

**The U.S. Virgin Islands Special Education Administrator Evaluation Guidebook**

**2018-2019**

The Special Education Administrator Task Force acknowledges the invaluable expertise and contributions of the Florida and the Islands Comprehensive Center at ETS (FLICC) and the David C. Anchin Center at the University of South Florida to the development of this guidebook.

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Insert Commissioner Letter

**Evaluating the Effectiveness of Special Education Administrators**

**Introduction**

The U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) is deeply committed to the implementation of the **U.S. Virgin Islands Employee Effectiveness System (EES)**, an evaluation system that provides growth and support for the educators and employees who serve the students of the Virgin Islands. Evaluation supports professional growth by identifying areas of strength and improvement. VIDE has designed an evaluation process for all special education administrators as part of the EES. In choosing to focus on improving the performance of district-level leaders, VIDE is part of an emerging group of educators who recognize the critical role of district administrators in supporting principals, supporting and coaching teachers and other educators as they refine their practices, administering programs, and facilitating systemic change. When developing the evaluation approach, VIDE and its partners met with the special education administrators and directors to ensure that the evaluation process would focus on the most important aspects of their work and provides useful performance feedback.

In February of 2016, a Task Force was convened to develop and make recommendations for the evaluation process for special education (SPED) administrators. Special education directors and administrators from the St. Thomas/St. John and the St. Croix school districts, EAA officers, and VIDE representatives comprised the Task Force. The Florida and the Islands Comprehensive Center (FLICC) staff, along with a national expert on evaluation systems, facilitated the development process. The goals of the Task Force were to

1. Develop a shared vision of what evaluation of SPED administrators should look like, and
2. Make recommendations to the VIDE on standards, evaluation instruments, and processes for the evaluation of SPED administrators.

The Commissioner recognizes the dedication and service of those serving on this Task Force:

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Special education administrators oversee and ensure the implementation of federal, territory, and district policies and regulations and programs that effect students with disabilities. Although SPED administrators do not provide direct service to students, their work builds district and school-level capacity and supports an inclusive culture. In the U.S. Virgin Islands, a special education administrator is a district-based supervisor or coordinator who is employed within the Office of the Insular Superintendent, Division of Curriculum and Instruction, and whose roles and responsibilities include support to the district and its schools in areas of leadership, curriculum, and instruction for students with disabilities, program and IEP management, and professional development.

Special education administrator evaluation is an important part of the VIDE Employee Effectiveness System (EES). No matter how many years an administrator has served in the profession, evaluation provides evidence and feedback regarding strengths and challenges, which encourage growth in professional practice. Evaluation is a systematic, annual assessment. The VIDE Special Education Administrator evaluation process includes the following components:

* A Framework that details performance levels for essential practices
* Measures that require evidence of levels of practice
* Procedures that ensure evaluations are thorough and fair

This document, the ***U.S.* *Virgin Islands Special Education Administrator Evaluation Guidebook***, describes the evaluation process. The procedures are designed to foster collaboration, trust, and conversation about the practices of SPED administrators, while maintaining a sense of accountability. The guidebook answers the following questions:

* How will the practice of special education administrators be evaluated?
* When will the evaluation take place?
* How much time will the evaluation process require?
* What are the responsibilities of special education administrators in the evaluation process?
* What standards will be used to evaluate practice?
* What measures will be used?
* What happens after the evaluation process has been completed?

**The SPED administrator evaluation process will be piloted during the 2018-2019 school year**. At the end of the pilot year, VIDE will conduct surveys and focus groups. The data collected will be used by the Department to document successes and determine any adjustments that may need to be made to the process for the following year.

The EES process is managed through TalentEd, the VIDE electronic performance management system. More information about TalentEd and the SPED administrator evaluation process, including resources such as this guidebook and copies of the forms discussed in this guidebook, can be accessed on the Special Education Administrator page of the [EES Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es.html). Additional questions may be directed to the EES Program Manager in St. Thomas/St. John or St. Croix district office.

# **Setting Expectations: The Business Rules**

Evaluation is a systematic method of documenting job performance for the purpose of ascertaining its quality, extending professional supports, and making human resources decisions. Evaluation is one important component of the Virgin Islands Department of Education’s efforts to build and maintain a highly talented educator workforce. Other components include educator certification, preparation, professional development, and retention processes.

Evaluation has always been an aspect of educators’ work in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The VIDE business rules outline the special education administrator evaluation process. VIDE has evaluated SPED administrators in accordance with the language in the labor contract, and the U.S. Virgin Islands EES evaluation process for special education administrators is commensurate with that language. Educator evaluation has also been an important federal initiative. The evaluation process is similar in many ways to the evaluation process for principals, assistant principals, coordinators, and other U.S. Virgin Islands educators. The following information describes the SPED administrator evaluation business rules.

**Who is evaluated?** All district-level SPED administrators are evaluated using the U.S. Virgin Islands EES special education administrator evaluation process. Previous performance, years of professional experience, and job assignment do not affect the use of the evaluation procedure.

