



2013-14
**Final Educator
Evaluation
Implementation
Report**



State of New Jersey
Department of Education

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Letter from Assistant Commissioner Peter Shulman

First and foremost, I want to thank the **teachers, school leaders, and superintendents across New Jersey** for their commitment to developing and implementing a fair and impactful evaluation system over the past several years. Results from the pivotal first year of statewide implementation show that AchieveNJ is allowing districts to better identify strengths and weaknesses in educator practice and to respond accordingly – and educators deserve extensive praise for making this happen. With the release of results from 2013-14, I believe the following points illustrate how the hard work of the past several years is yielding great returns, even in the early stages:

- Overall, the first year of AchieveNJ implementation represents a **significant step forward** in improving our statewide educator evaluation system. New Jersey teachers are receiving more observations and feedback than ever before, and school leaders are focusing more of their time and talent on instructional quality in schools.
- New Jersey educators are **no longer subject to a single-measure evaluation** with binary results that fail to differentiate strengths and weaknesses. The majority of educators rated Effective or Highly Effective last year earned those ratings through multiple measures that offer much more detailed and individualized information. Further, the 2,900 teachers identified for additional support last year touch approximately 13% of all New Jersey students – about 180,000 of them. Those educators are now on a path to better serving their students.
- Data from 2013-14 points to **areas for improvement** with evaluation implementation:
 - Observers are often not using the full rubric within a practice instrument; by training them to better understand what each level of practice looks like for each component, districts can provide differentiated feedback even for those earning the highest ratings.
 - Scores on educator-set student growth goals (Student Growth Objectives and Administrator Goals) skewed high, revealing a need to focus on the “ambitious” as much as the “achievable.”
 - Given the emphasis placed on implementing new teacher evaluations with fidelity, districts and the state focused more on supporting principals as instructional leaders and less on the implementation of principal evaluations.
- The state remains committed to improving the evaluation system through **extensive educator input, targeted supports, and increased flexibility**. Since the spring of 2013, Department staff members have participated in hundreds of presentations and workshops, reaching over 350 districts. Over 25,000 educators attended a session offered by the Department in 2013-14. This coming summer, we will offer new SGO and other trainings to focus on the areas where educators have indicated the greatest concerns. Educator input is helping the Department to identify and respond to challenges with improved guidance, direct district support, changes in requirements as needed, and increased flexibility as appropriate. Over the coming months, we will engage teachers, school leaders, and superintendents to hear their ideas on how to provide flexibility and showcase innovative work.

In 2014-15, we continue to examine if and how the system is fostering more frequent, thorough, and useful feedback; shaping professional development for individuals and districts; and fostering the effective use of data in classrooms, schools, and districts. We appreciate and look forward to continued collaboration with the state advisory committee, stakeholder groups, and practicing educators to improve AchieveNJ.

Sincerely,



Peter Shulman, Assistant Commissioner/Chief Talent Officer
Division of Teacher and Leader Effectiveness

Executive Summary

Vision and Context

The vision for student learning at New Jersey Department of Education encompasses a unified set of strategies that:

- align academic expectations in P-12 schools with those of colleges and employers;
- improve instruction through meaningful preparation, induction, and professional development experiences for teachers and leaders;
- include effective and efficient assessments that measure student growth over time and provide meaningful feedback to students, parents, and educators;
- foster positive school cultures of lifelong learning that honor teaching as a critical profession; and
- employ technology to drive innovation and continuous improvement.

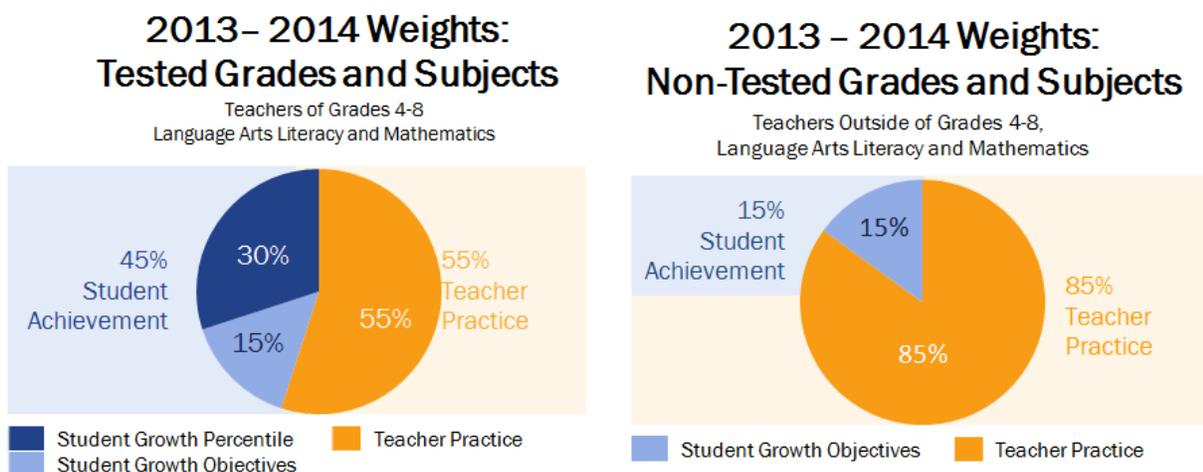
AchieveNJ, the state’s new evaluation and support system, developed over several years with New Jersey educators, plays a critical role in helping teachers and leaders realize this vision in every school. In order to deliver a rigorous curriculum aligned to state college and career readiness standards, educators must be supported and must receive meaningful feedback on their work with students. Similarly, in order to derive all of the potential benefits of AchieveNJ, districts must implement all facets of the system with fidelity and must receive feedback and support on those efforts in order to improve. With this release of results from the first year of statewide implementation of AchieveNJ, the Department hopes that our initial lessons learned will help districts to improve implementation, and in turn student learning, in subsequent years.

Overview of AchieveNJ in 2013-14

AchieveNJ uses multiple measures of both student achievement and educator practice to evaluate and support teachers and school leaders, as defined and displayed below:

Teacher Evaluation

- **Teacher Practice** is measured by performance on a teacher practice instrument, which is used to gather evidence primarily through classroom observations.
- **Student Growth Objectives (SGOs)** are academic goals for groups of students that each teacher sets with his or her principal or supervisor at the start of the year.
- **Student Growth Percentile (SGP)** represents the growth of an individual student on the state assessment from one year to the next compared to “academic peers” across the state.



Principal and Assistant/Vice Principal Evaluation

- **Principal Practice** is measured by a school leader’s supervisor/superintendent using a state-approved practice instrument selected by the district. Evidence might be gathered in a school walk-through, observations of staff or parent meetings or assemblies, etc.
- **Evaluation Leadership** is measured using a state-developed rubric, which measures how well a principal implements teacher evaluations.
- **Average SGO** ratings are the average of all the teachers’ SGO scores in the leader’s building(s).
- **Administrator Goals** are student growth and achievement goals – such as scores on Advanced Placement tests, college acceptance rates, graduation rates (in schools with rates under 80%) – that the principal sets with his or her superintendent.
- **School SGP** data are state-calculated scores that measure a principal’s ability to help increase student achievement on the state standardized assessment.



Results from Year One

Overall, the first year of AchieveNJ implementation represents a significant step forward in improving our evaluation system, as teachers are receiving more observations and feedback than ever before, and school leaders are focusing more of their time and talent on instructional quality in schools. New Jersey educators no longer receive a single-measure evaluation with binary results that fail to differentiate strengths and weaknesses. Instead, educators are now evaluated through multiple measures that have provided much more detailed and individualized feedback about their performance and its impact on student growth.

The statewide statistics presented in this report are drawn from certified data for 113,126 teachers and 4,058 school leaders. Summative data from the first year of AchieveNJ indicates that most educators in the state met or exceeded the expectations of their supervisors. Overall, the vast majority of teachers in New Jersey earned high ratings – nearly three-quarters were rated Effective by their supervisors and almost a quarter were Highly Effective. School leaders earned similar rating percentages (62% Effective and 35% Highly Effective).

Approximately 3% of teachers earned ratings of Partially Effective or Ineffective. Just one year before, districts reported less than 0.8% of teachers as rated “not acceptable” (under the previous acceptable/not acceptable system). Further, the 2,900 teachers identified for additional support last year provided instruction to approximately 13% of all New Jersey students – about 180,000 of them. Those educators are now on a path to improvement with individualized support, or will face charges of inefficiency if unable or unwilling to better serve students over time.

As we reflect on the first full year of AchieveNJ implementation, the summative data alone can mask some of the broader takeaways:

- 1) As a state, we have made **significant progress** relative to the evaluation systems of the past; teachers, school leaders, superintendents, and school board members should be **commended for their commitment** to this endeavor.
- 2) Educators are benefiting from multiple evaluative measures within instructional practice and student performance; these complementary elements are driving more **insightful professional conversations and growth opportunities** for educators.
- 3) Although this year represents a big step in the right direction, there is **much room for improvement**; specifically, districts are still adjusting to using all aspects of their instructional practice instruments and educator-set goals often focused more on the “achievable” than the “ambitious” last year.
- 4) The state remains committed to improving the evaluation system through **extensive educator input, targeted supports, and increased flexibility**.

