

**The U.S. Virgin Islands Paraprofessional Evaluation Guidebook**

**September 2016**

The Paraprofessional 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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# Evaluating Paraprofessional Effectiveness

***Introduction****.* The 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 encourages growth and support for the educators and employees who serve the students of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Evaluation supports professional growth by identifying areas of strength and improvement. VIDE has designed an evaluation process for all paraprofessionals as part of the Employee Effectiveness System (EES).

The VIDE considers this process ***an investment in the paraprofessionals of the U.S. Virgin Islands*.** The evaluation system honors and enhances the professionalism of paraprofessionals as they gain expertise throughout their careers.

In January of 2016, a Task Force was convened to develop the evaluation process for paraprofessionals. Paraprofessionals, school and district administrators representing the St. Thomas/St. John and the St. Croix school districts, AFT officers, and VIDE staff comprised the Task Force. The Florida and the Islands Regional Comprehensive Center, 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 paraprofessionals should look like, and
2. Make recommendations to the VIDE on standards, evaluation instruments, and processes for the evaluation of paraprofessionals.

The Commissioner recognizes the dedication and service of those representing their colleagues on this Task Force:

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This guidebook answers the following questions:

* How will paraprofessionals’ practice be evaluated?
* When will the evaluation take place?
* What are my responsibilities 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 paraprofessional evaluation process will be piloted during the 2016-2017 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.

*Forms and Resources.* Resources, such as this guidebook, and copies of the forms discussed in this guidebook will be available on the VIDE EES Portal for the **Paraprofessional Evaluation Process** found on the VIDE website. The forms on the Portal mirror the forms that paraprofessionals and administrators will complete and submit in **TalentEd**. TalentEd is the electronic employee evaluation system managed by the Division of Human Resources. For questions about the evaluation process or assistance in accessing the VIDE EES [Portal](http://vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es/298-paraprofessional-evaluation-proces.html) and TalentEd, please contact the EES Program Manager in each district office.

# Setting Expectations: The Business Rules

Performance evaluation systematically documents performance for the purpose of ascertaining its quality, extending supports based on evidence-based feedback, and making human resources decisions. Evaluation is one important component of the efforts of the VIDE to build and maintain a highly talented workforce. Other components include educator certification, preparation, professional development, and retention processes.

Performance evaluation always has been an aspect of paraprofessionals’ work in the U.S. Virgin Islands. VIDE has evaluated paraprofessionals in accordance with the language in the labor contract, and the Employee Effectiveness System for Paraprofessionals (EES) is commensurate with that language. Performance evaluation is also an important federal initiative. Business rules describe the evaluation procedure, which is to be used with St. Croix, St. John, and St. Thomas paraprofessionals. The following information describes the evaluation business rules.

**Who is evaluated?** All paraprofessionals are evaluated using the U.S. Virgin Islands EES paraprofessional evaluation process. Previous performance, years of professional experience, and school level do not affect the use of the evaluation procedure.

**Who evaluates paraprofessionals?** In the U.S. Virgin Islands, the school administrator (principal or assistant principal) is responsible for evaluating the paraprofessional. The administrator will oversee and complete the performance evaluation procedure each year. All school administrators complete training in order to evaluate paraprofessionals.

**How often are paraprofessionals evaluated?** All paraprofessionals will be evaluated one time per year. During each academic year, paraprofessionals will receive formative feedback mid-year and summative feedback before the end of each academic year.

**How will results be used?** Paraprofessionals will receive performance feedback from administrators each year during a meeting convened before the end of the academic year. Feedback is intended to document and improve performance.

**What is a Professional Growth Plan (PGP)?** Like school-level administrators and teachers, paraprofessionals complete a PGP each year, regardless of previous performance or years of experience. The PGP addresses one growth goal based on a need identified by the paraprofessional. Paraprofessionals will be evaluated on the degree to which the PGP goal has been achieved.

**What happens if disagreements occur about evaluation results?** If a paraprofessional disagrees with evaluation results, he or she should acknowledge receipt of results by signing the required forms and discussing areas of disagreement with the administrator. Should disagreements persist, the paraprofessional should file an appeal with VIDE Human Resources and the American Federation of Teachers.

**When will evaluation occur and how much time will the evaluation require?** School districts will set implementation timelines according to the academic calendar. A sample timeline is provided in this document.