**Who evaluates Special Education Administrators?** In the U.S. Virgin Islands, district directors of special education evaluate SPED administrators’ performance. The directors complete training in order to evaluate the SPED administrators.

**How often are Special Education Administrators evaluated?** All SPED administrators will complete the evaluation process each year. The VIDE sets the calendar for evaluation events. Special education administrators will receive formative feedback mid-year and summative feedback before the end of the year.

**How, if at all, is the evaluation differentiated?** All SPED administrators, regardless of previous performance or experience level, are evaluated the same way and according to the same set of standards. However, within the evaluation process, individual administrators collaborate with the director on choices related to the performance measures.

**How will results be used?** SPED administrators receive performance feedback from the directors of special education each year during a Summative Meeting convened at the end of the school year. Feedback is intended to document and improve performance. The administrator and the director discuss areas of improvement and growth, as well as possible goals linked directly to evaluation results to include in the professional growth plan for the following school year. VIDE will use evaluation results for personnel decisions. In addition, VIDE will use performance data to think strategically about professional development programs, preparation programs, and other specific workforce issues.

**What is a Professional Growth Plan (PGP)?** Like all of the educators and employees of the VIDE, SPED administrators complete a PGP each year, regardless of previous performance or years of experience. The PGP focuses on the administrator’s professional development and addresses two goals: a Professional Growth Goal and a Collaborative Goal. SPED administrators are evaluated on the degree to which the PGP has been completed and they have engaged in and achieved their professional learning.

**What happens if a SPED administrator receives an unsatisfactory rating?** If a SPED administrator receives one “unsatisfactory” rating in any practice, the administrator and the district director of special education create a plan to address performance. The administrator is responsible for enacting the plan immediately to improve performance, and the director is responsible for increasing support and monitoring the administrator’s performance. Failure to enact the performance plan or improve performance within the required time period may negatively impact personnel decisions. This business rule is commensurate with the labor agreement and applies to SPED administrators, as well other education personnel such as principals, assistant principals, and coordinators.

**What happens if a SPED administrator receives a basic rating?** If a SPED administrator receives a “basic” rating in one or more practices, the administrator and director utilize the PGP for improvement, and the director increases support and monitoring. Failure to improve performance above the *basic* level by the next end-of-year summative evaluation meeting may negatively impact personnel decisions.

**What happens if disagreements occur about evaluation results?** If a SPED administrator disagrees with evaluation results, s/he acknowledges receipt of results by electronically signing the required form and discussing areas of disagreement with the director of special education. Should disagreements persist, the SPED administrator may file an appeal with VIDE Division of Human Resources and the Educational Administrators Association.

**How much time will the evaluation process require?** The evaluation process is conducted throughout each school year**.** VIDE determines the timeline for each evaluation process once the school calendar has been approved for the school year. Please refer to the VIDE [EES Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es.html) for the current year’s timeline.

# **Focus of Special Education Administrator Evaluation**

The U.S. Virgin Islands special education administrator evaluation process measures the quality of *practice*, which is the special education administrator’s daily actions or performance that can be observed and measured. The system does *not* include outcomes or results measures, which may encompass student learning gains or improvements in school culture. An evaluation that focuses on practice provides detailed feedback to the special education administrator on the things that s/he can control in order to improve.

**The special education administrator evaluation process focuses on *practice*. This ensures that SPED administrators receive meaningful feedback on things that they can control.**

# **The Standards**

The special education administrator engages in many activities during the workday and school year that can be evaluated; however, evaluating all thingsthat he or she does would be impractical and not useful to the process. The special education administrator evaluation process assesses what matters most to the accomplishment of the work assigned to the SPED administrator. Specifically, the evaluation process addresses the special education administrator’s continuous improvement of projects and programs, facilitation of educator supports, and contributions to district policy administration. The leadership practices related to effective school and district level administrators are defined by standards.

VIDE adopted the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL), which were released in 2015. The PSEL address the current context of public education as well as recent research that examines the impact of school administrators on teaching and learning. The PSEL intend to inform the work of school leaders and central office administrators. The standards are as follows:

1. **Mission, Vision, and Core Values**: Effective educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of each student.
2. **Ethics and Professional Norms**: Effective educational leaders act ethically and according to professional norms to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.
3. **Equity and Cultural Responsiveness**: Effective educational leaders strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.
4. **Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment**: Effective educational leaders develop and support intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.
5. **Community of Care and Support for Students**: Effective educational leaders cultivate an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of each student.
6. **Professional Capacity of School Personnel**: Effective educational leaders develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.
7. **Professional Community for Teachers and Staff**: Effective educational leaders foster a professional community of teachers and other professional staff to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.
8. **Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community**: Effective educational leaders engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.
9. **Operations and Management**: Effective educational leaders manage school operations and resources to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.
10. **School Improvement**: Effective educational leaders act as agents of continuous improvement to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.

The complete document, *The Professional Standards for Educational Leaders* is available at [www.npbea.org](http://www.npbea.org) or on the [EES Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es.html).

