

TASBO 2021 **Engage**

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ANNUAL CONFERENCE

DOCUMENTATION: *IS YOURS ALL THAT IT SHOULD BE?*

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Let me introduce myself . . .

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

"The attorney will review proper documentation for renewals and nonrenewals, as well as share best practices for ensuring that all documentation includes everything that it should be and not anything that should not be there!"

- Confirm timing and tasks for contract nonrenewal preparation
- Gain insight into correlation of TTESS to Chapter 21 nonrenewals
- Identify elements to rock solid documentation!

 THESE PRINCIPLES CAN BE APPLIED EQUALLY TO AT-WILL AND ADMINISTRATIVE, NON-TEACHING STAFF!

IS YOUR DISTRICT ON TRACK?

- January: Completion of administrator evaluations
- February: Completion of all evaluations of poor performing/young teachers; goal setting refined; administrator renewals to Board
- February/March: Conduct file reviews with all campus principals
- March/April: Round 2 of file reviews; checking for progress; recommendations for renewal made to superintendent; probationary contract terminations and nonrenewals held back; additional goal refinement
- April/May: Career counseling sessions; negotiation of resignations; negative action to Board

WHERE DO WE GET THESE DEADLINES?

- Orientation (3 wks after 1st day of instruction)
- Appraisal calendar (same as above)
- Goal setting (first 6 wks)
- Advance notice provision (DNA Local)
- Pre-observation conference
- Post-observation conference deadline (10 bus days)
- End of year conference (15 bus days before last day of instruction)
- Summative (10 bus days from EOY conf; no later than 15 days before last day of instruction)

DON'T FORGET:

- 45-minute observation (in writing if split)
- 10-day rule (shared w/ tchr if used in eval)
- Verify third party data
- Notify principal of cumulative data
- Walkthrough feedback (w/in 10 days)
- Goal refinement (no TINA)
- Principal/AP attend end of year conference (if appraiser not on campus)

APPRAISAL CALENDAR (published and unpublished)



APPRAISAL ACTIVITIES	DATES
Deadline for Teacher Orientation (Walk-throughs may begin immediately after orientation date)	September 4, 2020
Formal Observations begin	September 14, 2020
Deadline for goal setting conferences: All Teachers	October 2, 2020
Deadline for Part I of goal Setting form	October 2, 2020
File Check # 1	December 1-4, 2020
File Check # 2	February 8-12, 2021
Deadline for completion of formal observations (except late hires)	February 26, 2021
EOY conferences begin: All Teachers	March 1, 2021
Contract renewals submitted to the Superintendent	March 4, 2021
Deadline for completion of EOY conferences: All Teachers	April 1, 2021
Second round of contract renewals, non-renewals or terminations submitted to the Superintendent	April 16, 2021
Written Summative Report completed after EOY conference (for teachers receiving formal observation)	Released to teachers within (10) days after conference
Final date to release Summative Report (for teachers receiving formal observation)	April 30, 2021
All evaluations and supporting documentation must be completed, signed, and in DMAC on or before this date	May 21, 2021

All teachers are to be appraised with Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support (T-TESS) System, except teachers who are eligible for less frequent evaluations in accordance with Board Policy DNA(LOCAL).

Formal T-TESS observations may not be conducted on the following days:

- During the two weeks following the day of completion of T-TESS orientation
- During administration of standardized tests
- On the days before and after a school holiday
 - September 4th and September 8th
 - October 8th and October 13th
 - November 20th and November 30th
 - December 18th and January 5th
 - January 15th and January 19th
 - February 12th and February 16th
 - March 4th and March 15th

ADD INS:

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DNA (LEGAL)

- In addition to conducting a complete appraisal as frequently as required by Education Code 21.352(c), a district shall require that appropriate components of the appraisal process, such as classroom observations and walk-throughs, occur more frequently as necessary to ensure that a teacher receives adequate evaluation and guidance. A district shall give priority to conducting appropriate components more frequently for inexperienced teachers or experienced teachers with identified areas of deficiency. TEC 21.352(c-1)

