NYSUT's

DeTECS 1.0

A TED tool that supports
targeting professional development by
Determining **T**eacher **E**ffectiveness **C**omposite **S**cores

Overview

One of the central challenges of improving teacher effectiveness is the fair and accurate diagnosis of areas of growth identified through the teacher evaluation process. In order to provide the appropriate and critical supports that can have substantive impacts on teacher performance (and subsequently, on student achievement), evaluation tools must be able to capture the subtle and nuanced as well as the obvious areas of performance aligned with the NYSUT Teacher Practice Rubric which can benefit from targeted professional development.

The DeTECS tool is designed to assist NYS evaluators to accurately collect and tally the numerical values they assign to evidence. The tool also provides a profile of the distribution of scores. This "profile" clearly and in detail offers a portrait of an individual teacher at work, and points to highly effective, as well as less effective performances.

DeTECS reports not only the composite score of teacher effectiveness, but offers essential information at the indicator level about how an individual teacher is excelling, succeeding, developing or struggling. With this fine-grained information in hand, both evaluators and teachers can make smart choices about professional goals and related growth opportunities.

Once evidence has been collected, DeTECS works optimally as a score calculator that provides some insight into a teacher's performance and his/her areas of growth and strength. It provides a secure, individualized record of scoring that can be easily shared with the teacher.

DeTECS is presented in an accessible, easy-to-use Excel spreadsheet. It provides users with a highly intuitive interface based on the NYS Teaching Standards and the NYSUT Teacher Practice Rubric. DTECS clearly lays out the individual standards, elements, and related performance expectations, enabling evaluators to have at their fingertips the full, well described range of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors that characterize teachers.

DeTECS isn't for evidence collection; it's a scoring repository that, because of the detail afforded in recording scores about teachers' professional practice (the "60%" portion of the composite score) offers some preliminary insights about a teacher's strengths and areas for growth to inform the teacher's options for professional learning.

Getting Familiar with DeTECS

Download and save the file to your computer's desktop and double-click on the icon for the "DeTECS Calculator."

At the bottom of the opening screen, the first tab is labeled "Home," followed by seven tabs: one for each Standard and its accompanying rubric (labeled SIRubric, SIIRubric, etc.). Three additional tabs follow: one for entering a value in the measures of growth (State assessments), another for measures of local growth (local assessments), and finally, a "calculator" tab, which provides conversion charts and tables.

Teacher (whose evidence is being scored) information should be recorded at the top of the Home page

The Home page contains a listing of all standards and rubrics with active hyperlinks. Click on a specific rubric to quickly navigate to that location.

The Home page screen compiles scores and provides an overview of which elements have been scored.

Important: How does your district "weight" the Teaching Standards?

Regulations in NYS require that at least one indicator in each teaching standard must be scored for every teacher.

DeTECS has been pre-loaded with a formula that weights the 7 Teaching Standards equally for a total of 60 possible points in the category of professional practice. According to NYS regulations, every teacher must be evaluated annually against each Teaching Standard in the array, and also by regulation, the total possible points in this section must add up to 60. Regulations also require that at least one indicator in each standard must be scored for every teacher.

This does not mean that all elements/performance indicators in each standard have to be addressed. The standards don't need to be equally weighted. It is up to individual districts to collectively bargain the details of their local evaluation processes. During contract talks, teachers and their unions will decide how to weight each standard.

Here's an example:

In Poplar Brook School District, the union local collectively bargained and the school district agreed to specify that because many teachers had been working to improve their management of classroom conduct, they elected to place more

weight on their performances in this area. Consequently, they bargained that Standard IV (Learning Environment), would be weighted at 10 points in the overall 60-point scheme, with 5 points each being allocated to Element 1 and Element 3 (the other elements would not be scored).

Simultaneously, because a multi-year, school-wide project in improving instruction, understanding and implementation of multi-disciplinarity and technology was just getting underway, many educators were less than enthusiastic about being evaluated on Element 3 of Standard III. The teachers collectively bargained to focus Standard 3 on Elements 1 and 2, and only to weight the overall Standard at 5 points. Other Standards were each weighted at 9 points, and in each, only 2 Elements were evaluated.

In DeTECS, these alternate values must be loaded into the home screen in order to ensure that the subsequent data inputs are accurate and result in scoring that is consistent with collective bargaining

	In the original DeTECS	In Poplar Brook SD
	Value ("weight") per standard	
Standard 1	8.571	9
Standard 2	8.571	9
Standard 3	8.571	5
Standard 4	8.571	10
Standard 5	8.571	9
Standard 6	8.571	9
Standard 7	8.571	9
Total	60	60

If your district elects to "weight" the standards unevenly, simply enter the negotiated values in the column labeled "points/60" on the Home page. Remember, the total of the column must equal 60.

