



## **SPECIAL SECTION: IMPORTANT LEAP FAIRNESS GUIDE UPDATES for SY 20-21**

*The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) has shared that 100% of an educator's final effectiveness rating will be based on Professional Practice for the 20-21 SY only.*

*Professional Practice comprises the 3 components listed below. DPS and DCTA have reached an agreement that **changes the implementation** of these components as follows:*

### **OBSERVATION:**

- 1) Probationary teachers shall receive a minimum of two observations and non-probationary, at-will and annual contract teachers shall receive a minimum of one formal full observation as defined and set forth in the LEAP Fairness Guide. Teachers may request additional observations for coaching and evaluation purposes.
- 2) Appendices that reflect the considerations unique to virtual, hybrid, and in person learning (under COVID restrictions) will be developed by the LEAP team in consultation with the Peer Observer Team and reviewed by the LCC. Similar modifications will be made for the SSP GPS system.
- 3) It is required that all evaluators, teachers and SSPs be trained, and evaluators calibrated utilizing the appropriate appendix (virtual, hybrid and in person learning) prior to any observation/evaluation being conducted.

### **STUDENT PERCEPTION SURVEYS (Grade 3-12 only)**

- 4) The Student Perception Survey shall only be offered in Spring semester

### **STUDENT GROWTH:**

- 5) SLOs will not be used (nor will any other student growth measure) for evaluation during the 20-21 school year. Schools will continue to use data teams to assess student progress.

### **Updates to LEAP classroom evaluations (Nov 2020):**

- LEAP classroom observers should complete all of their observation and feedback sessions remotely, no matter the teaching scenario, for safety reasons and to ensure fairness (see separate [ECE Guidance](#)).
- Formal (scored) observations should not happen within two weeks of a teaching scenario shift (i.e. from in-person to remote due to COVID quarantine or vice versa). For more details and exceptions, read this [Remote Observation Guidance one-pager](#).

**All other guidelines not related to those listed above, will remain relevant to the current year**



## 1 Purpose

The LEAP Fairness Guide was developed in consultation with the Denver Classroom Teachers Association (DCTA) to ensure that LEAP is administered fairly and consistently for all teachers.

The Guide includes requirements that Denver Public Schools (DPS) is committed to regarding the teacher evaluation process. It also includes a number of best practices that work toward improving the quality of feedback that teachers receive. Last, it outlines the processes for handling any concerns or questions about whether DPS has followed the requirements of this Guide or Article 10 of the DCTA Agreement. The LEAP Collaboration Committee, may review and revise the LEAP Fairness Guide as deemed necessary.

Please contact us at [leap@dpsk12.org](mailto:leap@dpsk12.org) if you have any questions about the Guide or suggestions for improvement.

## 2 The Components of LEAP

The following measures shall be used to calculate the LEAP End-of-Year rating:

- Observation
- Professionalism
- Student Perception (grades 3-12)
- Student Growth

## 3 Observation

Our goal is to ensure that all teachers are provided with ongoing support and coaching through observation and feedback.

- **Types of Observations**

**[PLEASE SEE UPDATED GUIDELINES FOR 20-21](#)**



All teachers will receive at least two observations that will be scored in Whetstone. One Formal Full observation plus at least one other Formal scored observation. The additional observation(s) can be any type – Full or Short. *Observations entered into Whetstone are categorized as either **Informal** or **Formal**. Only Formal observations (Shorts and Fulls) that are scored will flow into the LEAP Application Tool – where Professional Practice components are calculated. Informal observations will remain in Whetstone and are referenced when reflecting on/reviewing all growth and performance data.*

1. **Formal Full:** The observer captures both teacher and student behaviors during a lesson (generally 45-60 minutes). For block-scheduled classes, the appropriate observation period may be longer than 60 minutes. For a Full, the observer completes a Classroom Observation Form (COF) in the District observation tool. The COF should include the observed teacher and student behaviors from that lesson aligned to the scored indicators and the resulting performance band score (1-7). Additionally, COFs should always include bulleted teacher and student behaviors from the Framework for Effective Teaching so educators have a clear understanding of how the score was determined. A full observation typically captures all 12 indicators. However, there might be extenuating circumstances where 1 or 2 indicators are not evident due to teachers' intentional planning. In these cases, in order for the LEAP Application Tool (LAT) to consider this one particular observation as a Full, and include it as such in the EOY calculation, this observation must have at least 3 Learning Environment and 6 Instructional indicators scored. (Note: if there was no opportunity during a full lesson to observe the specific practice associated with an indicator, then the observer may choose not to score that indicator. Best practice would be to return, on a future date, to observe for those unscored indicators, in a new observation form.)