The following sections cover those elements of evaluation that applied to both teachers and school leaders in 2013-14. For details on all evaluation components, view the full report that follows.

Educator Practice

Statewide, the majority of educators earned high scores on the teacher and principal practice measures; approximately 87% of teachers and 85% of principals were rated 3.0 and greater on a four-point scale. The average teacher practice score across the state in 2013-14 was 3.23 and the average principal practice score was 3.28. This indicates that across the state, the vast majority of New Jersey educators are demonstrating effective practice, a long-held belief that is now supported by at least one year of data derived from observation rubrics.

Prior to AchieveNJ, only one observation was performed for the large majority of teachers. With the launch of AchieveNJ, high quality rubrics, a four-point scale, and more frequent observations, a more detailed picture of teacher practice has emerged. By the Department’s estimates, over 180,000 additional observations took place last year for tenured teachers.

However, while aggregate statewide data indicate shifts in evaluation results in general, it is up to districts to thoughtfully use evaluation data in district-wide and individualized professional development strategies that provide extra support, encourage growth in targeted areas, and recognize and promote exceptional teaching. Data from 2013-14 shows that observers are often not using the full rubric within a practice instrument; by promoting better understanding of each component, districts can further emphasize differentiated feedback even for those earning the highest ratings. The Department will continue to explore best practices regarding observations and the information they generate and will continue to develop tools, guidance, and policy as necessary.

Student Growth Objectives (SGOs)

Through the SGO process, all teachers set specific learning targets for their students while considering the content standards that students should be taught, some type(s) of available student knowledge data, and assessment methods to measure learning. Statewide, 76.5% of teachers earned a 3.5 or better on the SGO score last year, meaning their students performed exceptionally on the learning goals their teachers had developed for them. In turn, school leaders also earned high ratings on the SGO averages of their teachers (the average principal average SGO score was 3.58). Understanding that this element was the biggest change for many teachers in year one of AchieveNJ, the Department emphasized setting “ambitious but achievable” growth targets.

Many educators and administrators shared that the SGO process helped improve teacher practice and student learning by promoting:

- Data-driven instruction based on a deeper understanding of individual student needs;
- More effective differentiation of instruction to ensure student mastery;
- Alignment of standards, instruction, curricula, and assessments;

- Higher quality assessments that more accurately measure student mastery;
- Closer tracking of student progress;
- Reflective and collaborative teaching practices; and
- Increased communication and learning among educators.

The Department is currently working to produce updated SGO resources for the 2015-16 school year based on feedback from the previous two years, including emphasis on the importance of assessment quality, using the SGO process to enhance teacher practice and student achievement, and the collaborative nature of the process locally.

Median Student Growth Percentiles (mSGPs)

In 2013-14, the median Student Growth Percentile (mSGP) score counted for 30% of the evaluation for about 15% of New Jersey teachers; specifically, 4th - 8th-grade Language Arts and Math teachers who were:

- Assigned to a 4th - 8th-grade Language Arts or Math course for 60% or more of the year prior to the date on which the state test was administered, and
- Assigned 20 unique students by the district through the Course Roster Submission.
 - These students must have been enrolled for 70% or more of the course duration prior to the administration of the test.

To determine the mSGP for an individual teacher, district course roster data was used to create an ascending list of SGPs of the qualifying students who were assigned to the teacher by the district. Principals and assistant/vice principals were assigned the mSGP of all students if they were assigned to buildings including one or more tested grades (4 - 8) by October 15, 2013; this included about 55% of New Jersey school leaders. The mSGP scores provided by the Department were then translated from a 1 - 99 growth percentile assigned to the student into a 1 - 4 score for the educator, according to the state [conversion chart](#).

Statewide, the vast majority of 2013-14 teacher mSGP and principal school SGP ratings were in the effective scoring range. The average teacher and principal mSGP score was 2.99. Additionally, 68% of teachers and 74% of school leaders earned a score of 3.0 or better on this measure. The report also demonstrates that educators evaluated partially on student growth on the state standardized test performed very similarly on the final evaluation rating to those not receiving those scores.

Many district administrators have reported that the objective, data-driven mSGP measure is a very useful element of AchieveNJ. Inspection of potential gaps between practice ratings and mSGP scores helps increase the accuracy and value of observations. Districts that participated in the evaluation pilot and have several years of mSGP data report even greater value in the ability to examine trends that develop over time.

Improvements to Data Infrastructure

The first year of AchieveNJ was also successful in moving toward a more robust statewide data system that can not only be used to measure teacher performance, but can also relate to teacher preparation initiatives and the NJ SMART data system. In 2013-14, all districts reported staff evaluation data to the Department through a new submission in NJ SMART.

The Department also initiated a Score Certification process where each district could securely access all submitted evaluation component scores and the summative rating for all qualifying educators. Districts could use this opportunity to verify scores, make any necessary adjustments to ensure local personnel records match the state records, and then certify scores with the Department. Through this process, the Department received certified scores from over 99% of all districts. This collaborative effort represents a significant step to ensure quality control and provide districts maximum flexibility to verify evaluation information from the first year.

Educators at the Center of Continuous Improvement

Mindful of the need to continuously improve, the Department remains committed to improving AchieveNJ through extensive educator input, targeted supports, and increased flexibility. Throughout the 2013-14 school year, we worked with districts to better understand implementation challenges and to grant flexibility, where appropriate, to ease the burden on districts. In addition to the daily support of three state Implementation Managers visiting schools to answer questions and provide guidance, the Department utilized two key mechanisms for broader support: waivers and regulation updates, which are explained in detail in the report.

One example of a key regulatory change was made in response to educator concerns about the transition from the NJ ASK to the PARCC assessment. The Department provided information about this transition, highlighting that among measures of student growth, SGP is uniquely designed to handle a transition across different types of assessments. This is because it is a norm-referenced methodology, creating a relative ranking of students within an academic performance peer group, not a ranking based on absolute performance. Because the Department worked carefully over the last several years to align the NJ ASK to the Common Core State Standards, SGP in the 2014-15 school year will be comparable to SGP in the 2013-14 school year. However, in response to feedback from educators across the state, the Department made a regulatory change to allow for reducing the weight of mSGP to 10% for all educators in 2014-15.

Educator input is helping the Department identify and respond to challenges with improved guidance, direct district support, changes in requirements as needed, and increased flexibility as appropriate. Since the spring of 2013, Department staff members have participated in hundreds of presentations and workshops, reaching over 350 districts. Over 25,000 educators attended a session offered by the Department last year. Moving forward, we believe that Highly Effective educators should be encouraged to help their colleagues improve through initiatives such as the Achievement Coaches program. This coming summer, we will offer new Achievement Coach and SGO trainings to address educators' greatest concerns.

As the Department has always stressed, local implementation will determine the value of evaluation for a district's educators. Over the coming months, we will engage teachers, school leaders, and superintendents and continue to hear their ideas on how to provide flexibility and showcase innovative work. In turn, each district should examine the distribution of ratings at both the summative and component level to identify trends that can inform improvements in supporting educators. In particular, we will work with districts to better understand how AchieveNJ is helping educators to realize our state vision for student learning by:

- Placing student learning at the center of teacher development and improvement;
- Fostering a climate of continual professional improvement in all teachers;
- Providing administrators access to powerful tools to understand and improve teacher practice;
- Connecting teacher practice with school, district, and state educational improvement strategies;
- Motivating school leaders and teachers to share and support each other in a professional learning community;
- Empowering educators in the classroom in creating and pursuing individualized improvement practices; and
- Using data to support the other elements of our vision for student learning, including teacher preparation and career pathways.

By supporting innovations that hold promise, continuing to listen carefully to educators, and thoughtfully examining data from the evaluation system, the Department is building a foundation on which to make deliberate and effective changes to guidance and policy as needed. By providing direct support through in-person interactions and high quality resources, the Department is helping districts overcome some implementation obstacles and enhance the value for educators. This approach will further the common goals shared by everyone – effective leadership, instruction, and high levels of academic growth for all 1.4 million schoolchildren in New Jersey.

Introduction and Methodology

Four years ago, educator evaluation in New Jersey – and across the country – was extremely inconsistent. While some districts promoted better practices than others and many had begun to use more robust observation instruments, the state had weak requirements and guidance to support this work. This reality resulted in over 99% of educators receiving “acceptable” ratings that lacked meaningful differentiation – regardless of student outcomes. This served both students and educators poorly; without frequent and reliable feedback about their practice, teachers were left in the dark about ways to better help students. Schools and districts lacked specific data to inform decisions about professional development at all levels. With the advent of more rigorous standards and aligned assessments, improving evaluations became more important than ever. Educators were seeking meaningful opportunities to examine their practice and learn new instructional strategies.

