard 2 – Human Capital: *The principal is responsible for ensuring there are high-quality teachers and staff in every classroom throughout the school.*

Effective principals focus on key issues related to human capital. They treat faculty/staff members as their most valuable resource and invest in the development, support, and supervision of the staff. They ensure all staff has clear goals and expectations that guide them and by which they are assessed. They are strategic in selecting and hiring candidates whose vision aligns with their school's vision and whose skills match the school's needs. They ensure that, once hired, teachers develop and grow by building layered supports that include regular observations, actionable feedback, coaching, and schoolwide supports so that teachers know how they are performing. They facilitate professional learning communities to review data and support development. They create opportunities for effective teachers and staff to take on a variety of leadership roles and delegate responsibilities to staff and administrators on their leadership team. They use data from multiple points of the year to complete accurate evaluations of all staff, using evidence from regular observations, student data, and other sources to evaluate the effectiveness of teachers and staff.

In schools with effective principals, faculty and staff understand how they are being evaluated and what the expectations are for their performance. Staff can identify areas of strength and have opportunities to practice and receive feedback on growth areas from the leadership team and peers. Staff evaluation data show variation based on effectiveness but also show improvement across years, as development and retention efforts take effect. Across the school, faculty and staff support each other's development through regular opportunities for collaboration.

Indicators

Targeted selection, placement, and retention

2a. The principal selects, places, and retains effective teachers and staff.

Tailored development, feedback, and coaching

2b. The principal coaches and develops teachers by giving individualized feedback and aligned professional development opportunities.

Staff collaboration and leadership

2c. The principal implements collaborative structures and provides leadership opportunities for effective teachers and staff.

Systematic evaluation and supervision

2d. The principal conducts rigorous evaluations of all staff using multiple data source.

Standard 3 – Executive Leadership: *The principal is responsible for modeling a consistent focus and personal responsibility for improving student outcomes.*

Effective principals take personal responsibility for the success of the school. They motivate the school community by modeling a relentless pursuit of excellence. They are reflective in their practice and strive to continually improve, learn, and grow. They acknowledge mistakes while remaining focused on solutions and are not stymied by challenges or setbacks. When a strategy fails, these principals analyze data, assess implementation, and talk with stakeholders to understand what went wrong and how to adapt strategies moving forward. They keep staff inspired and focused on the end goal even as they support effective change management. They have strong communication skills and understand how to communicate a message in different ways to meet the needs of various audiences. They are willing to listen to others and create opportunities for staff and stakeholders to provide feedback. They treat all members of the community with respect and develop strong, positive relationships with them.

Effective principals build a supportive and adaptive context for identifying the right work, sustaining improvement, managing change, and emphasizing leadership practices positively associated with student achievement. Waters & Cameron (2007) suggest that:

> *"Everything that happens in a school happens within the context of a community. School communities are comprised of students, parents, teachers and other school staff members, central office administrators and support personnel, the school board, other social agencies, and businesses. The more this diverse community is able to coalesce around shared purposes, the more sustainable and effective the school's change efforts will be."*

The impact of principal leadership on school productivity, instructional quality, and student achievement is instrumental in developing a purposeful community. Accordingly, a first priority of school leaders is to work with teachers and key community leaders to develop and maintain a strong, intentional, and purposeful community.

Indicators

Resiliency and change management

3a**.** The principal remains solutions-oriented, treats challenges as opportunities, and supports staff through changes.

Commitment to ongoing learning

3b. The principal proactively seeks and acts on feedback, reflects on personal growth areas and seeks development opportunities, and accepts responsibility for mistakes.

Communication and interpersonal skills

3c**.** The principal tailors communication strategies to the audience and develops meaningful and positive relationships.

Ethical Behavior

3d. The principal adheres to the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators in such a way that it demonstrates the moral imperative to educate all children and follows practices and procedures of his or her respective district.

Standard 4 – School Culture: *The principal is responsible for establishing and implementing a shared vision and culture of high expectations for all staff and students.*

Effective principals leverage the schools' culture to drive improved outcomes and to create high expectations. They establish and implement a shared vision of high achievement for all students and use that vision as the foundation for key decisions and priorities for the school. They establish and communicate consistent expectations for staff and students, providing supportive feedback to ensure a positive campus environment. They focus on students' social and emotional development and help students develop resiliency and self-advocacy skills. They treat families as key partners to support student learning, creating structures for two-way communication and reporting regular updates on student progress. Regular opportunities exist for both families and the community to engage with the school and participate in school functions.

In schools with effective principals, staff believes in and is inspired by the school vision and has high expectations for all students. Staff takes responsibility for communicating the vision in their classrooms and for implementing behavioral expectations throughout the building, not only in their own classrooms. Teachers regularly communicate with the families of their students to provide updates on progress and actively work with families to support learning at home.

Indicators

Shared vision of high achievement
4a. The principal develops and implements a shared vision of high expectations for students and staff.

Culture of high expectations
4b. The principal establishes and monitors clear expectations for adult and student conduct and implements social and emotional supports for students.

Intentional family and community engagement
4c. The principal engages families and community members in student learning.

Safe school environment
4d. The principal creates an atmosphere of safety that encourages the social, emotional, and physical well-being of staff and students.

Discipline
4e. The principal uses a variety of student discipline techniques to meet the behavioral and academic needs of individual students.

Standard 5 – Strategic Operations: *The principal outlines and tracks clear goals, targets, and strategies aligned to a school vision that continuously improves teacher effectiveness and student outcomes.*

Effective principals assess the current needs of their schools, reviewing a wide set of evidence to determine the schools' priorities, in order to set ambitious and measurable school goals, targets, and strategies that form the schools' strategic plans. With their leadership teams, they regularly monitor multiple data points to evaluate progress towards goals, adjusting strategies that are proving ineffective. They develop a year-long calendar and daily schedule that strategically use time to both maximize instructional time and create regular time for teacher collaboration and data review. They are deliberate in the allocation of resources (staff time, dollars, and tools), aligning them to the school priorities and goals, and they work to access additional resources as needed to support learning. They treat central office staff as partners in achieving goals and collaborate with staff throughout the district to adapt policies as needed to meet the needs of students and staff.

