

A Survey of Race to the Top Teacher Evaluation Systems

In the following report, Hanover Research provides an overview of Race to the Top (RTTT) teacher evaluation systems. The introduction discusses grant provisions and highlights central requirements for teacher evaluations. Section I outlines the progress of three Ohio districts in implementing RTTT-based teacher evaluation systems. Section II examines RTTT transitions in two alternate states – Delaware and Tennessee – to provide a wider context. The final section provides a brief literature review on the logistical implementation of RTTT reforms, and offers recommendations for education service providers that may support teacher evaluation procedures. Appendices at the end of the report contain additional evaluation materials of interest.

Introduction

The Obama administration's \$4.35 billion Race to the Top (RTTT) Fund, a competitive grant program aimed at rewarding states that were "creating the conditions for education innovation," dominated discussions of educational reform from its July 2009 launch until well after all funds had been awarded.¹ Though the program's endowment was relatively modest by government standards – one reporter noted that the total budget accounted for less than one percent of all federal, state, and local education spending – it accomplished significant reforms even *before* awards were made, with many states scrambling to enact new laws and regulations that would make them more attractive recipients.²

Though RTTT targeted various levels of reform, **the most significant emphasis was placed on improving teacher effectiveness, specifically by bolstering evaluation procedures.** This encompassed two main dimensions: first, establishing a means of measuring student growth (ideally through the implementation of data systems), and second, incorporating this data into teacher evaluations and subsequent human capital decisions, such as promotion, retention, and tenure. Teacher evaluations were addressed in the RTTT application in Assurance Area D: "Great Teachers and Leaders," which held the most weight of all the criteria (138 of 500 total points).³

In the following report, Hanover Research examines school districts and states that have made progress in implementing changes under Assurance Area D, particularly the sub-criterion D(2): "Improving Teacher and Principal Effectiveness Based on Performance."⁴ In doing so, we focus specifically on RTTT-based changes to teacher evaluation systems, highlighting the structure and content of these systems and, importantly, the strategies through which changes are being implemented. Federal requirements for how grant money is used make solid logistics a significant concern in the execution of reforms at both the state and district levels.

Because the final RTTT awards were announced in August 2010, **most states, including Ohio, are in the beginning stages of reform implementation,** and limited information is available regarding detailed progress reports. Moreover, a broad scan of Ohio local education agencies (LEAs) in receipt of RTTT funding indicates that *very few districts have published materials of any kind related to their individual RTTT initiatives*, which may be due to the fact that RTTT roll-out is still in the preliminary stages. Nonetheless, transitions are underway in Ohio, as well as other recipient states.

¹ "Race to the Top Program Executive Summary." U.S. Department of Education. <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/executive-summary.pdf>

² Brill, S. "The Teachers' Unions' Last Stand." *New York Times Magazine*, 17 May, 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/23/magazine/23Race-t.html>

³ "Race to the Top Program Executive Summary," *op. cit.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

Report Contents

Following the introduction, this report consists of three sections.

- ❖ **Section I** presents case studies of three Ohio districts that are currently in the process of implementing changes to teacher evaluations using RTTT funding: Hamilton City School District and Talawanda School District, both in Butler County, and Jefferson Area Local School District, in Ashtabula County. These districts were selected based on the fact that they provided comprehensive, up-to-date information on their RTTT reforms. The majority of participating Ohio districts either do not independently publish RTTT materials, or only publish their initial Scope of Work proposals, which do not address progress to date.
- ❖ **Section II** provides case studies of reforms in Delaware and Tennessee, the only two states awarded funding in the *first* round of RTTT. These states serve as useful case studies for two reasons: first, their proposals were the strongest, making them valuable exemplars of reform planning and logistics; and second, both have had more time to enact changes, which offers a clearer picture of statewide progress. Section II is supplemented by Appendices A and B, at the end of the report, which contain additional RTTT materials from Delaware and Tennessee.
- ❖ **Section III** offers a brief overview of literature regarding RTTT reform implementation, and provides a list of Hanover’s recommendations for education service providers.

Before examining the case studies, it is useful to outline the major components of RTTT’s D(2) criterion, “Improving Teacher and Principal Effectiveness Based on Performance.” This provides a reference point for examining states’ approaches to teacher evaluations. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the criterion as outlined by the U.S. Department of Education.⁵

⁵ *Ibid.* Reproduced verbatim from source.

Table 1: RTTT Criterion D(2): “Improving Teacher and Principal Effectiveness Based on Performance”

Criterion	Component	Description
“Improving Teacher and Principal Effectiveness Based on Performance”	1	Establish clear approaches to measuring student growth ... and measure it for each individual student.
	2	Design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth ... and (b) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement.
	3	Conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback; as part of such evaluations, provide teachers and principals with data on student growth for their students, classes, and schools.
	4	Use these evaluations, at a minimum, to inform decisions regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Developing teachers and principals ... by providing relevant coaching, induction support, and/or professional development; ❖ Compensating, promoting, and retaining teachers and principals; ❖ Whether to grant tenure and/or full certification to teachers and principals; ❖ Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve.

Source: U.S. Department of Education

Section I: Ohio Districts

Like other states which were awarded funding in the second round of RTTT, Ohio is still in the early stages of rolling out new programs and implementing changes to meet RTTT requirements. For participating LEAs, the advent of the 2011-2012 school year marks the transition from the Year One “Strategic Review and Planning” program of work to the Year Two “Implement, Review and Refine” program.⁶

The preliminary nature of current initiatives makes detailed information, particularly at the district level, difficult to obtain. Moreover, RTTT programs and projects are generally reported primarily on the *state* level, making it difficult to assess the progress of individual schools districts.⁷ Nonetheless, some Ohio districts have taken steps toward meeting RTTT requirements, and have made planning documents and progress reports available to the public. In this section, we outline the initiatives of three districts that have made strides in the RTTT transition, particularly with regard to teacher evaluations: Hamilton City School District, Talawanda School District, and Jefferson Area Local School District.