# The Paraprofessional Evaluation Process in the U.S. Virgin Islands

This section provides an overview of the design of the evaluation system for paraprofessionals and the language and terminology used in describing the process.

*Aligning the Job Description with Standards*. Paraprofessionals have a job description that outlines the basic, beginning-level knowledge expected for entering the profession in the Virgin Islands. Paraprofessionals are valued employees with talents, skills, and knowledge that contribute to the success of the classrooms and non-instructional roles in which they serve. The job description states that under supervision of teachers, counselors, assistant principals, or principals, paraprofessionals assist with providing appropriate educational opportunities and instruction for students, or provide routine and non-specialized work related to non-teaching activities, according to the guidelines established by VIDE.

In order to measure the performance of the paraprofessionals, it is important that

1. The evaluation process aligns with the job description so that paraprofessionals are evaluated based on their performance of those requirements.
2. The performance of paraprofessionals is measured against professional standards.

Beginning with standards sets the criteria for performance and ensures that the instruments utilized for measuring performance align with what a paraprofessional should know and be able to do. After comparing a number of standards documents from across the country, the Task Force adapted standards from the *Idaho Special Education Manual* (2007) to create the **U.S**. **Virgin Islands Paraprofessional Standards.** This document describes paraprofessionals’ skills, knowledge, and practices. Table 1 lists the standards. The complete document, with further explanation of each of the standards, is found on the VIDE EES [portal](http://vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es/298-paraprofessional-evaluation-proces.html) for the [**Paraprofessional Evaluation Process**](http://vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es/298-paraprofessional-evaluation-proces.html)**.**

Table 1.

*U.S. Virgin Islands Paraprofessional Standards*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Standard 1 | The paraprofessional has knowledge of the discipline(s) taught and supports the teacher/provider in creating learning experiences that make the subject matter meaningful for students. |
| Standard 2 | The paraprofessional has knowledge of how students learn and develop, and assists in providing opportunities that support the students' intellectual, social, and personal development. |
| Standard 3 | The paraprofessional knows that students differ in their approaches to learning and assists in creating instructional opportunities that are adapted to students with diverse needs. |
| Standard 4 | The paraprofessional understands and uses a variety of strategies to assist the teacher/provider. |
| Standard 5 | The paraprofessional understands the impact of the educational environment on student learning, self-motivation, and positive social interaction, and assists in creating a positive learning environment. |
| Standard 6 | The paraprofessional uses a variety of communication techniques, including verbal, nonverbal, multimedia, and technology, in and beyond the classroom. |
| Standard 7 | The paraprofessional assists the teacher/provider by implementing teacher-designed instructional plans. |
| Standard 8 | The paraprofessional supports the teacher/provider in evaluating the intellectual, social, and physical development of the student. |
| Standard 9 | The paraprofessional engages in continued professional improvement toward an identified goal. |
| Standard 10 | The paraprofessional interacts in a professional, effective manner with colleagues, parents, and other members of the community to support students' learning and well-being. |

*Aligning the Standards with a Framework.* Evaluation systems use frameworks to ensure that the process of evaluation is objective and fair across all schools. After studying evaluation frameworks and rubrics in use across the country, the Task Force adapted the Bergenfield (NJ) Public Schools’ Performance Evaluation Process for Paraprofessionals. This Framework was modified for the Virgin Islands and aligned with the VI Paraprofessional Standards. The **U.S. Virgin Islands Performance Evaluation Framework for Paraprofessionals** (see [Portal](http://vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es/298-paraprofessional-evaluation-proces.html))servesas a rubric that describes the practice of paraprofessionals in the Virgin Islands in observable and measurable terms. The framework divides the responsibilities of paraprofessionals into broad categories called *domains*. Each domain is further clarified by *components,* which describe what is important in that domain and what performance looks like across four levels: Unsatisfactory, Basic, Proficient, and Distinguished. The component descriptors under each level help paraprofessionals understand how to improve their practice and grow in the profession. Figure 1 shows an example of how the framework is constructed. Notice that the language of the framework is a useful tool as paraprofessionals reflect on how to hone their craft and articulate what they are doing well.

