

DATE:	July 10, 2025
SUBJECT:	Texas Teacher Evaluation & Support System (T-TESS) Refresh Engagement and Future Updates
CATEGORY:	Teacher Appraisal
NEXT STEPS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the T-TESS Stakeholder Advisory Committee application with district and campus staff who support implementation of teacher appraisal systems and who would provide valuable feedback as a part of this process. • Complete the interest form if your district would like additional information about field testing or is interested in participating.

The purpose of this communication is to share information regarding anticipated updates to the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS), including highlighting engagement opportunities to inform the updates, and previewing the long-term timeline for release.

T-TESS Context and Planned Refresh

T-TESS was initially launched in 2015 and is currently used by 89% of Texas school systems. As we mark its tenth anniversary and reflect on the time since its initial launch, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has identified an opportunity to refresh and improve the system to meet the evolving needs of Texas schools.

There have been related updates in recent years, including to Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 19, Chapter 235, Subchapters A-D, as required by House Bill (HB) 1605, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023. The updates reorganize the teacher standards and introduce definitions that clarify expectations for educators and foster a shared understanding of key terms.

The revised standards name what teachers need to know and be able to do before entering the profession, and as part of their ongoing professional growth. This includes best practices in implementing high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) products, the Science of Learning, Research-Based Instructional Strategies (RBIS), Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Content-Based Language Instruction (CBLI), digital literacy and student work analysis. The updated standards will inform potential modifications to T-TESS that further support and align with initiatives observed in the field.

The T-TESS refresh is not designing a complete replacement, but instead, building on the strengths of the existing system. The goal of the refresh is to update and align key appraisal components based on national research, updates to educator standards, identified trends in T-TESS annual survey data, and feedback from stakeholders across the state. This process provides an opportunity to identify areas for refinement while recognizing the current strengths of T-TESS and maintaining the integrity of the current system. The updated appraisal system will clearly define excellent teaching and learning and support school systems' ongoing efforts to enhance teacher effectiveness and improve student outcomes.

Engagement Opportunities

As part of the T-TESS refresh, TEA is offering two key opportunities this fall for educators, district leaders, and partners to actively help shape the future of educator appraisal in Texas.

1. **T-TESS Stakeholder Advisory Committee** - TEA is recruiting a statewide committee to provide feedback on proposed updates to T-TESS.
 - **Purpose:** The Stakeholder Advisory Committee will play a vital role in providing feedback, supporting implementation planning and ensuring the new system reflects the realities of classrooms across Texas.
 - **Commitment:** 2-5 virtual hours per month between August 2025 to February 2026.
 - **Application Deadline:** August 4, 2025
 - **Next Step for District Leaders:** Please share this [opportunity](#) with teachers, school leaders and other administrators who would provide valuable feedback as a part of this process.
2. **Field Testing** - To ensure the revised T-TESS rubric supports reliable, instructionally aligned ratings, TEA will field test the instrument across a sample of districts this fall. The agency is recruiting school systems that could provide access to K-12 classrooms.
 - **Purpose:** Examine how teachers and observers engage with the rubric in real classroom settings.
 - **Commitment:** One scheduled visit with school system leaders that provides access to between five and 10 diverse K-12 classrooms and an opportunity to connect with classroom teachers.
 - **Interest Survey Deadline:** August 8, 2025
 - **Next Step for District Leaders:** Please complete the [T-TESS Field Test Interest Form](#) if your school system is interested in supporting this important work and participating in field testing.

Timeline Overview

Target Date	Milestone
Fall 2024	T-TESS at Ten Landscape Analysis
Spring 2025	Updated Teacher Pedagogy Standards
Summer 2025	Draft Proposed Updates to T-TESS Rubric and System
August 2025	Launch T-TESS Stakeholder Advisory Committee
Fall - Winter 2025	Field Test Updated Rubric and System
Fall 2026	Pilot Updated T-TESS

As TEA conducts planning and engagement related to the T-TESS refresh, regular updates will be provided on the [T-TESS website](#).

Contact Information

For questions related to this communication or the T-TESS refresh, please email support@teachfortexas.org.