In 2015, this landscape has improved dramatically. Over the past several years, New Jersey educators and policy makers have worked together to build a better evaluation and support system – one that has been informed by the experiences and insight of educators across the state.

During this time, the Department has had direct contact with more than 25,000 educators in over 100 presentations, workshops, panels, and school visits and has released over 30 guidance bulletins to superintendents. State advisory groups have been convened over 24 times. The state has responded to hundreds of questions, comments, and survey responses through our regulatory process and ongoing outreach efforts. Major steps in this process are listed in [Appendix A](#) (including links to relevant reports providing more details on various activities). In order to understand the full scope of the work as context for this study, please review this information.

The statewide system that launched in 2013 includes multiple measures of educator practice and student growth and emphasizes frequent and meaningful feedback throughout the school year. See [Appendix B](#) for the specific weights and measures for teacher and principal evaluations in 2013-14. This report includes both qualitative and quantitative information gathered from state data and partner districts (see Methodology section below for more information). The quantitative statewide data is being shared at the state level only at this time. Evaluation data of a particular employee in New Jersey is confidential pursuant to the *TEACHNJ Act* and *N.J.S.A.18A:6-120*, is not subject to the Open Public Records Act, and will not be released to the public.

Methodology

This report combines the feedback gathered through the Department’s support of AchieveNJ implementation described above with quantitative and qualitative data gathered from a statewide collection as well as outreach to a selection of districts; it is an update to the [2013-14 Preliminary Implementation Report on Teacher Evaluation](#) published in November 2014.

Statewide Aggregate Data

All districts reported staff evaluation data to the Department through a new submission that started with the 2013-14 school year. As explained in this [January 2014 memo](#), districts were instructed to use the NJ SMART data system to submit evaluation scores for all certificated staff using a spring practice window and then the official submission window in summer 2014. Due to the timeline by which the state receives standardized test scores, the median Student Growth Percentile (mSGP) data was not available at that time and therefore those educators receiving mSGP scores did not have complete evaluation data or summative scores. The mSGP scores were provided later, as explained in this [January 2015 memo](#).

Given that 2013-14 was the first year of evaluation implementation and hearing feedback that additional time to verify all score data would be helpful, the Department designed and conducted a [score certification process](#) from February 4 - March 13, 2015. During this time, the Department provided access to an online interface where each district could securely access all submitted evaluation component scores and the

summative rating for all qualifying educators. Importantly, districts could use this opportunity to verify scores, make any necessary adjustments to ensure local personnel records match the state records, and then certify scores with the Department. Through this process, the Department received certified scores from over 99% of all districts. This collaborative effort represents a significant step to ensure quality control and provide districts maximum flexibility to verify evaluation information from the first year. The statewide statistics presented in this report are drawn from certified data for 113,126 teachers and 4,058 principals and assistant/vice principals (APs/VPs). For each metric reported (practice score, SGO score, etc...), the Department used all numeric scores available.

Survey and Interview Data

Each year, all school districts must submit to the Department the name of the principal and teacher practice instruments they plan to use in the upcoming school year. During this collection, which is executed through the Department's Homeroom Interface, the Office of Evaluation asks districts to answer other questions specifically related to compliance with state law and regulations. Surveys of this nature were answered by over 99% of districts in advance of both the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years.

In April 2014, the Department invited 53 “partner districts” across the state to participate in this study by sharing additional evaluation data for analysis. Of these partner districts, 17 shared some or all of the data that was requested (see [Appendix C](#)). These data included qualitative feedback received through a questionnaire. The questions asked related to 1) Planning and Infrastructure; 2) Teacher Observations and Scoring; 3) Principal Observations and Scoring; 4) SGOs; 5) Administrator Goals; 6) Median Student Growth Percentile Scores and Roster Verification; 7) Evaluation Leadership; 8) Communications, Committees, and Feedback; and 9) Links to Professional Development. Follow-up interviews were conducted in winter 2015 in an effort to add depth and clarity to the feedback collected from the questionnaire. Questions explored the changes districts were experiencing in the 2014-2015 school year, highlighting the evolution of AchieveNJ along with successes and the challenges that lie ahead.

Additional information about principal evaluation was gathered through round table meetings. The state AchieveNJ Advisory Committee (ANJAC) provided feedback at meetings in January and February of 2015, with approximately 13 districts represented at each meeting. The New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association (NJPSA) provided a forum for additional feedback through their annual Board Retreat in January; building-level administrators represented 13 counties and 22 districts. Similarly, the Department gathered feedback through the Middlesex County Superintendents' Roundtable February meeting, where 21 districts were represented. Information was gathered through structured conversations and guided written reflection at each of these venues.

Student Growth Objective (SGO) Data

The SGO data shared by partner districts included forms detailing the SGOs established by some or all of that district's teachers. Each SGO was evaluated against a modified version of the [SGO Quality Rating Rubric](#) published by the Department. In all, approximately 350 SGOs were evaluated for this analysis in addition to results from the district survey and teacher reflections.

Teacher Practice Data

As explained in more detail in [Section 2.3](#), New Jersey districts have flexibility to select from a list of over 25 state-approved teacher practice instruments. Partner districts shared observation data at the component level for the teacher practice instrument that they chose. For the Danielson 2011 instrument, this typically included scores on several components at all three observations conducted over the course of the year. For districts using the Stronge instrument, this represented scores across seven standards, all scored based on the accumulation of evidence across the rating period. This sample provided data on 8,350 teachers who were collectively observed approximately 25,000 times.

Part One: State Support for AchieveNJ Implementation

Like the vast majority of education initiatives in New Jersey, evaluation systems are largely built and run at the local district level. The state sets guidelines and requirements, while districts determine the details of elements such as training sessions and other related professional development opportunities, observation frameworks, student learning targets, advisory committee activities, and communications structures.

A hallmark of AchieveNJ is the degree to which the system varies from district to district to reflect local needs. The system has been built this way intentionally to ensure that those most directly impacted by policies and procedures are the ones shaping and leading those very structures.

A hallmark of AchieveNJ is the degree to which the system varies from district to district to reflect local needs. The system has been built this way to ensure that those most directly impacted by policies and procedures are the ones shaping and leading those very structures. This section describes the supports offered by the Department in collaboration with teachers and leaders to assist with district implementation in 2013-14. Recognizing that this work will take many years to develop and refine, the state intentionally set out to listen and learn in the first full year of implementation and to provide support in the areas that emerged as needing it most.

1.1 Collaboration with Educators

State Advisory Committees

Throughout the two-year evaluation pilot from 2011-2013, the Department convened the Evaluation Pilot Advisory Committee (EPAC). This group of teachers, administrators, district leaders, and representatives of education associations and institutes of higher education met regularly to provide feedback to the Department on local challenges and successes and to help shape policy decisions for the state. For a full account of this work, please see the [Final EPAC Report](#).

In the fall of 2013, the Department transitioned this advisory role from the EPAC to a new committee – the [AchieveNJ Advisory Committee \(ANJAC\)](#). The ANJAC includes some EPAC members in addition to new educators and leaders and fulfills a similar role in advising and providing feedback to the state. The relationship between the Department and the ANJAC in 2013-14 allowed the state to shape guidance, field support, and policy recommendations for the future. New Jersey teachers and leaders have undeniably shaped major evaluation policy decisions, as demonstrated in the detailed chart included as [Appendix D](#).

Collaboration with Local Groups

In addition to the evaluation development steps listed in the [Introduction](#), the *TEACHNJ* Act and AchieveNJ require specific forms of educator input. In 2012, each district was required to form a [District Evaluation Advisory Committee](#) (DEAC) with various members to guide evaluation implementation at the local level. The unique DEAC concept was part of the evaluation pilot; after pilot districts and the EPAC highlighted the critical role of such a group, the state extended the requirement for all districts in the initial years of implementing new evaluations. In 2013-14, the Department worked with ANJAC members to support DEACs by providing lessons and advice from pilot districts for this group, as well as sample agendas and other resources on the AchieveNJ website.

The *TEACHNJ* Act also requires each school to form a [School Improvement Panel \(SciP\)](#) annually to oversee implementation of teacher evaluation, mentoring, and professional development. The first SciPs were formed by February 1, 2013 in preparation for statewide implementation of AchieveNJ the following fall. Now, SciPs must be in place by August 31 each year. In 2013-14, the Department worked with ANJAC

members and other school leaders across the state to better understand what level of guidance could best support SciPs. The first [SciP Guidance](#) document was published in August of 2014 based on this feedback and was supported by a series of statewide presentations and supporting resources.

[Section 4.1](#) of this report examines DEAC and SciP activities in 2013-14.

1.2 Direct State Support to Districts

Starting with the announcement of proposed regulations outlining the new evaluation system in March 2013, the Department employed a comprehensive communications and outreach strategy to ensure educators across the state had access to resources and support.