2. **Formal Short (aka Scored Partial):** The observer captures both teacher and student behaviors during a lesson for 15-30 minutes (minimum 15 minutes), depending upon the indicators being scored and then completes a Classroom Observation Form (COF) in the District observation tool. The COF should always include the observed teacher and student behaviors from that lesson aligned to the scored indicators and the resulting performance band score (1-7). Additionally, the COF should include bulleted teacher and student behaviors from the Framework for Effective Teaching so educators have a clear understanding of how the score was



determined. (Note: Observers will only evaluate/score indicators that they directly observed.)

3. **Informal:** with no set minimum time – an informal may last an entire lesson or only 5-10 minutes. Informal observations should include the observed teacher and student behaviors from the lesson, along with any aligned bulleted teacher and student behaviors from the Framework for Effective Teaching and provide feedback or next steps. Informal observations are a great way to assess where a teacher's performance is aligning and therefore may or may not include scores. Scores from an Informal observation are not used in the End-of-Year calculation of the Professional Practice rating. All Informal observations (scored or not) remain in Whetstone and do not carry over into the LEAP Application Tool.

· **Observers: Who Can Conduct Observations and MY and EOY Evaluations?**

- Peer Observers and School Leaders who have been trained and certified under the District's system are allowed to perform observations. School Leaders include: Principals, Assistant Principals, Administrative Assistants, Teacher Leaders (Senior Team Leads and Team Leads), Deans, Principal Residents and Principal Interns, Instructional support roles such as Instructional Superintendent, or other designee. (Note: Teachers at innovation schools, should review their innovation plans to determine whether their schools have modified any of these procedures.)
  - *With the exception of Team Leads, all of the observers mentioned above may complete MY and EOY evaluations.*

· **Observation Schedule, Frequency, Notification and Use of Video**

- [Formal observations begin two weeks after the start of school.\\* \(Refer to 20-21 Update #3\)](#)
- Observations can be announced or unannounced. Announced – might be defined as the week the observation is to occur, but perhaps not the exact time and date.
- Observations can take place at any point during a teacher's instructional time. However, observers should not conduct a Formal observation if there is a significant disruption to the lesson time period (e.g. testing of significant duration, guest speakers, fire drill, or other extenuating circumstances). For example if the observer was intending to conduct a Formal Full observation, but was interrupted after 20 minutes by a fire drill or some other similar type of disruption, the observer couldn't conduct the Formal Full but could choose to still score the observation as a Formal Short for the indicators which the observer directly observed prior to the disruption. The observer should not score for the absence of a teacher practice that may have happened later in the disrupted lesson.)



- Given that evaluation is meant to be a growth-based system featuring meaningful coaching, observers will work to coordinate observation schedules. Observers should collaborate with teachers and one another to manage observation schedules, in order to space observations and formal evaluations throughout the school year. Teachers will not receive a Formal observation during the first two weeks of the school year and will not receive more than one Formal Full observation during a school week. Additionally, after a Formal Full observation, the teacher will not receive an additional scored observation until feedback on the prior Formal Full observation has been provided.
- When observations are shared in Whetstone there are two delivery options for leaders to choose from; *Share via Whetstone* or *Share via Email and Whetstone*. The best practice communicated to leaders is to select *Share via Email and Whetstone* so that teachers receive notification in both their DPS Outlook email and in Whetstone. After being observed, it is also best practice for a teacher to check their email and Whetstone for any new observation forms and/or coaching and feedback data.
- Videos of instruction can be uploaded into Whetstone by a teacher or leader. Both teachers and leaders can reflect on these uploaded videos either through a Video Observation Form or Self-Reflection Form. Use of video is for coaching and development **only** and may not be used as part of a teacher's body of evidence to inform their overall EOY rating **unless** the teacher authorizes the use of video as part of the evaluation process by executing this [Video Consent Form](#), located on the Resources Tab in Whetstone.