Ohio requires participating LEAs to design and implement a teacher evaluation system based on state standards and aligned with the DOE-developed model, which dictates that evaluation procedures must:⁸

- ❖ Be developed with teacher and administrator input;
- ❖ Use a rubric that distinguishes five performance ratings: ‘ineffective,’ ‘satisfactory,’ ‘effective,’ ‘highly effective’ and ‘distinguished’;
- ❖ Incorporate standards-based definitions of ‘effective’ or ‘highly effective’ teachers;
- ❖ Include a self-assessment on Ohio’s Standards for the Teaching Profession;
- ❖ Incorporate goal setting, observations protocol, and an analysis of students’ learning needs; and
- ❖ Utilize a summative evaluation process based on multiple measures, including student growth.

It is important to note that while the Ohio Department of Education recently designated ten organizations as RTTT “educational partners,” information on transitional procedures is generally not yet available through local education service

⁶ “Race to the Top News and Views, May 26, 2011.” Ohio Department of Education.

<http://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/DocumentManagement/DocumentDownload.aspx?DocumentID=105900>

⁷ The state does mention the progress of individual schools in RTTT newsletters; however, beyond these publications, the only detailed, district-specific information provided by the state tends to be contained in initial LEA Scope of Work documents, which outline proposed initiatives but do not address progress to date.

⁸ “Assurance Area D Technical Assistance Document- Evaluation Systems.” Ohio Department of Education.
<http://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/DocumentManagement/DocumentDownload.aspx?DocumentID=93557>

centers.⁹ We therefore focus on the efforts of individual districts and, where applicable, note whether the district is affiliated with an RTTT “partner” organization.

Hamilton City School District (Butler County)

As of May 2011, Hamilton City School District had reportedly made “significant progress” in meeting its Race to the Top goals.¹⁰ Hamilton’s \$1.74 million share of Ohio’s state funding has so far been used for changes falling under Assurance Areas B, C, and D. With regard to teacher evaluations, the district’s administrative assistant for business and planning reported to a local newspaper that “the instructional department has prepared value-added notebooks for each building, has been trained in district instruction and met with each building principal to review the data.”¹¹

Logistically, the implementation of new programs has been handled by a 10-member committee in charge of overseeing the district’s progress toward RTTT requirements. A central project of the committee has been a gap analysis of the district’s teacher evaluation system, though specific details of this analysis have not been made available by the school district.¹²

Table 2 displays the district’s RTTT project budget table for Assurance Area D, “Great Teachers and Leaders.”¹³

Table 2: Hamilton City School District Project Budget Table, RTTT Assurance Area D

Budget Categories	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Salaries	\$113,984	\$113,984	\$113,984	\$113,984	\$455,936
Retirement/Fringe Benefits	\$25,991	\$25,991	\$25,991	\$25,991	\$103,964
Purchase Services	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$220,000
Supplies	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Outlay	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Total Costs	\$194,975	\$194,975	\$194,975	\$194,975	\$779,900

Source: Hamilton City School District

⁹ “MOESC Selected as ‘Race to the Top’ Partner.” Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center.

<http://www.moesc.net/?p=668>

¹⁰ “Hamilton Schools Moving on ‘Race to the Top’ Requirements.” *Hamilton Journal News*, 17 May, 2011.

<http://www.journal-news.com/news/hamilton-news/hamilton-schools-moving-on-race-to-the-top-requirements-1162576.html>

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ “Hamilton City RTTT Budget.” Ohio Department of Education.

<ftp://ftp.ode.state.oh.us/misc/RTTT/old%20Scope%20of%20Work/044107-Hamilton%20City/044107-Hamilton%20City%20-%20Budget.xlsx>

Talawanda School District (Butler County)

As of spring 2011, Talawanda School District had undertaken detailed planning initiatives for meeting RTTT requirements. In total, Talawanda received \$201,549.83 in funding in 2010.¹⁴ The logistical implementation of RTTT-driven transitions in the district is being handled by a District Leadership Team, in coordination with an RTTT Transition Team composed of various subcommittees. Internally, these teams provide teachers and district staff with relevant instructional and professional development materials regarding the transition process. Externally, the teams engage regularly with stakeholders, especially parents, to communicate objectives and progress district-wide and within individual schools.¹⁵

While the majority of RTTT-based changes have not yet been implemented throughout the district, recent planning documents provide useful reference points, as they detail specific strategies and timelines for changes to the teacher evaluation system.

As of the end of the 2010-2011 school year, the district was in the process of forming a committee to revise the district's teacher evaluation system. Once established, the system will be piloted in spring 2012.¹⁶ Table 3 presents Talawanda's plans, including a budgetary breakdown, for initiating changes to teacher evaluations.¹⁷

Table 3: Talawanda Leadership Plan for Reforming Teacher Evaluation System

Tasks ¹⁸	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Budget			
			Salaries	Materials	Other Services	Total
<i>Action 1: Identify ways to measure student growth in order to improve the quality of instruction and learning.</i>						
Identify district-wide team to investigate uses of value-added data, ensuring more consistent dissemination to all grade levels/subject areas, and ensuring confidentiality.	Fall 2010- Spring 2011	Building administrators; one teacher from each building	No cost to grant			0
Investigate and identify possible other measures of student growth that do not have statewide standardized tests.	Spring- Fall 2011	Content chairs; dept. chairs; specialists	\$1,000	-	-	\$1,000

¹⁴ "Federal Funds for Schools on the Way." *The Oxford Press*, 29 January, 2011.