Since the spring of 2013, Department staff members have conducted or participated in hundreds of presentations at the school, district, regional, and association levels. In the course of these interactions, Department staff have reached over 350 school districts in the state. Specifically:

- From April-June of 2013, the Office of Evaluation led 9 regional presentations to explain the new evaluation system and hear feedback and questions from educators.
- From June 2013 through February of 2014, Department staff led 44 workshops across the state to help educators understand the process for setting Student Growth Objectives (SGOs).
- Throughout the 2013-14 school year:
 - Three full-time Department Implementation Managers worked in schools and districts every day to provide training, coaching, and other direct support based on educator needs;
 - Other Department staff participated in or led dozens of presentations to groups such as the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA), New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association (NJPSA), New Jersey Association of School Administrators (NJASA), New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA), county superintendent roundtables, etc., to explain various elements of the evaluation system and hear feedback; and
 - State officials responded to calls and emails for evaluation support full time during business hours and on a timely basis
- In the spring of 2014, the Department offered 39 SGO 2.0 workshops based on lessons learned from 2013-14 to help improve the SGO process for the coming year. These sessions were so popular that the Department added more sessions for summer and early fall.
- In the summer of 2014, the Department offered 42 teacher practice workshops across the state based on qualitative data from 2012-14 indicating that student engagement and questioning techniques were an area of weakness for teacher practice.
- Overall, more than 25,000 educators attended some form of training, workshop, or presentation offered by the Department in 2013-14.

The kind of direct educator support tailored to local needs is a defining characteristic of AchieveNJ implementation in 2013-14. The Department considers this level of support essential for providing educators with the necessary guidance and resources for doing such challenging work well.

1.3 Resources

Based in large part on feedback from and collaboration with educators, the Department has produced and continuously updated a comprehensive library of resources related to each element of evaluation. These resources are posted on the [AchieveNJ Website](#) on various pages organized by category. In addition, the [AchieveNJ Resource Catalog](#) lists the major materials for a given school year by topic area. Throughout 2013-14, the Department worked with educators to improve these materials and to consider needs for additional resources to support particular topics.

Part Two: Teacher Evaluation

AchieveNJ provides a unique opportunity for teachers and administrators to reflect on the practices that most effectively promote student learning. While summative ratings provide a broad picture of effectiveness across the state and within districts, inspection of the data from each evaluation component provides valuable information to help districts and individual educators learn about and improve their practices.

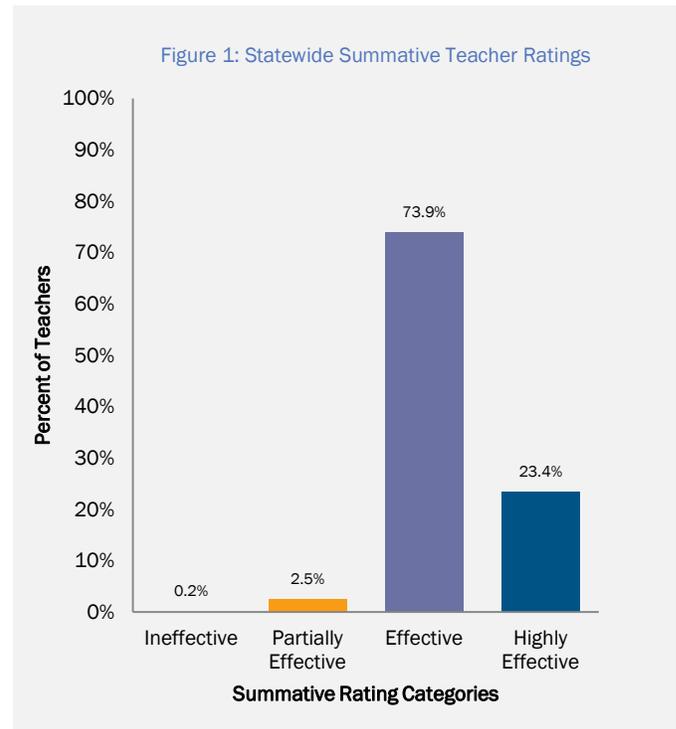
2.1 Summative Ratings for Teachers

Findings from Summative Data

1. Data from the first year of AchieveNJ indicate that most teachers in the state met or exceeded the expectations of their administrators.

While one year of this new data is insufficient for identifying sustained trends or making sweeping judgments about the state’s teaching staff, there are three important takeaways from the early results depicted in Figure 1:

1. Overall, the vast majority of teachers in New Jersey are – as we have always known – performing at a high level. Nearly three-quarters of teachers were rated Effective by their supervisors and almost a quarter were Highly Effective.
2. Approximately 2,900 struggling teachers were identified as needing (and are receiving) support to help them improve.
3. A sizeable group of teachers are excelling in the classroom; their expertise can be leveraged to help others improve.

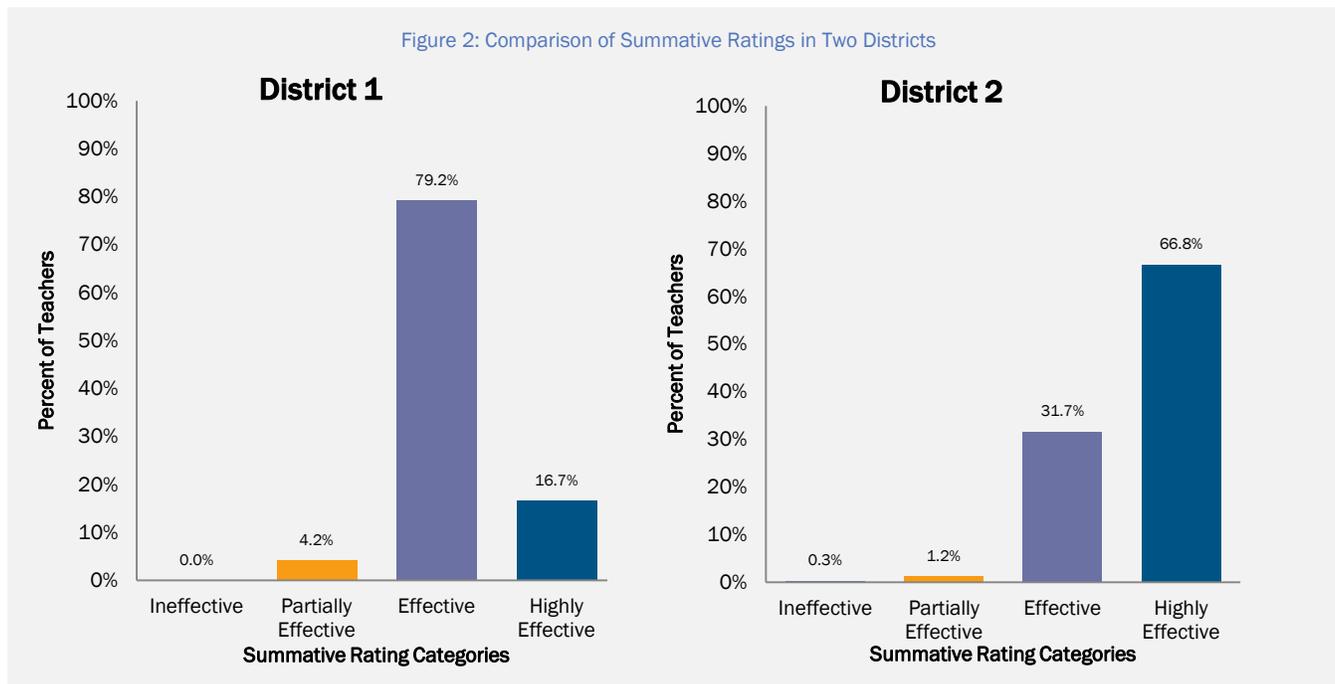


In comparison to previously available evaluation data, where more than 99% of teachers were rated “acceptable” in a binary system, the distribution of teacher performance through AchieveNJ provides a more nuanced picture of teacher effectiveness. Ultimately, though, it is not statewide aggregate data that will help New Jersey’s educators grow in their profession. Instead, the thoughtful implementation of evaluation and support systems by school and district leaders will determine how well AchieveNJ helps each teacher to best support student growth.

2. Differences in score distributions across districts highlight the importance of local implementation.

The primary goal of AchieveNJ is to ensure all educators receive meaningful feedback and data to drive improvement at every level of instruction. The graphic in Figure 2 below demonstrates how the distribution of final evaluation ratings can vary at the local district level. The distribution indicates that two-thirds of teachers in District 2 have earned the highest rating, indicating little room for improvement. While this may actually be the case, it is also possible that those educators are perhaps not receiving the individualized support they deserve. As the Department has always stressed, local implementation will determine the value of the evaluation system for a district’s educators. Each district should examine the distribution of ratings at both the summative and component level to identify trends that can inform improvements in supporting educators.

Figure 2: Comparison of Summative Ratings in Two Districts



Neither districts nor the Department should expect implementation to be without challenges after just one year. AchieveNJ is an iterative process of learning and support that helps everyone improve over the long run. As explained in [Part Five](#), the Department has identified several focus areas for future state support and continues to collaborate with educators to inform this work.

The following sections offer a closer look into each of the multiple measures of teacher evaluation in 2013-14 and provide several areas for district consideration moving forward.