#### Feedback Sessions

- **After Formal Full Observation:** An in-person feedback session is required after a Formal Full observation. The feedback session should be conducted as close to the observation as possible *and no later than ten school days after the observation*. It is also best practice for the draft of the Formal Full observation COF to be shared via Whetstone and/or email at least 24 hours prior to the feedback conversation. If an observer fails to hold a required feedback conversation within ten school days of a Formal Full observation, the teacher should send an email to LEAP@dpsk12.org and the observer in order to request that the feedback be scheduled. If the observer does not schedule and complete the feedback session within ten school days of the email, the teacher can grieve the failure to hold a feedback session.
- **After Formal Short Observation:** The teacher will receive notification of the new observation via Whetstone and/or email which includes the evidence described



above (see definition of Formal Short Observation). In addition to the written feedback provided in the observation form, the teacher may also receive feedback via email or in-person but it is not required. Best practice is to share Short observation forms within 10 school days.

- **After Informal Observation:** After an Informal observation the teacher will receive notification of the new observation via Whetstone and/or email which includes the evidence described above (see definition of Informal Observation). In addition to the written feedback provided in the observation form, the teacher may also receive feedback via email or in-person but it is not required. Best practice is to share Informal observations within 10 school days.

- **Disagreement on Indicator Scores (Formal Observations Only)**

Teachers who disagree with their observer's scores may:

- Open the observation in Whetstone and add a comment and/or upload evidence via the paperclip icon in the comment box. A notification will go to the observer. It is best practice to follow-up with the observer directly regarding any concerns. (Also see Section 14, page 10)
- Contact the LEAP help desk, discuss the situation with the observer, and/or ask DCTA for advice.

*\*Please note that grievances may not be filed for observation scores.*

- **Observation Support:** Teachers have access to various instructional leaders during the year who will provide coaching and feedback as well as conduct classroom observations and MY & EOY evaluations. These supports include Senior/Team Leads, Regional Improvement and Leadership Specialists, and Peer Observers. Please note- Peer Observers require a teacher to opt-in via this [link](#).

- **Late Hires:** All teachers that are late hires still participate in LEAP and receive coaching and feedback through formal and informal observations. Regardless of the date of the late hire, best practice is for a leader to observe the teacher.

- **Limited Term Assignment:** Teachers with this job title may or may not be in LEAP as it is dependent on their role at the school. Please call the LEAP office or your HR School Partner to help determine evaluation type.



- **110-Retired Teachers:** Retired teachers are not required to be in LEAP. The retired teacher may discuss the option with their school leader and let the LEAP team know of the final decision. Please contact the LEAP Team if you have any questions.
- **Teachers on Leave:** Teachers who are on leave during the course of the year will receive observations if/when they return to the classroom.

- **ELA-S teachers**

For ELA-S teachers instructing in Spanish, the following observation and scoring guidelines have been outlined below:

- For purposes of LEAP and ELA-S Designated Classrooms:
  - During Spanish Instruction –an observer is required to be fluent in order to conduct a scored observation.
  - During Spanish Instruction – an observer does not need to be fluent if he/she is not intending to score the observation, but solely provide coaching and support as a result of their time in the classroom
  - During English Instruction - an observer does not have to be fluent in Spanish and may conduct scored and unscored observations

LEAP is a multi-measure system designed to *incorporate multiple aspects of a teacher’s practice. While scored observations, of Spanish instruction, must be conducted by an individual fluent in Spanish, the scoring of Professionalism and overall performance rating discussion does not require an individual to be fluent in Spanish.*

- **Observer Certification:**
  - **New leaders/ observers** are required to attend District training to learn about norming on observation. Additionally, they are required to watch and score a classroom instruction video to receive LEAP certification. The online assessment (scoring the video) requires the participant to have scores that are 83% adjacent to the norm scores. Observers who do not pass the online assessment on their first opportunity will have two additional chances to take the assessment or go through an in-person certification process.



