

DATE:	February 12, 2026
SUBJECT:	T-TESS Update and Pilot Recruitment
CATEGORY:	Teacher Appraisal
NEXT STEPS:	Complete the interest form if your district would like to participate or learn more about piloting the updated T-TESS appraisal system.

The purpose of this communication is to share an update on the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) Refresh planning process and to offer districts the opportunity to pilot the updated T-TESS during the 2026-27 school year.

Context for T-TESS Updates

T-TESS was initially launched in 2015 and is currently used by 89% of Texas public school systems. As we mark its tenth anniversary and reflect on the time since its initial launch, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has identified an opportunity to refresh and improve the system to meet the evolving needs of Texas schools. More information about the process is available in the July 10, 2025, To the Administrator Correspondence: [Texas Teacher Evaluation & Support System \(T-TESS\) Refresh Engagement and Future Updates](#).

The goal for these updates is to build on the strength of the existing system rather than replace it by better aligning key appraisal components with national research, the revised educator standards, and trends in T-TESS feedback, all informed by a statewide stakeholder engagement process. This work has refined targeted areas while preserving the system's core strengths and integrity.

Stakeholder Engagement to Date

This fall, the TEA provided all educators, district leaders and partners with opportunities to engage in the T-TESS revision process. These included:

- A robust **Stakeholder Advisory Committee** composed of classroom teachers, school and district leaders, educator preparation programs and professional organizations reviewed proposed updates and provided feedback to ensure the revisions reflect current classroom practice.
- **Field testing** of the draft rubric in approximately 100 classrooms, allowing teachers and appraisers to interact with the updated instrument in authentic settings.

TEA will release engagement summaries and key findings in late March.

T-TESS Pilot Opportunity

For the next phase in this work, TEA is seeking districts statewide to participate in the 2026–27 pilot of the updated T-TESS evaluation system.

Purpose: To examine how the updated TTESS evaluation system functions in district contexts prior to statewide implementation. This effort will ensure alignment with district and state priorities, strengthen supports for teacher growth and ensure that the system provides fair and

trusted recognition of effective teaching. This will also be an opportunity to provide further feedback that refines the T-TESS evaluation system and ensures that districts have the right suite of resources and supports for strong implementation.

Commitment: Districts will implement the updated appraisal system districtwide during the 2026–27 school year. Participating districts will be asked to:

- designate a lead to coordinate data collection and engagement activities
- implement the full evaluation cycle
- participate in associated training and calibration
- provide feedback to support statewide implementation

Participation Benefits:

- Dedicated implementation support from TEA, regional education service center (ESC) partners, and technical assistance providers.
- Access to updated materials and resources.
- Financial support for implementation planning and any necessary training.

Next Step for District Leaders:

- Register and join our Office Hours to learn more about the pilot and ask any additional questions.
 - **Wednesday, February 18 at 11:00 a.m.** [Zoom Link](#)
 - **Monday, March 2 at 1:00 p.m.** [Zoom Link](#)
- Complete the [Pilot Interest Survey](#) if your district is interested in supporting this important work and would like an opportunity to apply for participation in the T-TESS Pilot.
Interest Survey Deadline: March 5, 2026

As we conduct planning and engagement related to the T-TESS refresh, TEA will provide regular updates on the [T-TESS website](#).

Contact Information

For questions related to this communication or the T-TESS refresh initiative, please email ttess@tea.texas.gov.