2.2 Student Growth Objectives (SGOs)

SGOs are long-term academic goals that teachers set for groups of students, accounting for 15% of each teacher's evaluation in 2013-14. SGOs must be

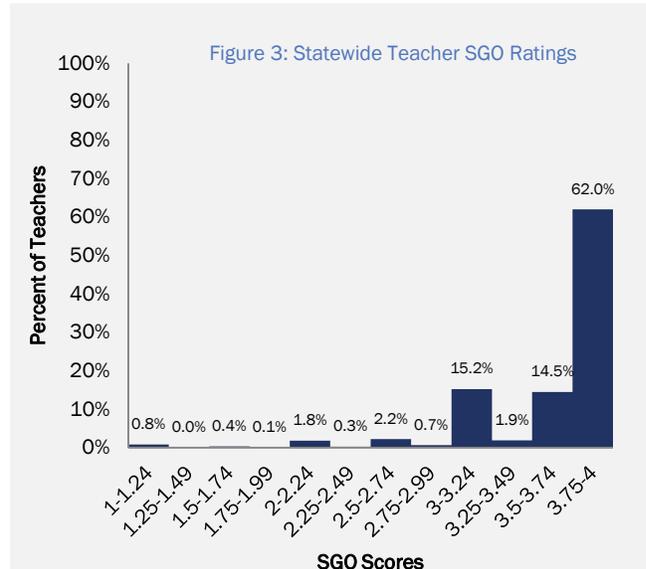
- Specific and measurable;
- Aligned to state academic standards;
- Based on student growth and/or achievement as assessed through a variety of measures (not required to be a standardized test);
- Set using available student learning data;
- Developed by a teacher in consultation with his or her supervisor; and
- Approved and scored by a teacher's supervisor.

Within this context, AchieveNJ regulations provide educators a high degree of flexibility for educators to create SGOs that address their students' needs. In 2013-14, the Department strongly encouraged districts to help teachers set goals that made sense for their unique distribution of students and their relative starting points. Educators were advised to take advantage of a range of assessment tools that they were currently using or could modify for SGO purposes, including not only more typical tests but portfolios and performance assessments as well.

Findings from SGO Results

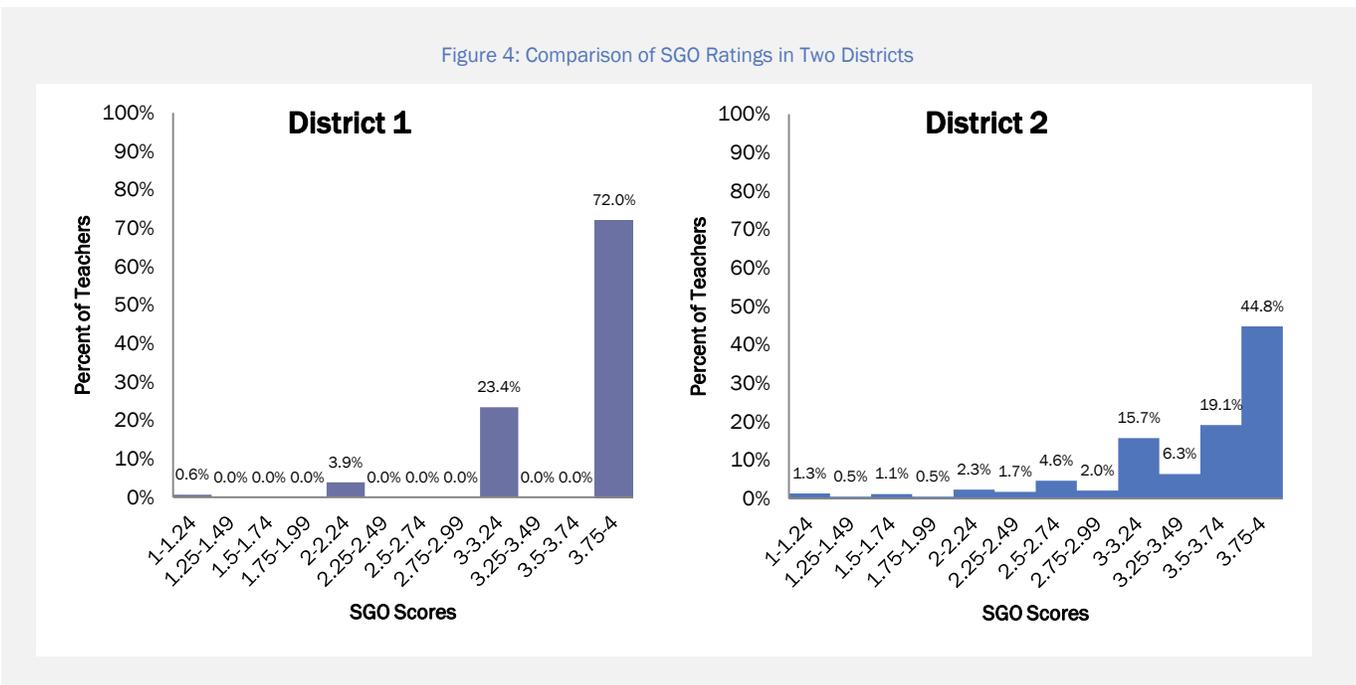
1. Statewide, the vast majority of teachers earned high scores on the SGO measure.

As depicted in Figure 3, 76.5% of teachers earned a 3.5 or better on the SGO score, meaning their students performed exceptionally on the learning goals their teachers had developed for them. Understanding that this element was the biggest change for many teachers in year one of AchieveNJ, the Department emphasized setting “ambitious but achievable” growth targets for students. Results show that educators likely emphasized the achievable over the ambitious in 2013-14. Understandably, many ended up setting SGOs that were likely not as challenging as they might have been if educators had been more familiar and comfortable with the process and how SGO ratings impact the overall evaluation score. More important than focusing on the aggregate numbers in each category alone, the following findings highlight distinctions in implementation that can inform better practice in the future.



2. District variation in SGO score distribution again points to the role of local implementation practices.

As with the summative rating distributions, there is significant variation in the way that individual districts implemented and assigned scores for SGOs. Figure 4 shows a comparison between SGO scores in two different districts. In District 1, all submitted SGO scores were whole numbers, whereas in District 2, scores were assigned with decimals across the scale. In addition, while both districts scored the vast majority of SGOs above 3.5, District 2 identified a higher percentage of goals that were not met by their educators. Districts should think carefully about whether their SGO scores provide an accurate picture of the student learning taking place in each teacher’s classroom, and how their approach to scoring impacts that picture.



3. Teachers set specific learning goals for their students; many reported this was beneficial to their practice.

Through the SGO process, all teachers set specific learning targets for their students while considering the content standards that students would be taught, some type(s) of available learning data, and assessment methods to measure learning. Many educators and administrators who participated in focus groups, committees, and professional development sessions with the Department shared that the SGO process helped improve teacher practice and student learning by promoting:

- Data-driven instruction based on a deeper understanding of individual student needs;
- More effective differentiation of instruction to ensure student mastery;
- Alignment of standards, instruction, curricula, and assessments;
- Higher quality assessments that more accurately measure student mastery;
- Closer tracking of student progress;
- Reflective and collaborative teaching practices; and
- Increased communication and learning among educators.

4. A majority of SGOs in the sample for this study (70%) had specific and measurable statements for student learning.

These statements identified the percentage of students who would achieve specific performance and/or growth targets by the end of the instructional period as measured by the given assessment(s). The other 30% of SGOs often lacked specificity. For example, “75 point increase on scale score,” was stated on one of the SGOs in the sample. Without differentiating targets for students based on their starting points or clearly identifying appropriate assessments, such vague SGOs offer much less value to the teacher. Figure 5 includes some examples of specific and measurable SGOs (many more can be found in the online [SGO Exemplar Library](#)):

Figure 5: SGO Examples

Subject/Grade	SGO
10 th -grade Math	By April 2014, 75% of my students in Algebra 2 class will increase their RIT score for MAPs by 2 points as indicated in the Projected Growth Report.
12 th -grade Marketing	75% of the students will score at least 75% mastery on the Financial Competency Assessment for Cash Register Terminal Analysis by February 15.
Kindergarten ESL	At least 80% of my students will increase at least 1 proficiency level in Speaking (linguistic complexity) based on the WIDA Speaking Rubric.
8 th -grade Science (special education)	At least 70% students will score 65%, 75%, or 85% (based on preparedness groupings) on the science assessment.
7 th -grade Social Studies	75% of the 7 th -grade Social Studies students in each preparedness group will meet their targeted score on the department developed post-assessment.

