

**NC Teacher Evaluation Process (NC TEP)
For the NC Department of Health and Human
Services**

2010 Edition

Prepared by the NC DHHS Office of Education Services

Background

Between 1999 and 2008, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) used the SERVE system for licensed teacher evaluation. SERVE was approved by the State Board of Education in 1999. The evaluation system used by all DHHS teachers was tailored for the special populations in DHHS.

In 2008, the State Board of Education mandated that all school systems in North Carolina would begin using the same instrument. The North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission developed and validated a new set of teacher standards and, at the direction of the State Board, contracted with McREL (the Mid Central Regional Education Laboratory) to develop an instrument for the evaluation of North Carolina teachers based on the new standards. The instrument was piloted in 2008 and the first thirteen (13) districts began using it in 2008-2009.

In early 2009, the DHHS Office of Education Services (OES) convened a group of representatives from the various types of programs in the Department which employ licensed teachers. This group met three times to review the NC Teacher Evaluation Process (NC TEP) and to discuss how it could be adapted for use with all the different populations in DHHS. In April 2009, OES staff began training sessions for each school/program so that teachers and their evaluators could have time to review the standards on which they would be evaluated and become familiar with the process before using it on or after July 1, 2009.

The members of that group worked diligently to modify the instrument and the process, and their efforts benefitted all teachers in the DHHS LEA. The group members are listed below:

Yvonne Barnes, School administrator, Eastern NC School for the Deaf
Kathy Davis, School administrator, Governor Morehead School for the Blind
Kelly Davis, Director, Governor Morehead Preschool
Ruth Anne Everett, Director, NC Early Intervention Program for Children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Linda Lindsey, Director of Staff Development and Special Projects, Office of Education Services
Jeff Lenker, Director, Whitaker School
Elizabeth Perrotto, Assistant School administrator, Eastern NC School for the Deaf
Kathy Rhoades, Assistant Superintendent, Office of Education Services
Judy Wimbush, Lead Teacher, O'Berry Neuro-Medical Treatment Center

Support for this process, for all DHHS schools, programs, and facilities with 115C licensed teachers, is provided by the Office of Education Services.

I. Basics of the NC TEP for DHHS

ORIENTATION: From April to July, 2009, all teachers and administrators/evaluators received an orientation to the NC TEP.

REFRESHER: A refresher in the use of the forms will be provided every fall or earlier, depending on the school/program/facility.

UPDATES: Periodically, changes or updates may need to be made to forms or parts of the process. These will be shared through email alerts to school administrators.

FILE AUDITS: Teacher files for each school/program/facility will be audited between June 30 and August 30 until the system has been in use for at least four years.

FORMS: All forms are available as templates on the OES web site (www.ncoes.net). Staff can download forms, save them, and type directly onto the templates.

POLICY: The policies for the evaluation of 115C licensed teachers can be found online in the DHHS Human Resources Policy Manual.

RECORDS: At the end of each school year, each school administrator is responsible for making a copy of teachers' evaluation files for his/her office and delivering the original Individual Growth Plan, observation forms, and Summary Evaluation to the Human Resources office responsible for that school/program/facility.

CAREER STATUS: A teacher with a Standard Professional 2 License who has taught for four consecutive years in one school system in North Carolina may be granted career status, formerly known as tenure, based on his/her exemplary performance during those four years.

INITIALLY LICENSED TEACHER: A teacher with a Standard Professional 1 License who does not have career status.

PROBATIONARY TEACHER: A teacher from another state or from another North Carolina LEA where s/he did not obtain career status; usually has a Standard Professional 2 License

ACTION PLANS AND WRITTEN WARNINGS: NCGS 115C-333 states that an action plan cannot be put in place without the endorsement of the Superintendent. All action plans and written warnings for educators must be submitted to the OES Central Office for feedback and approval.

II. Individual Growth Plans (IGP)

All teachers are required to complete an Individual Growth Plan (IGP) each year. The IGP should be designed to guide a teacher's professional growth and to align with strategies for addressing learners' needs.