DNA (LEGAL)

- The district shall notify a teacher of the results of any appraisal of the teacher in a **timely manner** so that the appraisal may be used as a **developmental tool** by the district and the teacher to improve the overall performance of the teacher. *TEC 21.352(f)*
- Each teacher is entitled to receive a **written copy** of the evaluation ***promptly*** on its completion. The evaluation and any rebuttal may be given to another school district at which the teacher has applied for employment at the request of that district.

DNA REGULATION

- T-TESS is a process that seeks to develop habits of continuous improvement with evidence-based feedback and professional development decisions based on that feedback through ongoing dialogue and collaboration.
- Components of the appraisal process, such as classroom observations and walk-throughs, will be conducted as frequently as necessary to ensure that teachers receive appropriate guidance.

TEA describes T-TESS as an on-going, recursive process that requires both the teacher and the administration to track the teacher's progress towards goals and reflect on goal attainment. Goal setting and professional development should be interwoven and applied throughout the year.

Current Year			Next Year
Weeks 1-6	Weeks 6 through End-of-Year Conferences	At Least 15 Days Prior to the Last Day of Instruction	Weeks 1-6
Teacher Orientation (No later than the first three weeks of school and at least two weeks before the first observation)	Teacher Orientation for Late Hires Goal-Setting and Professional Development Plan for Late Hires <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submitted to the appraiser within six weeks from the day of the completion of the orientation. 	End-of-Year Conferences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review summative scores for Domains I, II and III - Review the data and evidence gathered throughout the appraisal year for Domain IV, including the teacher's evidence for this domain/dimensions - Review results of the performance of the teachers' students - Review potential goals and professional development plans for the next school year <i>Note: Domain 4 is not scored until after the teacher has been afforded an opportunity to present evidence related to each of the four dimensions during the end-of-year conference.</i>	Teacher Orientation for teachers new to T-TESS, the district, and when district policy has changed from the last orientation. (No later than the first three weeks of school and at least two weeks before the first observation)
Goal-Setting and Professional Development (GSPD) Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submitted to the appraiser for approval within six weeks from the day of completion of the orientation. - A GSPD Conference is required for a teacher in the first year of appraisal under T-TESS and teachers new to the district. 	Ongoing review of teacher and student data Ongoing review of the GSPD plan to formatively assess progress towards goals, professional development impact, and teacher and student performance Ongoing collection of evidence to support Domain IV <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher and appraiser 		Goal-Setting and Professional Development (GSPD) Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Returning teachers review the goal(s) established at the EOY Conference to determine if changes are needed, and submit within first six weeks of instruction.</i> - <i>New teachers are guided through the GSPD process to self-assess, develop goals, and establish a professional development plan, then submit within six weeks of the orientation.</i>
Informal observations and walkthroughs with ongoing feedback to support and develop teacher practices			
Formal observation window established per local policy – Excludes/prohibits observations in the two weeks following the orientation			

T-TESS DOCUMENTATION PACKET

- Evidence of Compliance with Orientation
- Goal Setting and Professional Development Plan
- Informal Walk-through's
- Pre-Observation Conference
- Post-Observation Conference
- On-going Review of Teacher and Student Data
- On-going Review of GSPD Plan to Assess Progress
- Evidence Used for Domain IV
- End of Year Conference
- Teacher Rebuttal and/or Appeal

YOUR ARSENAL

- Appraisal Calendar

- Add “checkpoints” for administrators

- Frequent walkthroughs

- Use the scoring criteria; provide feedback via scripting; check for timely review



- Refinement of Goals

- DMAC drop down system; “Goal 1, Refined”

- Goal Setting and Professional Development Plan

- Use this instead of a “growth plan”