# **The Framework**

Frameworks are the backbone of performance evaluation systems. A framework is a rubric that describes standards of practice in observable and measurable terms at specific levels of performance. Multiple measures (e.g., Artifact Review, Professional Growth Plans) are aligned with frameworks to gather performance evidence. After an extensive review of research, standards and practices, the Task Force recommended the adoption of a framework based on the PSEL standards and the essential practices they identified as important to special education administrators in the Virgin Islands. The ***U.S. Virgin Islands Performance Evaluation Framework for Special Education Administrators***(SPED AdministratorFramework) focuses the evaluation process on leadership practices that matter most for supporting and improving special education programs in the territory.

**Standards outline the desired job performance; rubrics describe performance at specific levels.**

The **Essential Practices of Special Education Administrators** align with the standards and form the basis for the Framework. The Essential Practices for Special Education Administrators are:

1. **Build shared purpose.** The Special Education Administrator promotes a shared vision/mission for the success of all students by supporting the implementation of programs for students with disabilities that align with the VIDE’s vision/mission.
2. **Manage organizational systems.** The Special Education Administrator acts strategically and systematically to support and align organizational resources, services, processes, and procedures that safeguard the legal rights of students with disabilities.
3. **Focus on learning.** The Special Education Administrator oversees program implementation to ensure students with disabilities have access to appropriate, rigorous, and relevant instructional programs and services in particular settings that contribute to their physical, academic, and social-emotional development.
4. **Collaborate with Families and Communities**. The Special Education Administrator collaborates with internal and external stakeholders and families to provide services for students with disabilities.
5. **Lead with integrity.** The Special Education Administrator models and promotes ethical and professional practices.

The SPED Administrator Framework is standards-based because it aligns with the PSEL, which are intended to guide evaluation and support of educational leaders. The standards and the essential practices focus on the core practices of all special education administrators, regardless of their specialized area or assignment. Table 1 displays the alignment between the Essential Practices of Special Education Administrators and the PSEL.

Table 1.

*Alignment between the PSEL and the Five Essential Practices of SPED Administrators in the U.S. Virgin Islands Performance Evaluation Framework for Special Education Administrators*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Professional Standards for Educational Leaders** | **Five Essential Practices of Special Education Administrators** | | | | |
| Build shared purpose | Focus on learning | Manage organizational systems | Collaborate with families and community | Lead with integrity |
| Mission, Vision, and Core Values |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ethics and Professional Norms |  |  |  |  |  |
| Equity and Cultural Responsiveness |  |  |  |  |  |
| Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment |  |  |  |  |  |
| Community of Care and Support for Students |  |  |  |  |  |
| Professional Capacity of School Personnel |  |  |  |  |  |
| Professional Community for Teachers and Staff |  |  |  |  |  |
| Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community |  |  |  |  |  |
| Operations and Management |  |  |  |  |  |
| School Improvement |  |  |  |  |  |

## *Practices, Indicators, and Elements*. The SPED Administrator Framework provides detailed performance information for administrators when used according to the process outlined in this document. When reflecting on practice or assessing performance, SPED administrators should refer to the practice descriptors called *indicators* and *elements* in the Framework for specific behaviors. One or more indicators describe a practice, and an indicator is described by one or more elements. Taken together, elements describe performance on a given indicator, and the indicators combine to describe a practice. Table 2 displays the Essential Practices with the indicators and elements.

Table 2:

*Essential Practices, Indicators and Elements of the SPED Administrator Framework*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Essential Practices** | **Indicators** | **Elements** |
| 1. **Build Shared Purpose** | 1.1: Supports the vision and mission of the VIDE. | A. Supporting Vision and Mission |
| 1. **Manage Organizational Systems** | 2.1: Supports and aligns organizational resources, services, processes, and procedures that safeguard the legal rights of students with disabilities. | A. Monitoring IEP development  B. Facilitating Teacher/Staff Access  C. Know, share, and apply organizational policies, programs, and procedures |
| 1. **Focus on Learning** | 3.1: Ensures students with disabilities have access to high quality education programs, services, and resources. | A. Supporting service delivery  B. Monitoring programs, services and resources implementation  C. Collaboration  D. Monitoring IEP implementation |
| 3.2 Advocates for equitable services for students with disabilities within the school. | A. Ensuring students’ rights |
| 3.3: Supports teachers in preparing students with disabilities for school-based and/or post-secondary transitions. | A. Supporting student transitions |
| 1. **Collaborate with Families and Communities** | 4.1: Collaborates to provide services and information to all stakeholders | A. Information Dissemination  B. Evaluation  C. Placement  D. Advocacy |
| 1. **Lead with Integrity** | 5.1: Demonstrates professionalism | A. Commitment to improving professional performance |

## In the special education administrator evaluation process, measures used to collect evidence of performance are aligned to selected practices and indicators. Special education directors use the SPED Administrator Framework to score the administrator’s practice. Special education administrators receive feedback on performance at the practice and indicator level.

*Levels of Performance.* The SPED Administrator Framework describes special education administrator practice along a continuum of four distinct performance levels: Unsatisfactory, Basic, Proficient, and Distinguished**.** When reading the Framework, it is important to understand that the rubric is **cumulative** from the basic through distinguished levels. This means that *only by displaying evidence of performance at the two previous level(s) can the SPED administrator attain the highest level of performance*.