QuickNotes about DeTECS

- Data entry in the DeTECS Excel spreadsheet is limited to specific cells—some cells are protected and cannot be modified—thus ensuring accurate recording.
- Data from DeTECS is not "up-loadable" to other reporting systems or other data repositories.
- DeTECS records scores assigned to evidence that may be collected through multiple measures, such as observations, artifact analysis, or other forms. DeTECS doesn't display which form(s) of evidence provided the basis for scoring.
- Users may not enter decimal points (e.g. 2.2, 3.8) in the scoring input boxes of the document. Only the whole number values (1-2-3- or 4) may be entered.

Use the DeTECS tool as a scoring repository for all kinds of evidence

Whether the evaluator is engaged in teacher observation, an analysis of artifacts, a review of an evidence binder, or the interpretation of a student survey, scores assigned to this evidence (or from many others) may be entered into the DTECS tool.

Creating unique files for individual teachers

Click on the desktop icon for the “DeTECS Calculator.”

Click on “file” and “save as” and modify the file name with the name of the teacher whose score is being entered (e.g. Denzel Robinson), such as “DeTECS dRobinson 12-3.”

At the bottom of the display, click on the tab labeled “Final” and fill in the 6 cells at the top of the page to further personalize the file, including the cells for “professional educator,” “building,” and “certification,” among others.

Navigating to completion

A complete evaluation score is comprised of the total of values assigned to evidence from multiple sources.

On the Home page, scores in DeTECS can be entered from three sources:

Source of score	As evidence of	Total maximum value
Multiple measures and scores provided by evaluator	Professional Practice	60
A State-determined measure	Student Growth	20
A locally determined assessment	Student Achievement	20
Total possible score		**100**

Data may be entered for each individual standard, state growth or local growth by clicking on the corresponding color-coded tab at the bottom of the spreadsheet, or by clicking on the tab for each individual standard name. To return Home, click on the “Home” tab at the top of each page.

What are the most common ways of using the DeTECS tool?

Example #1:
A principal familiar with the rubric can use DeTECS to highlight a teacher's strengths.

Nicholas Casey is being observed by Elementary School Principal Alexandra Adams. Even though Alexandra has loaded the DeTECS tool on her laptop, she keeps her evidence notes separate from the tool. She knows she shouldn't score the evidence until she's had time to review it. As Alexandra observes, Nicholas introduce his 2nd graders to a unit on weather.

Alexandra begins her observation around Standard 3. She listens attentively as Nicholas describes different kinds of clouds and asks questions of his students. Next, he gives instructions for his students to break into small groups. The students then begin to devise weather forecasts based on the shape and size of clouds. The students look at many photos of clouds, and Nicholas circulates among them, prompting them with additional questions.

Alexandra is very familiar with the NYS Teacher Rubric and the NYS Teaching Standards. Consequently, she is able to attend to the activities of Nicholas and his students without being distracted by the text in the rubric. She makes many notes and records evidence throughout the observation.

Alexandra reviews the evidence she has collected before she scores it. She opens the DeTECS file for Nicholas. Because she feels somewhat indecisive about giving him a 3 or 4 in one area, she finds the text in the rubric describing teacher performances informative and helpful.

Although the evaluation process only requires that Alexandra provide a single score for a single indicator in each element, she enters scores for III.2.a and III.2.b. In so doing, Alexandra is using the tool to indicate two of Nicholas' strengths. In each additional indicator in the standard, Alexandra indicates a single score.

During her observation, Alexandra has collected a lot of evidence. Subsequently, she turned to the DeTECS tool and scored many indicators in 4 of the 7 standards. Later, during another conversation with Nicholas, (and during a second observation), when he presents some additional evidence, Alexandra will return to this file. Each time she opens Nicholas' DeTECS file, she will know by consulting the standards map on the "final" page, which elements have not yet been addressed.

Example #2:
An evaluator may use DTECS to check mathematical calculations, review other data, and clarify the final scoring summary.

Mr. Williams, the Principal at Harper High School, doesn't use a laptop to collect evidence during observations. Instead, he makes extensive notes on paper. "Sometimes I just can't make up my mind about how to score a particular performance. I can't show my hesitation if I use an electronic tool. But if I write down evidence with pen and paper, I can add question marks or indicate my indecision about scoring.

