



Teaching Conditions Across Evaluation Models

To do their best work with students, teachers need supportive school environments that maximize their opportunity to be effective. As a part of the First to the Top Initiative, the Tennessee Department of Education and a coalition of education stakeholders worked collaboratively with the New Teacher Center (NTC) to implement the second iteration of the Tennessee Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning Survey (TELL Tennessee Survey) to assess whether educators across the state report having the resources and supports necessary to encourage the most effective teaching. Findings from this initiative will inform district and school strategic planning.

The TELL Tennessee Survey is a statistically valid and reliable instrument that assesses nine research-based teaching and learning conditions: Time, Facilities and Resources, Community Support and Involvement, Managing Student Conduct, Teacher Leadership, School Leadership, Professional Development, Instructional Practices and Support, and New Teacher Support. Response options for core questions from TELL Tennessee use a Likert scale and range from strongly disagree to strongly agree. NTC administered the anonymous survey of all school-based licensed educators in early 2013. Over 61,000 educators (82 percent) in the state responded.

This brief is part of a series of special analyses requested by the Tennessee Department of Education to examine educators' responses on selected TELL conditions (Time, Teacher Leadership, Professional Development, and three items related to teacher evaluation)¹ by different categories of educators, schools, and districts, which include:

- Educator years of experience,
- Alternative evaluation models (Coach, TEM (Teacher Effectiveness Measure), and TIGER (Teacher Instructional Growth for Effectiveness and Results) compared to the statewide TEAM (Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model),
- Combined alternative evaluation models compared to statewide TEAM,
- Urbanicity status,
- CORE (Centers of Regional Excellence) regions,
- District enrollment, and
- School accountability (Reward, Priority, and Focus) status.

The current brief focuses on a comparison of all teaching conditions but emphasizing Time, Teacher Leadership, Professional Development, and items related to teacher evaluation across schools assigned to one of the three alternative evaluation models or the statewide TEAM evaluation model. The alternative evaluation models are part of Tennessee's new educator evaluation system. As part of Tennessee's First to the Top Act, the State Board of Education adopted a statewide model, the TEAM. The Board also approved three alternative evaluation models generally specific to geographic regions: 1) Project Coach in Hamilton County; 2) TEM in Memphis City; and 3) TIGER in 12 (mostly municipal) school systems² statewide.†

† Tennessee Department of Education. July 2012. *Teacher Evaluation in Tennessee: Report on Year 1 Implementation*.

For this brief, results are summarized using a rate of agreement that combines the strongly agree and agree categories.

Additionally, differences of means tests were conducted to see if there are statistical differences between the groups. Statistical significance indicates the differences likely did not occur by chance. It should be noted that statistical significance does not necessarily imply practical or meaningful differences in the data. Readers should consider differences between groups in the larger policy context, including types of schools in each group, length of intervention, and intensity of intervention in determining the importance of differences. For example, there are qualitative differences (urbanicity, size, poverty, etc.) in the contexts where the alternative models are implemented that are not controlled for in the analyses.

TELL respondents in schools implementing the alternative evaluation approaches and the TEAM approach are provided in Table 1. Of the more than 60,000 TELL Tennessee Survey respondents, over 50,000 are assigned to schools using the state-adopted TEAM approach. Six percent of survey respondents are in schools implementing the Coach model, 10 percent of educators are assigned to schools implementing the TEM model, and three percent are in schools implementing the TIGER model.

TABLE 1. TELL SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY EVALUATION MODEL

Program	Survey Participants	Percent
Coach	3,760	6.1
TEM	5,912	9.6
TIGER	1,658	2.7
TEAM	50,011	81.5
Total	61,341	100.0

Findings

Educators assigned to schools participating in the TIGER model are more positive about their teaching conditions than comparison groups (Table 2).

- When examining 2013 aggregate construct level agreement rates across evaluation models, educators implementing the TIGER model report the highest rates of agreement for every survey area except Professional Development where TEM model participants report a higher rate of agreement.
- Additionally, educators in the TIGER program report significantly higher agreement rates than educators in at least two other groups in seven of the eight constructs. In Managing Student Conduct, for example, educators in the TIGER program report a 90 percent agreement rate averaged across all questions assessed compared to 85 percent of educators in TEAM schools and 82 percent of educators using the Coach and TEM models
- Educators utilizing the TEM model report agreement rates higher than those implementing either the TEAM model or the Coach model in the areas of Facilities and Resources, Professional Development, and Instructional Practices and Support Constructs as measured by the TELL Tennessee Survey.
- Educators in TEAM schools report significantly higher rates of agreement than schools using the Coach and TEM model in the area of Managing Student Conduct and higher than the Coach model in the areas of Facilities and Resources, Community Support and Involvement, and Instructional Practices and Support constructs.
- Generally, educators in schools using the Coach model report low rates of agreement across teaching conditions relative to the other groups, particularly in the areas of Facilities and Resources, Instructional Practices and Support, and Professional Development.