In schools with effective principals, faculty and staff have access to resources needed to meet the needs of all students. Staff understands the goals and expectations for students, has clear strategies for meeting those goals, and has the capacity to track progress. Members of the staff collaborate with the principal to develop the school calendar. Teacher teams and administrator teams meet regularly to review and improve instructional strategies and analyze student data. Throughout the year, all staff participates in formal development opportunities that build the capacity to identify and implement strategies aligned to their school's improvement goals.

Indicators

Strategic planning
5a. The principal outlines and tracks clear goals, targets, and strategies aligned to a school vision that improves teacher effectiveness and student outcomes.

Maximized learning time
5b. The principal implements daily schedules and a year-long calendar that plan for regular data-driven instruction cycles, give students access to diverse and rigorous course offerings, and build in time for staff professional development.

Tactical resource management
5c. The principal aligns resources with the needs of the school and effectively monitors the impact on school goals.

Policy implementation and advocacy
5d. The principal collaborates with district staff to implement and advocate for district policies that meet the needs of students and staff.

T-PESS Rubric Design

The T-PESS rubric was developed to align with and exemplify the Texas Principal Standards. The rubric serves as the foundation of T-PESS. It should be used throughout the process to inform principal practice and monitor progress toward consistently using practices that leadership research has identified as necessary to improve instructional quality and school productivity and increase student achievement. The Texas Principal Evaluation Steering Committee applied a unique theory of action to the design of the rubric. As a result, the T-PESS rubric personifies a formative, growth-oriented approach to leadership assessment.

T-PESS Rubric Components

Performance Standard
Indicator
Descriptor
Performance Rating

The rubric contain=ns four main components. Figure 2 illustrates a section of the rubric and identifies the four components. The complete rubric can be found at the end of the User's Guide.

Each standard is formatted as follows:
- **Performance Standard**: The broad category of the principal's knowledge and skills
- **Indicator**: A part or aspect of the standard, especially one that is essential or characteristic to overall intent and meaning of the standard
- **Performance Descriptors**: An item or term that has the function of describing or identifying knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are intended to describe leadership
- **Performance Level**: A classification or ranking of performance based on generalized descriptors related to knowledge, skills, and dispositions of performance

Figure 2: T-PESS rubric components

Performance Levels

The following levels will be used:

- **Distinguished** - Principal consistently and significantly exceeded proficiency on standard(s) of performance. Direct comment is required.
- **Accomplished** - Principal exceeded proficiency on standard(s) of performance most of the time.
- **Proficient** - Principal demonstrated competent performance on the standard.
- **Developing** - Principal demonstrated adequate growth toward achieving standard(s) during the period of performance but did not demonstrate proficiency on standard(s) of performance.
- **Not Demonstrated/Needs Improvement**: Principal did not demonstrate competence on achieving standard(s) of performance. Direct comment is required.

Performance Indicators

Each standard is supported by a four or five indicators. Each indicator provides general expectations for what the principal should know and be able to do in order to meet the performance expectations of the standard. The descriptors that describe and differentiate the leadership practices are detailed horizontally across the rating scale. Figure 3 illustrates how the performance indicators (leadership practices) are emphasized across the rating scale.

Figure 3: Horizontal alignment of leadership practices

When leaders collectively emphasize the descriptors (vertically) within a rating scale they are exemplifying the intent of the indicator at that particular performance level.

Performance Descriptors

The descriptors detailed in each performance level of T-PESS address the inadequacies of previous evaluation systems (Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009) that lacked the specificity to differentiate performance across ratings. Each indicator within each standard includes descriptors (leadership practices) that are associated with evidence-based research (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005) and principal competencies stressed in nationally recognized leadership standards (ISLLC, 2008).

Research-based Responsibilities and Practices

To further strengthen T-PESS, the Steering Committee utilized research on effective school-level leadership (Waters & Cameron, 2007; Marzano et al., 2005; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). Results from the study identified 21 specific leadership responsibilities and 66 associated practices that have a statistically significant link between principal leadership and student achievement.

Table 3: Research-based Leadership Responsibilities and Practices

Balanced Leadership – 21 Principal Responsibilities & 66 Associated Practices			
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Responsibility	Avg. r	The extent to which the principal…	Associated Practices
Affirmation	.19	Recognizes and celebrates school accomplishments and acknowledges failures	• Systematically and fairly recognizes the accomplishments of teachers and staff • Systematically and fairly recognizes and celebrates the accomplishments of students • Systematically and fairly recognizes the failures of and celebrates the accomplishments of the school as a whole
Change agent	.25	Is willing to and actively challenges the status quo	• Consciously challenges the status quo • Is willing to lead change initiatives with uncertain outcomes • Systematically considers new and better ways of doing things • Consistently attempts to operate at the edge versus the center of the school's competence
Communication	.23	Establishes strong lines of communication with teachers and among students	• Is easily accessible to teachers and staff • Develops effective means for teachers and staff to communicate with one another • Maintains open and effective lines of communication with teachers and staff
Contingent rewards	.24	Recognizes and rewards individual accomplishments	• Uses performance versus seniority as the primary criteria for rewards and recognition • Uses hard work and results as the basis for rewards and recognition • Recognizes individuals who excel
Culture	.25	Fosters shared beliefs and a sense of	• Promotes a sense of well-being among teachers and staff

