



## EDUCATOR EVALUATIONS

Arkansas has two statewide evaluation systems in place to observe, evaluate, and support teachers and principals. These include the **Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS)** and the **Leader Excellence and Development System (LEADS)**.

### TESS

Act 1209 of 2011 created a statewide teacher evaluation system known as the Teacher Excellence and Support (TESS) system. It is used for licensed and non-licensed K-12 classroom and specialty teachers such as librarians and school counselors.

It began with a soft roll out in 11 schools in 2012, followed by a statewide pilot in 2013-14, and then full implementation in all schools in 2014-15.

TESS is based on Charlotte Danielson’s Framework for Teaching. **The framework measures teachers’ effectiveness in the four domains: planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities.** Within each domain, there are multiple components used in the evaluation.

### LEADS

Unlike the TESS requirements first put forth in Act 1209 of 2011, the only initial requirement for evaluating administrators (also referred to as leaders) was that the Division of Secondary and Elementary Education (DESE) provide technical assistance to districts to develop and implement an administrator evaluation system similar to TESS. Act 709 of 2013 authorized (but did not require) DESE to develop and implement an evaluation system for school administrators known LEADS. However, DESE did develop LEADS

pursuant to this authorization. LEADS is used for building level administrators, such as principals and assistant principals. It does not include superintendents.

All districts and schools piloted LEADS in 2013-14, and the districts and schools fully implemented it beginning in 2014-15 as well.

Previously, the LEADS framework was based on the Interstate School Leaders’ Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards adopted by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA). This framework was replaced with the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL), also from the NPBEA. These were piloted in 2018-19 and are being implemented statewide in 2019-20 as LEADS 2.0.

The rubric format was also reworked to mirror the TESS rubric with domains and components. **The four domains used under LEADS 2.0 include school organization and management, school culture and climate, teaching and learning, and human capital management.**

### Evaluation Process

Both evaluation processes operate similarly, with some notable differences. Their similarities include:

- Novice Teachers or Beginner Administrators are defined as those with less than three years of experience.
- Career Summative Educators include those with three years or more experience.
- All career summative educators are given a summative evaluation every four years.
- Evaluations can still be given at any time.

- Novice or beginners must receive support by their respective district or charter.
- Four rating options are available for teachers and administrators.
- Educators create a Professional Growth Plan with their evaluator (PGP).
- Waivers are available through the AR State Board of Education.
- Educators can be placed in Intensive Support Status.

TESS and LEADS differ in the types of evidence used in the evaluation. In TESS, the evaluation is based on direct observation, indirect observation, artifacts, and data. The evaluator schedules and conducts announced and unannounced observations of teachers. In LEADS, the evaluator uses formative observation conferences which can consist of several formats. The administrator does not have to be observed directly. The evaluator can also gather evidence from stakeholders, students, or the school’s physical environment.

### TESS and LEADS Ratings

**In 2018-19, about 6,600 teachers and 369 administrators were evaluated.** These do not include specialty teachers but does include summative evaluation scores from all districts and charters that input evaluation. This includes the Arkansas School for the Blind, School for the Deaf, and any other district or charter that may otherwise have a waiver from it or do not serve K-12 students like preschools and the Excel Center.

**In 2018-19, 96% of evaluated teachers were rated proficient or better and 93% of administrators were.** Most of these were rated as proficient.