

# SC Music Educator Evaluation: A Value-Added Model for Assessing Standards-Based Growth and Teaching

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Prepared by the

*South Carolina Music Educators Association Task Force on Teacher Evaluation*

## **Task Force Members**

Michael W. Moore, task force chair | Department of Music Education, Bob Jones University

Donna Barrick, position statement subcommittee chair | Lyman Elementary School, Spartanburg District Five

Pam Sweer, student growth measures subcommittee chair | South Middle School, Lancaster County School Dist.

Gail V. Barnes | University of South Carolina

Mark Britt | Furman University

Christine Fisher | Winthrop University/ABC Project

Melanie Gladstone | SC School for the Deaf and Blind

Marsha Gross | Northwestern High School, Rock Hill School District Three

Scot Hockman | Arts Education Associate, SC Department of Education

Marianne Holland | North Greenville University

David Perry | Anderson University

Douglas Presley | Limestone College

Christopher R. Selby | Charleston School of the Arts, Charleston County School District

Sheneice Smith | Lower Richland High School, Richland School District One

## Background

On July 19, 2012, the U.S. Department of Education approved South Carolina Department of Education's (SCDE) application for flexibility in fulfilling the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). As a condition of this flexibility waiver, the SCDE was required to submit guidelines for a value-added teacher evaluation system that included student growth as a significant factor in determining teacher effectiveness.

As of this writing, the proposed guidelines call for 30 percent of a "Non-Classroom Value-Added" (i.e. non-tested subject area) teacher's evaluation to be based on a "School Value-Added" measure, an indicator based on the growth rating on school report cards for elementary and middle schools and on HSAP pass rates and graduation rates for high schools. The proposed guidelines also stipulate that 50 percent of the Teacher Observation and Performance Scale (TOPS) evaluation be based on student growth.

In October 2012 Dr. Kathy Meeks, then Director of the Office of Educator Evaluation at the SCDE, requested input from the South Carolina Music Educators Association (SCMEA) regarding a means for measuring student growth in music. At the request of SCMEA President Dr. Christopher Selby, the SCMEA Task Force on Teacher Evaluation was formed and charged with outlining a proposal for evaluating music teacher effectiveness using student growth measures as well as crafting a position statement that would serve to inform teachers, administrators, and policy makers of recommended best practices in music teacher evaluation. The Task Force comprises representatives of all disciplines in public school music (general music, band, choral, and orchestra) and all grade levels (K-16) in our state.

In developing its recommendation, the Task Force was given the following criteria set forth by the SCDE: Measures of student growth must be

- capable of validation,
- capable of state-wide application and dissemination,
- equivalent in rigor across sub-disciplines (i.e., general music, band, etc.) and grade levels, and
- comparable to measures used in other disciplines.

In addition, the Task Force was charged with ensuring that any recommendation would also take in to account the guidelines set forth in the National Association for Music Education's (NAfME) Teacher Evaluation Position Statement and be compatible with the practical realities of teaching music in a wide variety of classroom settings.

The opportunity to contribute to this effort is a welcome one, and one that the Task Force does not take lightly. Based on an extensive investigation of teacher evaluation systems in place in other states, a review of existing literature on music (and other arts) assessment, and input collected through a state-wide survey of hundreds of music teachers, the Task Force has crafted the following position statement on music teacher evaluation and a corresponding model for measuring student growth in music.

## SCMEA Position Statement on Music Teacher Evaluation

As music educators, we affirm this opening statement of the NAFME Teacher Evaluation Position Statement: *The systematic application of student scores to teacher evaluation must be done carefully if the resulting systems for evaluation are truly to benefit our students and our schools.*<sup>1</sup>

We also hold the following additional statements from the NAFME document as representative of the profession's best thinking on this issue and as critical to the validity of any effort to evaluate music teachers based on student growth and/or achievement:

### 1. Measures of student achievement used in teacher evaluation:

- Must be based on student achievement that is directly attributable to the individual teacher, in the subject area taught by that teacher. Student achievement measures must be used with care, ensuring that they accurately reflect a given teacher's contributions.
- Must be based on evaluation instruments that accurately reflect the achievements they purport to measure. This implies that the evaluation instruments are used by individuals with sufficient expertise to accurately observe and interpret the outcomes under measurement.
- Must be created to evaluate the curriculum that is taught. This implies that such measures reflect national, state, and local standards and curricula and use clear criteria known to the teacher in advance.
- Must be developed and applied in the context of the number of students taught and the instructional time available.
- Must take into account, if they are based on growth models, the beginning level of achievement from which growth is expected to take place. The evaluation instrument must be capable of capturing all levels of achievement, including the very highest levels of mastery.

### 2. Successful Music Teacher Evaluation:

- Must avoid using school-wide measures other than those directly associated with music achievement. If the use of school-wide measures of attendance, dropout and graduation rates, and/or work habits is mandated, they should form a minimal part of the music teacher's evaluation.
- Must limit observation-based teacher evaluations to those conducted by individuals with adequate training in music as well as in evaluation.
- Must, where the most easily observable outcomes of student learning in music are customarily measured in a collective manner (e.g., adjudicated ratings of large ensemble performances), limit the use of these data to valid and reliable measures and should form only part of a teacher's evaluation.

