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**TO:** Chief School Administrators  
Charter School Lead Persons

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

**SUBJECT: Educator Evaluation System Implementation Update**

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With the August 6<sup>th</sup> signing of new tenure legislation for the state of New Jersey and the start of a new school year, this is a very busy time for evaluation reform activities. We have made significant progress toward our goal of implementing an improved statewide evaluation system by 2013-14, and our work is reinforced by the new state law. This year we will continue to provide regular updates about evaluation activities as we strive to guide and support the hard work happening across the state. Thank you in advance for sharing the information in this update broadly across your district.

# 1. REQUIREMENTS AND RESOURCES FOR ALL NON-PILOT DISTRICTS

## Timeline of Requirements

All non-pilot New Jersey districts must meet the following milestones in the 2012-13 school year in preparation for statewide rollout of a new evaluation system in 2013-14 (*please note some deadlines have changed as a result of the new tenure law*):

1. Form a **District Evaluation Advisory Committee (DEAC)** to ensure stakeholder engagement by October 31, 2012.
2. Adopt educator evaluation rubrics that include **state-approved teacher and principal practice evaluation instruments** by December 31, 2012.
3. Begin to **test and refine evaluation rubrics** by January 31, 2013.
4. Form a **School Improvement Panel** to oversee evaluation activities by February 1, 2013.
5. Thoroughly **train teachers** by July 1, 2013.
6. Thoroughly **train evaluators** by August 31, 2013.

In addition, districts must report on progress toward these milestones to the Department in February and August of 2013. More information about the reporting process will be provided in future memos.

## Tenure Legislation and Regulations

The “[Teacher Effectiveness and Accountability for the Children of New Jersey \(TEACHNJ Act\)](#)” legislation was signed by Governor Christie on August 6<sup>th</sup>. The following is an overview of evaluation-related components of the new law.

- Any new teacher, principal, assistant principal, or vice principal hired after the effective date of the law must complete four years of employment **to be eligible for tenure** under the following evaluation requirements:
  - To earn tenure, a new teacher must complete a district mentorship program during his/her first year of employment. After completion of this program, the teacher must be rated either effective or highly effective in two of the three subsequent years.
  - To earn tenure, a new principal, assistant principal, or vice principal must be rated either effective or highly effective in two annual summative evaluations within the first three years of employment, with the first effective rating on or after completion of the second year.

- If any tenured teacher, principal, assistant principal, or vice principal is rated ineffective or partially effective in two consecutive years, that employee will be charged with inefficiency. The charges are promptly filed by the superintendent with the local board of education. Within 30 days of the filing, the board of education shall forward the written charges to the Commissioner, unless the board determines that the evaluation process has not been followed. After permitting the employee an opportunity to submit a written response to the charges, the Commissioner shall refer the case to an arbitrator to determine potential loss of tenure. The filing of tenure charges may be deferred for another year for employees rated partially effective in the second of the two consecutive years. The chart below outlines these rating combinations and the related actions.

<u>Year A Rating</u>	<u>Year B (Consecutive) Rating</u>	<u>Action</u>
Ineffective	Ineffective	The superintendent <b>shall</b> file a charge of inefficiency
Partially Effective	Ineffective	
Ineffective	Partially Effective	The superintendent <b>may file</b> a charge of inefficiency <b>or may defer</b> the filing until the next year; in the following year (i.e., the third consecutive year), the superintendent <b>shall</b> file a charge of inefficiency if the annual rating is ineffective or partially effective
Partially Effective	Partially Effective	

- **Professional development** aligned to evaluations must be provided to all teaching staff, including:
  - a focus on supporting student achievement;
  - individual professional development plans;
  - extra professional development for struggling teachers; and
  - the creation of a Corrective Action plan for teaching staff members rated as ineffective or partially effective in the annual evaluation.
- Every school must convene a **School Improvement Panel** that will oversee the mentoring and evaluation of teachers and identify professional development opportunities.
- All **identifiable information related to personnel evaluations will be confidential** and not accessible to the public.
- A school district’s evaluation rubric shall not be subject to **collective bargaining**, and no collective bargaining agreement entered into by the district after July 1, 2013 may conflict with provisions of the law.
- The deadline for districts to adopt **educator evaluation rubrics for teachers and principals, assistant principals, and vice principals** is December 31, 2012.

- Districts must begin to test and refine evaluation rubrics by January 31, 2013.
- Districts must implement the evaluation rubrics by school year 2013-14.

The [new tenure law](#) includes some changes to evaluation terminology used by the Department in the past. Please see updated definitions listed in Appendix A of this document and [on our educator evaluation website](#).

The Department presented proposed regulations codifying statewide capacity-building requirements for 2012-13 to the State Board on August 5. At their September meeting, the regulations were at the Second Discussion level.

