

Christie Administration Provides Greater Flexibility
In Preliminary Years of Teacher Evaluation

For Immediate Release

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Trenton, NJ – The Christie Administration today announced that the state Department of Education will provide greater flexibility to school districts in the two student achievement components of teacher evaluations, including the introduction of a review process for teachers' 2013-14 school year summative ratings.

"The Department of Education has slowly and methodically rolled out new standards and assessments. Throughout the process we have continually and consistently listened to the voices of thousands of educators, and we continue to do so now that we have a full year of statewide implementation to learn from," said Acting Education Commissioner David Hespe. "By actively engaging all stakeholders, New Jersey is able to move forward with an educator assessment program that will help teachers improve their craft, and ultimately provide the high level of education that every New Jersey child deserves."

For school year 2014-15, the Department is modifying the weights of student growth components in teacher evaluations as measured by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness of College and Careers (PARCC) assessments and as measured by a teacher's individualized student growth objectives.

Teachers who teach 4th through 8th grade Language Arts and Mathematics – approximately 20 percent of all classroom teachers statewide – will continue to use two student growth measurements as part of their evaluation. For the 2014-15 school year, these teachers' evaluations will be comprised as follows: 10 percent will be based on student academic growth as measured by statewide assessments, 20 percent will be based on student academic growth as measured by individualized student growth objectives, and 70 percent will be based on observations. For the 2015-16 school year, their evaluations will be comprised as follows: up to 20 percent, to be determined by the Department, will be based on student academic growth as measured by statewide assessments, 20 percent will be based on student academic growth as measured by individualized student growth objectives, and 60 percent will be based on observations.

The previous system called for student academic growth to represent 30 percent of teacher evaluations, with 55 percent classroom observations and 15 percent student growth objectives (student growth objectives are specific student learning targets that are developed between teacher and principal, rather than based on a uniform statewide assessment).

The use of student growth as a factor in teacher evaluations was one of the requirements of the Teacher Effectiveness and Accountability for the Children of New Jersey Act, or TEACH-NJ, which the Legislature unanimously passed in 2012. The modifications announced today continue to adhere to the requirements of the law.

For teachers who do not receive a student growth measurement derived from a statewide assessment, their 2014-15 and 2015-16 school year evaluations will be comprised as follows: 20 percent will be based on student academic growth as measured by individualized student growth objectives and 80 percent will be based on observations. Previously, the classroom observations counted for 85 percent.

The Department will also offer flexibility to teachers in reviewing their evaluation ratings for the 2013-14 school year. Specifically, any teacher who receives an evaluation rating of Ineffective or Partially Effective due to the outcome of the scoring of the student growth objectives will be eligible to ask for a review of their rating. The Department plans to release additional details regarding this review process later this summer. Further, the Department will continue to offer targeted training on the development of student growth objectives throughout the next school year.

"Research has shown that the single most important in-school factor in improving a child's education is a high quality teacher,

" Acting Commissioner Hesse said. "The overarching goal – to ensure children in New Jersey have their education provided by a high quality teacher – remains unchanged."



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