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<sup>1</sup> The entire statement may be accessed here: <http://musiced.nafme.org/about/position-statements/teacher-evaluation>

In light of the aforementioned guiding principles and criteria, the Task Force makes the following specific recommendations for music teacher evaluation in South Carolina public schools:

1. Eliminate from a music teacher's evaluation formula all School Value-Added measures as these factors are not directly associated with a teacher's influence on student music growth or achievement and therefore are irrelevant to the measure of a music teacher's effectiveness. Barring complete elimination, we propose that a music teacher's evaluation formula be aligned with that of "Classroom Teachers" (SCDE's term) in terms of the weight of the School Value-Added measures (currently 10 percent) as opposed to the current proposal of 30 percent.
2. In keeping with the SCDE proposal, we recommend that the balance of a music teacher's evaluation formula (referred to as the Teacher Observation and Performance Scale [TOPS] formula) match that of the "Classroom Teacher" TOPS formula, with 50 percent (as of this writing) based on the measurement of student growth as it relates directly to the *2010 South Carolina Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Standards*. The proposed system, outlined beginning on page 6 of this document, includes measures of student growth that are a) capable of validation; b) capable of state-wide application and dissemination; c) equivalent in rigor across sub-disciplines (i.e. general music, band, etc.) and grade levels; and d) comparable to measures used in other disciplines.
3. TOPS evaluations must be conducted by individuals with adequate training in music. Best practice points to the use of a blind peer review process (outlined below).
4. The SCDE should consider carefully that the significant percentage of evaluation placed on student growth may have a negative impact on an experienced teacher's willingness to serve as a mentor for a student teacher or field experience student. Given the need to prepare competent future teachers through field experiences, the Task Force recommends the SCDE offer incentives that support the mentor teacher's acceptance of a field experience/student teacher. Likewise, appropriate consideration should be given when assessing student growth within the mentor teacher's evaluation process.

In accordance with these recommendations, the Task Force proposes a portfolio model patterned after the Tennessee Fine Arts Growth Measure System, a nationally recognized model that has garnered the support of Education Secretary Arne Duncan as well as other state departments of education. The model was developed by arts teachers under the leadership of Dr. Dru Davison of Memphis City Schools and was designed specifically to satisfy the stipulations of the Race To The Top legislation and its focus on value-added evaluation and student growth. What follows is an adaptation (with permission) of the Tennessee model for use with the *South Carolina Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Standards (2010)* without adding unreasonable expense or time/resource commitments for teachers, students or administrators.

## SCMEA Proposed Model for Measuring Student Growth in Music<sup>2</sup>

### OVERVIEW

The purpose of this evaluation model is to provide South Carolina music teachers with a teacher evaluation system that is tied to the measurement of student growth defined by the SCDE as “change in performance for an individual student between two or more points in time” (Meeks, SCDE Stakeholder Meeting, Brashier Middle College campus, October 24, 2012). Student Growth in music can be demonstrated in a variety of ways. There is no single common student performance measure. Teachers will use portfolios of student growth work samples demonstrating growth and competence in four of the six SC Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Standards for Music (2010):

1. MUSIC PERFORMANCE
2. CREATING MUSIC
3. MUSIC LITERACY
4. CRITICAL RESPONSE TO MUSIC
5. HISTORY AND CULTURE
6. MAKING CONNECTIONS

Music teachers will continue to deliver a standards-based curriculum. Music teachers, as always, will be expected to use formative and summative assessments (for individual students and groups when appropriate) for the purpose of informing instructional practice.

1. Teachers will collect, select and assess student work samples using a purposeful sampling process. Samples of student growth should be from two points in time, whether pre/post evidence or post/post evidence.
2. Teachers will complete a brief questionnaire that is meant to provide context to the review committee.
3. Teachers will pre-score and submit evidence collections for blind peer review via a web-based portfolio management site.
4. The blind peer review process will be conducted by trained content-area teachers who will review the student work samples and score the portfolios.

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<sup>2</sup> This model is an adaptation of the Tennessee Fine Arts Growth Measure System. The Task Force gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Dr. Dru Davison, Arts Administrator for Memphis City Schools and Project Coordinator of the Tennessee Arts Assessment System.

## COMPLIATION GUIDELINES

A completed portfolio contains a cover sheet questionnaire, evidence collections, evidence collection explanation forms, and a score sheet completed by the teacher.

1. Cover sheet questionnaire
  - a. Teachers will complete a cover sheet questionnaire that will provide the peer reviewer(s) sufficient context.
  - b. A building administrator must sign this sheet before it is submitted.
2. Evidence Collection
  - a. Teachers will review the Evidence Collection Guide (below) and compile a purposeful sample of student growth samples (a minimum of four Evidence Collections, one per selected standard).
  - b. Teachers will include student growth evidence collections that are standards-based and that are meaningful/authentic measures of student learning. (Please refer to the purposeful sampling section of this document for detailed information about Type I and Type II Evidence Collections.)
3. Evidence Collection Description Form: Teachers will describe how the evidence submitted for each standard shows growth within that standard.
4. Score: Teachers will self-score each Evidence Collection using the provided scoring guide.
5. Submit: Teachers will submit the completed portfolio for blind peer review. Two options:
  - a. Electronically (recommended)<sup>3</sup> or
  - b. In hard-copy.