<http://www.oxfordpress.com/news/oxford-news/federal-funds-for-schools-on-the-way-1067333.html>

¹⁵ "Talawanda School District DLT Team District & School Communication Plan." Talawanda School District.

http://www.talawanda.net/racetothetop/files/2011_dlt_communication_outline.pdf

¹⁶ "Tasks." Talawanda School District. http://www.talawanda.net/racetothetop/files/2011_rttt_tasks.pdf

¹⁷ "DLT Great Teachers (1-4)." Talawanda School District. <http://www.talawanda.net/racetothetop/>

¹⁸ Reproduced verbatim from source.

Tasks ¹⁸	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Budget			
			Salaries	Materials	Other Services	Total
Provide professional development (PD) to faculty about using value-added data to improve student learning. Review student progress (formative and summative).	Spring 2011-Spring 2012	Building administrators	TBD	-	-	TBD
Establish data system 'dashboards' to collate student data for use by teachers.	Fall 2012-Spring 2013	Director of Curriculum and Instruction	TBD	-	-	TBD
Utilize value-added reports to determine areas of performance improvement/PD.	Fall 2013-Spring 2014	Building administrators	<i>No cost to grant</i>			0
<i>Action 2: Implement a comprehensive evaluation system that is aligned with Ohio model, which utilizes multiple measures, including student growth measures.</i>						
Identify a district-wide team to review, research and determine possible components of an evaluation system for teachers and principals.	Fall 2010-Spring 2011	Superintendent; building principals; selected teachers	\$1,000	-	-	\$1,000
Attend PD related to State evaluation model, and provide PD about effective evaluation processes.	Spring 2011-Fall 2011	Principals and teachers	TBD	-	-	TBD
Establish and pilot components of comprehensive evaluation system, and insure alignment to State model.	Spring 2012-Fall 2012	Building administrators and teachers	<i>No cost to grant</i>			0
Continue to pilot comprehensive evaluation system that identifies great teachers and leaders.	Fall 2012-Spring 2013	Director of Curriculum and Instruction	<i>No cost to grant</i>			0
Finalize and use the new evaluation system to conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals.	Fall 2013-Spring 2014	Building administrators	\$1,500	-	-	\$1,500

Source: Talawanda School District

Jefferson Area Local School District (Ashtabula County)

Jefferson Area Local School District was the recipient of \$172,978 in RTTT funding in 2010. In June 2011, the district released a Scope of Work Progress Monitoring Summary detailing the first-year initiatives it had undertaken, as well as plans for the following school year.¹⁹

The district's RTTT transition is overseen by a Transformation Team composed of various subcommittees, including an Evaluation Instrument Committee (EIC) appointed by the local teachers' union. The EIC is slated to attend various training sessions in the 2011-2012 academic year, in preparation for a gap analysis of the current evaluation system in relation to state standards and requirements.²⁰

The district's plan for revamping teacher evaluations was stated as follows:²¹

The [district] will have in place an evaluation system for teachers and principals that is comprehensive and based on best practices as defined within the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession. Consistent with House Bill 1 we will have in place strong intensive supports for new teachers to assist them in using district resources and meeting district goals. Professional development will meet the standards put forth in the state's standards for professional development.

The 2010-2011 budget for reforms under Assurance Area D was \$3,310. The district's central areas of focus are shown in Table 4, below, along with the specific objectives and projects associated with each.²²

¹⁹ "Jefferson Area Local Schools Race to the Top 2010-2014, Year 1 (2010-2011) Progress Monitoring Summary." Jefferson Area Local School District. http://www.jefferson.k12.oh.us/files/1092218/irn%20045872_jefferson%20area%20local%20schools%20year%201%20sow%20progress%20monitoring%20summary%20rev.%206-2-11.pdf

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²² *Ibid.*

Table 4: Jefferson Area Local School District, Assurance Area D Objectives

Focus Area	Objectives	Projects
Student Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Use value-added data throughout school district ❖ Identify growth measures for subjects that do not receive value-added reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Professional development in support of access to and use of value-added data in measuring student growth
Evaluation Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Develop annual teacher evaluation model that provides constructive feedback; includes student growth as significant factor; and uses multiple rating categories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Development of evaluation system through collective bargaining process
Effective Support of Teachers and Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Provide high quality professional development; induction support; coaching services; and common planning/collaboration time for educators ❖ Ensure educators assist in shaping professional development ❖ Undertake regular evaluations of impact and effectiveness of professional development programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Develop process to use data in designing professional development ❖ Develop induction program for new staff ❖ Develop coaching program for educators ❖ Develop time/space for common planning time ❖ Create district professional development team ❖ Develop assessment methodology for professional development

Source: Jefferson Area Local School District

The district's value-added student growth measure was developed through Battelle for Kids, a third-party organization which assists schools and districts in implementing strategic educational reforms. Battelle's recommendations are set to be completed and presented to the district's Transformation Team by July 2011.²³

The RTTT Transformation Team monitors progress of each initiative under Assurance Area D. Relevant quarterly benchmarks are shown in Table 5, below.²⁴ Note that the table includes only those benchmarks which are directly related to *teacher* evaluations; we exclude Assurance Area D projects exclusively related to principals and administrators.

