

MCALLEN AFT NEWS

1500 Dove, McAllen, TX 78504

October 2016

Volume 24, Issue 2

IMPORTANT INFORMATION!

T-TESS

T-TESS should be prescriptive and diagnostic in nature and not punitive. It is to be used as a developmental tool to improve a teacher's performance.

From the Commissioner's rules:

§150.1003. Appraisals, Data Sources, and Conferences.

(a) Each teacher must be appraised each school year, except as provided by subsection (1) of this section. Whenever possible, an appraisal shall be based on the teacher's performance in fields and teaching assignments for which he or she is certified.

(b) The annual teacher appraisal, or full appraisal, shall include:

(5) an observation post-conference that:

(A) shall be conducted within 10 working days after the completion of an observation;

(B) is diagnostic and prescriptive in nature;

(C) includes a written report of the rating of each dimension observed that is presented to the teacher only after a discussion of the areas for reinforcement and areas for refinement; and

(D) can allow for, at the discretion of the

appraiser, a revision to an area for reinforcement or refinement based on the post-conference discussion with the teacher;

Texas Education Code, Sec. 21.352:

(f) The district shall notify a teacher of the results of any appraisal of the teacher in a timely manner so that the appraisal may be used as a developmental tool by the district and the teacher to improve the overall performance of the teacher.

Your GSPD plan is NOT set in stone!

GSPD is an ongoing, recursive process through which teachers authentically engage in reflection about current professional practices, identify individualized professional growth goals, establish and implement a professional development plan to attain those goals, and track progress toward the goals over the course of the year.

The goal-setting process is a dynamic process and may need to be revised throughout the year. A question to consider in revising the goals mid-year is whether the goal is still accurate or whether it needs to be revised based on changes in teacher/student need(s).

Planning and Prep Periods

Can my administrator do a formal observation on me during after school tutorials? The answer is NO! The observation should take place during the school day.

Many administrators are using T-TESS as a reason to



McAllen AFT
1500 Dove Avenue
McAllen, TX 78504

Continued

hijack your conference period. It is unlawful for administrators to mandate attendance at group sessions during the teacher's individual planning and preparation period. For more information: <http://www.texasaft.org/planning-prep-periods/>

Turning Back an Attack on Your Freedom to Use Payroll Deduction

The Texas Senate State Affairs Committee took testimony on a fresh attack against your right to pay your organizational dues via payroll deduction. A private-sector business group, locked in a dispute with a private-sector union, has chosen to lash out by demanding the prohibition of payroll deduction of dues by public employees—who are not even a party to the dispute.

The threadbare rationale offered by the business lobbyists for this attack drew some tough questioning from Sens. Judith Zaffirini, D-Laredo, and Rodney Ellis, D-Houston. The weakness of the case against payroll deduction was further exposed in rebuttal testimony, including a point-by-point response delivered on behalf of Texas AFT this afternoon by Traci Dunlap, a pre-K teacher and leader in Texas AFT's Education Austin local. She said:

As a public school teacher, I promise you that I earn **every penny** of my paycheck. How I spend my money, and what I have deducted from my paycheck, should be **my choice**. I am opposed to any legislation that would, without justification, take that choice away from me.

Texas is a “right to work” state, so there is no mandatory union membership. All public employees are free to choose whether or not to join a union or professional organization, and to direct a portion of their earnings to that organization through payroll deduction. Taking away that option would infringe upon the **personal economic freedom** of public employees.

Payroll deduction is the **safest** way to pay dues, since it removes the risk of ID theft and credit card fraud. After having my own personal information stolen, and fraudulent activity on two of my credit cards, I can tell you that this is a significant benefit. It costs **taxpayers** nothing, because any administrative costs are the responsibility of the organization for which the dues are collected.

All public employees should have the right to choose payroll deduction. Any discrimination among employees would be completely arbitrary and without any rational basis. Why should some public employees be deemed worthy of this important benefit, while others, such as teachers, like me, would not?

There are currently hundreds of organizations, with widely varying viewpoints, that receive voluntary deductions from public employee paychecks. Why should I be able to direct part of my pay to The United Way, or a retirement account, but not to Education Austin? This seems to be an attempt to either endorse or oppose the viewpoints of organizations through payroll deduction policies, but the state should not be in the business of deciding what viewpoints individuals hold, and the **Election Code** already prohibits employee organizations from using dues for political contributions.

Finally, this is an issue of **local control**. Collaboration between public employees and local governments should be encouraged, and individuals should have the **right**, through organized membership, to have a **voice**. My school district should have the right to accommodate my choice for payroll deduction. Any legislation prohibiting payroll deduction would take away local authority, undermine collaboration, and prevent individuals from making their own financial decisions. **MY** money, **MY** choice.

