



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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March 31, 2015

TO: Chief School Administrators
School Leaders

ROUTE TO: All District Principals, Assistant/Vice Principals, and Teaching Staff Members

FROM: Peter Shulman, Assistant Commissioner/Chief Talent Officer *PS*
Division of Teacher and Leader Effectiveness

SUBJECT: AchieveNJ Update

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The Department of Education recognizes the collaborative effort over the past several months to distribute 2013-14 median Student Growth Percentile scores and summative ratings for qualifying educators, and to complete and certify all evaluation scores with the state. As we continue to learn and grow through implementation of AchieveNJ, we appreciate the hard work underway in so many districts to provide educators with meaningful, accurate evaluation information. We know that your efforts in these early years are paving the way to more streamlined, sustained systems in the future.

As we enter the spring of year two, we are seeing great progress in a move from compliance to quality and ownership of all elements of evaluation. Today's memo focuses on updated resources to support scoring and summary conferences for 2014-15. Please share this information directly with all educators in your district. As always, we encourage you to visit the [AchieveNJ Website](#) and [FAQ page](#) and to send any questions and feedback to educatorevaluation@doe.state.nj.us.

I. Resources for Completing 2014-15 Evaluations

A. Preparing for School Year End

As we approach the final months of the school year, there are several important actions that districts can take to support successful completion of evaluations. Please view our updated documents including guidance and recommendations for district consideration:

- [Finishing Strong: 2014-15 Teacher Evaluations](#)
- [Requirements and Resources for Teacher Evaluation in 2014-15](#)
- [Finishing Strong: 2014-15 Principal Evaluations](#)
- [Requirements and Resources for Principal Evaluation in 2014-15](#)
- [Evaluating Teachers with Extended Leaves](#): Updated guidance for teachers on family leave, those hired part-way through a school year, long-term substitutes, and others.

B. Scoring and Summary Conference Resources

The following scoring resources have been updated and are available for use in scoring 2014-15 evaluations and conducting summary conferences:

General Scoring Resources

- 2014-15 Teacher Evaluation Scoring Guide ([PPT](#) | [PDF](#))
- 2014-15 Principal/AP/VP Evaluation Scoring Guide ([PPT](#) | [PDF](#))
- “Calculate Your Rating:” These tools let educators determine a summative rating based on potential practice and student growth scores. Official summative ratings are calculated by an educator's district/the Department, but these tools can help educators get a sense of how the various components of an evaluation can affect a summative score.
 - [“Calculate Your Rating” Tools for Teacher Evaluation](#)
 - [“Calculate Your Rating” Tool for Principal/AP/VP Evaluation](#)

Student Growth Objective (SGO) Scoring Resources

In order to offer additional support as districts prepare to score SGOs, we have posted the following resources as part of our library of SGO exemplars, forms, and guidance:

- [SGO Scoring Checkpoints and Considerations](#): Annotated guide with examples and resources for developing SGO scoring policies and completing the SGO process with teachers.
- [SGO Scoring Checklist](#): Simple list that administrators may use prior to or during annual conference to ensure important aspects of SGO scoring are completed.
- [Administering and Scoring SGO Assessments](#): Table including a series of optional steps districts and schools can take to increase the quality of SGO assessing and scoring.

Evaluation Leadership Scoring Resources

To facilitate the collection of evidence for the Evaluation Leadership component of principal evaluation, the Department has produced optional spreadsheets that principal evaluators can use to collect evidence and score one or more principals.

- [2014-15 AP/VP Evaluation Leadership Scoring Worksheet](#)
- [2014-15 Principal Evaluation Leadership Scoring Worksheet](#)

Conference Resources

- Optional 2014-15 non-mSGP Teacher Summary Conference Form ([Word](#) | [PDF](#))
- Optional 2014-15 mSGP Teacher Summary Conference Form ([Word](#) | [PDF](#))
- Optional 2014-15 non-mSGP Principal/AP/VP Summary Conference Form ([Word](#) | [PDF](#))
- Optional 2014-15 mSGP Principal/AP/VP Summary Conference Form ([Word](#) | [PDF](#))

Notes:

- mSGP scores and summative ratings for teachers and principals receiving mSGPs will be provided by the Department in 2015-16. Therefore, these educators should discuss the other components of evaluation at the summary conference but will not have the mSGP or a summative rating at that time.
- Districts should ensure they have the proper documentation for each required observation in the teacher's personnel file by the time of the summary conference – including observer and teacher signatures. Districts using electronic records for observation reports might consider keeping one “signature page” in the teacher's file, listing the sign-off's after each observation, and thereby reducing unnecessary paperwork.