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

Components describe the Domains

Domains are the broad categories

***Domain 2: Supports the Classroom Environment***

|  | **Levels of Performance: Domain 2** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Component** | **Unsatisfactory** | **Basic** | **Proficient** | **Distinguished** |
| **2a. Supports an Environment of Respect and Rapport**  *(Standard 5)* | Interactions with students and in the presence of students are negative, inappropriate, or insensitive to students’ cultural backgrounds, and/or characterized by sarcasm, put-downs, or conflict. | Interactions with students and in the presence of students are generally appropriate and free from conflict, but may be characterized by occasional displays of insensitivity or lack of responsiveness to cultural or developmental differences among students. | Interactions with students and in the presence of students reflect general warmth and caring, and are polite and respectful of the cultural and developmental differences among groups of students.  Descriptors under the Levels of Performance delineate the development of expertise along a continuum | Interactions with students and in the presence of students are highly respectful, and reflect genuine warmth/caring toward individuals. As a result of the direct support from the paraprofessional, students maintain high levels of civility among members of the class. |

*Figure 1*. Example of a component. This figure depicts a component and the descriptors across the four levels of performance found in the **U.S. Virgin Islands Performance Evaluation Framework for Paraprofessionals**.

In addition, the framework is aligned with the paraprofessional standards, enabling paraprofessionals to clearly understand the relationship between the standards and the components of the framework. This alignment is illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2.

*Alignment between the U.S. Virgin Islands Paraprofessional Standards and the Domains in the U.S. Virgin Islands Performance Evaluation Framework for Paraprofessionals*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Domain 2** | **Domain 3** | **Domain 4** |
| **Standard 1** |  |  |  |
| **Standard 2** |  |  |  |
| **Standard 3** |  |  |  |
| **Standard 4** |  |  |  |
| **Standard 5** |  |  |  |
| **Standard 6** |  |  |  |
| **Standard 7** |  |  |  |
| **Standard 8** |  |  |  |
| **Standard 9** |  |  |  |
| **Standard 10** |  |  |  |

*Three Domains of Responsibility*. In order to operationalize the standards in their day-to-day work, paraprofessionals examine their responsibilities across three Domains: (2) Supports the Environment, (3) Delivery of Services/Accommodations (Instruction), and (4) Professionalism and Self-Reflection. The Domains are further explained by components. Each component defines an aspect of a domain. As paraprofessionals study each domain and its components, they will notice that the components, when taken together, describe the broad area of practice under the Domain. The complete Framework, which includes a correlation to the Standards, is found on the VIDE EES [Portal](#http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es/298-paraprofessional-evaluation-proces.html).

The table below is a summary of the Domains and their components. *Since the job responsibilities for paraprofessionals in the Virgin Islands do not typically include planning and preparation, Domain 1 is not included in this evaluation framework. However, to maintain the alignment with the Danielson Framework that administrators are already using for teacher evaluations, the numbering has not been changed.* The responsibilities of paraprofessionals are found under Domains 2, 3, and 4.

Table 3.

*Domains and Components of the USVI Performance Evaluation Framework for Paraprofessionals*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Domain 1: Planning and Preparation** | **Domain 2: Supports the Classroom Environment** |
| Not Applicable | 2a: Supports an environment of respect and rapport  2b. Reinforces a culture of learning  2c. Manages classroom procedures  2d. Manages student behaviors |
| **Domain 4: Professionalism and Self-Reflection** | **Domain 3: Delivery of Services/Accommodations (Instruction)** |
| 4a: Cultivates professional relationships  4b:Participates in classroom and/or school activities  4c: Demonstrates integrity and ethical conduct  4d: Demonstrates knowledge of educational state and district regulations and policies  4e: Reflects and engages in professional development | 3a: Communicates clearly and accurately:  Ability to employ constructive communication strategies and approaches in working with students, staff, and the greater school community.  3b: Assists in engaging students In learning  3c: Assists in the use of assessment in instruction |

Together, the domains and the components describe the holistic duties of the paraprofessional. The purpose of isolating separate aspects of practice is to allow paraprofessionals to focus on components of practice that can be strengthened as they grow professionally. Paraprofessionals continuously grow and learn throughout their careers, improving their practice as they gain expertise.

*Evaluation Instruments*. Best practices for evaluation systems require the use of standards-based instruments for these critical reasons:

1. The instruments focus on evidence.
   1. Evidence is recorded *at the component level* when conducting the evaluation.
   2. The administrator refers to the evidence when providing feedback to the paraprofessional.
2. There is a focus on professional growth.
   1. The focus should not be on scores, though scores are a necessary product of the evaluation system.
   2. The focus should be on ***guiding and supporting professional growth***.