- Goal Progress Memo

- Snapshot of year in one memo; read with board member goggles; shoot for February

IMPORTANCE OF REFINING GOALS

- GSPDP: It's the mechanism TEA has provided – use it!
- You approved the goals; if they no longer match the infraction, it will be USED AGAINST YOU!
- You need to identify supports provided
 - “evidence based feedback” and “professional development decisions”
- More importantly, you'll have to show that remediation efforts have proven futile
 - Despite having done XYZ employee has not improved to satisfactory level
 - Assign remediation that is MEASURABLE

NONRENEWAL and T-TESS

- Board must consider most recent evaluations when “relevant to reasons”
 - Tex. Educ. Code § 21.203(a)
 - Domain IV (professional practices and responsibilities)
- Before making final decision to nonrenew
 - But not at proposal stage
- Treat all documentation like it is cumulative data
 - Shared in writing within 10 working days
 - Verification of parent/student complaints

THE COMMISSIONER SPEAKS

- The appraisal does not have to be completed before the proposal to nonrenew or even before the nonrenewal hearing
- Fact that district had not prepared intervention plan will not subvert the nonrenewal
- The employee cannot wait until the nonrenewal hearing to raise concerns about the appraisal process or to challenge the appraisal
- An employee does not have a legal right to have an evaluation made early enough that it can be fully grieved and appealed prior to the board considering the evaluation as a reason for proposed nonrenewal

DOCUMENTATION: 3 GOALS

- Performance will improve; OR
- If no improved performance, employee will see writing on the wall and resign; OR
- If no improved performance and no resignation, you will have the paper trail necessary to support adverse action if challenged

WHAT DOCUMENTATION IS NOT:

- Diary entries
- Calendar entries
- Post it notes
- Notes to File
- Email
- Memos to employee w/o employee signature

WHAT DOCUMENTATION IS:

- Written correspondence from the supervisor to the employee memorializing discussions of performance concerns, inclusive of directives for future behavior and signed by the employee evidencing receipt
- Tips?
 - Write for a broader audience (they have to understand it to reach the same conclusion)
 - Stick with one issue per memo
 - Don't forget the importance of fundamental fairness

In other words,

DOCUMENTATION SHOULD BE:

- Addressed to the employee
- From the supervisor (with title)
- Dated
- Contain references to impact on T-TESS or other evaluation instrument
- Provide forewarning (how employee should have known better)
- Provide directives for future behavior
- Provide opportunity for remediation (and identify supports already provided)
- Acknowledged by the employee



Documentation Reminders!



- Think like a _____; glass half empty
- When you think the worst (i.e. it will happen again), you will put pen to paper _____
- Write for a broader audience, such as the lady at _____
- If she can understand it, so can a _____ member, an _____ investigator or even a _____
- The goal is for the third-party reader to say “I would have done the _____ thing”
- Understanding requires you to write in simple terms
 - keep it to one _____ if you can, and document only one _____ at a time
 - no _____, terms of _____, or words with more than ____ syllables
- Understanding also requires you to tell a complete _____
- Review your memo with the _____ in mind; is it a document that works _____ you or _____ you?
- And KEEP IT OBJECTIVE at all times; no personal _____, sarcasm or degrading _____

BEST CHEAT SHEET EVER!!

1. Correspondence follows conference
2. Recite specific allegation
3. Include employee response
4. Copy and paste text from handbook, policy, etc. (how employee should have known better)
5. Directives for future behavior
6. Include supports you will provide
7. Identify if/how conduct will be reflected in evaluation
8. Notice of additional discipline for future misconduct
9. Signature of acknowledgement

Last but not least . . .

THE DREADED EMAIL

- Email is a public record!
- “Personnel file” is defined to include everything about the employee regardless of location
- Sloppy spelling and grammar
- Personal thoughts and opinions dangerous
- Face to face communication better form of management
- Often misinterpreted
- No acknowledgment



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