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Balanced Leadership – 21 Principal Responsibilities & 66 Associated Practices			
			© 2015 McREL International
Responsibility	Avg. r	The extent to which the principal…	Associated Practices
		community and cooperation	• Promotes cohesion among teachers and staff • Develops an understanding of purpose among teachers and staff • Develops a shared vision of what the school could be like • Promotes cooperation among teachers and staff
Discipline	.27	Protects teachers from issues and influences that would detract from their teaching time or focus	• Protects instructional time from interruptions • Protects/shelters teachers and staff from internal and external distractions
Flexibility	.28	Adapts his or her leadership behavior to the needs of the current situation and is comfortable with dissent	• Is comfortable with making major changes in how things are done • Encourages people to express diverse opinions contrary to those held by individuals in positions of authority • Adapts leadership style to the needs of specific situations • Is directive or non-directive as the situation warrants
Focus	.24	Establishes clear goals and keeps those goals in the forefront of the school's attention	• Establishes high, concrete goals and expectations that all students meet them • Establishes high, concrete goals for curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices within the school • Establishes high, concrete goals for the general functioning of the school • Continually keeps attention on established goals
Ideals and beliefs	.22	Communicates and operates from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling	• Possesses well-defined beliefs about schools, teaching, and learning • Shares beliefs about school, teaching, and learning with the teachers and staff • Demonstrates behaviors that are consistent with beliefs
Input	.25	Involves teachers in the design and implementation of important decisions	• Provides opportunities for teacher and staff input on all important decisions • Provides opportunities for teachers and staff to be involved in developing school policies • Uses leadership teams in decision-making
Intellectual stimulation	.24	Ensures that the faculty and staff are aware of the most current theories and practices and makes the discussion of these a regular aspect of the	• Keeps informed about current research and theory on effective schooling • Continually exposes teachers and staff to cutting-edge research and theory on effective schooling • Fosters systematic discussion regarding current research and theory on effective schooling

Balanced Leadership – 21 Principal Responsibilities & 66 Associated Practices			
			© 2015 McREL International
Responsibility	Avg. r	The extent to which the principal…	Associated Practices
		school culture	
Involvement in curriculum, instruction, and assessment	.20	Is directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices	• Is directly involved in helping teachers design curricular activities and address assessment and instructional issues
Knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment	.25	Is knowledgeable about current curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices	• Possesses extensive knowledge about effective curricular, instructional, and assessment practices • Provides conceptual guidance regarding effective classroom practices
Monitor and evaluate	.27	Monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning	• Continually monitors the effectiveness of the school's curricular practices • Continually monitors the effectiveness of the school's instructional practices • Continually monitors the effectiveness of the school's assessment practices • Remains aware of the impact of the school's practices on student achievement
Optimize	.20	Inspires and leads new and challenging innovations	• Inspires teachers and staff to accomplish things that might be beyond their grasp • Is the driving force behind major initiatives • Portrays a positive attitude about the ability of teachers and staff to accomplish substantial things
Order	.25	Establishes a set of standard operating procedures and routines	• Provides and reinforces clear structures, rules, and procedures for teachers and staff • Provides and reinforces clear structures, rules, and procedures for students • Establishes routines for the effective running of the school that teachers and staff understand and follow
Outreach	.27	Is an advocate and spokesperson for the school to all stakeholders	• Ensures the school complies with all district and state mandates • Is an advocate of the school with the community at large • Is an advocate of the school with parents • Is an advocate of the school with central office
Relationships	.18	Demonstrates awareness of personal aspects of teachers and staff	• Is informed about significant personal issues within the lives of teachers and staff • Maintains personal relationships with teachers and staff • Is aware of the personal needs of teachers and staff • Acknowledges significant events in the lives of teachers and staff
Resources	.25	Provides teachers with materials and	• Ensures that teachers and staff have the necessary materials and equipment

Balanced Leadership – 21 Principal Responsibilities & 66 Associated Practices			
			© 2015 McREL International
Responsibility	Avg. r	The extent to which the principal…	Associated Practices
		professional development necessary for the successful execution of their jobs	• Ensures that teachers and staff have the necessary professional development opportunities that directly enhance their teaching
Situational awareness	.33	Is aware of the details and the undercurrents in the running of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems	• Is aware of informal groups and relationships among teachers and staff • Is aware of the issues in the school that have not surfaced but could create discord • Accurately predicts what could go wrong from day to day
Visibility	.20	Has quality contacts and interactions with teachers and students	• Makes systematic and frequent visits to the classroom • Is highly visible to students, teachers, and parents • Has frequent contact with students

The 21 leadership responsibilities have been strategically placed in a framework that simplifies the complex and demanding job of the principal. The framework helps principals to *select the right work*, *effectively manage change* to implement strategic initiatives and priorities, and build resilient, *purposeful communities* of practice that contribute to improving student outcomes. The 21 leadership responsibilities are used in T-PESS to anchor principal practices to the Texas Principal Standards.

Principal Competencies

A competency is a combination of knowledge (factual and experiential) and skills that one needs to do something effectively and efficiently--in this case, implement T-PESS. According to McREL's learning taxonomy (Waters & Cameron, 2007), factual knowledge is simply "knowing" content. Experiential knowledge is the knowledge one gains from understanding; it is knowing the when and why. Skills bring structure to experiential knowledge. It is when one can put his or her accumulated knowledge into a series of steps that, if followed, will lead to effective practice.

There are many competencies embedded within the descriptors in the T-PESS rubric. These competencies are adapted from the nationally recognized Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC, 2008) school leadership standards developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The principal may or may not personally possess all of these competencies but must ensure that a team is in place on his or her campus that not only possesses them but can effectively and efficiently execute them. Although the principal may not personally possess them all, he or she is still responsible for their effective use in the various leadership practices.

The competencies listed below can be applied to multiple standards and indicators and are essential to

principals' success as school leaders. The competencies are listed to emphasize their importance and to strengthen T-PESS.