Looking at evaluation in this way allows paraprofessionals to reflect on their own practice, celebrate accomplishments, and plan for growth in their profession.

Paraprofessionals are evaluated through the use of 1) a Professional Growth Plan (PGP), 2) one scheduled observation, and 3) Employee time. Details describing the instruments used to collect evidence for these measures are found in this Guidebook.

# How Evidence Is Collected

The U.S. Virgin Islands paraprofessional evaluation process uses multiple measures to assess performance. Using multiple measures increases assessment fairness and accuracy. The measures used in the paraprofessional process are 1) the Professional Growth Plan, 2) Observation, and 3) Paraprofessional Time. These measures are described below.

## Measure 1: Professional Growth Plan (PGP)

***The Professional Growth Plan Process***. The **Professional Growth Plan (PGP)** is required for Domain 4, Component 4e: Reflects and Engages in Professional Development, and aligns with VI Paraprofessional Standard 9: The paraprofessional engages in continued professional improvement toward an identified goal.

Planning for professional growth that will impact the practice of the paraprofessional requires thoughtful, honest reflection. The better the planning, the more likely goals will be met, services will be improved, and students’ learning will be supported. The PGP is created, reviewed, and scored in TalentEd.

The PGP process provides a meaningful, individualized opportunity for growth and accountability. There are multiple ways of developing skills and knowledge, and the process allows for differentiation based on the needs and experiences of the paraprofessional. The process ensures that paraprofessionals are actively involved in their own professional growth.

The process is cyclical to provide a continuous system of growth and improvement for paraprofessionals, as depicted in Figure ­­2. It is a cycle of planning, implementing, checking, continuing the implementation, and reflecting on the impact of the paraprofessional’s effort and resulting growth. The cycle repeats the next year, informed by the learning from the previous year.

*Figure 2.* The PGP Cycle. This figure illustrates the cyclical nature of the PGP process.

All forms used for the PGP process can be accessed on the VIDE EES [Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es/298-paraprofessional-evaluation-proces.html) and in TalentEd. The steps of the process include:

Step 1: Evaluation Planning Form. The first half of the Evaluation Planning Form (see VIDE EES [Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es/298-paraprofessional-evaluation-proces.html))is used to develop the Professional Growth Plan. Paraprofessionals follow the directions on the planning form, using the template to develop one goal. The goal addresses an area of growth identified by the paraprofessional and informed by self-reflection using the *USVI Performance Evaluation Framework for Paraprofessionals*, previous evaluation results, and/or other available data. The **Professional Growth Plan Development/Scoring Rubric** (see [Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es/298-paraprofessional-evaluation-proces.html)) will assist with development of the PGP. Paraprofessionals should refer to this document because it will also be used to score the PGP.

**Remember to refer to the PGP Development/Scoring Rubric while developing the PGP.**

While considering a goal, the paraprofessional may consult with the supervising teacher or administrator to discuss student needs and/or data associated with the duties performed. Once the paraprofessional has identified the area of need for his or her learning, a SMART goal is written. Then the paraprofessional and administrator meet to finalize the PGP.

**Note:** SMART is an acronym for **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-bound. A template for writing the goal is shown below, followed by an example. Administrators and teachers are familiar with writing SMART goals and can serve as resources for paraprofessionals. See the [Portal](http://www.vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es/298-paraprofessional-evaluation-proces.html) for additional examples of SMART goals, including an example for non-instructional paraprofessionals.

Here is the template to use in writing the goal:

**Framing the SMART Goal**

I will improve my ability to (state the practice I want to improve) by (state how and when I will do this) to learn (state what I will learn), and I will implement (how and when I will apply the learning).

Following is an example of a SMART goal. The color-coding aligns with the template. The paraprofessional should check to see that all of the parts to the goal are included as he/she writes a goal.

Example: After a discussion with the supervising teacher, an elementary paraprofessional decides to focus on vocabulary acquisition for students with whom she works during reading time. The SMART goal might be:

*I will improve my ability to assist students to master vocabulary by attending a district training offered in November to learn at least 2 strategies to reinforce students’ vocabulary; I will implement my learning by sharing with my supervising teacher* *and utilizing the new strategies with my small groups of students from December through April.*

Next, the paraprofessional states a rationale for the goal. Here is a possible rationale for this example.