Figure 1 provides an example of the behaviors and skills that characterize each performance level in the Framework. The complete document, the ***U.S. Virgin Islands Special Education Administrators Performance Evaluation Framework***, may be downloaded from the [EES Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es.html).

Practice is the main classification.

## **Practice 1: Build Shared Purpose**

The Special Education Administrator promotes a shared vision/mission for the success of all students by supporting the implementation of programs for students with disabilities that align with the VIDE’s vision/mission.

Each Indicator describes part of the practice.

**Indicator 1.1: Supports the vision and mission of the VIDE**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Element** | **Unsatisfactory**  The Special Education Administrator performing at the ***unsatisfactory*** level | **Basic**  The Special Education Administrator performing at the ***basic*** level… | **Proficient**  The Special Education Administrator performing at the ***proficient*** level also… | **Distinguished**  The Special Education Administrator performing at the ***distinguished*** level also… |
| **A. Supporting Vision and Mission** | * Fails to consider the vision/mission or takes actions contrary to the VIDE’s vision/mission. | * + Considers vision/mission when taking specific actions. | * + Actions are consistent with the vision/mission. | * + Cultivates stakeholder’s commitment to, and ownership of, the VIDE’s vision/mission. |

*Figure 1.* Example of SPED Administrator Framework design. This figure displays an essential practice, as well as its indicator, element and level descriptors as found in the U.S. Virgin Islands Performance Evaluation Framework for Special Education Administrators.

Elements combine to describe the indicator.

The special education administrator benefits from a well-written framework because it encourages reflection on his or her strengths and areas for improvement. The framework allows the special education directors to collect quality evidence and offer targeted feedback. Table 3 highlights the purposes of the SPED Administrator Framework.

Table 3:

*Purposes of the SPED Administrator Framework*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Purpose** | **Rationale** |
| **Communicate** | The Essential Practices provide a common language for describing performance standards and levels. |
| **Inform Professional Learning** | The Essential Practices and indicators provide a rich description of performance levels that the special education administrators can use to prioritize growth areas and locate resources to advance leadership practice. |
| **Rate Practice** | The Framework provides a basis for scoring special education administrators practice using aligned measures. |
| **Focus Feedback** | Research suggests that the best feedback is detailed and focused. It highlights strengths and identifies areas for growth. |

# **The Practice Measures: How Evidence Is Collected**

The U.S. Virgin Islands SPED administrator evaluation process is evidence based and requires directors of special education to use multiple measures aligned to the SPED Administrator Framework to gauge performance in prescribed ways. Setting these requirements establishes a fair and consistent system of evaluation for all SPED administrators. The use of multiple measures increases fairness and accuracy. Three measures are used in the SPED administrator evaluation process: (1) Professional Growth Plan (PGP), (2) Artifact Review, and (3) Employee Time.

**Measures are used to gather evidence of performance for evaluation purposes.**

Time is a component of all employee evaluation processes in the EES system. The Professional Growth Plan and the Artifact Review serve to document a SPED administrator’s performance related to the Essential Leadership Practices in the U.S. Virgin Islands Performance Evaluation Framework for Special Education Administrators.

**The PGP/Artifact Collection Process**

Because the process for both the PGP and the Artifact Review involve planning, collecting, and sharing evidence to demonstrate distinguished performance, the cycle displayed in Figure 2 is applicable to both measures. The process for the PGP and the Artifact Review is explained in the next section, which describes each of the three measures.

*Figure 2.* The PGP/Artifact Collection process. This figure displays the evidence collection process for all SPED administrators in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

***Step 1: Planning.*** Planning for the PGP and Artifact Review occurs at the beginning of the school year. The SPED administrator completes the *Evaluation Planning Form* in TalentEd and submits it in TalentEd prior to the Evaluation Planning Meeting. During the meeting, the administrator and the director of special education discuss the PGP goals, the three proposed indicators, and the artifacts to include as evidence for review. These items, when viewed in combination, provide a complete picture of the SPED administrator’s leadership during the school year. The SPED Administrator Framework describes what that complete picture might look like. The Framework, previous evaluation data, and current administrator practice are used to inform the selection of PGP goals and artifacts for the review. In addition, the Task Force created a document entitled *Examples of Evidence for Special Education Administrators*, which is a resource on the EES Portal.

The following **Guiding Questions** may be used during the planning meeting:

1. To what degree is the administrator clear about the evidence collection process?
2. To what degree could the artifacts the administrator intends to collect and the evidence of attainment of the goals of the PGP represent the selected essential practices and indicators?
3. When will the artifacts/PGP evidence be collected? Does the timeline for collecting evidence allow for enough time to complete the collection by the due date?
4. What, if any, support does the administrator need in collecting artifacts or accomplishing the goals of the PGP?

At the conclusion of the meeting, the administrator and director review and finalize the *Evaluation Planning Form*in TalentEd. Once the director approves the plan, the SPED administrator may begin work on the PGP and the Artifact Collection.