A. Process for Completing the IGP

1. A teacher must first self-assess using the NC TEP Rubric to determine his/her strengths and areas for improvement. This should be done based on the artifacts a teacher is able to provide and his/her professional judgment as to whether the artifacts are aligned with the descriptors for "Developing", "Proficient", "Accomplished", or "Distinguished" for each element of each standard.
2. After completing the self- assessment, the teacher will complete a draft of his/her IGP (see IGP Packet).
3. The teacher and his/her school administrator will meet to discuss the self-assessment and the draft IGP goals and finalize the goals.
4. The Mentor Teacher should assist the Initially Licensed Teacher in the self-assessment and the development of the IGP.
5. Teachers in the following circumstances will have three goals which relate to the entire NC TEP Rubric:
 - a. Experienced career status teachers in the first year of the licensure renewal cycle
 - b. All probationary teachers
 - c. All initially licensed teachers
 - d. Experienced career status teachers who are teaching in a new assignment
 - e. Experienced career status teachers who were placed on an Action Plan in the previous year
 - f. Experienced career status teachers who have demonstrated that they are not reliable independent workers
6. *Experienced, career status teachers who are reliable, independent professionals who have not been assigned to a new placement (grade level, group, etc.) for the year should complete three global goals which include the elements of Standard 4 in the NC TEP Rubric as well as any school/facility goals that need to be addressed by all teachers. These teachers will be evaluated each year only on Standard 4.*
7. The signature of the school administrator on the IGP indicates that the school administrator agrees with the teacher's goals and plans to support his/her growth through these goals. The teacher's signature indicates that s/he is prepared to carry out the goals as described.

B. Mid-Year IGP Review

1. IGPs must be reviewed between December 1 and February 1 of each school year.
2. Teachers should complete the sections related to progress for each goal and send the document to their administrators/evaluators prior to the meeting.
3. During the meeting, the school administrator adds his/her comments.
4. The teacher and the administrator sign the IGP. As with the initial IGP, signatures indicate that the school administrator agrees with and approves of the teacher's progress and that the teacher will continue to work on the goals as outlined in the IGP.
5. The Mentor Teacher of an Initially Licensed Teacher should participate in this meeting and add his/her comments and signature.

C. Completing the IGP

1. Between April 15 and May 15, the teacher should complete the End of Year Review page of the IGP by describing the progress on his/her goals.
2. The teacher will provide this to the administrator to use as evidence in preparing the teacher's Summary Evaluation Form. This means that there does not need to be a meeting to resolve the IGP. The only meeting that is required at the end of the year is the review of the Summary Evaluation Form.

D. Adjusting the IGP

1. The IGP can be adjusted at any time during the year at the request of either the teacher or the school administrator.
2. It should be adjusted when a teacher needs to alter his/her plan for completion of a goal due to circumstances beyond his/her control such as courses that are not offered, travel that has been canceled, or personal reasons.
3. The IGP also should be adjusted when a teacher is experiencing difficulty performing his/her prescribed duties. At that time, the school administrator should meet with the teacher, review the issue, and work with the teacher to adjust the plan to address the concern. When this occurs, specific actions, resources, outcomes, and timelines should be written into the IGP so that both the teacher and school administrator are clear on how the teacher will improve his/her performance.

III. Observations

A. The Number of Observations Required

1. Probationary and initially licensed teachers must be observed at least three times by the school administrator and one time by a peer.
2. Experienced teachers with career status will be observed formally (two observations by the administrator; one by a peer) only in the first year of the licensure renewal cycle unless:
 - a. the school administrator determines that observations are necessary to ensure that the teacher is performing his/her duties;
 - b. the teacher has been assigned new duties for that year such as another grade level or developmental group;
 - c. the teacher has a pattern of not being a reliable independent worker, or
 - d. the teacher was on an Action Plan in the previous year.
3. Experienced teachers with career status who fall under the exceptions listed above should be observed as if they were in the first year of their licensure renewal cycle (two formal observations and one peer observation).
4. Experienced teachers with career status in years two through five (2-5) of the licensure renewal cycle who are in the same assignment; who demonstrate the ability to work independently, and who are consistently rated at the accomplished and distinguished levels are not required to be formally observed.