- **Communication** – Effectively listens to others; clearly and effectively presents and understands information orally and in writing; acquires, organizes, analyzes, interprets, and maintains information needed to achieve school or team objectives.
- **Change Management** – Effectively engages staff and community in the change process in a manner that ensures their support of the change and its successful implementation.
- **Conflict Management** – Anticipates or seeks to resolve confrontations, disagreements, or complaints in a constructive manner.
- **Creative Thinking** – Engages in and fosters an environment for others to engage in innovative thinking.
- **Customer Focus** – Sees students as customers of the work of schooling, understands the servant nature of leadership, and acts accordingly.
- **Delegation** – Effectively assigns work tasks to others in ways that provide learning experiences for them and in ways that ensure the efficient operation of the school.
- **Dialogue/Inquiry** – Is skilled in creating a risk-free environment for engaging people in conversations that explore issues, challenges, or bad relationships that are hindering school performance.
- **Emotional Intelligence** – Is able to manage oneself through self-awareness and self-management and manage relationships through empathy, social awareness, and relationship management. This competency is critical to building strong, transparent, trusting relationships throughout the school community.
- **Environmental Awareness** – Becomes aware of and remains informed about external and internal trends, interests, and issues with potential impacts on school policies, practices, procedures, and positions.
- **Global Perspective** – Understands the competitive nature of the new global economy and is clear about the knowledge and skills students will need to be successful in this economy.
- **Judgment** – Effectively reaching logical conclusions and making high-quality decisions based on available information; giving priority and caution to significant issues; analyzing and interpreting complex information.
- **Organizational Ability** – Effectively plans and schedules one's own work and the work of others so that resources are used appropriately, such as scheduling the flow of activities and establishing procedures to monitor projects.
- **Personal Ethics and Values** – Consistently exhibits high standards in the areas of honesty, integrity, fairness, stewardship, trust, respect, and confidentiality.
- **Personal Responsibility for Performance** – Proactively and continuously improves performance by focusing on needed areas of improvement and enhancement of strengths; actively seeks and effectively applies feedback from others; takes full responsibility for one's own achievements.
- **Responsiveness** – Does not leave issues, inquiries, or requirements for information go unattended; creates a clearly delineated structure for responding to requests/situations in an expedient manner.

- **Results Orientation** – Effectively assumes responsibility. Recognizes when a decision is required. Takes prompt action as issues emerge. Resolves short-term issues while balancing them against long-term goals.
- **Sensitivity** – Effectively perceives the needs and concerns of others; deals tactfully with others in emotionally stressful situations or in conflict; knows what information to communicate and to whom; relates to people of varying ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds.
- **Systems Thinking** – Understands the interrelationships and impacts of school and district influences, systems, and external stakeholders and applies that understanding to advancing the achievement of the school or team.
- **Technology** – Effectively utilizes the latest technologies to continuously improve the management of the school and enhance student instruction.
- **Time Management** – Effectively uses available time to complete work tasks and activities that lead to the achievement of desired work or school results. Runs effective meetings.
- **Visionary** – Encourages "imagineering" by creating an environment and structure to capture stakeholder dreams of what the school could become for all the students.

Instructions for Completing T-PESS

Training

Before the opening of school, every educator without prior experience using T-PESS must receive training by a TEA-approved training provider. TEA utilizes its system of Regional Education Service Centers to provide the training and support necessary to make T-PESS meaningful, manageable, and productive. Each Regional Education Service Center has identified a cadre of professional staff that have received facilitator training, undergone quality assurance, and are authorized to deliver T-PESS to school districts located in their geographic region.

This system of support and the required training process helps ensure everyone has the same declarative and procedural knowledge to effectively use T-PESS and apply the evaluation process. Well-trained and knowledgeable users help ensure the reliability of the rubric and system, therefore making it more likely that results of the evaluation will be valid.

Orientation

Orientation is an important step in the process of implementing and maintaining the intensity and fidelity of T-PESS. This precursor to the annual evaluation process is intended for all principals and those authorized to appraise principal performance. The orientation session can be conducted in such a manner that best fits a school district's calendar. For example, it can be conducted as a large group session, delivered in smaller group settings, or individually. Orientation is an important step in the process because it:

- Provides the appraiser and the principal with concise and accurate information regarding T-PESS;
- Ensures that all appraisers and principals understand their roles and responsibilities;
- Details the T-PESS process and provides a specific timeline for when required actions and activities are due;
- Addresses and communicates any regulations and policies that govern principal evaluation;
- Explains how performance will be measured.

At the Orientation, each appraiser and the principal should receive a complete set of materials and become thoroughly familiar with T-PESS and all of the materials associated with it, including definitions and forms.

Self-assessment and Goal Setting

The Self-assessment is intended to facilitate collaborative conversations between the principal and appraiser to share and develop a common understanding of professional practice and performance expectations. The Self-assessment is not to be used in making final judgments about performance nor to promote a conversation between the principal and appraiser in which each is trying to convince the other of particular performance ratings.

Including self-assessment as a step in the process of principal evaluation is a powerful technique to improve principal performance. Self-assessment provides principals the opportunity to consider past feedback received from peers and appraisers and how their current practice fulfills the knowledge and skills implied by the Texas Principal Standards and detailed within the evaluation rubric. Ross and Bruce (2005) provide several primary advantages and outcomes resulting from using self-assessment in teacher performance that can be applied and used by principals and their appraisers. The primary advantages of completing and using a self-assessment include:

1. Principals are able to modify and clarify their definition of excellence. Since the rubric provides a scaffolding of knowledge and skills, principals can identify specific practices on which to compare their performance against expected performance measures.
2. The rubric provide clear descriptors of performance, and the Self-assessment assists with identifying discrepancies between actual and desired performance.
3. The self-assessment process assists the principal and his or her appraiser to select improvement goals by providing clear standards of leadership and discussing opportunities to find gaps between desired and actual practices. It is within this analysis and ongoing conversation between the principal and their appraiser that immediate and realistic goals can be monitored and supported throughout the evaluation cycle.
4. The Self-assessment tool, particularly the rubric, facilitates communication between the principal and the appraiser. It provides them with a common language for talking about instruction, district-adopted models of professional practice and the various levels of performance associated with the rating scale.

Completing the Self-assessment

Engaging in and completing the Self-assessment (process step 2) is time well spent. Typically, this process takes 15–30 minutes, depending on the principal's experience using T-PESS. Before beginning, principals should reflect on their past performance in determining how well they know and have performed the leadership practices characterized by the descriptors within each standard and identify those that have proven to be a challenge. In addition, thinking about past feedback the principal has received from appraisers, supervisors, and colleagues will be helpful in framing thoughts about performance.