As the table shows, the majority of reforms related to the teacher evaluation system are either currently underway or slated to begin in the 2011-2012 academic year.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

Table 5: Assurance Area D Benchmarks and Progress-to-Date

Year 1 Activities	Quarterly Benchmarks 12/24/10	Quarterly Benchmarks 5/30/2011	Quarterly Benchmarks 6/30/11	Quarterly Benchmarks (Year 2) 9/24/11
Prepare teachers to use value-added data effectively	Value-added measures introduced to staff in October (Completed)	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Value-added professional development program completed ❖ Value-added accounts established for all grade 4-8 teachers
Battelle for Kids value-added program evaluated; recommendation made to Transformation Team	-	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Professional development on the use of value-added reports is offered and 25% of core content teachers have attended
Teachers' union appoints evaluation team	-	-	Team to be appointed (Completed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Team attends state DOE training sessions
Develop process for using evaluation data in designing professional development programs	-	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Create subcommittee to develop process

Source: Jefferson Area Local School District

To support the observation aspect of the evaluation system, the district has opted to utilize McREL Power Walkthrough, a software-based teacher evaluation tool. As of June 2011, staff had been introduced to the Walkthrough process, and preliminary data was being reviewed by each building. By fall 2011, the district aims to develop Walkthrough templates based on RTTT teacher evaluation requirements.²⁵

²⁵ *Ibid.*

Section II: Delaware and Tennessee

In this section, we present case studies of Delaware and Tennessee, the only two states to receive funding in the first round of RTTT. Both have made significant strides in transitioning to teacher evaluation models that fulfill RTTT requirements, and serve as exemplars of RTTT reform implementation on a statewide level.

Additional teacher evaluation materials for each state, including planning documents, are provided in Appendices A and B at the end of the report.

Delaware

Since being awarded approximately \$100 million in RTTT funding, the State of Delaware has made considerable strides in implementing and strengthening reforms related to teacher evaluations. Significant progress at both the statewide and district levels is due, in part, to a decade-long educational reform effort throughout Delaware, the results of which were instrumental in the state's initial obtainment of RTTT funds.²⁶

The allocation of funds to individual districts is coordinated by the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE), which has worked with LEAs in developing, evaluating, and implementing RTTT-based changes. The overarching logistical support structure in the RTTT transition is the LEA Support Program, through which the DDOE organizes workshops, training sessions, and professional development opportunities, and also oversees the monitoring of participating districts' progress based on their four-year plans.²⁷

Structure of Evaluation System

Delaware has had a statewide teacher evaluation system in place since the 1980s.²⁸ Currently in its second incarnation, the Delaware Performance Appraisal System II (DPAS II) had *already* incorporated student growth data into teacher and administrator evaluations; the use of RTTT funding has therefore been targeted primarily at standardizing and streamlining the evaluation process, and also establishing a direct link between teacher evaluations and staffing decisions (compensation, promotion, dismissal and tenure). In the first year of RTTT, Delaware passed new regulations linking teacher effectiveness to student growth, and making tenure provisions dependent upon positive ratings.²⁹

²⁶ Brill, S., *op. cit.*

²⁷ "LEA Support Program." Delaware Department of Education.
http://www.doe.k12.de.us/rttt/lea_pages/support_programs.shtml

²⁸ "Teacher Evaluation System Changes." Delaware Department of Education.
<http://www.doe.k12.de.us/rttt/files/initiatives/DPASII.pdf>

²⁹ "Delaware's Race to Deliver, One Year Later: Where Do We Stand?" *Vision 2015*.
<http://vision2015delaware.org/uploads/rttt1styearreport.pdf>

The DPAS II teacher evaluation system, based on Danielson’s *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*, assesses performance in five component areas: **Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, Professional Responsibilities** and **Student Improvement**. For each component, teachers are awarded a rating of “unsatisfactory,” “basic,” “proficient,” or “distinguished.” Based on evaluations, teachers receive a summative rating of “ineffective,” “needs improvement,” “effective,” or “highly effective.” Summative ratings are determined by the number of satisfactory component scores. To receive a satisfactory score in a component, teachers must receive a “basic” or higher rating on at least three of the four criteria specified in that component. As of fall 2011, demonstrated student growth is required to receive a summative rating of “effective” or higher.³⁰ The frequency of evaluations varies somewhat by teachers’ experience levels and past ratings; however, the student growth component is measured every year.³¹

Table 6 outlines the assessment procedures used to evaluate teachers on each component.³²

Table 6: DPAS II Teacher Evaluation Components and Assessment

Component	Evaluation Procedure
Planning and Preparation	Observation by trained administrators
Classroom Environment	Observation by trained administrators
Instruction	Observation by trained administrators
Professional Responsibilities	‘Professional Responsibilities Form’ completed by teacher, detailing professional growth and contributions
Student Growth	Objectively measured through student achievement data

Source: Delaware Department of Education

Table 7 shows the DPAS II framework for the determination of summative ratings.³³

³⁰ “Race to the Top Application for Initial Funding,” Delaware Department of Education. http://www.doe.k12.de.us/rttt/DE%20RTTT%20Narrative%20Final%20-%20100119_0116.pdf. Information on DPAS II is also available on the DDOE website at <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/csa/dpasii/default.shtml>

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. D-18. For an outline of the evaluation cycle, see Appendix A.

³² *Ibid.*, p. D-10.

³³ *Ibid.*

Table 7: Assigning Summative Ratings under DPAS II

Total Number of Satisfactory Component Ratings	Rating on Student Improvement Component	Summative Rating
4 or 5	Satisfactory	Highly Effective (also requires >1 year of student growth)
3, 4 or 5	Satisfactory	Effective
1 or 2	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Less than 5	Unsatisfactory	Ineffective

Source: Delaware Department of Education

A central goal of Delaware’s reform plan was to bolster evaluations by establishing a clear and measurable definition of student growth and improvement, and subsequently, to use the reconfigured evaluation system more actively in staffing decisions as well as professional development and support programs. The logistical implementation of these changes is outlined in the next subsection.

Logistical Implementation of Changes

Because DPAS II already utilized student growth in its evaluation system prior to RTTT, the goals for the funding in the area of teacher evaluations were stated as follows:³⁴

- ❖ “By July 2011, the State will have a single, clear approach for measuring student growth, as part of annual teacher and principal evaluations.”
- ❖ “Beginning in the 2010-11 school year, all administrators responsible for assessments will receive one-on-one coaching in conducting rigorous annual evaluations.”
- ❖ “By the 2011-12 school year, all LEAs will use the statewide evaluation system to develop, compensate, promote, retain, and remove teachers and principals.”
- ❖ “By the 2011-12 school year, ‘tenure’ will be granted to teachers only if they demonstrate satisfactory student growth for two or more years, and have no more than one year of ‘ineffective’ teaching.”