TABLE 2. CONSTRUCT LEVEL RATE OF AGREEMENT BY EVALUATION MODEL†

Construct	TEAM	Coach	TEM	TIGER
Managing Student Conduct	85%**	82%	82%	90%***
School Leadership	84%	85%	85%	89%***
Community Support and Involvement	84%*	83%	83%	89%***
Facilities and Resources	84%*	82%	87%**	88%**
Instructional Practices and Support	84%*	82%	87%**	88%*
Teacher Leadership	84%	84%	85%	87%**
Professional Development	79%	78%	86%**	83%**
Time	70%	72%**	67%	76%***

† RA indicates rate of agreement after combining the agree and strongly agree response options.

* Statistically significantly higher than one comparison group (two-sided t-tests $\alpha=.05$)

** Statistically significantly higher than two comparison groups (two-sided t-tests $\alpha=.05$)

*** Statistically significantly higher than three comparison groups (two-sided t-tests $\alpha=.05$)

Considering percentage-point increase between the 2011 and 2013 surveys, the TIGER program is associated with the highest increase in rates of agreement for two constructs (Professional Development and Teacher Leadership) and second highest in Time (Table 3). Educators in the Coach

program indicate the second highest growth in Professional Development and Teacher Leadership. TEM educators report the highest increase in rate of agreement for the Time factor. Educators assigned to TEM schools report the lowest rate of agreement in 2013 for the Time construct.

TABLE 3. CHANGE IN TEACHING CONDITIONS BY EVALUATION MODEL 2013 TO 2011*

Construct	TEAM	Coach	TEM	TIGER
Time	6	7	8	7
Teacher Leadership	5	7	6	7
Professional Development	3	4	4	6

* Numbers in table indicate percentage point change from 2011.

EDUCATORS IN THE COACH PROGRAM indicate the second highest growth in Professional Development and Teacher Leadership.

Time

Educators in schools implementing the TEM model report the lowest rates of agreement for Time in 2013, but the largest increases from 2011.

At the individual item level, differences between schools employing different evaluation models are more pronounced, with educators using the TEM model reporting some of the highest increases between survey administrations in the area of Time (Table 4).

- Both TEM and TIGER groups report 10-percentage-point increases from 2011 that teachers are allowed to

focus on educating students with minimal interruptions. This is four percentage points higher than educators implementing the statewide TEAM evaluation model.

- Educators, regardless of evaluation model, report 10-percentage-point increases or greater that efforts are made to minimize the amount of routine administrative paperwork teachers are required to do.
- Educators implementing the TEM evaluation model report twice as much growth (eight percentage points) as those implementing the TEAM evaluation model (four percentage points) that the non-instructional time provided in schools is sufficient.

TABLE 4. CONSTRUCT LEVEL RATE OF AGREEMENT BY EVALUATION MODEL

Construct	TEAM		Coach		TEM		TIGER	
	2013 RA*	Change from 2011	2013 RA	Change from 2011	2013 RA	Change from 2011	2013 RA	Change from 2011
Teachers are allowed to focus on educating students with minimal interruptions	73%	6	71%	7	67%	10	81%	10
Efforts are made to minimize the amount of routine administrative paperwork teachers are required to do.	68%	10	73%	10	61%	14	74%	13
The non-instructional time provided for teachers in my school is sufficient.	68%	4	71%	7	67%	8	77%	7

* RA indicates rate of agreement after combining the agree and strongly agree response options.

EDUCATORS IN SCHOOLS implementing the TEM model report the lowest rates of agreement for Time in 2013, but the largest increases from 2011.

Teacher Leadership

Educators implementing the TIGER model report the largest increase in rates of agreement across Teacher Leadership items.

Differences in perceptions of Teacher Leadership across evaluation models are more modest than those in other constructs examined. Although increases are fairly even across models, educators using the TIGER model report twice the increase in rate of agreement (eight percentage points) that teachers are recognized as educational experts compared to the other alternative evaluation models (four percentage points for Coach and three percentage points for TEM).

Professional Development

Educators in schools implementing the TEM evaluation model report the highest rate of agreement and TIGER evaluation model teachers report the greatest increase from the 2011 TELL Survey.

The TEM model rate of agreement averaged across all professional development questions is 86 percent. The TIGER model educator rate of agreement increased twice as much (six percentage points) as those educators implementing the TEAM evaluation model (three percentage points). Teachers using the Coach and TEM evaluation models both report four-percentage-points gains from 2011 to 2013.

At the item level, of the three alternative evaluation models examined, educators using TIGER report greater increases

than educators implementing no alternative evaluation model on 12 of 13 questions. As reflected in the composite rate of agreement, the rates of agreement across six professional development questions for educators in the TIGER program are twice as high as those in other programs or who implement the state TEAM model.

Teacher Evaluation

Educators implementing an alternative evaluation model report there is more consistency in teacher evaluation procedures.

For educators who implemented the TEAM approach, respondents report low or no increases from 2011 on items related to teacher evaluation (Table 5). The educators in TEM and TIGER evaluation models also report a decline in the rate of agreement on evaluation questions, though not as large of a decrease as those in schools implementing TEAM. Only the teachers in the Coach model indicate an increase across all three questions.

