



## **GAE Position Statement on the Weaponization of TKES Evaluations**

It has come to the attention of the Georgia Association of Educators that educators across the state are being threatened with poor evaluations based on measures currently suspended by the Georgia Department of Education. Georgia's Teacher Keys Effectiveness System, or TKES, is designed to evaluate educators' effectiveness in the classroom by generating a score, called a Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM). The three components included in this score are Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS), Student Growth, and Professional Growth. This system is intended to promote professional excellence by providing meaningful feedback to educators, not to be weaponized as a tool for intimidation.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, typical teaching and learning methods were disrupted, prompting Georgia Department of Education to suspend both TAPS and student growth scores in 2020. Per the guidance of State Superintendent Richard Woods released in July 2022, this suspension remains in effect for the 2022-2023 school year. As a result, TEM ratings will once again not be determined this year, and thus will not be used by the Georgia Department of Education or the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. TKES evaluations are mandated by law to continue, but these evaluations will not affect certificate renewal. Essentially, though school districts must continue to observe educators, no data will be collected or used by state agencies for adverse action or any other purpose.

Contrary to the guidance of the State Superintendent, officials in some schools have nonetheless chosen to intimidate educators with threats of poor TKES evaluations and adverse action. In some cases, officials have cited poor student growth scores, which are currently suspended and have been since 2020. **The Georgia Association of Educators vehemently opposes the use of evaluation instruments like TKES as tools to deceive, threaten, and bully educators.** Furthermore, we urge school districts to do the right thing by following the State Superintendent's recommendation that TKES evaluations be used as a tool for professional growth.

If any member of the Georgia Association of Educators is threatened with adverse action by a school official based on a TKES evaluation, we strongly urge that member to contact their regional GAE UniServ Director for representation.

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