- **Existing leaders/observers:** The District handles re-certification by providing opportunities to norm as an Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) at least one time during the year through ILT Calibration sessions. And for those that have not observed for two or more years, they must participate in a LEAP Observer Training.

## 4 Professionalism

- The Professionalism Domain assesses the work teachers do outside of instructional time, individually and collaboratively, and includes a component of teacher self-assessment. Professionalism calculations are based on the first 6 indicators of the Professionalism Framework, unless the evaluated teacher serves in a designated Teacher Leader capacity, in which case the school leader will evaluate the teacher's performance on the seventh indicator as well (P.7). Teachers are encouraged to track their Professionalism progress using the Quick Notes tool that is available within the Professionalism tab in the LEAP Application Tool. (Note: While S/TLs are officially evaluated on LEAP, they are a vital part of the Instructional Leadership Team, and it is critical they receive regular feedback on their leadership skills using the LEAD Framework as a guide. More information can be found on [The Commons](#).)
- **Professionalism Completion:** During both the Mid-Year and End-of-Year Conversations, teachers rate themselves on Professionalism as does the school leader.
  - Teachers can choose whether or not they self-rate the Professionalism indicators for Mid-Year and End-of-Year. It is voluntary but strongly recommended.
  - A school leader is required to fill in the Professionalism indicators with ratings at End-of-Year, and it is strongly recommended for Mid-Year. School leaders are encouraged to provide evidence with each rating, either in written form or during conversations. Best practice is to holistically assess the teacher's practice on each indicator rather than focus solely on isolated events. Only the End-of-Year ratings are used in the calculation for the overall performance rating.
  - Teachers are strongly encouraged, but not required, to attend the Mid-Year conference with their own evidence for each indicator on the Professionalism Domain. For example, the teacher can show examples using data from Infinite Campus, data team meetings, Professional Development sessions they attended, records of meetings with parents etc. Leaders should review and consider the evidence teachers provide when determining professionalism scores.



- **Dual Schools:** Teachers who are at two schools will have their Professionalism completed by their home school's leader. Home school is defined as the school the teacher attends on Monday mornings or, if not equally at both, the school with the greater FTE (unless agreed otherwise).

- **Disagreement on Professionalism Indicator Scores**

Teachers who disagree with their leader's Professionalism scores may:

- Contact the LEAP help desk for assistance, discuss the situation with the school leader, and/or contact DCTA for advice. Teachers who did not receive EOY Professionalism ratings may submit a grievance (see Section 12 & 13).

## 5 Student perception surveys (SPS)

- **PLEASE SEE UPDATED GUIDELINES FOR 20-21**

The Student Perception Survey is the LEAP measure that incorporates student voice. As part of LEAP, the Student Perception Survey is a short survey done annually for most teachers to examine how students perceive their teachers and their experience in the classroom.

- SPS is administered during the fall (Mid-October-- Mid-November) and again in February for the make-up or opt-in window.)
- Teachers in ECE- 2<sup>nd</sup> grade will not have student perception surveys.
- Teachers must have at least 10 unique student surveys completed in order for student perception results to contribute to the overall rating calculation.
- The LEAP Collaboration Committee previously determined that teachers should have the option to administer SPS a second time. As a result, in the spring, teachers may opt-in to administer the SPS for a second time. Results from the 2<sup>nd</sup> administration are aggregated with those from the first, fall administration. Teachers who miss the fall administration, or need to add students, will **automatically** be added to the spring window. Teachers may not opt-out of the fall administration.
- DPS has posted [resources](#) for teachers and school leaders to help explain the calculations, make connections to instruction, and understand the results. Teachers are encouraged to discuss the results with their school leaders and/or teacher leaders.
- For questions about SPS, contact the LEAP team for help, discuss the situation with a school leader and/or contact DCTA for advice.



## 6 Student Growth

### **PLEASE SEE UPDATED GUIDELINES FOR 20-21**

**LEAP Student Growth:** As required by law, all Colorado districts must incorporate student growth as 50% of a teacher's rating. For DPS, Student Growth is made up of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), school measures, and state measures (when applicable).

**SLOs:** SLOs comprise 30% or 40% of a teacher's overall LEAP rating, depending on the teacher's role. All teachers are required to do SLOs including late-hires and teachers taking leave during the course of the year.