The DDOE employs a longitudinal data system which tracks individual student data.³⁵ As of June 2011, no announcements had been made by the Delaware secretary of education regarding the proposed standardized models for measuring student growth; however, the DDOE notes that DPAS II is currently “undergoing changes,

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. D-7.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

including the linkage of student growth.”³⁶ While “the critical work related to Component 5 and multiple measures ... will continue through the next school year,” other aspects of the reform plan have been put into motion, namely, the use of development coaches to strengthen teacher evaluations.³⁷

As of March 2011, the state was in negotiations with a third party vendor to hire development coaches (roughly one per every 40 administrators) to serve participating LEAs.³⁸ In an effort to strengthen the teacher evaluation process, development coaches will:³⁹

... [P]rovide coaching to assessors to improve the quality of performance appraisal and instructional planning ... Twelve coaches will work with five to eight schools intensively as well as provide district-wide training to all principals and assistant principals.

The main role of the coaches is to assist evaluators in assessment, and also to help develop improvement plans for teachers rated “ineffective” or “needs improvement.” Following a month-long training program, development coaches are scheduled to begin working with individual districts in July or August 2011, beginning the 24-month program.⁴⁰ After the initial two years, participating LEAs may choose to allot remaining RTTT funding to continue employing the service of development coaches.⁴¹

Changes in the *content* of the teacher evaluation system thus far have been handled on the state level by DDOE staff, who are currently in the process of revising components 1-4, as well as “crafting definitions and criteria” for the student growth component.⁴² The DDOE sought the input of more than 300 educators in developing measures of student growth.⁴³ Changes to the system have not yet been finalized; 2011-2012 has been deemed a “development year” for the recalibrated evaluation system.⁴⁴

To encourage a link between teacher evaluations and staffing decisions, the DDOE mandated that “As part of their participation [in RTTT], LEAs will be required to use educator evaluations as the primary factor in teacher and principal development, promotion, advancement, retention, and removal.”⁴⁵

³⁶ “Development Coaches.” Delaware Department of Education. <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/rttt/files/initiatives/development.pdf>

³⁷ “DPAS II.” Delaware Education Association. <http://www.dsea.org/Accountability/DPASII.html>

³⁸ “Development Coaches,” *op. cit.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ “Race to the Top Application ...,” *op. cit.*

⁴² “Teacher Evaluation System Changes,” *op. cit.*

⁴³ “Delaware’s Race to Deliver ...,” *op. cit.*

⁴⁴ “Teacher Evaluation System Changes,” *op. cit.*

⁴⁵ “Race to the Top Application ...,” *op. cit.* p. D-18.

Another initiative related to teacher evaluations involves an \$8.2 million “data coaches” program. Through the vendor Wireless Generation, the DDOE notes that currently:⁴⁶

Skilled coaches are partnering on-site with educators to build capacity in analyzing student data; adjusting and individualizing instruction; monitoring progress continuously; intervening early ... [and] collaborating across classrooms and grades.

Tennessee

Tennessee, the only state besides Delaware to be awarded funding in the first round of RTTT, received approximately \$500 million.⁴⁷ As noted in its application for initial funding, “No other state has measured student growth through value-added assessment as long as Tennessee.”⁴⁸ As in Delaware, a central use of RTTT funding has been to incorporate student growth data into a teacher evaluation system and to provide a clearer link between teacher evaluations, staffing decisions, and professional development.

Structure of Evaluation System

As a part of its legislative effort to receive RTTT funding, Tennessee mandated that a new, annual teacher and principal evaluation system be implemented statewide beginning in the 2011-2012 school year. The new evaluation system was designed to address all components outlined in RTTT guidelines; namely, the use of multiple metrics for assessment and the incorporation of measurable student growth as a significant criterion.

The formulation of the evaluation system – named the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) – was overseen by the state’s Teacher Evaluation Advisory Council (TEAC). Teacher evaluations are based on three components: **observation data** (50 percent), **student growth score** (35 percent), and **student achievement data**, chosen by the educator and a supervisor from a set of approved options, including postsecondary matriculation and graduation rates (15 percent). A detailed breakdown of evaluative criteria is presented in Appendix B. Student growth data is based on state assessment test scores; for teachers who do not teach subjects covered by state assessments, the TEAC is currently working with third-party

⁴⁶ “Data Coaches.” Delaware Department of Education. <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/rttt/files/initiatives/data.pdf>

⁴⁷ “Delaware and Tennessee Win First Race to the Top Grants.” U.S. Department of Education. <http://www2.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2010/03/03292010.html>

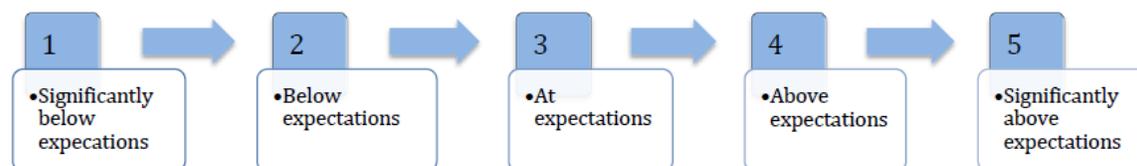
⁴⁸ Tennessee Race to the Top Application for Initial Funding,” p. 81. Tennessee Department of Education. http://www.tn.gov/education/doc/TN_RTIT_Application_2010_01_18.pdf

technical advisors to develop alternative, subject-specific criteria, which are expected to be fully completed by the 2012-2013 school year.⁴⁹

The 50 percent observation component is based on the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) rubric, which rates educators as “unsatisfactory,” “proficient” or “exemplary” for multiple dimensions in three central areas: Instruction, Designing and Planning Instruction, and The Learning Environment. The TAP rubric, which is comprised of 19 indicators, covers the degree to which students grasp central concepts, as well as the extent to which state standards are communicated through coursework.⁵⁰ The “Designing and Planning Instruction” portion of the rubric is provided in Appendix B of this report.