B. Administrative Prerogatives

1. Administrators/evaluators may observe any teacher at any time if s/he suspects that a teacher may not be performing his/her duties.
2. Administrators may also change the number of observations a teacher will require in a given year based on observations regarding a teacher's performance. This gives the

administrator the opportunity to observe the teacher and provide feedback to improve performance.

3. If improvement does not occur, the administrator should accelerate the three required observations and evaluate the teacher on the full rubric so that the ratings can determine whether or not the teacher needs to be placed on an Action Plan.

C. The Pre-Observation Conference

1. The **first** observation of each year for any teacher being observed should be an announced observation with a documented Pre-Observation Conference (see Observation Packet).
2. It is best practice to do a Pre-Observation Conference for observations of all initially licensed teachers and probationary teachers in the first year of their probationary period.
3. The school administrator is responsible for scheduling the Observation date and time as well as the date and time for the Pre-Observation Conference and notifying the teacher in writing no less than five (5) days prior to the event.
4. The teacher is responsible for completing the Pre-Observation Conference form and returning it to the administrator prior to the meeting about the scheduled observation.
5. The teacher is responsible for completing his/her parts of the form and bringing it to the Pre-Observation Conference.
6. The teacher and the school administrator meet to discuss the upcoming observation, using the completed Pre-Observation form.
7. The form must be signed for it to be complete.
8. It may be necessary to do the Pre-Observation Conference with itinerant teachers immediately prior to the observation; this means that all of their observations will be announced. Those situations are unavoidable and unannounced observations could cause loss of valuable time for teachers and administrators/evaluators.
9. If the Initially Licensed Teacher approves, the Mentor Teacher may attend the Pre-Observation Conference.

D. Observations

1. It is important to conduct observations using the best practices available to achieve the most accurate results. Therefore, the school administrator should incorporate the following practices:
 - a. Complete the Pre-Observation Conference no more than ten (and no less than two) working days prior to the Observation.
 - b. Take comprehensive notes during the Observation with notations related to time throughout.
 - c. Refrain from interacting with students/staff during the Observation unless there is a situation that warrants involvement.
 - d. Make a positive statement after the Observation concludes such as "Thank you". but do not commit to an appraisal such as "Good lesson."
2. The written documentation of the Observation should be completed within 10 working days of the observation. Following are some best practices that should be incorporated into the process by the school administrator:
 - a. Take time to complete the Observation form as soon as possible after the Observation.
 - b. Use language throughout the comments that aligns with the Rubric so that the teacher will have an accurate picture of his/her performance.
 - c. Add language in the Strengths/Areas for Improvement that reflect performance levels

other than “Proficient” as needed (the items listed on the Observation form are in the language of the “Proficient” level of performance). Again, it is critical to use the language of the Rubric.

- d. Balance the number of strengths and areas for improvement. This is especially important for initially licensed teachers who can be easily overwhelmed by too many areas for improvement.
 - e. Provide the teacher a copy of the completed Observation form at least two days prior to the Post-Observation Conference. This gives the teacher time to process the comments of the school administrator.
3. Peer Observations: The NC TEP incorporates peer observations as a vital part of teacher evaluation. ILTs and probationary teachers must have one peer observation as part of their required four observations. Career teachers in the first year of their licensure cycle or who have been identified by the administrator as needing closer supervision (see Section III, A of this Handbook) must have one peer observation in their three observations for the year. Here are some basics on peer observation which will ensure that peer observation is a constructive process that creates positive peer relationships.
- a. The school administrator chooses all of the peers who will be observing.
 - b. Peers should be outstanding, career status educators with track records of success that are well documented. In other words, their reputations as professional educators should be sterling.
 - c. The school administrator is responsible for meeting with the group of peer observers at the beginning of the school year to set his/her expectations, outline the responsibilities, and inform the peer observers of their observation schedule for the year.
 - d. The peer observation should not be the first or the last observation in a year.
 - e. Peer observers should be encouraged to do the Pre-Observation Conference prior to the observation as part of the cycle. They must do the Post-Observation Conference.
 - f. It is important to stress that Peer Observations are not part of the formal evaluative process but play an important role in well-rounded feedback as well as in healthy collegial relationships among teachers.
 - g. Peer observers should be versed in conducting meetings with other teachers in informative and useful terms. They should be careful to use language that reflects on the teacher’s practice and not the teacher personally.