- Teachers are required to complete **one** SLO for each school year (see one exception below where two SLOs are required). Each SLO will be scored as a percent of points possible. While only one SLO is required, two SLOs are recommended. Completing two SLOs includes more students, thereby producing a more reliable score.
- Teachers must include a minimum of 10 students on at least one SLO unless teachers have less than 10 students rostered to them over the course of the school year. Teachers with less than 10 students assigned baseline preparedness levels on their first SLO *will be required to complete two SLOs*. The rationale for this is to protect teachers from any one student having a significant (potentially negative) impact on their evaluation. This requirement was based on feedback and concerns expressed by our teachers.
- When a teacher completes more than one SLO, the SLOs will be **weighted equally** for the teacher's overall LEAP rating.
- All students from a section in Infinite Campus must be included in an SLO. A teacher may also (but does not have to) include multiple sections of a course in a single SLO. If a teacher's second SLO is the same objective but with a different section; the section should be added to the first SLO.
- Teachers and school leaders should review the teacher's body of evidence for each student prior to approving the SLO.
- At the end of the course, all students in the SLO with greater than 80% attribution are required to be given an expectation level and included in growth calculations. Teachers may include students with less than 80% attribution. Attribution is based on Infinite Campus data and combines student attendance with the duration a teacher is the teacher-of-record. Teachers may exclude students above 80% attribution if Infinite Campus data is shown to be inaccurate.



- After teachers submit end-of-course SLO levels, an evaluator may request revisions or approve the SLO.
  - If approved, a Student Growth rating will then be calculated.
  - If the leader requests revisions, the leader and teacher should discuss the request. If they are unable to reach collaborative consensus on SLO data (i.e. rigor of standards addressed, appropriate students are included or excluded, baseline levels, end-of-course levels), then they should mutually contact a neutral content-expert (generally the district content specialist/coordinator) for support. The neutral content-expert should provide content-based support to both teacher and leader. This support is not as arbiter, but rather provides content-based expertise on the SLO. With this third-party guidance, the teacher should re-submit and the evaluator should approve.
  - If agreement is not reached even with third-party input, after re-submission, the leader can begin “approve with modifications” track after attesting that: 1) leader and teacher have met multiple times to discuss SLO data, 2) additional support (see above) has been involved, and 3) teacher is informed in advance that the leader will submit revised SLO information. The leader can then adjust student-level SLO information and approve with modifications. The leader’s modified levels will be used to create a Student Growth rating.
  - If a teacher chooses not to complete an SLO, he/she will receive a Not Meeting for Student Growth.

**School Measures:** The School Performance Framework (SPF) represents a teacher’s collective measure of student growth and comprises 10% of an overall LEAP rating.

- Only the SPF Growth Indicator, not the Status Indicator, is used in teacher evaluations.
- The previous academic year’s SPF Growth is used in all teacher evaluations.

**State Measures:** For English Language Arts and Math teachers, student growth on state measures will comprise 10% of overall LEAP ratings. (State Measures include: CMAS, PSAT and SATs - as applies)

- Students must have scores from two consecutive years to calculate growth and be included in a teacher’s evaluation.
- State Measures will not be used in the calculation of new teachers’ evaluations.



## 7 LEAP Mid-Year and End-of-Year Conversations

- LEAP Mid-Year conversations should occur between mid-December and mid-February. During this time, teachers and leaders have the opportunity to do a preliminary assessment of the teacher's progress to-date for the school year.
  - Teachers are encouraged but not required to complete a mid-year self-reflection on performance and professionalism (scores only or scores and comments).
  - Leaders are advised to enter scores and comments for each teacher at Mid-Year (Professionalism and Reflections), and share them with the teacher prior to a Mid-Year conversation. Best practice is for the leaders to include evidence and cite specific examples of practice.
- While data is reviewed for each of the measures, **no Overall or Professional Practice ratings** are provided to teachers at mid-year. Best practice is for leaders to use the mid-year to help teachers understand next steps for growth and improvement, with the goal being to assure that the End-of-Year rating is not a surprise.
- LEAP End-of-Year conversations will start in April and go through the end of the year. During this time, teachers and leaders do a final assessment of the teacher's progress and performance for the school year.
  - Leaders are required to complete the End-of-Year process by assigning Professionalism scores and updating evidence and comments as needed.
  - Leaders are required to enter the Reflections on Practice, identifying Areas of Strength, Areas of Growth and Next Steps.
  - Leaders will share a draft of the ratings and comments with teachers via the LEAP Application Tool. It is best practice to share the draft at least two weeks prior to the end of the school year. Note: Given the timing/completion of SLOs, teachers and leaders may request an extension which may not exceed the last day of school.
  - Teachers are encouraged but not required to complete Professionalism self-assessment and/or reflections on practice.