Principals will use the T-PESS rubric to complete their Self-assessment to reflect on and benchmark their performance. The rubric is designed in such a manner that knowledge and skills scaffold down each rating and across to the next rating level, hence the "…and" at the bottom of the *Proficient*, *Accomplished*, and *Distinguished* levels. The procedure (see Figure 4) for completing the Self-assessment:

1. Begin with Standard 1, Indicator 1a.
2. Start with the "*Developing"* rating column. Read down and mark the descriptors that you believe you know and do consistently well.
3. Move across to the next column. Read down and mark the descriptors on which you believe you do consistently well, continuing the process through the *Distinguished* level.
4. If no marks can be confidently made throughout the indicator, then write a brief comment in the "*Not Demonstrated/Needs Improvement"* box that will remind you to discuss this particular indicator with your appraiser.
5. Replicate this process for each of the standards and supporting indicators.

Figure 4: Process and example of completing the Self-assessment

To help principals with this procedure, it is recommended that principals use a learning taxonomy to help guide an accurate and reflective analysis of performance (McREL, 2005). As principals read through and mark the individual descriptors within each standard, they should consider:

1. What they know about the knowledge, skills, and dispositions inferred about the descriptor (Declarative Knowledge)
2. How they specifically meet the expectations of that descriptor (Procedural Knowledge) and what artifacts and evidence would substantiate their performance
3. When would they have applied the skills and strategies inferred about the descriptor (Contextual Knowledge)
4. Why the skills and knowledge inferred about the descriptor are important for student success (Experiential Knowledge)

The Self-assessment can be utilized multiple times during the school year. Doing so continues to reinforce performance expectations but, more importantly, keeps performance improvement at the forefront of conversations between the principal and appraiser. Additionally, it is not necessary to

complete the rubric for every standard beyond the initial required instance if the self-assessment is utilized multiple times throughout the year. It is good practice for principals to complete periodic self-assessments using the rubric, although a minimum of one complete Self-assessment is required. It is recommended that a complete self-assessment occur at or near the beginning of the school calendar year.

Professional Development Plan

The Professional Development Plan is an essential part of the principal evaluation process (McGreal, 1983). Goal setting, progress monitoring, and goal attainment, as part of professional development planning, is the continuous process of acquiring and refining the knowledge and skills necessary to execute the educational and instructional practices required to improve student achievement. Planning and goal setting focus principals and supervisors on improving and refining practice (Dean, Stone, Hubbell, & Pitler, 2012). The professional development planning process requires a collaborative effort between the appraiser and principal to monitor progress toward goals and eventually determine goal attainment.

The T-PESS Professional Development Plan constitutes three main parts:
1. Beginning-of-year Goal Setting
2. Mid-year Progress toward Goal Attainment
3. End-of-year Goal Attainment

Monitoring, evaluating, and providing constructive feedback on the progress and attainment of individual performance goals must occur throughout the course of the evaluation cycle. Crucial points during the year, however, provide opportunities to formally address progress and take corrective actions when necessary. Formal opportunities to address the Professional Development Plan occur during the development of the plan, at the Mid-year Progress Meeting, and at the End-of-year Performance Discussion.

Goal Setting

When principals use the rubric to self-assess at the beginning of the year, they have a clear idea of the highest priority areas on which to base improvement goals (Marshall, 2009; Ross & Bruce, 2005). Principals will be more likely to persist if they adopt goals based on an authentic self-assessment with unambiguous outcomes that are moderately difficult and achievable in the near future. The results of the Self-assessment is one data point on which to identify goal opportunities (see Figure 5). Other data sources on which to base improvement goals should come from Campus Improvement Plans, district strategic priorities, and past feedback from peers and appraisers.

Figure 5: Goal Opportunity identified from the Self-assessment

It is strongly encouraged to set improvement goals using the SMART (O'Neill, Conzemius, Commodore, & Pulsfus, 2006) criteria. The acronym "*SMART*" embodies the fundamental practices necessary for achieving increased motivation and improving the odds that one will actually accomplish a given set of goals. The Goal Setting Form (see Figure 6 for an example of a performance goal) is designed in such a way as to emphasize setting goals using the SMART criteria.

- *Specific* – target a specific area for improvement
- *Measurable* – quantify or at least suggest an indicator of progress
- *Achievable* – specify who will do it
- *Realistic* – state what results can realistically be achieved, given available resources
- *Time-related* – specify when the result(s) can be achieved

A goal can focus directly on a part of a Campus Improve Plan, a district strategic priority, or on efforts to improve a specific leadership practice or competency. An example of a campus improvement goal may read, "Implement the *Cool Reading Program* during the 20XX school year in all language arts classrooms in grade 9 to reduce the literacy gap between sub-populations of students as measured by the end-of-course exam." An example of a goal related to a district priority may read, "Evaluate the implementation of the district-approved mathematics curriculum for the 20XX school year to ensure all students have access and teachers have the time to teach the curriculum." An example of a goal to improve a specific leadership practice might read, "Improve the quality of contacts and interactions with teachers and students for the 20XX school year as measured by the teacher working conditions survey and student engagement survey." Regardless of the focus, determining the goal will require the principal and appraiser to consider:

- The standard(s) and indicator(s) in the Texas Principal Standards that will be addressed by the goal;
- Strategies and actions the principal will engage in to accomplish the goal; and

- Expected measurable outcome(s). In other words, how will we measure progress toward the goal and, ultimately, goal attainment? What artifacts and evidence will need to be produced to demonstrate progress toward the goal and goal attainment?

- Specific timeline for benchmarks and milestones related to progress toward the goal and goal attainment
- Reasonable resources that may be required to accomplish the goal

Goal:
Evaluate the implementation of the district approved mathematics curriculum for the 20XX school year to ensure all students have access and teachers have the time to teach the curriculum.

