

<h1>University Schools</h1>			
Monitoring: Review: Annually, in February	Descriptor Term: Evaluation of School Directors and Assistant Directors	Descriptor Code: 5.803	Issued Date: June 2025

This policy applies to all University Schools directors and assistant directors and outlines guidelines for evaluating University Schools school-based administrators in order (1) to improve instruction; (2) to provide ongoing feedback to identify areas to strengthen and identify supports available through the University and other resources for professional growth; (3) to facilitate communication between the professional employee and their immediate supervisor; (4) to promote high standards of excellence for school-based administrators; and (5) to utilize an evaluation grievance procedure for evaluated administrators to challenge only the accuracy of the data used in the evaluation and the adherence to the evaluation policies adopted in accordance with state law.

University Schools believes that a school-based administrator evaluation process that promotes high and sustained levels of quality school leadership is essential for student academic success, growth, and achievement. Accordingly, evaluation of school-based administrators should be conducted in accordance with the guidelines of the State of Tennessee and should reflect a fair, meaningful, and accurate depiction of an administrator's development, growth, and performance.

University Schools is also committed to supporting school-based administrators in their professional practices. University Schools believes that meaningful evaluations allow the University 1) to identify school-based administrators' leadership areas that are superior and prescribe support, rewards/recognition, and leadership opportunities that enhance the strength of the school-based administrator and 2) to identify school-based administrators' leadership areas that need strengthening and prescribe appropriate available support and professional development. Therefore, school-based administrators may seek available University support to improve their professional practices.

Additionally, school-based administrator evaluations provide the University with a useful tool to inform personnel decisions. In accordance with state law, evaluations shall be a factor in employment decisions, including, but not necessarily limited to, promotion, retention, termination, and compensation. Moreover, the evaluation may also have implications in areas such as director movement, rewards/recognitions, autonomy, leadership opportunities, and support.

From a University-wide perspective, the results of regular and accurate evaluations are useful in informing systemic decisions designed to (1) improve and optimize student achievement; (2) improve overall school leadership within the University; and (3) improve efficiency in the educational service delivery of the school system (e.g., align University professional development and support programs with University-wide school-based administrator needs identified through aggregate evaluation results).

Evaluation Model and Process

University Schools believe that in order for evaluation results to accurately reflect the performance level of a school-based administrator, the model of evaluation should be multidimensional and include components that are valid indicators of performance. Additionally, the evaluation process should be conducted with fidelity by competent evaluators and those certified in observation, in accordance with state law and regulations. To that end, University Schools shall evaluate all school-based administrators in accordance with standards established in applicable state laws and regulatory guidelines. The evaluation process shall be defined and implemented uniformly throughout the University. The administrator evaluation measure for University Schools shall include the following components: (1) Student Growth and Achievement Data; (2) Observation of Practice; Quality of Teacher Evaluations and (3) Stakeholder Perceptions.

The inputs for each evaluation component for an individual school-based administrator shall be confidential. Inputs may include items such as school-wide TVAAS scores, an evaluator's observation notes, and individual responses to stakeholder perception surveys. The inputs for each evaluation component for an individual school-based administrator shall be available to the administrator (or their designee); those allowed access by University Schools policy; and those required access by court order or state and/or federal law. Pursuant to state law, all records containing the results of an individual school-based administrator evaluation shall be treated as confidential and shall not be open to the public.

In accordance with state law and the Tennessee State Board of Education policy, a University grievance process (see below) is available to provide a means for evaluated administrators to challenge only the accuracy of the data used in the evaluation and the adherence to the evaluation policies adopted in accordance with state law.

Policy Monitoring

The Vice Provost (or designee) shall monitor implementation of this policy and shall review the methods and definitions for measuring effective school leadership with appropriate stakeholders. The Vice Provost (or designee) shall also review for appropriateness the components of the school-based administrator evaluation system TEAM Administrator Evaluation.