- Professional Practice and Student Growth ratings will be assigned and applied to the matrix. If a teacher's performance rating lands in a decision box, the leader must select an overall rating and provide written reasoning for selecting that rating.

- An End-of-Year conversation must occur prior to the end of the school year. If a teacher is on leave and is LEAP Official, and has sufficient data to receive a rating, the leader should reach out to the teacher to offer to meet either by phone, in person, or through email exchanges to complete the End-of-Year conversation. If the teacher on leave chooses not to participate in any of these options, the Leader must respect that decision and will finalize the EOY without penalizing the teacher in any manner for the decision to not participate in an End-of-Year conversation.

- School Leaders must acknowledge/sign all teachers' final ratings.

- Teachers may select one of the following options for finalizing their End-of-Year rating:

- Acknowledge and sign
- Refuse to acknowledge

Or a teacher may choose not to finalize.

## 8 Calculating Overall Professional Practice Rating

**Calculation:** Since there are 50 points possible in Professional Practice, a teacher's performance rating is based on the percentage of points a teacher earns on the Professional Practice measures out of 50.

The Professional Practice data is converted into points using the following:

- Points for Observation and Professionalism are calculated using the mean scores.
- For the Student Perception Survey, teachers will earn points based on their performance on each SPS category.



The number of points a teacher receives is then plotted on the Professional Practice continuum to determine the overall Professional Practice performance category rating. The graphic below displays the performance continuum. If the point totals fall within these bands, school leader discretion is applied in determining the rating.

Prior to End-Of-Year conversations, DPS will provide resources and guidance to school leaders to assist in making discretionary decisions for teachers that land within a decision band for Professional Practice. DPS will consult with DCTA prior to issuing such guidance.

## 9 Calculating the Final End-of-Year Rating

- A teacher will receive an overall performance rating of Distinguished, Effective, Approaching or Not Meeting.
- 50% of the rating is from Professional Practice and 50% is from Student Growth. The Professional Practice Rating is combined with the Student Growth Rating using a matrix.
  - If a teacher's ratings are the same for both Professional Practice and Student Growth, a rating is automatically assigned.
  - If a teacher's ratings are different, a leader will need to select the rating and provide the reasoning for the rating selection.
- Prior to End-Of-Year conversations, DPS will provide resources and guidance to school leaders to assist in making discretionary decisions for teachers that land within a decision box.
- **Note:** School leaders must select a rating and provide written reasoning for selecting that rating and should include a specific statement in the End-of-Year report about the strengths or growth areas of the student growth data and how that factored into their assignment of the final rating from the decision box.



## 10 End of Year Ratings for Late Hires and Leave Teachers (LEAP Unofficial)

**Late Hires:** If a teacher is hired after the first 68 teacher reporting days passed (typically mid-November) he or she is considered LEAP Unofficial. While likely eligible to receive a rating as he or she will meet the end-of-year calculation requirements, this rating will not be recorded in his/her InFor record and will not be shared with the Colorado Department of Education.

**Leave Teachers:** Teachers on leave 68 or more teacher reporting days are also considered LEAP Unofficial. Leave teachers may be eligible to receive a rating based on End-of-Year calculation requirements, however this rating will not be recorded in his/her InFor record and will not be shared with the Colorado Department of Education. \*Note: Due to the complex nature of “intermittent” leaves, they are not included.