The Office of Evaluation will provide ongoing guidance on the implications of the tenure law and evaluation regulations in subsequent memos and on our website.

#### Educator Practice Evaluation Instruments: State Approval and District Selection

We understand that some confusion exists about the approval process for Teaching and Principal Evaluation Instruments and the selection of approved instruments by all districts. Please carefully review the following information for clarification.

By December 31, 2012, all districts must select teaching and principal evaluation instruments to be implemented district-wide in 2013-14. **The Department of Education will require districts to submit the names of their selected instruments as part of the February 2013 reporting requirement. This process will be outlined in upcoming memos and is distinct from the Request for Qualification (RFQ) process.**

Over the next few months, the NJDOE is conducting an RFQ process to develop and release a state-wide list of instruments that meet basic criteria identified by the Department and are suitable for use by a district. Ultimately, districts will only be able to select an instrument that has been approved through this RFQ process. Once the initial lists are posted, districts may take one of the three following actions:

1. **If a district intends to use an instrument that appears on the approved list, they are not required to submit any documentation through the RFQ process.**
2. If a district does not see an instrument on the list that they wish to use, they should work with the instrument provider to ensure the instrument is submitted through the RFQ process for review.
3. If a district has developed an instrument that meets the criteria outlined in the RFQ, or wishes to use a modified version or different edition of an approved instrument, they should submit that information for review.

The teacher practice evaluation instrument RFQ process has already begun; the [first approved list](#) was released on September 7 and can be accessed at <http://www.nj.gov/education/EE4NJ/providers/>.

Today, we are releasing the [principal practice evaluation instrument RFQ](#) to solicit submissions from a variety of entities. Instrument providers, local school districts, and other stakeholders can use the RFQ to submit an instrument for review. If the instrument meets the technical requirements, it will be included on the approved list according to the following submission and notification schedule; *please note this schedule also applies to the remaining review periods for the teaching practice evaluation approval process:*

- Submission deadline: September 30, 2012; Notification date: October 19, 2012
- Submission deadline: October 31, 2012; Notification date: November 23, 2012
- Submission deadline: November 30, 2012; Notification date: December 21, 2012

The entire RFQ process for teacher and principal evaluation instruments is detailed on our website at: <http://www.nj.gov/education/EE4NJ/providers/>.

The key next steps for instrument approval and selection are as follows:

1. Eligible entities submit instruments through the RFQ process, and the Office of Evaluation releases a state-approved instrument list at the intervals specified above (first list published September 7).
2. Districts select both a teaching and principal practice evaluation instrument from the approved list by December 31, 2012.
3. Districts report their selected instruments to the Department in February 2013 as part of a process that will be outlined in an upcoming memo.

Please note that the approved instrument list will only include 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.

Note that the instruments on the approved list *will not* have contracts with the state, necessitating that districts develop their own contracts; please refer to our [FAQ on public bidding](#) 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 and/or proof of mastery. Related details can be found in our [evaluation requirement FAQ](#).

We will continue to provide updates on our website and in future evaluation memos as this process progresses.

### Resources

In the [Resources](#) section of our website, we have posted a [presentation](#) covering the requirements for all non-pilot districts in 2012-13, providing some context for evaluation reform, and sharing brief information about our pilot activities. I invite you to use this as appropriate within your district.

## 2. 2012-13 EVALUATION PILOTS

### Teacher Evaluation Pilot

I am pleased to report that all districts that received grants through our competitive award process last year intend to continue their work as part of the 2012-13 teacher evaluation pilot. The Department will provide supplemental funding for these districts to extend their pilot activities, and we are grateful for their collaboration and the significant feedback they continue to share. I am also glad to share that all ten newly selected teacher evaluation pilot districts have completed the grant process and are now official participants.

Given our desire to include as many stakeholders as possible in this work, we rebid the Title I Notice of Grant Opportunity and are currently reviewing several new applications with the hope of adding districts to Cohort 2. We plan to announce the results of this process in early October. In addition, we invited districts that scored above the minimum requirement, but that we were unable to fund due to limited resources, to join our Cohort 2 pilot using their own funding. We are currently in the process of defining the role these districts will play and the types of support the Department will provide.

### Principal Evaluation Pilot

The new principal evaluation pilot has just begun, and District Evaluation Advisory Committees are preparing to execute training and other requirements for the 2012-13 pilot year. We will provide additional updates as they are available.

### External Advisory and Evaluation Activities

The state Evaluation Pilot Advisory Committee (EPAC) has been expanded to cover both teacher and principal evaluation activities for the 2012-13 pilot year. The first EPAC meeting of the school year will be held on September 27, when we will welcome new members and representatives from pilot advisory committees.