E. Post-Observation Conference

1. **Each Observation must be followed by a Post-Observation Conference within ten (10) working days of the Observation.**
2. **In order for the Observation to be valid, the Post-Observation Conference form must be signed by all parties and filed as an attachment to the Observation (and, if necessary, the Pre-Observation Conference Form).**
3. The Post-Observation Conference should be held in the teacher’s workspace if it is a confidential space.
4. The comments on the Observation should guide the discussion; the school administrator should encourage the teacher to talk about his/her practice. It is not the job of the school administrator to tell the teacher what his/her observations were without engaging the teacher in a dialogue about the lesson.

5. The teacher should be encouraged to share artifacts that relate to the lesson and/or the learners involved such as IEP goals, learner products, lesson plans, teacher-made materials, assessment data, etc.
6. If the Initially Licensed Teacher approves, the Mentor Teacher may attend the Post-Observation Conference.

IV. Summary Evaluation

- A. **Reviewing the Evidence:** At the end of the year, the school administrator must review all of the evidence presented by the teacher. This includes all data gathered from the formal observations as well as any other data relevant to that teacher which the school administrator has access to such as assessment data, newsletters, correspondence with parents/guardians and other professionals, emails, lesson plans, participation in school/program committees/activities, etc. The teacher also needs to complete the last page of the IGP and submit it to the administrator between April 15 and May 15.
- B. **Rating the Performance:**
 1. Whether the teacher is being rated on the entire rubric or just Standard IV, the school administrator should use the rubric and rate all evidences and artifacts presented using the indicators.
 2. Using the Teacher Summary Rating Form, the school administrator should record the rating for the teacher on each element of each standard. Element ratings should be derived from the indicators checked on the rubric; a teacher must have all indicators checked in a column and all the ones in the previous column to be rated at that level. For example, to be "Proficient" on any element, a teacher must have all indicators checked off in the "Developing" column and all indicators checked off in the "Proficient" column. However, all indicators that apply should be checked even if it is not enough to rate a teacher at that level.
 4. Once the element ratings are recorded on the Teacher Summary Rating Form, the school administrator should rate the entire standard. To do this, the school administrator should use an average of all the ratings of the elements for that standard.
 5. All teachers with more than three years of experience, whether they are probationary or not, must achieve a Summary rating of at least "Proficient" on each Standard in order to avoid being placed on an Action Plan. Any rating of "Developing" on for a Standard will result in the teacher being placed on an Action Plan.
 6. All Initially Licensed Teachers have three years to bring ratings for all Standards up to at least "Proficient". Any ILT who receives a rating of "Developing" on any Standard at the end of their third year may be placed on an Action Plan or may not have his/her contract renewed in order to work a fourth year to be reviewed for Career Status.
 7. Probationary Teachers with experience (those who came from another LEA or state with three or more years of experience) are moved to an Action Plan when the overall rating for any standard is "Developing".
 8. All Action Plans must be approved by the Superintendent. Plans should be forwarded to the Licensure and Support Coordinator and the Assistant Superintendent to be reviewed for the approval of the Superintendent.

- C. **Completing the Teacher Summary Rating Form:**
 1. After checking the performance levels, the school administrator should complete the sections below the ratings to detail "Comments", "Recommended Actions for Improvement", and "Resources Needed to Complete the Actions".
 2. The school administrator should then detail using the items listed as well as the remaining space to indicate the evidence and artifacts used to inform his/her evaluative decisions.