## 11 The LEAP End-of-Year Report

As required by statute, the LEAP End-of-Year Report shall:

- specifically identify when the classroom observations were conducted;
- state the teacher’s strengths and areas for future growth;
- include a plan for improvement\*
- identify the data used to support the overall rating; and
- be signed by the evaluator.

The teacher can choose electronically to (i) acknowledge and sign, (ii) select the option of “refusing to sign,” or (iii) not sign. A signature will not be construed to indicate agreement with the information or the conclusions in the final written evaluation.

\*The entire End-of-Year Report acts as the plan for improvement by providing the collection of evidence/feedback from throughout the year as well as specific sections to note areas of strength, areas for growth, and recommendations for next steps.



## 12 Review Process for Failure to Follow Guide

If a teacher feels that the District has not followed any requirement set forth in this Guide, the teacher is encouraged to resolve the issue at the lowest level possible by speaking with his or her evaluator and/or by submitting an inquiry to the LEAP team by emailing [LEAP@dpsk12.org](mailto:LEAP@dpsk12.org). The LEAP team will communicate with the teacher within five school days regarding next steps.

If the concern regarding a requirement of this Guide is not resolved or the teacher does not wish to seek resolution from the LEAP team first, the teacher can submit a grievance under Article 7 of the DPS/DCTA Agreement. The grievance should state how the District has not followed the requirements of this Guide. (Note: Recommendations or suggestions for best practices are not considered requirements of this Guide. For failure to follow suggestions or best practices, the teacher should contact the LEAP team for guidance.)

The teacher's grievance must comply with the timing deadlines in Article 7. Specifically, any Level 1 grievance must be filed within **fifteen days** after the teacher knew or should have known of the District's alleged failure to follow the requirements in this Guide.

Failure to follow any **requirements** in this Guide will only be grievable up to Level 2. They cannot be taken to Level 3, as defined by Article 7 of the Agreement.

## 13 Review of Observation or Professionalism Scores during the School Year

If a teacher disagrees with the indicator-level observation (Formal observations only) or Professionalism scores that were assigned for a particular observation or at Mid-Year or End-of-Year conversations, the teacher should first approach his/her leader to review and discuss the disagreement. If the situation is still unresolved, the teacher can submit an inquiry to the LEAP team by emailing [LEAP@dpsk12.org](mailto:LEAP@dpsk12.org). Depending on the facts of the situation, the LEAP team may be able to provide support to remedy the teacher's concerns. At minimum, the LEAP team will respond within five school days with next steps. The teacher can also contact DCTA for advice.

Disagreements regarding indicator-level observation scores or professionalism scores are **not grievable** unless an alleged violation of the requirements of this Guide materially impacted the challenged scores. (Note: Failure to follow the recommendations or best practices of this Guide does not constitute a violation of a requirement but can be referred to the LEAP team for potential resolution.) (See Section 12 for guidance on filing a grievance.)



## 14 Review of End-of-Year Ratings

Teachers with non-probationary status, in schools recognizing non-probationary status, who have received two consecutive years of Not Meeting and/or Approaching ratings will have access to an appeal process before losing non-probationary status. If a teacher meets these qualifications, the District will reach out to the teacher with additional information, forms and timelines for a possible appeal. Please see Article 10 of the DCTA Agreement for further information.

The Redress Process is an option for teachers who land in a decision-band or an overall decision box or whose Student Growth rating was impacted by the use of the SLO “approve with modifications” process and disagree with their final LEAP End-of-Year rating that is assigned by their evaluator. In the Redress Process, the teacher is given an opportunity to meet with their evaluator (and school principal if they are not one in the same) to revisit the End-of-Year rating and present their argument for why they feel the rating assigned by the school leader was unreasonable in light of the body of evidence.

### Purpose

- Provide an opportunity for discussion when a teacher believes that his/her rating was determined unfairly.
- Encourage problem-solving at the lowest level between teacher and school leadership.

