Evaluating Tennessee's Teachers

May 2011

Questions Still to be Answered

Many questions raised by TEA and our members over the past 15 months about the workings of the new evaluation system remain unanswered (or only partially answered). We expect many of these questions to be answered during the next couple of months as the state makes decisions and develops additional guidelines prior to July 1, 2011.

Questions related to Achievement Data

1. *How will TVAAS scores for teachers who were on extended leave (maternity, medical, etc.) during the year be addressed in those teachers' evaluations?*
2. *What will be used for the 35 percent growth data in schools that have no school-wide data (i.e. pre-K-2 configurations)?*
3. *What growth data will be used for itinerant teachers who serve multiple schools?*
4. *What growth data will be used for special education teachers and inclusion teachers who impact general education students?*
5. *Will school/district-wide data include data from teachers who are not fully professionally licensed (apprentice teachers, alternative licensure)?*
6. *How will school-wide data incorporate data from alternate growth measures?*
7. *How will working with pre-service teachers impact the growth data of the professional teachers-of-record?*
8. *How does the use of non-certified substitutes (in one classroom for an extended period) impact school-wide or district-wide growth data?*
9. *How does the homebound student's scores impact the teacher-of-record's growth data?*
10. *If graduation rate is used, will it be school-wide for all teachers or include only those who were on a given teacher's caseload?*
11. *If ACT is used, will it be the composite score or individual subject scores?*
12. *How long must a teacher be on a faculty before their students' data is included in school-wide data?*
13. *If a teacher or principal changes job site or assignment during the school year, how is their 35 percent growth data calculated? How is their 15 percent other achievement data determined?*
14. *What data is used for teachers with split grade assignments (e.g., 4th and 5th grade)?*
15. *Can writing assessment scores be disaggregated from TCAP and used for the 15 percent?*

16. *How will school/district-wide TVAAS scores be calculated? Is this different from "TVAAS composite"? If so, how will each be calculated?*

17. *If a teacher has more than one TVAAS score, how will those scores be compiled?*

18. *What level of performance on the various options for the 15 percent component will be required to qualify as "at expectations," "above expectations," etc.?*

Questions related to Observation and Overall Process

19. *Will there be a different rubric for apprentice and alternative-licensed teachers? (Will the scoring standard be the same as for professional teachers?)*

20. *What observation rubric will be used for teachers with non-classroom assignments (e.g., graduation coaches, counselors, reading specialists, technology specialists, instructional coaches)?*

21. *With so much dependent on student performance data, how will an equitable distribution of students be ensured? What allowances or adjustments will be made for differences in class size, number of students below grade level and other possible disparities?*

22. *How often will principals and other observers be required to receive training on the evaluation process?*

23. *How frequently will teachers be given orientation on the evaluation process, and who will do this?*

24. *How will school districts be monitored regarding appropriate implementation of the evaluation process/rules?*

25. *When (in the school year) will the teacher and principal make the decision about what data to use for the teacher's 15 percent?*

26. *When will teachers claim their students for TVAAS? How will they deal with students who have not been present for instruction for the minimum number of days?*

27. *Why are the four domains of the observation rubric not given equal weight in the state model? How was this decision made to assign the different weights?*

28. *When the three evaluation components are combined for a final rating, if the resulting number is not a whole number, precisely what score qualifies a teacher to be in the top two ratings or the bottom two ratings to determine tenure/probationary status?*

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