Leadership Standard(s) and Indicator(s) to be Addressed	Strategies and Actions	Expected Measurable Outcomes	Timeline for Achieving Goal	Resources Needed
Standard 1 Indicator A: Actively initiates activities and opportunities for teachers and staff to evaluate the implementation of the approved curriculum	Bi-Monthly PLC meetings with grade level math teachers Quarterly benchmarking with other district high schools	• Improved Unit design • Use of common instructional planning template • Development of formative assessments	• Submission of Unit plan – Quarterly • Submission of formative assessments – Quarterly	• Coverage for 9th grade teachers for planning and development – 4 days total.

Appraiser Comments:			
Principal Signature:			**Date:**
Appraiser Signature:			**Date:**

Figure 6: Example of a principal goal

Mid-year Progress Meeting

Monitoring principal progress is an important component of professional development planning. The form (see Figure 7) and Mid-year Progress Meeting provides the opportunity for principals and appraisers to formatively take stock of the progress the principal is making on his or her professional goals. Monitoring progress allows for continuing dialogue within the context of the standards, indicators and the principal's performance goals. Additionally, this conference offers the opportunity to modify goals should the need arise. The timeline for conducting this conference should be held near the mid-point of the annual evaluation cycle. Considering a traditional calendar school year, this would be about the second week of December; however, district policy and timelines would determine a specific due date.

Figure 7: Example of the Mid-year Progress Form completed for one goal

Preparation by the appraiser prior to this conference is important. The appraiser should:
1. Review the principal's Self-Assessment and Goal Setting Form.
2. Consider the evidence collected through site visits.
3. Review and consider the depth and quality of the artifacts submitted or collected.

The appraiser should monitor and provide feedback regarding the process toward achieving goals and provide a brief narrative for each goal established in the professional development plan. Signatures are required to complete the Mid-year Progress toward Goal Attainment Form.

End-of-year Progress Goal Attainment

Goal progress monitoring should be an ongoing process when using T-PESS. When done on a frequent basis, it offers principals a chance to see how they are progressing and provides the opportunity to reflect on the leadership practices emphasized to accomplish the goal. Second, progress monitoring offers the opportunity for the appraiser and the principal to discuss and clarify leadership practices within the context of the school using real data. Lastly, determining goal attainment at the end of the annual evaluation cycle will factor in to the overall performance rating of the principal.

After completion of the Summary Rating Form (illustrated later in this section), the appraiser will use the End-of-year Goal Attainment Form (see Figure 8) to determine if the principal accomplished his or her improvement goals detailed on the Professional Development Plan from the beginning of the school year. The appraiser then uses the End-of-Year Goal Attainment Form to provide a very brief narrative of the outcomes related to goal attainment and obtains the appropriate signatures.

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Goal: Evaluate the implementation of the district approved mathematics curriculum for the 20XX school year to ensure all students have access and teachers have the time to teach the curriculum.			☐ Goal Achieved ☐ Goal Not Achieved		
○ Significantly Exceeded Expectations	○ Exceeded Expectations	✓ Attained	○ Progressing		○ Not Progressing
Through the completion and full attainment of the established goal, the principal has demonstrated significant and substantial competence through knowledge, skills, responsibilities, or behaviors essential to an effective leader in the progress of meeting the established goal.	Through the completion and full attainment of the established goal, the principal has demonstrated adept competence through knowledge, skills, responsibilities, or behaviors essential to an effective leader in the progress of meeting the established goal.	Principal demonstrated significant progress and growth toward achieving the established goal and the goal was at least marginally attained.	Principal demonstrated significant progress and growth toward achieving the established goal; however, the goal was not attained.		Principal did not demonstrate significant progress or adequate growth toward achieving the established goal.
Evidence of Completion: Dr. Principal the leadership team at Excellent High School completed a review of the 9th grade math curriculum and developed four comprehensive units of study that will provide opportunity and access to curriculum for all students. In addition, the math team developed and embedded formative assessments for each unit that will help monitor student progress during the year.					
Appraiser Comments: Dr. Principal and his leadership team will continue the process of curriculum mapping to ensure opportunity and access by students and time by teachers to teach the district approved curriculum.					

Figure 8: Example of the End-of-year Goal Attainment Form

The End-of-year Goal Attainment form is a formative rubric that offers the appraiser and principal the opportunity to dialogue about the depth and degree to which the principal accomplished the goal. Often times, educational goals can exceed the limit of a school year and may need to carry over to subsequent years. T-PESS respects the dynamic nature of leadership and the necessity to set and accomplish significant goals related to school productivity and student achievement. Additionally, T-PESS seeks to accommodate the complexity of the change process and the reality that, in some cases, goal attainment can't be constrained to a single school year. It is important, however, that principals remain steadfast in their pursuit of personal growth and goal attainment. Respecting the effort and process requires that recognition and credit toward goal attainment.

Pre-evaluation Conference

The Pre-evaluation Conference provides the principal and the appraiser the opportunity to engage in collaborative conversations. At this meeting, the principal and the appraiser discuss the principal's Self-assessment and the principal's proposed goals. The primary purpose of the Pre-evaluation Conference is to give the principal and the appraiser an opportunity to discuss professional practice in relation to the five principal standards.

In preparation for the Pre-evaluation Conference, the principal will:
1. Submit a copy of his or her completed Self-assessment; and
2. Submit their draft goals.

In preparation for the Pre-evaluation Conference, the appraiser will:
1. Review the results of the principal's Self-assessment, the previous year's summary ratings (if a continuing principal); and
2. Review the principal's draft goals.

During this meeting, it is recommended that the principal and the appraiser:

1. Discuss principal practice in relation to the principal's Self-assessment and, if a continuing principal, summary ratings from the previous year's evaluation. This dialogue is not intended for the principal and appraiser to contend or dispute the results of the self-assessment but rather to discuss learning as it applies to district-adopted models of professional practice and the Texas Principal Standards.
2. Finalize 1-3 goals for the year by:
   a. Reviewing the elements and/or standards to be addressed;
   b. Clarifying the types and sources of artifacts and evidence to support performance;
   c. Reviewing any state or local policy that may pertain to the professional development and the evaluation of principals;
   d. Signing and dating the Beginning-of-year Goal Setting Form.