*Students struggling with vocabulary have difficulty comprehending what they read. The classroom test data my supervising teacher reviewed with me shows that our students need improvement in this area. I provide assistance for struggling students, and I wish to work more effectively with them to improve their results.*

After identifying the growth goal and proposed professional learning activity, the paraprofessional identifies how he/she will demonstrate progress and achieve the goal. Identifying evidence is also an important part of planning. Evidence should show that the activities are completed, changes in practice occurred, and that the changed practice is used to support student learning.

**How will I know that I am making progress and achieving my goal?**

|  |
| --- |
| *Workshop certificate, supervising teacher feedback, and class data on vocabulary quizzes that my supervising teacher shares with me.* |

In the same way that students need support to achieve learning goals, paraprofessionals also need support to achieve their professional growth goals. Support comes in many forms and can be provided in many ways, including through technology. School colleagues, such as the supervising teacher, counselor, assistant principal, or the principal, as well as paraprofessional colleagues, may also provide support and/or assistance. **It is important to identify possible supports just in case they are needed.**

**What supports might I need to complete the activity and achieve my goal?**

|  |
| --- |
| *Release time to attend professional development, time with my supervising teacher to discuss strategy implementation and results.* |

Step 2: Begin implementation of the PGP. The paraprofessional and the administrator meet to discuss and complete the Evaluation Planning form. (The second half of this form is completed for observation planning.) If there are no questions, the form is submitted in TalentEd and signed electronically by the paraprofessional and the administrator. Once the form is submitted and signed, the paraprofessional begins work on the goal.

Step 3: Mid-Year Check-in. The **Mid-Year Checklist** is completed in Januaryby the paraprofessional as he or she reflects on the progress made toward completion of the PGP goal. (This form is also used to reflect on attendance and punctuality.) Any necessary adjustments or changes to the goal are indicated on this form, which is then submitted to the administrator through TalentEd. If there are questions, the administrator may schedule a meeting to discuss progress and any modifications to the PGP goal.

Step 4: Reflection. After the paraprofessional’s growth goal is completed, he/she completes the **Professional Growth Plan Reflection Form** in TalentEd to prepare for the Summative Evaluation Meeting with the administrator. Prior to the Summative Evaluation Meeting, the administrator uses the Reflection Form as he or she scores the PGP.

Step 5: Summative Meeting. The administrator schedules the Summative Evaluation Meeting through TalentEd. At this meeting, the paraprofessional engages in a collaborative discussion with the administrator about the PGP. The administrator shares the score given to the PGP using the **Professional Growth Plan Development/Scoring Rubric** (see VIDE EES [Portal](http://vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es/298-paraprofessional-evaluation-proces.html)).

Table 3 summarizes the PGP process.

Table 3.

*The PGP Process at a Glance*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Steps | Forms in Portal/TalentEd | When |
| 1. Develop and submit the PGP to administrator through TalentEd. Meet with the administrator to finalize PGP. The administrator and the paraprofessional sign the form electronically through TalentEd. | Evaluation Planning Form  Professional Growth Plan Development/Scoring Rubric  Professional Growth Plan Frame and Samples | Sep/Oct |
| 1. Implement and monitor progress of the PGP. | Completed PGP  Professional Growth Plan Development/Scoring Rubric | Oct - May |
| 1. Complete and submit Mid-Year Checklist to share progress, identify any challenges with the activities, and modify the PGP as needed. | Mid-Year Checklist | Jan |
| 1. Complete a written reflection on the PGP Reflection Form in TalentEd summarizing goals, knowledge, and skills learned, and how the knowledge and skills have been applied to improve practice. | PGP Reflection Form  Professional Growth Plan Development/Scoring Rubric | April/May |
| 1. Discuss performance with the administrator at the Summative Evaluation Meeting. Discussion may include identifying possible areas of focus for the following school year. | Evaluation Planning Form  PGP Reflection Form  Professional Growth Plan Development/Scoring Form (completed by administrator) | May |

## Measure 2: Observation

The paraprofessional’s observation may occur in either the first or second semester. The observation is an opportunity for the paraprofessional to demonstrate his/her skills on specific components selected from the *USVI Performance Evaluation Framework for Paraprofessionals*. The administrator collects evidence during the observation to document the performance of the paraprofessional. The observation is based on components of the Framework. The evidence collected by the administrator will be scored at the component level using the **Paraprofessional Observation Scoring Form** (see [Portal](http://vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es/298-paraprofessional-evaluation-proces.html)).