## ***Step 2: Evidence Gathering.*** Evidence is assembled throughout the school year and shared with the director near the end of the school year. The process is managed through TalentEd, VIDE’s performance management system, and BriteLocker, the electronic artifact storage software.

***Step 3: Mid-Year Check-In.*** The SPED administrator completes and submits the *Mid-Year Checklist* in TalentEd. Progress to date on the collection of artifacts and on completing the learning activities on the Professional Growth Plan (PGP) is indicated. The form provides an opportunity for the administrator to comment on any challenges, adjustments, solutions, or supports needed to complete the artifact collection or PGP. The administrator also self-assesses attendance and punctuality. The director confirms receipt of the document.

***Step 4: Evidence Gathering.*** After the Mid-Year Check-in, evidence collection continues. If changes were needed, the administrator reflects on any necessary adjustments to the identified artifacts or PGP and collects evidence of leadership practices based on those changes. Prior to the PGP/Artifact Review, the administrator finalizes the PGP/artifact collection by labeling and uploading the artifacts as PDFs into BriteLocker.

## 

## ***Step 5: PGP and Artifact Review.*** After the administrator has completed the artifact collection and implemented the PGP learning activities, he or she completes and submits the *Artifact Reflection Form* and the *Professional Growth Plan Reflection Form* in preparation for the PGP/Artifact Review Meeting. This meeting is an opportunity for the administrator to share and answer questions to ensure that the director of special education understands how the artifacts provide clear evidence of the essential leadership practices described in the SPED Administrator Framework. The discussion focuses on how effectively the artifact demonstrates distinguished performance for the essential practice. The discussion also includes any documents related to the PGP and the administrator’s reflection on his or her performance. A thorough explanation provides the director with enough information to score the artifacts and PGP fairly.

The following section details the specifics of each of the three performance measures.

#### Measure 1: Professional Growth Plan

The special education administrator is responsible for completing an annual Professional Growth Plan (PGP), which describes professional learning goals, and includes evidence of completion and application of the professional learning in district and/or school contexts. The purpose of the PGP is to advance the administrator’s leadership practice. The PGP process is designed to foster reflection, collaboration, and accountability. Each SPED administrator develops goals based on previous evaluation data, program data, and/or personal reflection using the SPED Administrator Framework and the *Professional Growth Plan Development Rubric.* He or she identifies and completes professional learning activities to improve or grow in the areas related to practices and indicators on the SPED Administrator Framework, applies the learning to current practice in district and/or school contexts, and reflects on knowledge and skills learned and their impact on the administrator’s practices. The PGP is reflective of:

* **Special Education Administrator Essential Practice 5. Lead with Integrity**

**Indicator 5.1:** Demonstrates professionalism.

##### *Developing the PGP.* TheSPED administrator uses the template in the first section of the *Evaluation Planning Form* (see [EES Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es.html)) to draft the PGP. It is important to refer to the *Professional Growth Plan Development Rubric*, as it will inform the scoring of the plan. S/he should also review the *Professional Growth Plan Scoring Form* to ensure they are familiar with the scoring criteria. These resources are available on the [EES Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es.html). Two goals must be included in the plan:

* **Professional Growth** **Goal:** A learning goal for the administrator that addresses an area of growth or improvement informed by self-reflection using the SPED Administrator Framework, previous evaluation results (if available), and/or other available data.
* **Collaborative Goal:** A goal written by a team of professionals collaborating around a common area for professional learning. SPED administrators may wish to collaborate with other SPED administrators within or across districts. They may also collaborate with school administrators to address a common need. The goal is the same for all of the team members; however, each member is responsible for identifying and completing appropriate activities, and reflecting on the learning and use of the new skills and knowledge.

Goals should be written as **SMART** goals. Table 4 explains the components of a SMART goal. The PGP goals should focus on *the SPED administrator’s professional practices* as defined by the SPED Administrator Framework (e.g., managing programs, supporting service delivery, collaborating with families, etc.). By improving SPED administrator practices, changes in district- and school-level practices may result.

Table 4.

*Defining SMART Goals*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **S** | **Specific**: Steps to be taken are well defined. | Who will be involved?  What do you want to accomplish?  How will the learning take place? |
| **M** | **Measurable**: Progress can be monitored. | What criteria will be used to measure progress toward goal attainment? |
| **A** | **Achievable**: Activities can be accomplished within the time allowed. | What are the requirements and/or constraints?  How are the goals challenging yet achievable? |
| **R** | **Relevant**: The goal is specific to the professional role. | How does the goal tie into key employee responsibilities? |
| **T** | **Time-bound**: Start and completion dates are clearly defined. | When will professional development activities occur?  What is the deadline for each activity? How will the learning be applied? |

*Professional Learning Activities.* Professional learning activities, application of the learning, impact on practice, and a target completion date are identified for each goal. When selecting professional learning activities, the SPED administrator and director should consider activities such as workshops, university courses, coaching, research, and Professional Learning Communities, any of which may be face-to-face or virtual.