Course Roster Verification Guidance

As explained in several previous communications, **the integrity of the mSGP measure of the evaluation system relies on course roster accuracy, which can only be verified at the local level.** Districts that do not take steps to ensure roster accuracy may provide incorrect summative evaluation data and may even face potential challenges from teachers who receive incorrect scores. Please see this [Course Roster Verification Guidance](#) to ensure your district has quality control procedures in place prior to your submission this summer.

C. Summary of Legal Requirements for Evaluation and Tenure Cases

In an effort to provide district educators with a comprehensive, streamlined guide to all the required steps before filing an inefficiency tenure charge under the TEACHNJ Act, the Department has posted summaries for teacher and principal/AP/VP requirements. The documents describe the legal requirements that must be followed for an educator's evaluation, the steps for filing an inefficiency charge, and the streamlined tenure revocation process.

- [Summary of Legal Requirements for Teacher Evaluation and Tenure Cases](#)
- [Summary of Legal Requirements for Principal/AP/VP Evaluation and Tenure Cases](#)

II. Request for Qualifications for Educator Practice Instruments

We are opening a new round of the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process to allow providers and districts the opportunity to submit practice instruments and required evidence and assurances for state review. We recognize that new and modified instruments continue to emerge and that districts may wish to change their selected instruments for the 2015-16 school year. Therefore, the next round of the RFQ process will occur as follows:

- March 31, 2015: Updated [RFQ application available on AchieveNJ website](#)
- March 31, 2015 - April 17, 2015: Providers and districts submit instruments and information
- April 17, 2015 - April 30, 2015: Department reviews submissions

- May 1, 2015: Approved districts and providers notified; updated lists posted on website
- June 1, 2015: Districts report selected instruments as part of evaluation rubric submission

Please note that the approved instrument list only includes instruments that have met the *technical requirements* for use in New Jersey. Any district that will be purchasing instruments is required to follow public bidding laws and regulations in acquiring an evaluation instrument and should consult with their Business Administrator (BA) for guidance. If the BA needs additional support, he or she should contact the appropriate county office of education. Instruments on the approved list *do not* have contracts with the state, necessitating that districts develop their own contracts; please refer to our [FAQ on bidding process for evaluation instruments](#) for more information. Additionally, local districts must ensure that they have the supports in place to meet the implementation requirements of the evaluation instrument, such as teacher and administrator training. Finally, the instrument approval process does not extend to data management systems. The state provides no approval list or endorsements for any data systems. Districts may choose or create a data management system that best suits their local needs.

The entire RFQ process for teacher and principal practice evaluation instruments is detailed on our website at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/AchieveNJ/resources/rfq.shtml>.

III. Announcements

A. Teacher and Principal Email Newsletters

In order to help ensure important information about evaluation reaches teachers and principals, the Office of Evaluation sends periodic emails directly to those groups of educators with relevant updates. We have added a “subscribe” feature to our website (<http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/>; left side under the navigation bar) so educators can sign up to receive the emails if they aren’t already. Please forward this information as appropriate and encourage teachers and school leaders in your district to subscribe.

B. New Staff in the Office of Evaluation

As announced in the [February 2015 issue of The Bridge](#), the Office of Evaluation has several staffing announcements to share. First, **Carl Blanchard** has been named the new Director of the Office of Evaluation following his two years of service as the team’s policy manager. Carl is the 2010 Somerset County Teacher of the Year and prior to joining the Department, served as a science teacher for fourteen years, including eleven at Franklin High School. He earned National Board Certification in Life Science in 2009. As an active member of the Evaluation Pilot Advisory Committee (EPAC) in 2011-12, Carl added a critical teacher’s perspective when he first joined the evaluation team. Recognizing how beneficial this was – and how important it is for the team to bring in current, fresh perspectives from experienced and accomplished educators – Carl has recently hired two more full-time staff directly from New Jersey public school districts.

Linda Eno founded Biotechnology High School (BTHS) and served as its principal for 10 years, during which time the school earned a number one ranking in the state from *U.S. News* and a top 10 ranking nationally. A member of the state evaluation advisory committee for two years who was

herself evaluated under AchieveNJ, Linda brings first-hand knowledge of the practitioner's perspective on evaluation. She will serve as an Implementation Manager with a particular focus on supporting the evaluation of principals and assistant/vice principals.

The Office of Evaluation's newest Policy Analyst, **Pete Mazzagatti**, also served on the state evaluate on advisory committees for the past several years, and most recently worked as the PreK-12 Instructional Facilitator for the Humanities for Woodstown-Pilesgrove Regional School District. A secondary social studies teacher for 13 years, Pete is the 2012 Salem County Teacher of the Year, and his school district participated in the state evaluation pilot. In his new Department role, Pete will conduct research, collaborate directly with educators across the state, and help craft new guidance and workshop materials to support effective implementation of AchieveNJ.

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