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State's largest educator association files petition against T-TESS
ATPE argues new evaluation rules violate state laws and the Texas Constitution

AUSTIN, Texas — The state's largest educator association will file a petition today with the Texas Commissioner of Education legally challenging his recent adoption of rules creating a new state-recommended teacher appraisal system. The Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE) asserts that Commissioner Mike Morath's rules for the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) violate state laws and the Texas Constitution and are contrary to public policy.

"Both state and federal lawmakers have taken steps to give local school districts more flexibility in designing their appraisal systems, but the T-TESS rules seem to move in the opposite direction," ATPE Governmental Relations Director Jennifer Canaday said. "The additional mandates, the restrictions on teachers' requests for second appraisals, and the inclusion of controversial Value-Added Measures (VAM) based on student test scores made it necessary for us to challenge the rules through available channels."

The Texas Education Code provides a primary mechanism for appeals of agency actions to the commissioner, after which a lawsuit may be brought in district court if necessary. ATPE hopes Commissioner Morath will take necessary steps to revise the T-TESS rules to comply with state laws, ensuring all teachers are evaluated fairly, and recommending an appraisal process that truly helps teachers improve their skills in the classroom.

For more information, visit <http://www.teachthevote.org/news/>

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The Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE) has been a strong voice for Texas educators since 1980. It is the leading educators' association in Texas with more than 100,000 members statewide. With its strong collaborative philosophy, ATPE speaks for classroom teachers, administrators, future, retired and para-educators and works to create better opportunities for 5 million public schoolchildren. ATPE is the ally and the voice of Texas public education.