

**Georgia Department of Education
Teacher Keys Effectiveness System**

**TEACHER ASSESSMENT ON PERFORMANCE STANDARD 9: PROFESSIONALISM
TKES QUICK GUIDE**

WHAT ELEMENTS, CHARACTERISTICS, AND DISPOSITIONS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROFESSIONALISM OF TEACHERS?

Teachers are responsible for the education and well being of their students, and they serve as an influential role model in children’s lives. Teacher professionalism encompasses the key characteristics of professional competence, performance, and conduct. Competence refers to the teacher’s knowledge of their subject area, as well as their understanding of teaching methods. Performance refers to instructional strategies and the ability to communicate the curriculum to students. Professional conduct includes behavior, language, personal appearance, as well as attitude and dispositions.

Highly effective teachers identify the following five characteristics possessed by exceptional teachers: (1) flexible, adaptable, will search for what works, (2) excellent management skills, organized, (3) caring, compassionate, (4) love working with children, love children, and (5) believe all children can learn at high levels, high expectations.

Dispositions are guided by our beliefs and attitudes. They are the values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence our behaviors toward students, families, colleagues and communities. They affect our student’s learning, motivation, and development and guide our professional growth.

Professional conduct includes a number of components that are necessary to effectively do the job. Examples include: being on time, demonstrating professional writing and verbal skills, being prepared to teach, dressing appropriately, having classroom materials prepared and organized, and maintaining confidentiality; just to name a few.

Individual schools, LEAs, and state agencies set their own standards for teacher professionalism. These policies include the Georgia Code of Ethics for Educators, school and LEA attendance policies, dress codes, and behavior standards. Teachers should review and understand any professional policies that apply to them and/or their position.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF PROFESSIONALISM:

PROFESSIONALISM FOR EDUCATORS ENCOMPASSES VARIOUS COMPONENTS THAT INFLUENCE STUDENT LEARNING.

- Professional standards and ethics:
 - ✓ Adhere to legal and ethical guidelines
 - ✓ Follow standards defined for the profession
 - ✓ Model professional demeanor and positive interaction with others
 - ✓ Respect the diversity of ethnicity, race, gender, and special needs
- Continuous self-reflection and professional development:
 - ✓ Act as reflective practitioner
 - ✓ Acquire and refine professional knowledge and skill
 - ✓ Engage in ongoing professional growth
 - ✓ Act, as appropriate, as risk taker, stepping out of the comfort zone
 - ✓ Embrace practices of a life-long learner
- Contributions to the profession:
 - ✓ Perform as a role model for other educators
 - ✓ Serve on school, LEA, regional, and state educational committees, work groups, etc.
 - ✓ Participate in professional associations
 - ✓ Contribute to the development of the profession

The teachers’ ethical and personal qualities of empathy, care, respect, fairness, motivation, perseverance, and a strong belief that they can make a difference in a student’s life are dispositions associated with professionalism.

- Caring – Good teachers are often described as warm, friendly, and caring. When students perceive their teachers care about them, they respond by putting forth greater effort and being committed to learning.
- Enthusiasm and motivation – Teachers who display enthusiasm and energy in the classroom increase student interest and motivation to learn, and students exhibit higher rates of on-task behavior.
- Efficacy – Teachers having high self-efficacy set higher goals, invest more effort, and persist in getting their students to learn.