During the Evaluation Planning Meeting, the administrator and the paraprofessional plan for the observation using the second half of the **Evaluation Planning Form**. Four components are identified for the observation:

* + One territory-wide component required for all paraprofessionals (4a in 2016-17);
  + One school-wide component chosen by the administrator for all paraprofessionals in the building;
  + Two components chosen by the paraprofessional.

While choosing components for the observation, the paraprofessional should review the standards in the USVI Paraprofessional Standards that are aligned with and represented in these components. The Standards are noted in the USVI Performance Evaluation Framework for Paraprofessionals for easy reference (see VIDE EES [Portal](http://vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es/298-paraprofessional-evaluation-proces.html)).

Remember that it is always an option to meet as needed.

Even though the observation may not occur until the second semester, the paraprofessional is informed about the territory-wide and administrator chosen components and should begin thinking about his or her own choices of components for the observation near the beginning of the school year.

The administrator completes the Paraprofessional Observation Form in TalentEd by recording evidence of and a score for performance on the identified components. The administrator then schedules a Post-Observation Conference to share the evidence and discuss how it reflects the paraprofessional’s performance.

## Measure 3: Employee Time

Employee time is indicated by a paraprofessional’s attendance and punctuality, and follows the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Education Personnel Attendance Policy. The Policy designates four categories for employee attendance: Outstanding, Exceeds Standards, Satisfactory, and Unsatisfactory.

The administrator completes the **Employee Time Form** (see [Portal](http://vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es/298-paraprofessional-evaluation-proces.html))based on the paraprofessional’s record of attendance and punctuality in TimeForce prior tothe Summative Evaluationmeeting. A copy of the Personnel Attendance Policy can be accessed on the [U.S. Virgin Islands Division of Personnel website](https://www.dopusvi.org/time-and-attendance-policy/).

# Summative Scoring: How Scores Are Determined

The focus of paraprofessional evaluation is ongoing professional growth. Periodically, performance must be evaluated to acknowledge growth, as well as to provide opportunities to improve.

The final evaluation score is derived from the three measures:

* The Observation consists of four components, each comprising 15% of the total and scored with evidence related to the USVI Paraprofessional Framework components. Therefore, the observation is **60%** of the summative score.
* The Professional Growth Plan is scored using the Professional Growth Plan Development/Scoring Rubric and accounts for **30%** of the summative score.
* Employee Time, reflecting attendance and punctuality, represents **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 administrator has entered a paraprofessional's scores for the Observation, Professional Growth Plan, and Employee Time, the weighted scores will automatically be calculated in TalentEd.

Data from the pilot year (2016-2017) will be analyzed to establish the score range for each performance level. After a full year of implementation in 2018-2019, a paraprofessional will receive a final score and an explanation of where that score falls on the continuum of levels. At this point, the paraprofessional’s ***practice*** will receive a summative rating of Distinguished, Proficient, Basic, or Unsatisfactory based on the USVI Performance Evaluation Framework for Paraprofessionals. Paraprofessionals should consider how the summative score and rating reflects their efforts and how they can continue to grow in their professional practice.

## *The Summative Evaluation Meeting.* The Summative Evaluation Meeting is scheduled in TalentEd and occurs prior to the last day of the school year. During this meeting, the paraprofessional and the administrator have the opportunity to discuss the year’s experience and learning, using the language of the USVI Performance Evaluation Framework for Paraprofessionals. A collaborative discussion based on the evidence the administrator collected from the evaluation measures (PGP, observation and time) leads to the sharing of ideas about next steps for growth in the following school year. The Summative Evaluation Form (see VIDE EES [Portal](http://vide.vi/for-employees/educators-portal/vide-es/298-paraprofessional-evaluation-proces.html)) will be completed by the administrator and submitted to TalentEd. A copy will be delivered to the paraprofessional’s folder via TalentEd.