Rutgers University researchers are continuing their external evaluation of the first pilot year, and they plan to submit their report by the end of 2012. Both the EPAC and Rutgers 2011-12 reports will be made available on our website once they are complete.

## 3. SPOTLIGHT FROM THE FIELD: OCEAN CITY

Linking student achievement outcomes to evaluations is a primary goal of reformed evaluation systems. Under the leadership of Superintendent Dr. Kathleen Taylor, the Ocean City School District has made strides in this area over the summer.

- Dr. Taylor and her district administrative team met regularly during the summer months to establish comparable **Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-oriented, and Time-bound (SMART) goals** and **Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)** for teachers in common grade levels.

- Ocean City has been examining Rhode Island’s process for establishing common SLOs and rubrics for evaluating them along with Indiana’s and Maryland’s procedures for establishing an overall summative rating encompassing teacher practice inputs and student learning outputs.
- With the start of the school year, Ocean City teachers will engage in collaborative work with administrators to continue to develop and refine these SMART goals and SLOs. The district will focus on identifying multiple measures and mechanisms to determine evidence of individual, classroom, course, and grade level growth during the upcoming school year. This work will occur during professional learning community meetings, staff in-service days, and District Evaluation Advisory Committee sessions.
- The district is also aiming to employ evaluative procedures to measure the overall effectiveness of professional learning communities (PLCs) by examining student learning outcomes over the course of time. By identifying and evaluating how grade levels of students are progressing, they can use such data to drive in-house professional development opportunities.

Dr. Taylor and her staff are demonstrating the importance of commitment and innovation at the local level while also examining lessons learned nationally. She reports, “We are really proud of the work that we accomplished in the first year of the pilot, as well as our work this summer to continue to move the District forward in addressing the student achievement aspect of the teacher evaluation process.”

For more information about Ocean City’s work as a pilot district, visit their website at <http://www.oceancityschools.org/?DivisionID=9191&ToggleSideNav=>.

#### **4. OFFICE OF EVALUATION CONTACT INFORMATION**

We are continuing to update the educator evaluation website, and we invite you to visit <http://www.state.nj.us/education/evaluation> and view new [FAQ](#) for additional information. If you have questions that are not addressed in our communications or the FAQ, please send them directly to our new email inbox at [educatorevaluation@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:educatorevaluation@doe.state.nj.us).

PS/TM/JP/E:\Communications\Memos\091112 Educator Evaluation Update.Doc

Attachment

c: Members, State Board of Education  
 Christopher Cerf, Commissioner  
 Senior Staff  
 Diane Shoener  
 Marie Barry  
 Karen Campbell  
 Jeff Hauger  
 Robert Higgins  
 Mary Jane Kurabinski  
 Timothy Matheney  
 Peggy McDonald

Cathy Pine  
 Megan Snow  
 Ellen Wolock  
 Amy Ruck  
 William Firestone  
 Todd Kent  
 CCCS Staff  
 Executive County Superintendents  
 Garden State Coalition of Schools  
 NJ LEE Group

## **APPENDIX A: Updated Evaluation Terminology**

### **New Jersey State Educator Evaluation System**

The overarching, integrated system in New Jersey of all processes and components of educator evaluation that are used to generate an annual summative evaluation rating for teaching staff members. This system:

- Encompasses measures of professional practice and measures of student performance and all aspects of implementation, including training and calibration;
- Uses four levels of annual summative evaluation ratings;
- Aligns to professional standards;
- Links to professional development;
- Involves District Evaluation Advisory Committees of stakeholders, with prescribed membership; and
- Includes district educator evaluation rubrics.

### **District Educator Evaluation Rubrics**

The set of criteria, measures, and processes to be used in each district to evaluate educators, including professional practice measures and student performance measures. Each district will have an evaluation rubric specifically for teachers (called a “district teaching evaluation rubric”); another specifically for principals, assistant principals, and vice principals (called a “district principal evaluation rubric”); and evaluation rubrics for other categories of teaching staff members (not yet defined). District educator evaluation rubrics include educator practice evaluation instruments.

- The District Teaching Evaluation Rubric includes:
  - Teaching practice measures
    - Measures assessed by a teaching practice evaluation instrument that includes a scoring guide and is evidence-supported
    - Other measures of teaching practice
  - Student performance measures
    - Student Growth Percentiles
    - Other measures of student performance
- The District Principal Evaluation Rubric includes:
  - Principal practice measures
    - Measures assessed by a principal practice evaluation instrument that includes a scoring guide and is evidence-supported
    - Other measures of principal practice
  - Student performance measures
    - Student Growth Percentiles, High School Proficiency Assessment
    - Other measures of student performance