

FAQ

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON THE PROPOSED TEACHER EVALUATION REGULATIONS

3/15/2013



This list of questions and answers about the proposed teacher evaluation regulations is based on a preliminary analysis. Please check this document frequently, as we will be updating it as we receive clarification from the Department of Education or if the department changes its proposal before the regulations are adopted by the State Board of Education.

FOR TEACHERS WORKING UNDER AN INSTRUCTIONAL CERTIFICATE

1. What will the length of my observations be?

Long observations are defined as 40 minutes in length. Short observations are 20 minutes in length. Teachers will have a combination of these depending on their years of teaching and their status as tenured or nontenured.

2. How many times will I be observed?

All teachers will be observed at least three times a year, once during each semester

- Non-tenured teachers in their first and second years of teaching will have at least two long observations, with a pre-conference and prior notice, and one short observation, unannounced.
- Non-tenured teachers in their third and fourth years of teaching will have at least one long observation, with a pre-conference and prior notice, and two short observations, unannounced.
- Tenured teachers will have at least three short observations, at least one with a pre-conference and prior notice, and at least one unannounced.
- Teachers on corrective action plans shall receive at least one additional observation.

3. Do I need a pre- and post-observation conference for all of my observations?

Will all of my observations be announced?

Only those observations that need prior notice require a pre-conference. [See question #2, How many times will I be observed?] All observations require a post-observation conference to occur no more than 15 working days following the observation, with a supervisor who is present at the observation. However, post-observation conferences for short observations of tenured teachers can be conducted by written or electronic communication, as long as the teacher is not on a corrective action plan.

4. Will my observations be “double-scored?”

Can outside observers conduct my observation?

Non-tenured teachers must be observed by more than one certified supervisor during the year. A co-observation (done by two observers) fills this requirement, but counts as one observation. According to the law, only supervisors hired by the district to serve in supervisory capacities can conduct evaluations.

5. Will standardized test scores be used in my evaluation?

If you teach grades 4-8 language arts and/or mathematics, the state will determine your median student growth percentile (SGP) based on the NJ ASK test. For all teachers, other standardized test scores may be used to create your student growth objectives (SGOs). [See question #6, What formula will be used to determine my rating? for more details.]

6. What formula will be used to determine my rating? What percentage is given to student achievement and teacher practice?

- For tested grades and subjects (i.e., teachers who receive a median student growth percentile), student achievement will be 50% of a teacher’s evaluation rating. Teacher practice will be the other 50%. Although not in the proposed regulations, the Department of Education is stating that for 2013-2014, student growth percentiles (SGPs), based on state standardized tests, will be 35%; student growth objectives (SGOs) 15%; and teacher practice 50% of a teacher’s evaluation rating.
- For non-tested grades and subjects (i.e., teachers who do not receive a median student growth percentile), student achievement will be at least 15% and no more than 85%. Teacher practice will be at least 50% and no more than 85%. Although not in the proposed regulations, for 2013-2014, the Department of Education is stating that SGOs will be 15% and teacher practice 85% of a teacher’s evaluation rating.

7. Can the formula be changed?

Yes. The department shall provide the required percentage weight of each measure by April 15 prior to the year the evaluation rubric applies.

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8. How is student achievement calculated?

Student achievement will be a combination of standardized test scores and teacher- and principal-developed student growth objectives (SGOs), which may also be based on standardized tests. Teachers in tested grades and subjects have to create at least one but no more than four SGOs. Teachers in non-tested grades and subjects have to create at least two but no more than four SGOs. The number of SGOs will be determined by the chief school administrator. Please note that the distribution of student growth percentiles (SGPs) and SGOs as part of student achievement is not written in the proposed regulations.

9. How is the student growth percentile (SGP) calculated? How are test scores used?

The Department of Education will calculate the median SGP for teachers, using SGPs of all students assigned to the teacher. SGPs will be based on student test scores on the NJ ASK in grades 4-8 in language arts and mathematics. This Department of Education video explains how the state plans to calculate SGPs. Although not in the proposed regulations, the Department of Education is stating that students must be assigned to the class for at least 60% of the year. Regulations state that a teacher must teach the course for a least 60% of the time from the beginning of the course until the standardized assessment, and that a teacher must have at least 20 SGPs for the year. If not, three years of SGPs may be used.

10. When do I get my annual summative rating?

If student achievement information necessary to determine the summative rating is available at the time of your annual summary conference, you will receive your rating at that time (at the end of the school year). If student achievement information is not available, pending results from state standardized assessments, the rating will be calculated when the assessment results become available. The department estimates that this will be in January of the following school year. The annual summary conference, however, will still take place in June.

11. How will my annual summative rating be determined?

For teachers with a student growth percentile (SGP) score, boards of education will submit your final rating to the Department of Education, which will then report your annual summative rating, including student growth percentiles, back to the local board. For teachers without SGP scores, the Department of Education will tell school districts how to calculate the rating using student achievement and teacher performance components.

12. Who gets a Corrective Action Plan?

Teachers who receive either a partially effective or ineffective rating on their annual summative rating are given a Corrective Action Plan (CAP). The CAP will be developed by the teacher and a supervisor.

13. How many times will I be observed if I have a Corrective Action Plan (CAP)?

What are the rules of this observation?

Any teacher with a CAP will receive one additional mid-year observation. If the CAP was done before the start of the school year, the observation will be completed before February 15; if, however, the plan is done after the start of the school year, it must occur before the annual summary conference. The length of this observation shall be determined by the administration and it will include a post-observation conference. For tenured teachers, this observation will be done by multiple observers.

FOR TEACHERS WORKING UNDER AN EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CERTIFICATE

14. What will the length of my observations be?

Unspecified. For non-tenured staff members, the chief school administrator shall determine the length. Observations may include, but are not limited to, observations of meetings, student instruction, parent conferences, and case-study analysis of a significant student issue. There is no mention of tenured staff members.

15. How many times will I be observed?

In their current form, the proposed regulations do not specify the number of times teachers working under an educational services certificate will be observed. However, state law still requires all nontenured teaching staff members to be observed a minimum of three times a year.

16. Who gets a Corrective Action Plan?

Teaching staff members who receive either a partially effective or ineffective rating on their annual summative rating are given a Corrective Action Plan (CAP). The CAP will be developed by the staff member and a supervisor.

17. How many times will I be observed if I have a Corrective Action Plan?

What are the rules of this observation?

Unspecified. The regulations do not appear to add any observations for educational services staff members working under Corrective Action Plans.