5. Educators were inconsistent in how clearly they connected SGOs to specific standards.

The Department’s optional SGO forms included a “Rationale for Student Growth Objective” section that asked educators to identify the content standards to be taught and the assessment method for measuring performance. Teachers completed this section by listing the standard number and in many cases providing a description of the standard. Even though almost all SGOs included some reference to the standards used, there was a high degree of variability in the details provided across the range of the SGO sample. For example, one middle school science teacher provided broad standard groups and descriptions as follows:

- NCCCS Life Science 5.1.8.A.B.D (understanding scientific explanation, generate scientific evidence through active investigation, participate productively in science)

Another middle school science teacher identified more specific standards and provided the detailed description of each of them as shown below:

- NJCCCS Science Practice Standards

- 5.1.8.A.c Using measurements to explain data (graphs): Predictions and explanations are revised based on systematic observations, accurate measurements, and structured data/evidence.
- 5.1.8.A.2 Using tools to gather data: Results of observation and measurement can be used to build conceptual-based models and to search for core explanations.

In some cases, teachers did not include the specific standards on the form but included a separate form listing these and/or referred to the standards that were included in the standardized assessment that was being used. More specific standards-alignment allows teachers to more effectively identify how their instruction is helping students to attain curricular goals.

6. Nearly all (98.5%) of sample SGOs included baseline data to identify students’ starting points.

These data helped educators identify more specific student needs and set goals accordingly. The majority of educators (77%) used only one data point of baseline information to determine students’ starting points. Educators used a pre-test to determine course prerequisite skills and/or content knowledge in 89% of the sample SGOs. 18% used two or three data points, and nearly 4% used four or more data points. These additional data points included things such as formative and summative assessments taken between September and October, the prior year’s NJ ASK scores, IEP information, and composite scores for homework completion and class participation. 22% of the sample SGOs indicated that multiple measures of student starting points were included when setting targets. Educators were evidently diligent in setting baseline metrics, but the underlying data sources varied significantly in number and type.

“We created professional learning communities to discuss student targets, formative assessments, differentiation, and quality test creation. These are conversations that were inspired by the SGO process.”

~Kelly Harmon, English Language Arts Teacher, Monmouth County Vocational School District

7. Educators used differentiation to set meaningful targets.

Many educators used a variety of approaches to set targets through tiered goal-setting. Of the 350 SGOs sampled, 39% included specific performance targets for different student preparedness groupings rather than one target for the entire class. These tiered targets enabled more individualized ambitious and achievable goals for students. For example, a 7th-grade social studies teacher created three groups of students based on their starting points and set the targets for them as shown in Figure 6 below:

Figure 6: Sample SGO Target

Preparedness Group	Number of Students	Target Score (%)
Low	61	65
Medium	65	70
High	20	80

8. Districts reported wide variance in the types and quality of assessments used for SGOs.

The wide variety of detail provided in describing the types of assessments used by teachers make it difficult to ascertain precise numbers but in general, commercial assessments were commonly used by Language Arts and Math teachers, especially at the elementary level. Teachers of other subjects and those at upper grade levels relied upon teacher-created assessments, some of which were used department-wide.

9. Educators commonly used pre-existing assessments for SGO purposes rather than adding new assessments.

Over half (54%) of districts in the survey reported that the summative SGO assessments were embedded into the typical testing schedule and did not increase the overall number of assessments given to students. A large majority (88%) of surveyed districts reported that at least half of their teachers used common assessments. 63% of educators in the sample used district or department-created common assessments or

commercial assessments like the DRA2 or MAP to measure progress, thereby increasing the comparability of SGOs between teachers.

Opportunities for Improvement in Future Work

Given that 2013-14 was the first year of the SGO requirement for all New Jersey districts, it is not unexpected that educators experienced challenges. Many of the opportunities for improvement identified below reflect the inherent challenges of engaging in this sort of work for the first time. As educators become more comfortable with the process, they will develop a better sense of which measures are best to determine student starting points, set targets that are both ambitious and achievable, and develop assessments that more accurately and reliably measure their students' understanding.

- Set ambitious and achievable targets. While it is difficult to objectively determine the strength of goals set for students based only on a review of the scoring plans, the Department has collected information anecdotally that many educators found the process of setting goals challenging. Additionally, a survey of educators who attended the Department's January and February 2014 SGO workshops showed that nearly half of the respondents (47%) wanted more support for setting "ambitious and achievable" targets. Several factors that contributed to the challenge of target-setting are described below:
 - **Using Only One Measure of Student Preparedness:** 77% of sample SGOs relied on only one data source for student starting points to set the learning target. While one data point – most often a pre-test score (89%) – provided a snapshot of student knowledge and skill, it was not necessarily predictive of future student learning.
 - **Using a Pre-test/Post-test Model:** In many cases, the pre-test and post-test used by 89% of sampled SGOs were identical. The "pre-test" was sometimes diagnostic in nature and allowed educators to measure the current skills or prerequisite knowledge of students prior to developing appropriate instructional strategies for students (the Diagnostic Reading Assessment, or rubrics to measure writing competence, for example). However, in many cases, the pre-test was a version of the summative assessment and a measure of what students were expected to learn throughout the course. This led to poor pre-test scores from which a prediction of expected learning was challenging to determine.

Educators may access an array of resources to help them set better targets including the revised [SGO Guidebook](#) and [SGO 2.0 Presentation](#).

- Make SGO development a collaborative process. As teachers and administrators grappled with the technical and logistical aspects of SGOs, there was a strong focus on management and compliance, sometimes at the expense of the quality of the process. While administrators are ultimately responsible for ensuring the SGO process is rigorous and of high quality, a collaborative approach to goal setting between teachers and supervisors is likely to result in the most valuable experience.
- Align goals and scoring plans. The SGO sample analysis revealed that educators could use more support in developing scoring plans that are aligned to the SGO statement. Only half (49%) of the SGOs in the sample had aligned scoring plans where the scoring range for "full attainment" accurately reflected the teacher's stated goal. Variations on this type of misalignment may have caused difficulties when assigning a final rating for the teacher based on student performance. Teachers and administrators may want to carefully check the alignment of goals and scoring plans during the approval process and refer to guidance in the published [SGO exemplars](#) as needed.
- Focus on assessment quality. While some teachers had access to commercial assessments such as those commonly used for math and ELA, educators teaching science, social studies, fine and performing arts, health and physical education, and other subjects had to develop their own assessments. A survey of educators who attended the Department's SGO workshops in winter 2014 revealed that 58% were interested in more guidance for developing or choosing high quality assessments. The Department responded to this request and others as described in the next section.

State Response to Lessons from Year One

Throughout 2013-14, the Department sought educator feedback and responded to challenges educators faced in order to make the SGO process easier to understand and use. This practice has continued into 2014-15, yielding some useful information described below.

Workshops, Tools, and Recommendations

Approximately 2,000 educators from about 300 districts, often in the form of SGO leadership teams, attended SGO workshops conducted in the spring and summer of 2014 by the Department. Thousands more received in-district training by the Office of Evaluation's Implementation Managers. These workshops included an emphasis on improving assessments, using multiple measures of student starting points, and differentiating targets to increase the quality of SGO goals. Some of the resources and tools shared during this time and hosted on the AchieveNJ website include:

- **[SGO 2.0: From Compliance to Quality](#)**: In conjunction with educators at Clearview Regional School District and Pequannock Township Public Schools, and technical experts at the Reform Support Network, the Department created a set of workshop materials to help teachers improve target setting and assessment quality. The Department trained leadership teams of approximately 2,000 educators from 300 school districts at this workshop from May – September, 2014.
- **[SGO Forms](#)**: Based on feedback, the Department revised several optional forms including condensing the “simple” and “tiered” SGO Form into one, modifying the *SGO Quality Rating Rubric* to take into account emerging best practices and developing an *Assessment Blueprint and Completion Guide* to take the place of three forms previously used to help evaluate and approve assessments.
- **[SGO Quality Rating Rubric](#)**: To support educators in developing high-quality SGOs, the Department updated the *SGO Quality Rating Rubric* for 2014-15 with more specific information on assessment quality and using multiple measures of student starting points. The Department also created an *Evaluating SGO Quality Presentation* to describe components and share examples of high-quality SGOs and an *Assessing and Adjusting SGOs* tool to describe the value of assessing submitted SGOs and making adjustments as needed before the February 15th deadline.
- **[SGO Exemplars](#)**: The Department has worked with dozens of educators and content specialists over the past year to develop exemplars that can serve as teaching tools for teachers, educational service professionals, and supervisors involved in SGO development.
- **[SGO 2.0 Guidebook](#)**: Changes were made to the first SGO guidebook based on a variety of information including surveys, district visits, conversations with teachers and administrators, feedback from ANJAC, and discussions with technical experts and capture the recommendations described for the 2014-15 school year.

Regulatory Changes

The Department made a few changes to state requirements in response to feedback from educators about SGO implementation – including a review process for 2013-14 SGO scores in cases where this component of evaluation drove a negative result for an educator. Please see [Section 4.2](#) for more details on these changes.

Recommendations for Year Two

Based on a variety of information including surveys, district visits, conversations with teachers and administrators, feedback from the AchieveNJ Advisory Committee, and discussions with technical experts, the Department produced recommendations and updated guidance to assist educators in developing SGOs in 2014-15. These are summarized in Figure 7 below and more detail can be found in the revised [SGO Guidebook](#).