Administrative Rules and Regulations

Purpose: To comply with Tenn. Code Ann. §49-1-302 which requires, “the development of a local-level evaluation grievance procedure to provide a means for evaluated teachers and directors to challenge only the accuracy of the data used in the evaluation and the adherence to the evaluation policies adopted by the State Board of Education.” “Accuracy of the data” means only that the data identified with a particular school-based administrator is correct.

Minor procedural errors in implementing the evaluation model shall be resolved at the lowest possible step in the grievance procedure but shall not constitute grounds for challenging the final results of an evaluation. Minor procedural errors shall be defined as errors that do not materially affect or compromise the integrity of the evaluation results. The final results of an evaluation may only be challenged if the person being evaluated can demonstrate, no later than during step II of the grievance procedure, that the procedural errors made could materially affect or compromise the integrity of the evaluation results. The department of education shall provide guidance on which procedural errors may materially affect or compromise the results of the evaluation.

- To efficiently and fairly resolve grievances regarding procedural errors in the evaluation process, not to address disputes regarding employment actions taken based on the results of an evaluation.
- To ensure evaluations are fundamentally fair because correct procedures have been followed.
- To address grievances objectively, fairly, and expeditiously by resolving them at the lowest possible step in the procedure.
- To provide school-based administrators a process for resolving grievances without fear, discrimination, or reprisal.

The Vice Provost shall be responsible for the proper effectuation of this policy at the local level and shall charge the Chief of Staff for ensuring that all directors and administrators are aware of the provisions of this policy, including the identification of the administrator designated to conduct Step I of this procedure.

Basic Standards.

- To resolve grievances as expeditiously as possible pursuant to section (1)(d) above, grievances may be filed at the end of each of the three components of the evaluation model – 1) qualitative appraisal; 2) student growth measures; and 3) other measures of student achievement. A grievance must be filed no more than 15 days from the date administrators receive the results for each component, otherwise the grievance will be considered untimely and invalid.

- The State Department of Education or University Schools may develop and make available to administrators standard grievance forms. No grievance may be denied because a standard form adopted by University Schools has not been used as long as the components required by this policy are included.
- At the informal hearing before the Vice Provost a representative of an employee may speak on behalf of the employee.
- Each grievance submitted at every step of the process provided below shall contain:
 - the administrator's name, position, school, and additional title if any;
 - the name of the administrator's immediate supervisor;
 - the name of the evaluator/reviewer;
 - the date the challenged evaluation was received;
 - the evaluation period in question;
 - the basis for the grievance;
 - the corrective action desired by grievant; and
 - sufficient facts or other information to begin an investigation.
- A failure to state specific reasons shall result in the grievance being considered improperly filed and invalid.
- All student achievement data used in evaluations must be made available to individual educators prior to the completion of their evaluations.

Procedures

Grievances shall be processed by working through the three (3) steps to finality as follows:

Step I: Evaluator

1. Written grievance submitted to evaluator pursuant to timeline listed in Section (3)(a). If the grievant is an assistant director, a copy must be submitted to their director; if the grievant is a director, a copy must be submitted to the Chief of Staff (in both cases, only if different from the evaluator).
2. Administrative investigation and fact finding.
3. Decision clearly communicated in writing to grievant within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the complaint.

4. To allow disputes to be resolved at the lowest level possible, the Evaluator may take any action necessary, based on the circumstances, to immediately correct any procedural errors made in the evaluation process.

Step II: The Vice Provost or their designee who shall have had no input or involvement in the evaluation for which the grievance has been filed.

1. Within fifteen (15) days of receipt of decision from Step I, written grievance and prior step decision submitted to: the Director of Schools if the grievant is a director; their regional superintendent if the grievant is an assistant director.
2. Informal discussion or hearing of facts, allegations, and testimony by appropriate witnesses as soon as practical.
3. Investigation, fact finding, and written final decision communicated to grievant in writing within fifteen (15) days of discussion.

To allow disputes to be resolved at the lowest level possible, the Director of Schools or their designee may take any action necessary, based on the circumstances, to immediately correct any procedural errors made in the evaluation process.