- D. **Summary Rating Form Meeting**
 1. The school administrator should schedule a meeting with the teacher at a mutually convenient time between April 15 and May 15 to complete the IGP; sign the IGP; review the Teacher Summary Rating Form; and sign the Teacher Summary Rating Form.
 2. This meeting should be held in the teacher's workspace if that is a confidential space.
 3. Signatures on the form do not indicate that the teacher agrees with the evaluation but that s/he has been made aware of the information.
 4. The teacher may choose to add written comments to the Teacher Evaluation Form within 10 working days of the dated signature.
 5. The school administrator should make the teacher a copy of the signed form.

V. Completed Teacher Evaluation File

- A. The following forms should be sent to HR at the end of each school year.
 1. Completed IGP (original)
 2. All Pre- and Post-Observations Forms with notes (originals)
 3. Completed Teacher Summary Rating Form (original)

- B. The school administrator should keep copies of the IGP and Teacher Summary Rating Form as records from which to start documentation for the following school year.

VI. Process Broken Down by Teacher Experience and Career Status

- A. **Experienced Teacher with Career Status in Year 1 of the Licensure Renewal Cycle**
 1. Self-Assess using the NC TEP Rubric
 2. Write the IGP and meet with the school administrator for approval no later than October 1
 3. Receive the first formal observation no later than November 30
 4. Participate in the Mid-Year IGP Review between December 1 and February 1
 5. Receive the peer observation no later than February 15
 6. Receive the second formal observation no later than April 15
 7. Complete the IGP Year End Review between April 15 and May 15
 8. Be evaluated no later than May 15

- B. **Experienced Teacher with Career Status Years 2, 3, 4, or 5 of the Licensure Renewal Cycle (who have not changed assignments, have not been on an Action Plan in the previous year, and who are reliable, independent workers)**
 1. Self-Assess using the NC TEP Rubric
 2. Write the IGP and meet with the school administrator for approval no later than October 1
 3. Participate in the Mid-Year IGP Review between December 1 and February 1

4. Complete the IGP Year-End Review between April 15 and May 15
 5. Be evaluated no later than May 15
- C. Experienced Probationary Teacher From Another State (must be Probationary for 4 years)**
1. Self-Assess using the NC TEP Rubric
 2. Write the IGP and meet with the school administrator for approval no later than October 1
 3. Receive the first formal observation no later than October 1
 4. Receive the second formal observation no later than November 30
 5. Participate in the Mid-Year IGP Review between December 1 and February 1
 6. Receive the peer observation no later than February 15
 7. Receive the third formal observation no later than April 15
 8. Complete the IGP Year-End Review between April 15 and May 15
 9. Be evaluated no later than May 15
- D. Experienced Probationary Teacher from Another North Carolina LEA (must be Probationary for 1 year)**
1. Self-Assess using the NC TEP Rubric
 2. Write the IGP and meet with the school administrator for approval no later than October 1
 3. Receive the first formal observation no later than October 1
 4. Receive the second formal observation no later than November 30
 5. Participate in the Mid-Year IGP Review between December 1 and February 1
 6. Receive the peer observation no later than February 15
 7. Receive the third formal observation no later than April 15
 8. Complete the IGP Year-End Review between April 15 and May 15
 9. Be evaluated no later than May 15
- E. Initially Licensed Teachers (must be in this cycle until the license converts to a Standard Professional II License)**
1. Self-Assess using the NC TEP Rubric
 2. Write the IGP and meet with the school administrator for approval no later than October 1
 3. Receive the first formal observation no later than October 1
 4. Receive the second formal observation no later than November 30
 5. Participate in the Mid-Year IGP Review between December 1 and February 1
 6. Receive the peer observation no later than February 15
 7. Receive the third formal observation no later than April 15
 8. Complete the IGP Year-End Review between April 15 and May 15
 9. Be evaluated no later than May 15