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August 12, 2014

TO: Chief School Administrators
Charter School Lead Persons
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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I. Proposed Changes to AchieveNJ

As announced last month, the Department intends to change certain requirements of AchieveNJ based on feedback from educators and other stakeholders. On August 6, the following changes were proposed to the State Board of Education.

A. 2013-14 Student Growth Objective Score and Administrator Goal Score Review Process

If a teacher's Student Growth Objective (SGO) score or a principal/assistant principal(AP)/vice principal(VP)'s Administrator Goal score is the sole reason that his or her summative rating dropped from Effective to Partially Effective or from Partially Effective to Ineffective, the educator will be eligible to ask for an expedited review of the rating. In addition, if a teacher's rating is adjusted through the SGO review, that teacher's SGO score may be negated from the principal's SGO average if doing so improves the principal's rating from Ineffective or Partially Effective to Effective or Highly Effective.

These reviews will apply only to the 2013-14 school year and **this is the only proposed change impacting 2013-14 evaluation scores.** The proposed steps for this process are as follows:

1. The qualifying teacher or principal appeals to his/her chief school administrator (CSA) or designee for reconsideration by February 1, 2015 or within 15 school days of receiving the summative rating – whichever is later. To track these instances, the Department will release simple forms for districts to indicate the adjusted annual summative rating.
2. The CSA must provide an answer to the teacher or principal within 15 school days of receiving an appeal.
3. If the CSA agrees with the appeal, the score weight will be adjusted from 15% to 1% and the teacher practice or principal practice instrument score weight will be increased accordingly.
4. If the CSA does not agree, then the educator has 15 school days following the receipt of this decision to appeal directly to the Commissioner, who will then review whether the annual summative rating was directly caused by the SGO or Administrator Goal score.

We will release the forms and any additional information in the coming weeks based on the regulatory review process.

B. Teacher and Principal Evaluation Weight Changes for 2014-15

Based upon lessons learned in 2013-14 and feedback from educators and others, we are proposing modifications to evaluation weights for 2014-15. The following chart depicts current weights with the proposed changes for the next school year:

	2013-14	2014-15 (Proposed) ¹
Student Growth Percentile (SGP)* Teacher Evaluation Weights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SGP: 30% • SGO: 15% • Teacher Practice: 55% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SGP: 10% • SGO: 20% • Teacher Practice: 70%
Non-SGP Teacher Evaluation Weights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SGO: 15% • Teacher Practice: 85% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SGO: 20% • Teacher Practice: 80%
SGP* Principal/AP/VP Evaluation Weights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SGP Average: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multi-Grade: 30% ○ Single Grade: 20% • Administrator Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multi-Grade: 10% ○ Single Grade: 20% • SGO Average: 10% • Evaluation Leadership: 20% • Principal Practice: 30% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SGP Average: 10% • Administrator Goals: 30% • SGO Average: 10% • Evaluation Leadership: 20% • Principal Practice: 30%
Non-SGP Principal/AP/VP Evaluation Weights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrator Goals: 40% • SGO Average: 10% • Evaluation Leadership: 20% • Principal Practice: 30% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrator Goals: 40% • SGO Average: 10% • Evaluation Leadership: 20% • Principal Practice: 30%

*SGP Teachers and Principals/APs/VPs are those who qualify for SGP scores based on the assignment of 4th-8th-grade Language Arts and Math students. In 2013-14, principals/APs/VPs were differentiated based on having one or more SGP grades/subjects within a school; this distinction has been dropped. For more information, see the [SGP Web Page](#).

¹ Current regulations set numerical ranges in which each student achievement component of evaluation must fall. Regulations do not specify the weights themselves; these are announced annually by the Department. We have proposed to change the student achievement weight ranges from 40-50% to 30-50% for teacher evaluation and from 20-40% to 10-40% for principal evaluation, and to change the annual deadline for announcing weights to August 31.

II. Principal Evaluation Resources for 2014-15

The Department has now posted updated principal evaluation materials to the [AchieveNJ website](#) to reflect proposed weight changes for 2014-15. Please see this updated [AchieveNJ Resource Catalog](#) for a list of all evaluation resources organized by topic area. Please note that separate evaluation scoring guidance materials have been provided for 2013-14 and 2014-15 as districts are still finalizing some 2013-14 evaluations.

A. Updated Evaluation Leadership Instruments

Based on input from district and school leaders in 2013-14, the Department has made small adjustments to the State Principal and Assistant/Vice Principal Evaluation Leadership Instruments. In the Principal Evaluation Leadership Instrument for example, one row (2a) has been deleted to eliminate redundancies, two rows have been added to a 2b, and some phrases and descriptions have been modified across the instrument to better capture elements of evaluation leadership in practice. The updated instruments are listed below:

- [2014-15 Principal Evaluation Leadership Instrument](#)
- [2014-15 Assistant and Vice Principal Evaluation Leadership Instrument](#)

The Office of Evaluation continues to collect feedback from educators about AchieveNJ and the many resources available on our website; please send any comments or questions to educatorevaluation@doe.state.nj.us. Thank you for your continued collaboration. We wish you a wonderful start to the new school year.

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c: Members, State Board of Education
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