*Measures of Progress and Success.* The SPED administrator and director also identify how progress towards achieving each goal will be demonstrated and how the administrator can show the completion of each learning activity. The emphasis is not only on the learning, but also on applying the learning to improve one’s practice. Ultimately, improved SPED administrator practice should impact the practice of others in district and/or school contexts.

*Completing the PGP.* The PGP is discussed and finalized during the **Evaluation Planning Meeting** at the beginning of the school year. The plan may be revised on an as-needed basis. Throughout the school year, the SPED administrator completes the professional learning activities and applies learning to his/her practice. Before the PGP/Artifact Review Meeting near the end of the school year, the administrator reflects on the learning experience and its impact on his or her practice using the *Professional Growth Plan Reflection Form*(see [EES Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es.html)). Related documents and/or pictures may be uploaded into BriteLockerthrough TalentEd. The PGP is reviewed and scored by the director of special education using the *Professional Growth Plan Scoring Form*.

**Measure 2: Artifact Review**

# With input from the Task Force members from St. Thomas, St. John, and St. Croix, it was determined that the SPED administrator artifact review would consist of evidence of performance related to **three practices and indicators chosen** from the first four Essential Practices of the USVIPerformance Evaluation Framework for Special Education Administrators. One required practice and indicator is chosen by the special education director, and two practices and indicators are chosen by each SPED administrator.

# Each district director of special education chooses a practice and indicator for which all SPED administrators in their district will collect evidence. Although the practice and indicator are the same for all SPED administrators in the district, the artifact(s) chosen to represent their practice will vary depending upon job responsibilities.

# For the remaining two practices and indicators chosen by the SPED administrator, possible artifacts are proposed and discussed with the director. The administrator may refer to the document *Examples of Evidence of Performance for Special Education Administrators*for examples (see [EES Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es.html)). The proposed indicators and evidence are finalized on the *Evaluation Planning Form* during the Evaluation Planning Meeting at the beginning of the school year.

SPED administrators should collect, or “harvest,” artifacts throughout the school year, rather than waiting until the third quarter. Harvesting means that materials created during the day-to-day work of the SPED administrator are selected as evidence of competency. Waiting until the last minute can result in an incomplete collection of documents put together haphazardly that do not reflect exemplary performance. The administrator saves electronic PDF versions of the artifacts (e.g., scanned or photographed) on his or her computer for consideration as evidence for practices and indicators chosen for the evaluation.

Before uploading the artifacts to Britelocker, the administrator should examine the artifacts collected and determine which of the harvested evidence best demonstrates his or her leadership. When possible, the administrator should select “high density” artifacts that demonstrate a range of performance related to multiple essential leadership practices and indicators in the SPED Administrator Framework. Selection of high-density artifacts minimizes the amount of evidence to be collected and reviewed. Once the administrator decides which pieces of evidence best represent his or her practice, s/he uploads the artifacts to BriteLocker, the electronic storage site within TalentEd. Captions or brief descriptions should be included on each artifact to ensure that the director understands the relationship of the materials to the practice.*Note: A set of artifacts that provides evidence for a single practice can be combined into one PDF*.

The PGP/Artifact Review meeting is scheduled near the end of the school year and provides an opportunity for collaborative discussion and reflection. The artifacts are systematically reviewed and scored by the district director of special education using the *Special Education Administrator Artifact Scoring Form*.

Information and access to BriteLockercan be found on the [EES Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es.html) or by contacting the EES Program Manager in each district office.

**Measure 3: Employee Time**

Being present is an important professional requirement for all employees of the VIDE. The SPED administrator plays a significant role in district and school leadership; therefore, it is important that the SPED administrator be present. Time is determined by attendance as reported in TimeForce and is scored using the rubric in the VIDE Attendance Policy.

The director completes the *Employee Time Form* (see [EES Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es.html))based on the administrator’s record of attendance in TimeForce and submits it through TalentEd beforethe Summative EvaluationMeeting. A copy of the VIDE Personnel Attendance Policy can be accessed on the [VIDE website](http://www.vide.vi/).

# **Summative Scoring: How Scores are Determined**

The purpose of the special education administrator evaluation is to promote growth and development through feedback and open discussion about current performance and career trajectory between the administrator and the director of special education. Scoring performance helps promote growth in the Essential Practices. The SPED administrator will receive a summative rating of Distinguished, Proficient, Basic, or Unsatisfactory based on the USVI Performance Evaluation Framework for Special Education Administrators (A rating will *not* be given in the pilot year.). Each of the three measures described in the previous section contributes to the SPED administrator’s evaluation, although each does not contribute equally.

The final Summative Score is derived from the three measures:

1. The Professional Growth Plan is scored using the *Professional Growth Plan Scoring Form* and accounts for **30%** of the summative score.
2. The Artifact Review consists of the three practices and indicators chosen by the director and the administrator, each comprising 20% of the total, and is scored with the Special Education Administrator *Artifact Scoring Form*. Therefore, the review represents **60%** of the summative score.
3. Employee Time, reflecting attendance, comprises **10%** of the summative score.

*Figure 3:* Weight of evaluation measures. This figure shows the percentages of each evaluation measure in determining the summative score.