Under the new evaluation system, licensed teachers are observed four times a year, while apprentice teachers are observed six times a year. Following evaluations, the three central components are combined into a *single* rating on a scale of five (shown in Figure 1, below).⁵¹ The specific methodology for reaching a combined score had not yet been made public at the time of this report.

Figure 1: Numerical System for Summative Teacher Ratings



Source: Tennessee Department of Education

Logistical Implementation of Changes

The state’s transition to the TEAM evaluation system is currently underway; training for administrators and instructional leaders was launched in May 2011. Following the four-day state training process, participants must pass an online certification test in order to be approved to conduct evaluations in the upcoming 2011-2012 school year.⁵² For the observation component, the state has developed a TAP Online Training Portal, which provides instructional resources for both evaluators and teachers.⁵³

⁴⁹ “Educators Overview: New Teacher and Principal Evaluation.” Tennessee Department of Education.

http://www.tn.gov/firsttothetop/docs/Educators_Overview.pdf

⁵⁰ “TAP Rubric.” Tennessee Department of Education.

http://www.tn.gov/firsttothetop/docs/TAP_Instruction_Environment_Designing_and_Planning__Rubric_Scoring.pdf

⁵¹ “Educators Overview ...,” *op. cit.*

⁵² “Tennessee First to the Top Monthly Update, May 2011.” Tennessee Department of Education.

<http://www.tn.gov/firsttothetop/documents/TNFirsttotheTopMonthlyUpdateMay2011.pdf>

⁵³ “Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model Training Information.” Tennessee Department of Education. www.gse.harvard.edu/ncte/news/NCTE_Conference_TN_Heyburn.pdf

The implementation of the new model was a multi-stage process, which included input at the state level from both teachers and administrators. While participating LEAs are required to utilize the model as outlined by the state, they may submit proposals for alternative qualitative indicators under the “student achievement data” component.⁵⁴ Input was solicited from teachers and administrators through a series of field tests of the evaluation model at several participating LEAs. Field tests were geared primarily toward assessing the utility of the TAP rubric, though investigators also gathered input on the development of summative teacher ratings; necessary resources for implementing change in individual schools and districts; and ways in which evaluation results could be incorporated into human capital decisions and professional development initiatives.⁵⁵

Required evaluation forms are provided to participating LEAs by the state. During the roll-out of the new system, the state will provide “ongoing support” to participating LEAs. The TEAC will monitor progress of the evaluations annually and will continue to solicit feedback from administrators to assess and refine the system.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ “Tennessee First to the Top Monthly Update ...,” *op. cit.*

⁵⁵ “Teacher and Principal Evaluation Field Test.” Tennessee Department of Education.
<http://www.tn.gov/firsttothetop/FieldTest1pager.pdf>

⁵⁶ “Educators Overview: New Teacher and Principal Evaluation.” Tennessee Department of Education.
http://www.tn.gov/firsttothetop/docs/Educators_Overview.pdf

Section III: Recommendations for Implementing RTTT Teacher Evaluations

School districts in receipt of RTTT funding face numerous challenges over the coming years, with fiscal, political and logistical factors influencing the implementation of reforms.⁵⁷ While LEAs will receive continued government support through 2014, state oversight can only go so far in effecting changes at the district level. To implement lasting changes, districts must employ solid strategies that address the needs of individual schools while also meeting state and federal requirements.

A recent report on the impact of RTTT noted that “state and local limitations may present roadblocks that undermine the implementation of state plans.”⁵⁸ For some states, legislation has been a major sticking point. In Maryland, for instance, the proposed RTTT overhaul of the state’s teacher evaluation system was delayed when a legislative review panel voted 12-3 against the reform in fall 2010.⁵⁹ Ohio faced similar problems in 2010, when the incoming governor considered eliminating the evidence-based funding distribution model laid out in the state’s initial RTTT proposal.⁶⁰

With RTTT currently back on track, the Ohio ESC Association laid out a series of basic guidelines for the state’s educational service centers in supporting local districts’ RTTT reforms. With regard to teacher evaluations, proposed ESC support includes implementing new teacher evaluation procedures and associated tenure policies by the end of 2012, and providing evaluation training to participating LEAs through the end of 2013.⁶¹

While the specific role of RTTT partner organizations in Ohio will be steered by state guidelines, Hanover offers the following general recommendations for such organizations as they support districts in conducting teacher evaluations:

- ❖ As per state requirements, the RTTT transition is overseen in individual districts by a designated team, typically in conjunction with several subcommittees dedicated to specific programs and/or schools. As such, **successful management of reform projects is heavily dependent upon complex communication structures**, which allow for a smooth flow of

⁵⁷ Cohen, J. “Key Challenges in Implementing Race to the Top.” Ed Money Watch: A Blog from the New America Foundation’s Federal Education Budget Project. 28 October, 2010. <http://edmoney.newamerica.net/node/39165>

⁵⁸ Manna, P. 2010. “Competitive Grant Making and Education Reform: Assessing Race to the Top’s Current Impact and Future Prospects” (Special Report 5 of *Education Stimulus Watch*). American Enterprise Institute. <http://www.aei.org/docLib/ESW-5.pdf>

⁵⁹ Hinton, F. “The Torturous Path of Implementing RTTT.” The Quick & the Ed, 9 November, 2010. <http://www.quickanded.com/2010/11/the-tortuous-path-of-implementing-rtt.html>

⁶⁰ Candisky, C. “Will Ohio Forfeit Schools’ \$400 Million Prize?” *The Columbus Dispatch*, 8 November 2010.