- Teachers across evaluation models indicate similar increases in the rate of agreement that teachers are held to high professional standards for delivering instruction (between one and three percentage points).
- Educators in schools implementing the TEAM model decreased by 10 percentage points from 2011 to 2013 on the question, 'the procedures for teacher evaluation are consistent' which is more than twice the decline of groups with supports.

DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS of Teacher Leadership across evaluation models are more modest than those in other constructs examined.

TABLE 5. CHANGE FROM 2011 TO 2013 ON QUESTIONS RELATED TO TEACHER EVALUATION

Construct	TEAM		Coach		TEM		TIGER	
	2013 RA*	Change from 2011	2013 RA	Change from 2011	2013 RA	Change from 2011	2013 RA	Change from 2011
Teachers are held to high professional standards for delivering instruction.	96%	2	95%	3	95%	2	97%	1
Teacher performance is assessed objectively.	83%	-5	88%	1	82%	-4	89%	-2
The procedures for teacher evaluation are consistent.	78%	-10	87%	1	82%	-4	87%	-2

* RA indicates rate of agreement after combining the agree and strongly agree response options.

Summary

Across the constructs and different evaluation models considered in this brief, teachers in schools implementing the TIGER model report the highest overall rates of agreement. Teachers in schools implementing the TEM model report the most increase in the area of TIME from 2011. Educators from schools implementing the Coach and TEM model report the most increase from 2011 in the area of Teacher Leadership. Those implementing the TIGER model report

the largest increase in the rate of agreement for Professional Development. Across evaluation models, teacher agreement rates decreased from 2011 on items related to assessing teacher performance objectively and consistently.

It should be noted that the alternative evaluation models are geographically specific and survey results should be considered within the larger context of the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system.

Endnotes

1. The Time construct pertains to the available time to plan, collaborate, provide instruction, and eliminate barriers in order to maximize instructional time during the school day. The construct includes the following questions:

- Class sizes are reasonable such that teachers have the time available to meet the needs of all students.
- Teachers have time available to collaborate with colleagues.
- Teachers are allowed to focus on educating students with minimal interruptions.
- The non-instructional time provided for teachers in my school is sufficient.
- Efforts are made to minimize the amount of routine administrative paperwork teachers are required to do.
- Teachers have sufficient instructional time to meet the needs of all students.
- Teachers are protected from duties that interfere with their essential role of educating students.

The Teacher Leadership construct pertains to the degree of teacher involvement in decisions that impact classroom and school practices. The construct includes the following questions:

- Teachers are recognized as educational experts.
- Teachers are trusted to make sound professional decisions about instruction.
- Teachers are relied upon to make decisions about educational issues.

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- Teachers are encouraged to participate in school leadership roles.
 - The faculty has an effective process for making group decisions to solve problems.
 - In this school, we take steps to solve problems.
 - Teachers are effective leaders in this school.
 - Teachers have an appropriate level of influence on decision making in this school.

The Professional Development construct pertains to the availability and quality of learning opportunities for educators to enhance their teaching. The construct includes the following questions:

- Sufficient resources are available for professional development in my school.
- An appropriate amount of time is provided for professional development.
- Professional development offerings are data driven.
- Professional learning opportunities are aligned with the school's improvement plan.
- Professional development is differentiated to meet the needs of individual teachers.
- Professional development deepens teachers' content knowledge.
- Professional development provides teachers with strategies to involve families and other community members as active partners in their children's education.
- Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their own practice.
- Follow-up is provided from professional development in this school
- Professional development provides ongoing opportunities for teachers to work with colleagues to refine teaching practices.
- Professional development is evaluated and results are communicated to teachers.
- Professional development enhances teachers' ability to implement instructional strategies that meet diverse student learning needs.
- Professional development enhances teachers' abilities to help improve student learning.

The TELL Tennessee Survey included a few questions related to the Department's interest in teacher evaluation. They are:

- Teachers are held to high professional standards for delivering instruction.
- Teacher performance is assessed objectively.
- The procedures for teacher evaluation are consistent.

2. Participating districts include Sevier County, Alamo City Schools, Unicoi County, Jackson-Madison County, Hollow-Rock Bruceton SD, Lincoln County, Greenville City Schools, Cheatham County, Lebanon SSD, Lenoir City Schools, Lexington City Schools, Roane County, Maryville City Schools, Milan SSD, Fayette County, Tipton County, Bradford Special, Paris SSD, Richard City Schools, Trousdale County, South Carroll SD, Putnam County, and Union City Schools.

About the New Teacher Center

New Teacher Center focuses on improving student learning by accelerating the effectiveness of new teachers. NTC partners with states, school districts, and policymakers to design and implement systems that create sustainable, high-quality mentoring and professional development; build leadership capacity; work to enhance teaching conditions; improve retention; and transform schools in vibrant learning communities where all students succeed.



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