# How Evaluation Improves Practice

The Virgin Islands Paraprofessional Evaluation process promotes growth and development. It is a thoughtful approach that engages paraprofessionals in self-assessment, reflection, and professional conversations. To provide this meaningful experience for paraprofessionals, the process must be rigorous, valid, and reliable (Danielson, 2011). The Virgin Islands Department of Education considers the evaluation process an investment in the paraprofessionals of the U.S. Virgin Islands. The process was designed to honor the professionalism of paraprofessionals as they grow and gain expertise throughout their careers**.** The experience of receiving feedback based on the language of the USVI Performance Evaluation Framework for Paraprofessionals provides a clear path of growth for all paraprofessionals and will support them in meeting their goals, whether they choose to enhance their skills in the important role of a paraprofessional, or whether they aspire to become teachers. The evaluation process highlights the contributions that paraprofessionals make to the success of the students of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

# Summary of Timeline and Steps

Because this process is so important to the success of our paraprofessionals and our students, a sample timeline and step-by-step description of what the process entails is included.

Table 4.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Sept.** | **Oct.** | **Nov.** | **Dec.** | **Jan.** | **Feb.** | **Mar.** | **Apr.** | **May** |
| PGP goal-setting; plan for observation |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Implementation of PGP goal |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mid-year PGP/Time check-in |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Modify PGP if needed |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Observation |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reflection on PGP goal |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Summative Evaluation Meeting |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

*Overview of USVI Paraprofessional Evaluation Timeline* (sample)

Table 5.

*TalentEd Steps for Paraprofessional Evaluation Process*

| **Step** | **Task** | **Paraprofessional** | **Administrator** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Evaluation  Planning | Evaluation Planning Meeting | Complete **Evaluation Planning Form** and submit it to the administrator through TalentEd before the Evaluation Planning Meeting. | Schedule Evaluation Planning Meeting.  Meet with the paraprofessional to provide feedback on goal, plan for observation, and finalize the **Evaluation Planning Form**. |
| Evidence Gathering | PGP Learning | Engage in PGP learning activities; begin implementation. | Provide PGP support to paraprofessional. |
| Mid-year Check-In | Check progress to date | Complete Mid-Year Checklist and submit through TalentEd.  Confer with administrator to adjust PGP goal as needed. | Review PGP progress described on Mid-Year Checklist.  Adjust goal with paraprofessional as needed. |
| Evidence Gathering | Implement PGP | Implement  PGP learning activities. | Provide PGP support to paraprofessional. |
| Complete observation (May occur in the first semester) | Accept scheduling request.  Sign form in TalentEd. | Schedule observation in TalentEd.  Review Evaluation Planning Form for components to be observed (optional pre-conference).  Observe paraprofessional. Save Observation Scoring Form and notes in TalentEd.  Schedule post-observation conference with paraprofessional to discuss and score observation. |
| PGP Completion | PGP Completion | Complete PGP Reflection Form in TalentEd and upload evidence of learning activities into BriteLocker. | Review PGP Reflection Form; score PGP using the PGP Development/Scoring Rubric |
| End-of-year meeting | Summative Evaluation Meeting | Confirm meeting in TalentEd.  Discuss performance, feedback, and scores.  Collaborate with administrator to plan for growth and/or improvement.  Sign Summative Evaluation Form. | Complete Employee Time Form and Summative Evaluation Form.  Schedule Summative Meeting in TalentEd.  Discuss performance, feedback, and scores.  Collaborate with paraprofessional to plan for growth and/or improvement.  Submit and sign Summative Evaluation Form in TalentEd. |

**Note: The Paraprofessional’s Summative Evaluation Meeting must occur before the last day of school.**

**Glossary**

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

**Components** define and further explain distinct aspects of the domains. Descriptions of performance at four levels (Distinguished, Proficient, Basic, Unsatisfactory) provide further specifics about the components.

**Domains** represent broad categories of practice. The practice of paraprofessionals is categorized into three domains: (2) The Environment, (3) Delivery of Services, and (4) Professional Responsibilities.

The **U.S. Virgin Islands Employee Evaluation 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.

**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.

The **Portal** 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 under the For Employees tab/Effectiveness System. The Portal houses the evaluation calendar, guidebook, forms, resources and other information and is organized by employee title.

**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 evaluator enters the scores for the evaluation measures.

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 managed by the Division of Human Resources.