⁶¹ “Race to the Top and Ohio ESCs.” The Ohio ESC Association. http://www.oesca.org/pages/uploaded_files/RttT%20and%20OH%20ESCs%2008242010.doc

- information both internally (among staff and administrators) and externally (to stakeholders). Utilizing these communication structures – and working to supplement or improve them, if necessary – is thus a key factor in providing effective support for RTTT reforms.
- ❖ The level of support needed for implementing RTTT-based teacher evaluation systems is heavily dependent upon the district's existing evaluation procedures. Required gap analyses will aid districts in determining the extent and type of evaluation training necessary; education service providers should utilize the results of these analyses to the fullest extent. **Tailoring support services to the specific needs of individual districts will be a significant factor in implementing sustainable changes and ensuring a smooth transition to new policies.**
 - ❖ In the same vein, **timelines and benchmarks for implementing new teacher evaluations should also take the status of the individual district into account.** While the State of Ohio has developed and distributed its own set of benchmarks for all participating LEAs, the pace of RTTT implementation naturally varies, due to a number of factors (e.g., the amount of funding received, the proposed scope of work, and available resources).
 - ❖ Teacher evaluation procedures will be drafted on the basis of state regulations, which may be further refined over the course of funding. However, when addressing its provision of district support, education service providers should maintain a focus on the following core requirements for Ohio teacher evaluations: that they **take student growth into account**; that they **employ multiple measures for teacher assessment**; and that they **utilize a rubric differentiating across five levels of summative ratings** ('ineffective,' 'satisfactory,' 'effective,' 'highly effective,' and 'distinguished').
 - ❖ It is not uncommon for LEAs in receipt of RTTT funding to employ third-party providers or vendors to assist in the implementation of changes to teacher evaluation procedures. Where applicable, education service providers' **coordination with these third parties** will be especially important in providing effective teacher evaluations.

Appendix A: Delaware RTTT Teacher Evaluation Materials

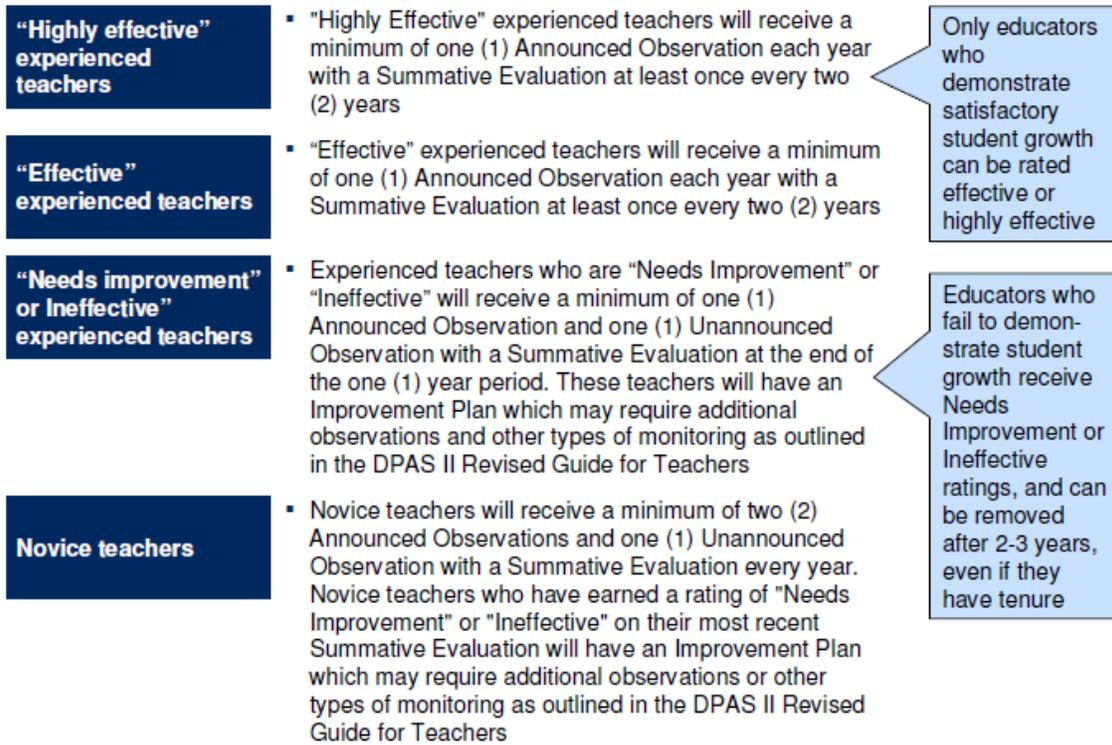
Table 8: Proposed Timeline for RTTT Teacher Evaluation Reforms⁶²