### Procedures & Protocols

- Teacher can request review of an overall LEAP rating where:
  - He/she believes there has been a computational error in the way the rating was determined; or
  - He/she believes that the evaluator’s assignment of the Professional Practice rating from a decision-band was not reasonable in light of the body of evidence and that assignment had a material impact on the overall final rating; or
  - He/she believes the evaluator’s use of the SLO “approve with modifications” process was not reasonable in light of the body of evidence and that the Student Growth rating is not accurate and had a material impact on the overall final rating; or
  - He/she believes the evaluator’s assignment of the overall Student Growth rating (determined due to the teacher being unable to complete the SLOs while on



- leave) was not reasonable in light of the body of evidence and that the rating is not accurate and had a material impact on the overall final rating; or
- He/she believes that the evaluator's assignment of a final rating within a decision box was not reasonable in light of the body of evidence
  - If the teacher believes that any of the requirements of this Guide were not followed and the teacher is within the time period for filing a grievance, s/he can file a grievance regarding the issue. (see Section 12). A teacher who is eligible for redress can also elect to have any alleged violations of this Guide considered in the redress process if the time period for filing a grievance has not passed.
  - Teacher **cannot** request review of an overall LEAP rating where:
    - A school leader exercised discretion in the decision band or box and it was in the teacher's favor.
  - If a teacher wishes to request a redress meeting, s/he must do so by sending an email to the LEAP inbox within ten (10) business days of the final evaluation conference.
  - This email will be acknowledged within two (2) business days. An initial email will be sent to the evaluator/principal to ask if they would like to reconsider the rating prior to moving to the redress process. If s/he declines then an email is sent to the designated DPS ombudsperson alerting him/her of the need to schedule a conversation with the teacher and school leadership. The ombudsperson is sent the final rating report and teacher/school leader contact information.
  - This meeting will be scheduled to take place within twenty-one (21) business days from the acknowledgement of a teacher's request.
  - If a teacher is unresponsive to the ombudsperson's requests to schedule the redress meeting, within the twenty-one business days, then as a result he/she will waive their right to redress. A final email will be sent to inform the teacher of this situation.
  - If a teacher fails to show for a meeting that he/she confirmed attendance at then the teacher forgoes the opportunity to redress the rating.
  - The redress meeting must be completed before the first day back to work for the subsequent school year, unless mutually extended.
  - Structure of the meeting with the ombudsperson:
    - Meeting will involve a facilitated conversation between the teacher and appropriate school leader(s). Schools leaders will include the principal and the school leader immediately supervising the teacher (if different than the principal).
    - A note taker may or may not be present to assist in the gathering of information presented.
    - The basis for the conversation will be the LEAP final evaluation document and whether the final rating was reasonable in light of the body of evidence.
    - Meeting will last no longer than 60 minutes.



- The ombudsperson will listen, ask questions, review the evidence presented, and provide a recommendation and considerations on the outcome to the school leader.
- Meeting attendees will be limited to the following: teacher, school principal, teacher's immediate supervisor (if different than the principal), and the ombudsperson. No additional attendees will be permitted.
- The principal or immediate supervisor may modify the overall evaluation document based on the conversations and the ombudsperson's recommendation, but the ombudsperson may not alter the rating.
- Following the meeting, the ombudsperson will document the outcome of the conversation, include his/her recommendation and share this with DPS Human Resources, the school leader, and the teacher. The ombudsperson will share this within five (5) business days of the redress meeting.
- If the teacher is not satisfied with the resolution of the facilitated process, she/he can submit a request for review to the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) or designee by sending an email to the LEAP inbox within three (3) days from receiving the document from the ombudsperson.
- This email will be acknowledged within two (2) business days and sent to the CHRO designee, along with the final rating report and summary by the ombudsperson.
- The CHRO or designee will make a final determination based on the written request for review and a review of the final evaluation document.
- This determination must be made within twenty-one (21) days of receiving the request for review.
- The CHRO or designee may consult with the Instructional Superintendent, ombudsperson, evaluator, teacher, or other relevant individual in making a final rating, but is not required to hold a hearing of the parties.
- The CHRO or designee may alter the rating assigned to the teacher only where it is not reasonable in light of the body of evidence; she/he may not substitute their judgment for that of the evaluator.
- The decision of the CHRO or designee will be final.

This guide is a District document that was developed in consultation with the Denver Classroom Teachers Association (DCTA). The LEAP Collaboration Committee, may also review the LEAP Fairness Guide and submit suggested revisions. This committee does not create any contractual or employment rights.