Data Collection
The principal will collect the data agreed upon in Step 3. These data may include the artifacts listed for each standard on the rubric, feedback from parents, students, and the school community, documentation of professional development completed during the year, and other data to document achievement of performance goals. The appraiser will visit the school during this period in order to observe the environment and interact with teachers and other members of the school community. Data collection will happen throughout the evaluation cycle. The frequency, duration, and type of data collection methods must be reasonable and manageable for both the principal and the appraiser and are generally determined by local policy and negotiated agreement.

Consolidated Performance Assessment
In preparation for the End-of-year Performance Discussion and completing the Principal Summary Rating Form, it is important for the school leader to prepare information in advance. The school leader should review progress toward his or her performance goals and collect and consolidate the artifacts and data that were agreed upon in making final determinations toward achieving goals and improving leadership performance. This information should be sent to the appraiser in advance of the final meeting to allow the appraiser time to adequately prepare for the final meeting.

End-of-year Performance Discussion
Year-end evaluation requires substantive preparation. For the process to meaningful and productive, significant thought should go into the preparation and facilitation of this discussion. Appraisers must carefully consider the key messages to be conveyed and the ratings the principal will receive on each of the standards and indicators on the rubric. Those ratings will be based on the qualitative, quantitative and antidotal evidence detailed in the principal's goals. If the appraiser has been communicating regularly and candidly with the principal all year, the final ratings and goal attainment determination should contain no surprises.

Determining Final Indicator Ratings

As previously discussed, the rubric is scored using a cumulative and additive method. Final ratings for each element are determined by the data collected from all site visits conducted during the annual evaluation cycle, by artifacts collected and submitted, and by other evidence that may be required by a school district as part of the evaluation of

Figure 9: Cumulative additive scoring method to determine final indicator ratings

principals. Appraisers will determine the final ratings based on the scoring rule similar to scoring the rubric.

Review of the Scoring Rule:
- To receive a specific rating for an indicator, the principal must have received at least one check during the course of the evaluation cycle on ALL the descriptors in that category and ALL the descriptors in the previous category, taking into account all observations of the principal.
- If the principal has not met the minimum requirements (check marks for all the descriptors in the Developing category at some point during the evaluation cycle), then his or her rating would be considered Not Demonstrated, which requires a narrative from the appraiser stating the reason for the rating.
- The summary rating scoring method is consistent with scoring the evaluation rubric.

Summary Ratings

The formative process of T-PESS will result in summary ratings (see Figure 10 for an example of a part of the Summary Rating Form). Summary ratings are derived from the result of quantitative, qualitative, and antidotal data collected through the submission and evaluation of artifacts and evidence related to performance goals and the fulfillment of the practices detailed in the rubric. The appraiser carefully considers all the data submitted and included from the Consolidated Performance Assessment (Step 5 of the T-PESS process) and accurately marks final ratings on the Summary Rating Form.

Standard 1 – *Instructional Leadership:* The principal is responsible for ensuring every student receives high-quality instruction.

Indicators	Distinguished	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing	Not Demonstrated Needs Improvement
a. The principal ensures implementation of state and district curricula and assessments aligned with state standards, including college and career readiness standards.	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
b. The principal monitors and ensures high-quality instructional practices among teachers and staff that improve student performance.	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
c. The principal monitors multiple forms of student data to inform instruction and intervention decisions to maximize student achievement.	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
d. The principal ensures that effective instruction maximizes growth of individual students and student groups, supports equity, and eliminates the achievement gap.	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
OVERALL Rating for Standard 1	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐

Comments:
Dr. Principal and his leadership team continue to make gains with their Campus Improvement Plan. With the emphasis of using PLC's more efficiently, the leadership team is able to provide constructive feedback to teachers regarding instructional quality.

Recommended actions for improvement:
It is recommended that Dr. Principal and the Excellent High School administrative team continue to use instructional rounds and multiple classroom walkthroughs to ensure the approved curriculum is being taught using research-based teaching practices.

Resources need to complete the actions for improvement:
Purchase of an electronic tool for collecting walkthrough data using iPads.

Evidence of documentation that may be used to support ratings:

- ☑ Campus Improvement Plan
- ☑ Student achievement and testing data
- ☐ Leadership teams
- ☑ Use of research-based school and classroom practices
- ☑ Campus master schedule
- ☐ Formative and summative assessments
- ☑ Education plans for identified sub-populations
- ☑ Stakeholder surveys
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Figure 10: Example of a section of the Summary Rating Form

Completing the Summary Rating Form, the appraiser will:
1. Give a rating for each indicator contained in the standards.
2. Make a written comment on any indicator marked Not Demonstrated/Needs Improvement.
3. Give an overall rating for each standard based on the indicator ratings.
4. Provide the principal with the opportunity to add comments and/or attach written comments to the Summary Rating Form.

Final Evaluation and Goal Setting

Once the appraiser has completed the Summary Rating Form and End-of-year Progress Form, a final conference is scheduled between the principal and the appraiser. This meeting provides the opportunity to discuss the principal's performance and complete the final procedures for the evaluation cycle. The appraiser and principal will discuss the principal's performance based on the information, data, and artifacts and evidence collected during the evaluation cycle.

At a minimum, the conference will result in:
a. The review of the completed Summary Rating Form and the progress toward accomplishing improvement goals
b. Securing the principal's signature on the Summary Rating Form and Principal Record of Activities Form.

This meeting brings closure to the current year's evaluation process and begins the process of setting goals for the subsequent year.

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Glossary

Artifact is a product resulting from a principal's/assistant principal's work. Artifacts are natural by-products of work and are not created for the purpose of satisfying evaluation requirements. Artifacts are used as evidence to support an evaluation rating and when the appraiser and the principal or assistant principal disagree on the final rating. Principals/assistant principals may use them as exemplars of their work.

Examples of artifacts include these:

- School Improvement Plan – A plan that includes strategies for improving student performance that discusses how and when improvements will be implemented, use of state funds, requests for waivers, etc. Plans are in effect for no more than three years.

- School Improvement Team Data – Work from a team made up of the school executive and representatives of administration, instructional personnel, instructional support personnel, teacher assistants, and parents of children enrolled in the school whose purpose is to develop a school improvement plan to strengthen student performance.