Once the director has entered an administrator's scores for the PGP, Artifact Review, and Time, the weighted scores are automatically calculated in TalentEd. The maximum score is 4. The director will give the administrator the final score along with feedback at the **Summative Evaluation Meeting.**

Data from the pilot year (2018-19) will be analyzed to establish score ranges for each performance level. Beginning with full implementation in 2019-20, the SPED administrator will receive a final score and an explanation of where that score falls on the continuum of Distinguished, Proficient, Basic, or Unsatisfactory. The administrator should consider how the summative score reflects his or her efforts and how s/he can continue to grow in his or her professional practice.

The director of special education is ultimately responsible for the SPED administrator evaluation process, providing specific, timely, data-driven feedback intended to guide improvement in the administrator’s leadership practice. The administrator is responsible for raising questions about scoring and for acknowledging his or her evaluation scores through an electronic signature in TalentEd. Should an administrator feel that scores are unfair or inaccurate, he or she may file an appeal with VIDE Division of Human Resources and the Educational Administrators Association.

# **Reviewing the Process: How and When Evaluation Occurs**

Fidelity to the evaluation process helps ensure fairness and accuracy. Forms and resources to complete the SPED administrator evaluation process are found in TalentEd and on the [EES Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es.html). All forms include directions for completion.

SPED administrator evaluation is a cyclical process that repeats annually.

*Figure 4*. The SPED Administrator Evaluation Process. This figure illustrates the cyclical nature of the evaluation process for the SPED administrator.

The steps in the evaluation process are summarized below.

**Step 1: Evaluation Planning.** Prior to the Evaluation Planning Meeting, the SPED administrator completes the *Evaluation Planning Form* in TalentEd. At the meeting, the administrator and the director of special education review past performance and district plans, and the administrator reflects on his or her current practice using the U.S. Virgin Islands Performance Evaluation Framework for Special Education Administrators. The director reviews the evaluation process and timeline for the process with the administrator. Revisions to the *Evaluation Planning Form* are made based on the discussion, and the plan is submitted to TalentEd.

**Step 2: Evidence Gathering.** The administrator begins harvesting artifacts for the artifact review and engaging in the learning activities on the PGP.

**Step 3: Mid-year Check-In.** The administrator completes and submits the *Mid-Year Checklist* in TalentEd indicating progress to date on the collection of artifacts and progress on completing the learning activities in the Professional Growth Plan (PGP). The administrator also self-assesses attendance. Any questions/modifications are discussed and changes are made if necessary. The director confirms receipt of the form.

**Step 4: Evidence Gathering.** The administrator continues to collect artifacts for the artifact review and completes the learning activities listed on the PGP.

**Step 5: PGP/Artifact Review.** The director of curriculum and instruction schedules the PGP/Artifact Review Meeting. The administrator finalizes and submits the artifacts and PGP evidence, and completes the *Artifact Reflection Form* and *Professional Growth Plan Reflection Form* to prepare for the meeting. The administrator and director meet to discuss how the artifacts and PGP evidence represent the administrator’s leadership practice. The director completes the *Artifact Scoring Form* and the *Professional Growth Plan Scoring Form*.

**Step 6: Summative Meeting.** The director of special education reviews all evidence and completes the *Employee Time Form* and submits to TalentEd in preparation for the Summative Meeting. The administrator and director meet to discuss scores, ratings, and goals for the next school year. **(A rating will not be given in the pilot year.)** The *Summative Evaluation Form* is completed and submitted through TalentEd. The evaluation cycle then begins again at the start of the next school year.

Table 5 displays the responsibilities of the SPED administrator and the director of special education for each step of the evaluation process. Questions regarding the process may be directed to the EES Program Manager in each district office.

Table 5.

*Annual SPED Administrator Evaluation Steps and Responsibilities*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Step | Task | SPED Administrator | SPED Director |
| Evaluation  Planning | Evaluation Planning Meeting | Draft the *Evaluation Planning Form* and submit to the director through TalentEd before the Evaluation Planning Meeting. | Schedule Evaluation Planning Meeting to finalize the *Evaluation Planning Form*.  Review remaining calendar in TalentEd. |
| Evidence Gathering | Harvest artifacts and PGP evidence | Collect artifacts and engage in  PGP learning activities. | Provide artifact collection and PGP support to administrator. |
| Mid-year Check-In | Check progress to date | Complete and submit *Mid-Year Checklist* to document progress.  Adjust choice artifacts or PGP goals with director as needed. | Confirm receipt of *Mid-Year Checklist*.  Adjust artifacts or PGP goals with administrator as needed. |
| Evidence Gathering | Harvest artifacts and PGP evidence | Collect artifacts and engage in  PGP learning activities. | Provide artifact collection and PGP support to administrator. |
| PGP and Artifact Review | Complete artifact collection & PGP | Upload artifacts into BriteLocker.  Complete and submit *Artifact Reflection Form* prior to the Artifact Review Meeting.  Complete PGP and upload related documents into BriteLocker. Complete and submit *Professional Growth Plan Reflection Form* prior to the PGP/Artifact Review Meeting. | Schedule PGP/Artifact Review Meeting.  Review artifacts in BriteLocker and reflection forms in TalentEd prior to the PGP/Artifact Review Meeting. |
| PGP/Artifact Review Meeting | Share artifacts and PGP evidence and explain how this demonstrates practice. | Discuss artifacts and PGP activities with administrator.  Complete the *Professional Growth Plan Scoring Form* and the *Artifact Scoring Form* and submit in TalentEd. |
| End-of-year meeting | Summative Evaluation Meeting | Discuss performance, feedback, and scores.  Collaborate with director to plan for growth and/or improvement.  Electronically sign the *Summative Evaluation Form*. | Complete *Employee Time Form* and submit to TalentEd.  Discuss performance, feedback, and scores.  Collaborate with administrator to plan for growth and/or improvement.  Submit the *Summative Evaluation Form* in TalentEd. |