Activities	Timeline	Responsible Parties
Define “student growth” through stakeholder engagement process	January 2010- July 2011	State Secretary of Education; representative stakeholders
Provide training for all assessors	January 2010- February 2013	DDOE; Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit (TLEU) Program Manager
Contract with third-party provider to recruit, hire and train development coaches	September- December 2010	TLEU Program Manager; third party provider
Development coaches assist administrators with DPAS II transition	January 2011- December 2012	TLEU Program Manager; school/district administrators responsible for evaluation
Audit DPAS II documentation for compliance/quality	May 2011- February 2013	TLEU Program Manager; third-party auditor
Conduct DPAS II feedback sessions and develop improvement plans	January-2010- February 2013	Development coaches (overseen by TLEU Program Manager)
Certify and recommend PD based on gaps in DPAS II rubric	September 2010-May 2011	TLEU Program Manager certifies; development coaches recommend
Propose legislation requiring novice teachers to have 2 years of student improvement before obtaining tenure	January-June 2010	Governor’s office
Remove teachers with a pattern of ineffective performance	September 2011-February 2013	Principals and superintendents
Create Teacher Leader pathways (and other pathways based on evaluations), with differentiated roles and compensation	September 2010- September 2011	TLEU Program Manager establishes parameters; districts create pathways
Create Fellows program for teachers rated ‘highly effective’	September 2011-February 2013	TLEU Program Manager
Provide retention bonuses to teachers rated ‘highly effective’	January 2012- February 2013	TLEU Program Manager
Expand Academic Achievement Award program	August 2012- April 2013	TLEU Program Manager

Source: Delaware Department of Education

⁶² “Race to the Top Application ...,” *op. cit.*, p. D-25.

Figure 2: Teacher Evaluation Cycle⁶³



Source: Delaware Department of Education

⁶³ *Ibid*, p. D-16.

Table 9: Selected Performance Metrics for RTTT Teacher Evaluation Changes⁶⁴

Goal	Baseline Data	End of SY 2010/11	End of SY 2011/12	End of SY 2012/13	End of SY 2013/14
Percentage of LEAs measuring student growth	N/A: All measure growth, but no statewide approach	N/A	100%: All LEAs will measure student growth with statewide approach.	100%	100%
Percentage of LEAs using evaluations to inform compensation	5%	5%	100%: “Highly effective” teachers in high-need schools will be eligible for retention bonuses.	100%	100%
Percentage of teachers rated “highly effective”	15%	15%	20%	25%	30%
Percentage of teachers rated “effective”	45%	45%	48%	49%	50%
Percentage of teachers rated “needs improvement”	25%	25%	21%	18%	15%
Percentage of teachers rated “ineffective”	15%	15%	11%	8%	5%

Source: Delaware Department of Education

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. D-26.

Appendix B: Tennessee RTTT Teacher Evaluation Materials

Table 10: Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM)⁶⁵

Component	Indicators
Qualitative Measures (50%)	❖ Observations using TAP rubric
Student Growth (35%)	❖ Tenn. Value Added Assessment System data <i>or</i> ❖ If subject is not covered by TVAAS, comparable criteria developed by DOE and Development Teams (forthcoming)
Student Achievement Data (15%)	❖ ACT/SAT scores ❖ Graduation rates/postsecondary matriculation ❖ AP/IB/NIC assessments ❖ Ninth grade retention/promotion ❖ Student success in advanced coursework ❖ Other measures approved by state Department of Education

Source: Tennessee Department of Education

Table 11: TAP Rubric - 'Designing and Planning Instruction' Evaluation⁶⁶

Component		
<i>Instructional Plans</i>		
Exemplary	Proficient	Unsatisfactory
Plans include measurable, explicit goals aligned to state content standards and activities, materials and assessments that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Align to state standards ❖ Are sequenced from basic → complex ❖ Build on prior student knowledge, are relevant to students' lives, and integrate other disciplines ❖ Provide appropriate time for work, reflection and closure ❖ Are appropriate for age, knowledge, and interests of learners ❖ Provide regular opportunities to accommodate student needs 	Plans include goals aligned to state content standards and activities, materials and assessments that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Align to state standards ❖ Are sequenced from basic → complex ❖ Build on prior student knowledge ❖ Provide appropriate time for work, reflection and closure ❖ Are appropriate for the age, knowledge and interests of most learners ❖ Provide some opportunities to accommodate student needs 	Plans include few goals aligned to state content standards and activities, materials and assessments that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Rarely align to state standards ❖ Are rarely logically sequenced ❖ Rarely build on prior student knowledge ❖ Inconsistently provide time for work, reflection and closure ❖ Little evidence that plan is appropriate for age, knowledge or interests of learners ❖ Little evidence that plan provides some opportunities to accommodate student needs

⁶⁵ "TEAM Training Information," *op. cit.*

⁶⁶ "TAP Rubric." National Institute for Excellence in Training. Accessed through the Tennessee Department of Education.

http://www.tn.gov/firsttothetop/docs/TAP_Instruction_Environment_Designing_and_Planning__Rubric_Scoring.pdf

Component		
Student Work		
Exemplary	Proficient	Unsatisfactory
Assignments require students to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Organize, interpret, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information rather than reproduce it ❖ Draw conclusions, make generalizations, and produce arguments that are supported through extended writing. ❖ Connected what they are learning to experiences, observations, feelings, or situations significant in their daily lives, both inside and outside of school 	Assignments require students to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Interpret information rather than reproduce it ❖ Draw conclusions and support them through writing ❖ Connect what they are learning to prior learning and some life experiences 	Assignments require students to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Mostly reproduce information ❖ Rarely draw conclusions and support them through writing ❖ Rarely connect what they are learning to prior learning or life experiences
Assessment		
Exemplary	Proficient	Unsatisfactory
Assessments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Are aligned with state content standards ❖ Have clear measurement criteria ❖ Measure student performance in more than three ways (e.g., project, experiment, essay, etc.) ❖ Require extended written tasks ❖ Are portfolio-based, with clear illustrations of student progress toward state content standards ❖ Include descriptions of how assessment results will be used to inform future instruction 	Assessments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Are aligned with state content standards ❖ Have measurement criteria ❖ Measure student performance in more than two ways ❖ Require written tasks ❖ Include performance checks throughout the school year 	Assessments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Are rarely aligned with state content standards ❖ Have ambiguous measurement criteria ❖ Measure student performance in less than two ways ❖ Include performance checks, though the purpose of checks is not clear

Source: Tennessee Department of Education

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