- Teacher Retention Data – The teacher turnover rate, including the distribution of inexperienced teachers

- National Board Certified Teachers – Teachers who have earned National Board Certification

Capacity is the collective efficacy and capability to develop and use assets to create the conditions necessary to accomplish purpose.

Correlation (*r*) is a measure of the degree of linear relationship between two variables. When one goes up, the other goes up (or down). The larger the correlation, the stronger the linear relationship between the two variables. Correlation coefficients vary between -1.00 and +1.00. A correlation of 0.00 indicates the absence of a relationship.

Dependent variable is a variable measured in a study. In an experimental study, the dependent variable is affected by the independent variable. In a correlational study, the dependent variable is associated with one or more other (independent) variables.

Descriptors are the specific performance responsibilities embedded within the elements of each performance standard. Descriptors are checked to determine the rating of each element.

Effect size is a measure of the magnitude of impact of an independent variable on a dependent variable. The most commonly used effect size is the standardized mean difference that depicts how many standard deviations the mean of an experimental group is above or below the mean of a control group. The correlation (*r*) is another type of effect size commonly used.

T-PESS Forms will help principals, assistant principals, and appraisers gain a deeper understanding of the principal's/assistant principal's level of performance.

- Self-assessment

- Principal Evaluation Rubric

- Principal Professional Development Plan

    o Beginning-of-year Goal Setting Form

o Mid-year Progress Form

o End-of-year Goal Attainment Form

- Principal Summary Rating Form

- Principal Record of Activities

Evaluation Rubric is a composite matrix of the standards, elements, and descriptors of T-PESS.

Factor analysis is a statistical procedure that reduces a set of items on a measuring instrument to a smaller number of dimensions called factors.

Indicators are the sub-categories of performance embedded within the performance standard.

Standard is the distinct aspect of leadership or realm of activities that form the basis for the evaluation of a school executive.

Performance Levels are used for evaluating school principals and assistant principals for Standards 1-5:

- Distinguished: Principal/assistant principal consistently and significantly exceeded basic competence on standards of performance. If the "Distinguished" rating is used, the appraiser must comment about why it was used.

- Accomplished: Principal/assistant principal exceeded basic competence on standard(s) for performance most of the time.

- Proficient: Principal/assistant principal demonstrated basic competence on standard(s) of performance.

- Developing: Principal/assistant principal demonstrated adequate growth toward achieving standard(s) during the period of performance but did not demonstrate competence on standard(s) of performance.

- Not Demonstrated, Needs Improvement: Principal/assistant principal did not demonstrate competence on or adequate growth toward achieving standard(s) of performance. If the "Not Demonstrated" rating is used, the appraiser must comment about why it was used.

Artifact

An *artifact* is one of many kinds of tangible by-products produced by a principal, during the annual evaluation cycle, that best reflect his or her skills on the criterion identified in the performance evaluation rubric. One example of an artifact could be a Campus Improvement Plan. The plan would be uploaded into the system and associated with a particular performance standard – in this case, perhaps **Standard I**: **Instructional Leadership.**

The same artifact can be used to support performance as described by other standards and/or elements. Continuing the example, some of the characteristics of the Campus Improvement Plan might address instructional strategies that would be found in **Standard 2: Human Capital.**

Although the T-PESS System provides some suggested artifacts, it is recommended that school systems collaborate with principals to expand and generate a list of artifacts and evidence by performance standard and/or element that best reflect principal practice and performance expectations as defined by

their district.

Evidence

On the other hand, **evidence** is a tangible by-product that can be produced as a result of using an artifact. Further, building on the example above, the adherence and execution of a *Campus Improvement Plan* could result in fewer disciplinary issues and off-task behaviors of students. Accordingly, the data validating a reduction in student disciplinary issues could be uploaded into the *artifact and evidence database* and associated with the appropriate standard or element.

Don't create a portfolio

The ability to upload artifacts and evidence to the software database is designed to improve the process and procedures accompanying best practice in supervision and evaluation. Submission of artifacts and evidence is not intended, and we strongly recommend that the system <u>not be used</u>, as a repository for a portfolio. It is unreasonable to expect a principal and appraiser to spend time uploading everything a principal might be responsible for into the system to substantiate his or her performance. Simply put, it is unnecessary.

Appropriate use of the artifacts/evidence

The ultimate decision on the best ways to use artifacts and evidence as part of a principal's evaluation rests with the district or school. However, we do have some suggestions on ways to use artifacts and evidence that keep this part of the evaluation process meaningful and manageable. Keep in mind that the primary purpose of evaluation is to inspire and inform performance improvement. A secondary purpose is to use evaluation results to inform policy decisions. Some appropriate uses of artifacts and evidence include the following:

Goal Setting: Identify a number of artifacts and evidence that can be used to support a targeted performance goal. Collaboratively determine what artifact and/or evidence would best support a specific strategy detailed within the four artifacts and/or evidence per goal. (The perfect number of artifacts and evidence, of course, will be dependent on the context of each principal's evaluation.)

Discrepancy in performance perception: Due to the dynamic and complex nature of leadership in the school, compounded by the fact that time is a limited resource to appraisers, there will be times when there is disagreement on the formative and summative scores principals receive during data collection. In such cases, the presentation of artifacts and/or evidence could support a certain rating. Using artifacts and evidence in this way helps stimulate productive conversations about best practice, allowing the principal to explain and substantiate his or her performance and the advisor to review the depth and quality of work and clarify performance expectations.

Strategic priorities: School districts may require specific artifacts and/or evidence to be submitted that align with district improvement priorities and goals. For example, a district may require examples of principal-developed formative and summative assessments. It is reasonable to expect that a district would want to reduce variability in assessment development practices.

Policy determined: Finally, specific artifacts and evidence may be required as a part of a "corrective" action or performance improvement plan. Typically, the process for developing, monitoring, and evaluating such plans are specifically spelled out in district policy.

USER'S GUIDE: Texas Principal Evaluation & Support System

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