**EES Glossary**

**BriteLocker** is the electronic storage system for uploading and organizing artifacts.

The **U.S. Virgin Islands Employee Effectiveness System (EES**) is the evaluation system for all VIDE employees. EES is a growth-oriented system that is focused on meaningful feedback for continuous improvement.

**Elements** describe specific performance on a given indicator in the USVI Special Education Administrator Performance Evaluation Framework.

**Essential Practices** align with the ISLLC standards and describe the leadership practices of special education administrators in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

**Evaluation** is a systematic, annual assessment of job performance.

**Feedback** is a specific, timely, data-driven exchange of information intended to guide improvement in employee performance.

A **Framework** is a rubric that describes practice in observable and measurable terms, and is used to determine levels of performance. A framework provides an overall structure for the evaluation system.

**Indicators** describe Essential Practices in the USVI Special Education Administrator Performance Evaluation Framework. One or more indicators may combine to describe an Essential Practice.

The[Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es.html)for the U.S. Virgin Islands Employee Effectiveness System (EES) provides access to information about the process for employee evaluation. It can be found on the Virgin Islands Department of Education [website](http://www.vide.vi) under the For Employees tab/ Effectiveness System. The [Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es.html) houses the evaluation calendar, guidebook, forms, resources, and other information and is organized by employee title, e.g., teacher, paraprofessional, librarian, guidance counselor, etc.

**Professional Growth Plan (PGP)** is a document used for planning and setting goals for professional learning that results in improved practice. The PGP is required for all employee evaluations by VIDE.

A **Rubric** describes practice and behaviors in observable and measurable terms and is used to determine levels of performance for the purpose of evaluation. Rubrics provide descriptors at four levels of performance to guide evaluation scoring and feedback.

The **Summative Evaluation Score** is the numerical score automatically calculated by TalentEd once the director of special education enters the scores for the Artifact Review (60%), the PGP (30%), and Employee Time (10%).

The **Summative Evaluation Rating** is determined once the final scores have been calculated. The performance levels will be identified using a chart that shows where scores fall on the continuum of Distinguished, Proficient, Basic, or Unsatisfactory. *Performance Level Ratings will be assigned after full implementation (not in the pilot year) and after data have been analyzed and cut scores, which are the numerical point at which one level ends and the next begins, are finalized.*

**TalentEd** is the electronic employee evaluation system.

**Glossary of Special Education Terms**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Terminology** | **Definition** |
| External stakeholders | Collective entities that support persons with disabilities including local businesses, organizations, and advocacy groups, etc. and are not affiliated with the Virgin Islands Department of Education. |
| Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) | FAPE is an educational right of children with disabilities in the United States that is guaranteed by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). |
| Individualized Education Program (IEP) | A written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in a meeting in accordance with Section 300.320-300.324, which must include child’s present levels of academic achievement, measureable annual goals, services, and educational setting. |
| Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) | A law ensuring services to children with disabilities. It governs how state and public agencies provide services to students with disabilities. |
| Internal stakeholders | Internal stakeholders refers to anyone who is invested in the welfare and success of a school and its students, including superintendents, administrators, teachers, staff members, students, parents, and families. |
| Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) | LRE means that the student who has a disability should have the opportunity to be educated with non-disabled peers, to the greatest extent appropriate, per the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In addition, students with disabilities should have access to the general education curriculum or any other program that non-disabled peers would be able to access. |
| Policies and procedures | Policies are legal guidelines that govern all procedures in the territory related to special education. Procedures are the steps involved in identifying and providing services to students with disabilities. |
| Services | A coordinated set of activities intended to assist students’ access to a free and appropriate publication education (FAPE). |
| Special education | Special education is specially designed instruction, at no cost to parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability. |
| Special education administrators | Supervisors and Coordinators of Special Education |
| Students with disabilities | Child with a disability means a child evaluated in accordance with Sec. Sec. 300.304 through 300.311 as having an intellectual disability, a hearing impairment (including deafness), a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), a serious emotional disturbance (referred to in this part as "emotional disturbance"), an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, another health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities, and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services. |
| Transition services | A coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that is designed to be a results-oriented process that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student with a disability to facilitate the student’s movement from Pre-K to Elementary, Elementary to Middle, Middle to High School, and High School to post-school activities including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. |