



Texas Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems Refinement Year Overview

Background

Since 2012, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has been developing a new teacher evaluation system to replace the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) as well as developing a new principal evaluation system. TEA began piloting the new systems in the 2014-15 school year, but in late July of 2014, TEA determined that a refinement year would greatly benefit the development and rollout of the new teacher and principal evaluation systems. The refinement year will allow TEA to take all 2014-2015 pilot feedback into consideration, adjust appraiser training materials and evaluation tools as appropriate, and provide the state's districts another year to have conversations about the role of a formative evaluation system in teacher and principal development.

Participation

TEA is seeking approximately 200 districts to participate in the refinement year, an addition of 135 districts from the 65 currently participating in the pilot year. The capacity of ESCs to train new appraisers in the summer of 2015 will largely determine how many districts in each region could participate. The size of districts joining the refinement year will also be a significant factor in the number of districts that a given region could accommodate.

Benefits

Districts that participate in the refinement year will benefit in the following ways:

- Districts can begin the process of changing the culture around evaluation from one based in compliance to one based in feedback, support, and development
- Districts will receive focused attention and support from ESCs and content experts, who will work closely with refinement districts to assist implementation
- District feedback on the evaluation systems will lead to improved processes and materials
- Districts will receive free appraiser training

Requirements

Districts that participate in the refinement year would have to commit to the following:

- Adopting T-TESS and/or T-PESS as their locally adopted evaluation system(s)
- Attending appraiser training during the summer of 2015 at an ESC

- Ensuring that all appraisers are certified (T-TESS requires passing a T-TESS certification exam)
- Implementing with fidelity all components of the T-TESS and/or T-PESS evaluation process, except for student growth (see below for more on student growth)
- Interacting with local ESCs to receive implementation support and provide feedback on the evaluation system(s)

Training

Appraiser trainings will be conducted through the ESCs in the summer of 2015. Participating districts can assume that trainings will be held from the middle of June through the beginning of August, except for the week of July 4th.

There will be no registration fee for appraiser training for refinement district personnel.

Data and Portal Use

The Teach for Texas portal will continue to be the primary source for materials and support for the T-TESS system. That site includes training modules on each domain and dimension of the rubric, templates and supporting documents for each part of the evaluation process, including the self-assessment and goal-setting process, observation evidence collection, pre- and post-conferences, and end-of-year conferences.

For districts that would like to use the portal for the submission of observation and evaluation results, the generation of teacher score reports, and campus and district aggregate reports, the portal will be available to them.

Districts do not, however, have to use the Teach for Texas portal for submission of evaluation results during the refinement year. If districts would prefer to use another evaluation management system to track, collect, or process evaluation data and results, they can.

Student Growth

For the pilot and refinement years, TEA strongly recommends that districts do not implement student growth measures during their first year of T-TESS implementation. It will take time for district and campus personnel to adjust from PDAS, an evaluation system largely based on compliance, to T-TESS, an evaluation system focused on providing instructionally valuable information to educators so they can continue to grow as practitioners.

Once districts and campuses establish an evaluation process based on improving educator practices, the subsequent implementation of student growth can reinforce those goals and provide additional data and information that appraisers and teachers can use to inform professional development decisions.

Due to these considerations, refinement year districts will not be required to implement student growth during the 2015-2016 school year.

LETTER OF INTENT REGARDING EDUCATOR APPRAISAL PROJECT FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2015-2016

October 15, 2014

This Letter of Intent expresses the agreement between [insert district name] (“District”) and the Texas Education Agency (“Agency”) regarding implementation of new appraisal systems for teachers and principals during the 2015-2016 school year (“Refinement Year”).

It is the express intent of the District to participate in the Refinement Year during the 2015-2016 school year agreed to by the superintendent, District school board, or other equivalent governing authority. In accordance with Texas Education Code (TEC) §21.352, the board adopted the Refinement Year appraisal system as the local option appraisal system on [insert date]. The District shall provide the Agency the list of campuses within the district, with campus identification numbers, that will participate in the Refinement Year attached to this letter. If all campuses in the District shall participate in the Refinement Year, the District shall check the appropriate box on page 3 of this letter.

The District will also indicate on page 3 of this letter whether the District shall participate in the teacher evaluation system, the principal evaluation system, or both for the Refinement Year.

The Parties agree as follows:

Agency Commitments

- 1) The Agency will provide for all required training through the Education Service Centers (“ESCs”) for District leaders, principals, and appraisers beginning approximately June 15, 2015. This will include training materials, trainers, and electronic access to supplemental materials as available. Appraisers who complete the Refinement Year training and pass the subsequent certification examination will be considered certified in accordance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §150.1006. The Agency will provide for ongoing access to appraisal system training and support through the ESCs until the close of the 2015-2016 school year.
- 2) The Agency will provide an electronic dashboard for all district appraisal results to be used at the district’s discretion.
- 3) The Agency will provide for training opportunities in all participating ESC regions.

District Commitments

- 1) Appraisal Requirements—As applicable, District commits that all appraisers will participate in all required trainings, including a three-day, face-to-face training for the teacher evaluation system and a two-day, face-to-face training for the principal evaluation system. Following completion of training and prior to performing appraisals,

LETTER OF INTENT REGARDING EDUCATOR APPRAISAL PROJECT FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2015-2016

an appraiser of teachers must pass the certification exam administered by TEA or its representatives.

- 2) Quality Implementation—District agrees to implement the evaluation systems with fidelity in all participating campuses, including adhering to the designated evaluation process, and using designated rubrics and provided online resources.
- 3) Collaborate with local education service center—District must work with their local ESC to coordinate training times. Additionally, District must keep their local ESC updated on any changes in District or campus leadership to ensure trainings can be administered to any new hires.

**LETTER OF INTENT REGARDING EDUCATOR APPRAISAL PROJECT FOR SCHOOL
YEAR 2015-2016**

[Insert District Name]

By: _____
Superintendent Name
Address
City, Texas Zip

_____ Date

Texas Education Agency

By: _____
Ryan Franklin
Associate Commissioner
Educator Leadership and Quality
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, TX 78701-1494

_____ Date

Will all campuses within the District participate in the Refinement Year?

Yes No

If not, please include a list of participating campuses with campus identification numbers.

Which of the following will the District implement during the Refinement Year? Check all that apply.

Teacher Evaluation System Principal Evaluation System