Figure 7: Findings and Recommendations for SGOs Based on 2013-14 Implementation

Key Points	Action Steps
<p>1. SGOs are learning goals for key concepts and skills that students can be expected to master in a course based on an approximate sense of where they start.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Base learning goals on what you want students to know and do by the end of the SGO period. • Get a rough sense of where students begin by using multiple measures of student prior learning (see example). • Use pre-assessments only when appropriate.
<p>2. SGO quality is critically dependent on assessment quality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the quality of the SGO assessments and develop common assessments where possible. (SGO 2.0 Presentation)
<p>3. SGOs should be a true reflection of the daily practice of effective teachers and of the curriculum and students an educator teaches. (2013-14: Lessons from Educators, section 6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align critical standards, effective instruction, and high quality assessment in SGOs. • Incorporate a significant number of students and portion of curriculum within the SGO(s) (see SGO Quality Rating Rubric). • Set differentiated learning goals for students based on their starting points.
<p>4. SGOs should be collaborative – teacher-driven, administrator-supported, and student-centered (as stated in code 6A:10-4.2 (e) 3).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even though administrators are responsible for approving and scoring SGOs, they should encourage teachers to take ownership of the SGO process as a powerful way to improve teacher practice and student achievement.

Learning from Year Two

The Office of Evaluation’s Implementation Managers continue to work closely with districts in 2014-15 to understand challenges and improvements to the SGO process in the second year of AchieveNJ. Many district leaders are focusing on improving the quality and value of their teachers’ SGOs.

The Department is currently working to produce updated SGO resources for 2015-16 based on feedback from 2014-15. “SGO 2.1” will emphasize the importance of assessment quality, using the SGO process to enhance teacher practice and student achievement, as well as the collaborative nature of the process locally. Further, the Office of Evaluation is working with teachers and leaders to explore additional flexibility based on local needs and abilities. Updated resources will be made available in late spring 2015.

“There is a feeling that SGOs have begun to converge with daily instruction.”

~Nancy Gigante, Assistant Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer, Parsippany-Troy Hills School District

“SGOs have become a way to document good teaching.”

~Deborah Sarmir, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Montgomery Township School District

2.3 Teacher Practice and Observations

For all teachers, the practice score comprises the majority of the summative evaluation (55% for teachers receiving the mSGP score and 85% for those not). The Department understands that student growth on local and state assessments offers just one perspective into a teacher's effectiveness and that observations are critical for providing teachers with fair, relevant, and useful feedback. Teacher observations allow school and district administrators to better understand what is happening in classrooms, support individual teacher growth and help improve the broader educational community. Further, while more frequent and thorough observation of instruction is a positive component of AchieveNJ, simply completing more observations will not result in schools and districts reaching their intended outcomes. However, many districts have taken this opportunity to redefine what good teaching looks like in their classrooms.

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While many other states have opted to mandate one state teacher practice instrument, New Jersey chose to promote local flexibility. Responding to direct feedback from the pilot program and the state advisory group, the Department allows districts to select the practice (or observation) instrument best suited to their local needs. Districts that chose to use a different instrument under AchieveNJ than their previous observation system had the capacity-building year of 2012-13 to pilot and become knowledgeable in their chosen framework.

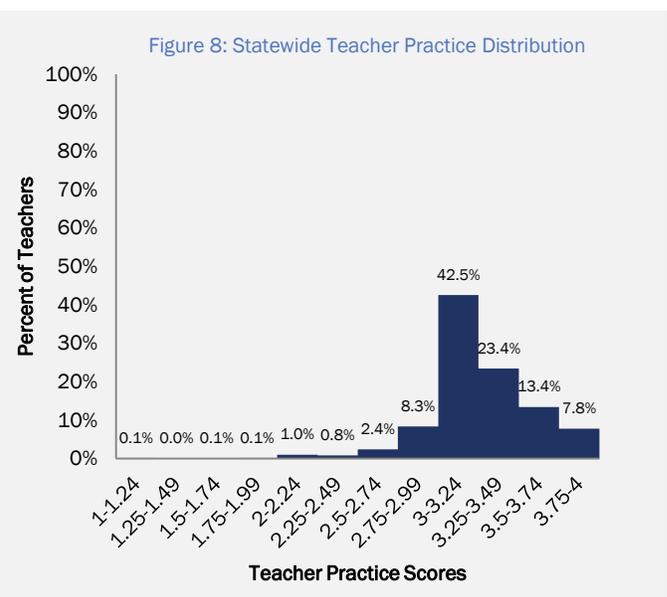
The state maintains a [list of over 25 approved instruments](#) and allows districts to submit their own “home-grown” or adapted versions as well. In 2013-14, approximately 58% of districts chose to use a version of the Danielson instrument and another 36% chose one of four other instruments (Stronge, McREL, Marzano, and Marshall; see [Appendix E](#)). While the instruments have differences that make analysis across all districts more challenging, there are many areas of commonality among them. For example, although the Marshall Rubrics and the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching vary somewhat in the length of observation envisioned by the authors, they both reflect research suggesting that questioning and discussion are important parts of any lesson. In addition, scoring on the instruments can generally be broken down into three sets of activities: (a) planning; (b) instruction and related actions in the classroom; and (c) year-long professional growth.

Findings from Teacher Practice Data

1. Statewide, the majority of teachers earned high scores on the teacher practice measure.

As depicted in Figure 8, the practice rating of approximately 87% of teachers was 3.0 and greater. The average teacher practice score across the state in 2013-14 was 3.23. This indicates that the vast majority of New Jersey teachers are demonstrating effective practice, a long-held belief that is now supported by our initial data.

Prior to AchieveNJ, only one observation was performed for the large majority of teachers. With the launch of AchieveNJ, high quality rubrics, a four-point scale, and more frequent observations have allowed a more detailed picture of teacher practice to emerge. However, while aggregate



statewide data indicate shifts in evaluation results in general, it is up to districts to thoughtfully use evaluation data in district-wide and individualized professional development strategies that provide extra support, encourage growth in targeted areas, and recognize and promote exceptional teaching. The following sections provide a closer analysis of state and partner district observation information and how it might be used effectively.

2. Teachers are getting more observations and feedback than ever before.

Prior to 2013-14, many teachers received only one observation. The observation requirements under AchieveNJ increased to at least three per year ranging from 20 - 40 minutes and including post-conferences. By the Department’s estimates, over 180,000 additional observations took place last year for tenured teachers. Based on survey and educator feedback, districts appear to have largely executed the required minimum three observations for their teachers. Examples of this evidence include:

- **Partner District Data¹:** Figure 9 shows a sample of partner districts for whom specific in-classroom visits were identified and their average number of observations per teacher calculated. As displayed, all districts are at or near an average of three observations. Where districts are below three, many explained that it was the exceptions (teachers on leave, switching buildings, teaching pull-out classes, etc.) that prevented them from reaching their goal.
- **Priority School Data:** Data submitted by Regional Achievement Center (RAC) staff from priority schools showed an average of three observations per building. Thus, even in schools with substantial operational challenges, building leaders were able to meet the basic requirements for conducting observations.
- **Department Offices:** Implementation Managers in the Office of Evaluation collected information directly throughout the year from county offices and district touchpoints. These state officials confirmed the prevailing average of three observations across districts in their field experience.

Figure 9: Average Observations Executed

Partner District	Average # of Observations
A	2.98
B	3.22
C	3.00
F	3.00

3. Observations take less time to conduct as observers become more familiar with instruments.

While observations generally take either 20 or 40 minutes to conduct, additional work is required to prepare, capture all evidence, and communicate feedback to the teacher. The majority of districts responding to the survey (71%) noted that it took them less than two hours to complete all work associated with a given observation, with a few under an hour and nearly all reporting less than three hours on average. Many districts surveyed reported that observations took less time as the year progressed, with nearly all others indicating that it took the same amount of time, not more. Both of these findings are consistent with the feedback pilot districts shared after their second evaluation year. Using these findings, the Department has already begun to work with districts on how to further reduce the time observations take to complete and has shared some initial strategies learned from partner districts in this guidance provided in August 2014: [Starting Stronger: 5 Ways to Improve Educator Evaluation in 2014-15.](#)

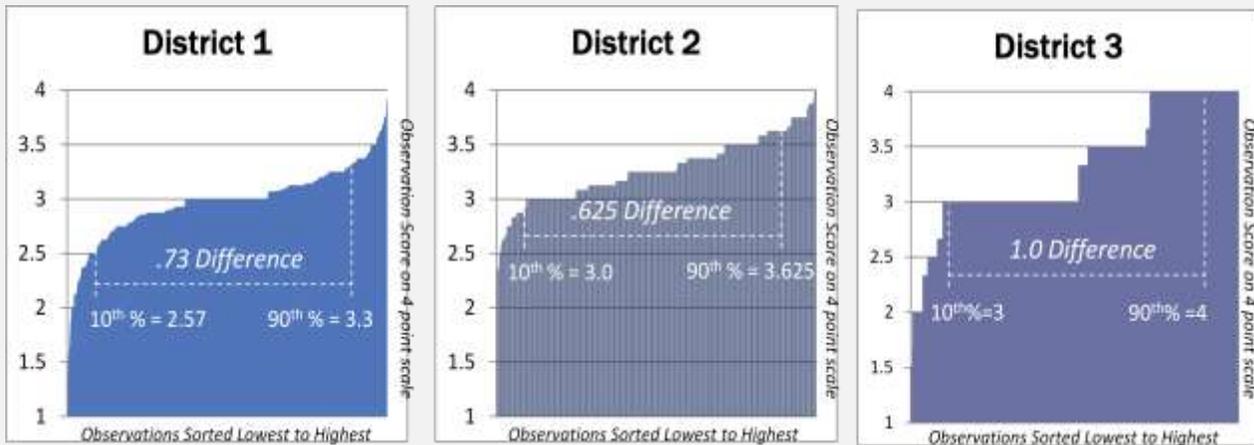
4. Districts are measuring different levels of teaching in their schools.