## EVIDENCE COLLECTION GUIDE

An Evidence Collection is a group of student work samples that demonstrate student growth. Teachers will submit a portfolio of evidence that demonstrates student growth in at least four of the six SCVPA 2010 curriculum standards.

Evidence collections should contain student work that shows a comparison between at least two points in time (e.g., pre-post or post-post).

1. Evidence may include student work products, audio and visual recordings, adjudicated festival performance assessment reports, end of year course examinations, or other state approved measures.<sup>4</sup>
2. Evidence representing various populations of students' work should be represented within the portfolio (e.g., emerging, proficient, advanced, children with special needs, etc.)
3. Evidence can be declared to show growth in more than one domain. The current state standards do contain a degree of overlap. For example, the SC VPA 2010 Standard 2 "Creating" may also contain elements of SC VPA 2010 Standard 1 "Performing."

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<sup>3</sup> Tennessee has contracted with the GLADiS Project for this. More info available here: <http://thegladisproject.org/>

<sup>4</sup> Although students may participate in music ensembles in multiple years, student growth will be measured within each academic year.

## PURPOSEFUL SAMPLING

Evidence Collections should be meaningful representations of the classes/students included in a teacher's job assignment. When considering what evidence to include, a teacher should consider the following elements of purposeful sampling:

1. Individual/Group
  - a) Evidence Collections must include **individual student** assessment data. Some Evidence Collections may include group or ensemble growth, but group evidence may not constitute the entirety of the portfolio.
2. Reflective of Course Load
  - a) If the teacher is responsible for teaching multiple courses within his/her license area, evidence must be included which reflect student growth in these multiple areas. For example, if the teacher teaches orchestra and chorus, the teacher would include student growth samples from both areas.
  - b) The teacher of multiple areas would NOT have to submit four Evidence Collections for each area taught. Rather, that teacher will use purposeful sampling to select a total of four Evidence Collections representative of his/her job assignments.
3. Demonstrate Growth for Multiple Populations
  - a) An effective Portfolio of Student Growth will contain evidence that reflects student growth for student populations of various performance and learning levels.
    - i) **Type I Evidence** shows growth for individual students or groups of students (such as an ensemble). There is no limit to how many Type I collections may be included in each portfolio.
    - ii) **Type II Evidence** shows growth for sub-populations within a class (e.g., emerging, proficient, advanced, special needs, etc.). It is unacceptable to submit student growth samples that represent learning from only one group of students. A portfolio must contain at least two Type II Evidence collections.
  - b) Please note: If using End of Course exams as evidence, teachers should not include all student exams but rather submit a sample exam with a data report that shows individual and group scoring.

## SCORING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT WHEN COLLECTING EVIDENCE.

Teachers will include samples of student achievement in each evidence collection. Teachers will classify each student achievement sample using the labels "Below Basic," "Basic," "Proficient," or "Advanced" (or a similar system subject to SCDE approval). These labels will be defined in terms of the indicators from the SC-VPA Curriculum Standards (2010). Because each standard contains multiple indicators, it is not necessary that each evidence collection meet all indicators within each performance level.



## SCORING THE EVIDENCE COLLECTIONS

Teachers will complete an Evidence Collection Identification Form for each of the four selected standards. Teachers will provide a brief explanation justifying the inclusion of the evidence to be used for demonstrating student growth. Upon submission of the portfolio, teachers will self-score each collection using the following rubric.

### Evidence Collection Scoring Guide

Score	Descriptor*
5	Significantly Above Expectations: Two levels of student growth AND demonstration of meta-cognitive processes; knowledge and skills; risk taking, imagination and voice; and a range of abilities with technique, problem solving and ideation.
4	Above Expectations: On average, approximately two levels of student growth
3	Meets Expectations: On average, one level of student growth
2	Below Expectations: On average, less than one level of student growth
1	Significantly Below Expectations: No/Limited student growth

*\*Students are expected to grow approximately one level each year (e.g., from “Basic” to “Proficient”).*

Though the teacher self-ratings will not be used as part of the overall score of the portfolio, it will be used to compare the teacher’s perceptions against the ratings of the peer reviewer. In cases where the peer reviewer ratings are plus or minus more than one full point away from the teacher self-ratings, the portfolio will be sent to an additional blind peer reviewer for a second review. In cases where there are still discrepancies, a district-level administrator will oversee the final scoring of the portfolio. A teacher’s comprehensive portfolio score will be weighted equally between the four selected standards.

In order to facilitate an impartial peer review process, teachers should make reasonable effort to remove references that would identify the teacher or school under review. If it is impossible to remove references in order to display the evidence, it is left up to the discretion of the teacher whether or not to include it. Peer review members will be trained to disregard school or teacher references when reviewing portfolios.