Sometimes I just want to ask the teacher in the post-conference to rationalize why she did something a certain way, or explain something I don't quite understand. Later, I apply this information to my scoring decisions, and enter them into the DTECS tool. It's great for making the final scoring summary more objective and unambiguous. On the "final" page, I can also check quickly whether or not I've failed to cover any particular performance indicator."

Example #3:
Teachers can also use DTECS for self-evaluation.

"Before my evaluation process started in November," offers Sophia Benjamin, a middle-school math teacher, "my principal sent me a copy of the DeTECS tool, the rubric and Teaching Standards, and some questions for me to think about before I was observed. She asked me to consider what sort of evidence I might need to demonstrate my effectiveness, and what values I assigned to my performances. She stressed that DeTECS could help me prepare for my evaluation process. It did! By the time I was observed, and prepared my portfolio, I had a better sense of what the principal was looking for.

"We also compared the scores that each of us had assigned to my performance. Surprisingly, these were pretty similar, except on one particular indicator. There, our opinions didn't match at all! But that lack of agreement was instructive about the work we both needed to do: even though I thought my evidence was strong, I could see that there were some new techniques I could try. For the principal's part, she hadn't given much consideration to the kinds of artifacts I presented as evidence, but agreed she ought to re-think her definition. In the end, because we shared the common language of the rubric and standards, I think we both felt like the evaluation process was fair and professional. DeTECS supported that conversation."

Example #4:
From year-to-year, DETECS can yield powerful information about an individual teacher's professional growth, and also about a district's collective progress on district-wide goals.

Buckingham Central School District was entering its second year of using the TED system and its evaluation process to evaluate and support its teachers. To support their data management needs and to create documents that were succinct and clear, the evaluators across the district had all used the DeTECS tool to calculate composite scores. The result of the first year's teachers' evaluations had proven valuable: across the district, a comprehensive analysis of not only the DeTECS reports, but also of other evaluation-related documentation, had revealed that BCS's teachers were quite competent in using current research to plan and explain instructional decisions and seeks out additional research to inform their practice (Element 1.2). Principal Julie West attributed this strength to the 2010 introduction of grade-level "journal clubs," in which teachers met monthly to discuss publications in educational research, curriculum, and instruction. Two teachers had even submitted papers to academic journals.

The same analysis, however, revealed that in general, teachers across the district—like teachers in many other districts—were challenged to understand and structure 21st Century skills-inspired communications, or to take advantage of all the technological tools at their disposal. (Element 1.6: Teachers demonstrate knowledge and understanding of technological and information literacy and how they affect student learning.) Naturally, isolated users in a variety of buildings were outstanding on this particular element, but generally speaking, it was clear that most teachers needed more support.

Marcus Harrison was typical. A 9th grade social studies teacher, Marcus had received an overall rating of "effective" in Year One (2012-13) of his evaluation cycle. While generally scoring well on most of the elements of his evaluation, Marcus wasn't surprised to see that he needed development on Element 1.6. He was the first to admit his technophobia; the smart board in the rear of his classroom had actually only been turned on once. At the end of the 2012-13 school year, Marcus and Julie had collaborated to explore which elements might best support Marcus' continued professional growth. Marcus set a personal goal for himself of improving his capacity to use technology in his classroom.

Julie West knew Marcus wasn't alone. Based on the data she'd seen in the DeTECS sheets suggested that shoring up technological literacy among her staff had to be a top priority to ensure that students were being prepared for college and 21st century careers. Other principals' experience, she learned at a building administrators' meeting, was similar to her own: teachers across the district needed more support to bring tech-savvy instruction to their classrooms. Consequently, the district's PDP team conceived of an Educators' TechAcademy—a program of orientation, in-class supports, and workshops that would be offered in Marcus' school building during

2013-14, as a pilot. Before launching the costly initiative across the district, Julie wanted to collect evidence that the TechAcademy project would have a meaningful and lasting impact on classroom practice and teacher growth.

While the 2013-14 evaluations, including teacher observations and other measures, would yield detailed information about individual teacher performances and development, a review of the corresponding DeTECS composite score reports (and in a comparison with the same reports from the previous year) would also yield an informative snapshot that would enable the district to draw inferences about the impact of the TechAcademy.

Importantly, Julie was able to exploit the dynamic potential of the DeTECS tool: not only did she recognize the advantage the tool offered her in helping Marcus to plot a path for his own individual career development, she was able to leverage the data from year-to-year to inform her PD committee, and to make programmatic and budgetary decisions that would contribute to systemic change. Over time, she also realized that every year that the district consistently used DeTECS, the more able it would be to "fine tune" planning for professional growth across the entire district.

For more information about DTECS, or about advance customization for your district, please contact its developer, Rod Sherman, at rsherman@westelcom.com