Figure 10 shows three districts reflecting different types of distribution of teacher practice ratings. Even though distributions in districts 1 and 2 have a different practice score profile, they both have more than a half-point difference between scores in the 10th and 90th percentile, demonstrating a significant difference between the strongest and weakest lessons taking place.² This is important information for administrators seeking to target their support efforts on teachers who need more help while providing different growth opportunities for those who are teaching at a very high level.

¹ Specific partner districts used in graphics are removed for purposes of confidentiality.

² District 1: .73 difference between 10-90, District 2: .625 difference, District 3: .73 difference

Figure 10: Sample Distributions of Observation Averages



5. Observers are identifying the strengths and weaknesses of individual lessons and sharing that information with teachers.

Even though districts are more accurately identifying the lessons at either end of the quality spectrum, the nature of compiling multiple indicators for good teachers can create a fairly flat profile of distributions for the majority of those observed. For example, in District 3 above, over 40% of observations conducted resulted in an average score of exactly 3, even though there is a difference between the best and worst lessons observed. This flat part of the distribution may hide variations in component level scores of individual educators that are actually being addressed in individual conferences and professional development plans.

In fact, an analysis of component-level district data reveals more score variation than would be indicated by composite scores alone. Figure 11 below depicts a sample of observations conducted by a specific observer using the Danielson framework. Orange squares indicate the observer is recognizing areas that are in need of improvement. White squares indicate proficient practices and blue denotes distinguished practice. In observations where there are differing colors across a row, the observer has communicated to the teacher that some parts of their lesson are better than others. This information can be very useful, as it shows teachers where they can focus their efforts for improvement.

Figure 11: Sample Distribution from Danielson Framework

Lesson	Domain 1: Planning and Preparation						Domain 2: Classroom Environment				Domain 3: Instruction			
	1a	1b	1c	1d	1e	1f	2a	2b	2c	2d	3a	3b	3c	3d
1	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2
2	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3
3	3	3	3		3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
5	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3
6	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
7	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3

6. In some cases, educators scored the same on all components.

A lack of differentiating among component scores may be an accurate reflection of the teacher’s practice but may also indicate low quality implementation of the rubric by an observer. This pattern can be seen in lessons 3 and 4 in Figure 11 above. If a teacher were to receive just those scores, he or she might not learn much about where to focus professional growth. Districts can reflect on scoring variation by sorting their scores by observer and looking for trends that run counter to what they know about classroom teaching in their schools. If such trends exist, leaders might ask the observer identified to examine written notes from a specific observation and reflect to see if the trend is indicative of what they saw, or if perhaps they didn't

have the confidence to make a judgment in that situation or the courage to communicate their opinion. For examples of how districts might work to improve scoring accuracy and quality of feedback, see the [Syllabus for Success](#) provided in September 2014.

7. Districts are using aggregate practice component data to identify areas that can be improved.

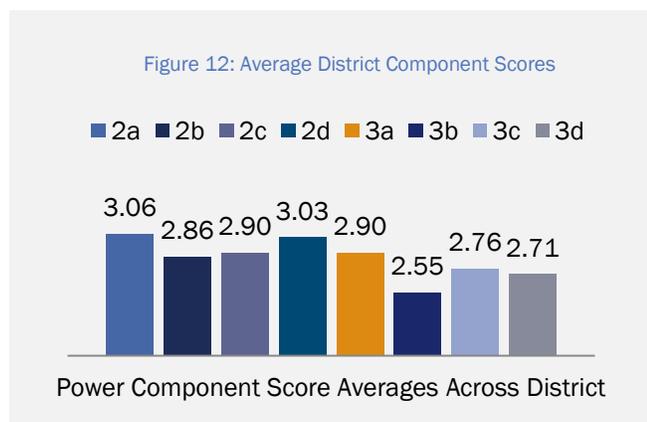


Figure 12 shows the distribution of a variety of component practice scores from a district using the Danielson Framework for Teaching. This shows low scores in the areas of 3b (Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques), 3c (Engaging Student in Learning), and 3d (Using Assessments in Instruction). Similar patterns can be seen in other instruments used in New Jersey. For example, partner districts using the McREL practice instrument had lower overall scores in assessing student knowledge. Districts may reflect on these patterns to determine if they are a function of scoring or an indication of a need for further professional development in these areas.

Opportunities for Improvement in Future Work

Many districts have changed the way they think about teaching performance as well as how they communicate about observations through oral and written feedback. Doing these activities well takes time, but after just one year of AchieveNJ, a more focused attention to high quality observation has begun to yield the type of information that will help teachers make strides in their practice. To capitalize on this momentum, districts might consider the following areas to help further improve the value of observations:

- While high quality observation instruments make it easier to distinguish between lessons at either end of the performance spectrum, leaders should look at evidence from lessons in the middle of their distributions in order to continue to both improve observation accuracy and instructional quality. Evaluators should actively seek to identify which components in mid-range observations reflect the strengths and weaknesses of an educator in order to provide guidance for improvement and recognition of excellence.
- When component scores are low or high, districts should determine whether such averages reflect practice or implementation. For example, nearly all district data submitted showed that teachers tended to score higher on the parts of the instrument associated with professional conduct. While several conclusions can be reached from this, many partner districts shared that these scores were impacted by a lack of clear expectations for some of these indicators. As districts clarify their expectations around these components, they may become more comfortable making decisions about effectiveness and therefore more likely to use the different scoring tiers.

State Response to Lessons from Year One

Workshops

Recognizing the need identified by many districts in the area of questioning, discussion, and student engagement in 2013-14, the Department conducted workshops in the summer 2014 on how to assess and improve in these areas. Over 2,000 educators attended 42 workshops conducted to help districts improve on these skills. If a district determines that this is a continued need, they can find a [copy of the presentation](#) on the AchieveNJ website, with associated materials to [facilitate the training](#).

Achievement Coaches Program

In October 2014, the Department announced two grant opportunities for districts to participate in the New Jersey Achievement Coaches program. The goal of this effort is to empower district teams of outstanding educators to provide direct support to their peers through high quality training and resources. The content of the coaching sessions will focus on components of evaluation identified by educators as most important for additional training, such as improving practice, aligning instruction to new curricula and content standards, and using evidence to shape instruction and guide professional learning. For more information, see [Section 5.1](#).

Waivers and Regulatory Changes

The Department responded to feedback from educators about various challenges with conducting observations by granting waivers for particular circumstances and changing state requirements for some observation procedures. Please see [Section 4.2](#) for more details on these responses.

Learning from Year Two

The Office of Evaluation's Implementation Managers continue to work closely with districts in 2014-15 to understand challenges and best practices in observations. Among a number of findings, early information shows that districts are beginning to use observation and other data to be more precise in the professional development they offer teachers (see box to the right for two examples of this). The Department will continue to explore best practices regarding observations and the information they generate and will continue to develop tools, guidance, and policy as necessary.

“We run reports looking at how teachers have performed on certain elements of the practice instrument. Last year we detected a gap in addressing higher order thinking skills, and then offered training for high school teachers regarding this element.”

~Ann Vargas, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Bogota Public Schools

“We took benchmark assessment data from Language Arts and Math from grades 3-8 and compared it to observation data for those teachers. This allowed us to identify and focus support on the gaps we saw.”

~Marnie McCoy, Chief Academic Officer, Paterson Public Schools

2.4 Student Growth Percentiles

The Department has undertaken extensive efforts to develop and explain the use of Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs) as one measure in new evaluation systems. Understanding the anxiety of many educators around SGPs, the Department engaged in several years of capacity-building and practice exercises to prepare for 2013-14, when this measure counted in educator evaluations for the first time. See this [SGP Timeline](#) for more details.

SGPs offer a high quality and standardized measure of student growth from year to year in comparison to academic peers. SGPs have been used since the 2011-12 school year for school performance reports as one metric for school performance. Educators are recognizing that the emphasis on growth rather than proficiency is a welcome change.

In 2013-14, the median SGP (mSGP) score counted for 30% of the evaluation for about 15% of all New Jersey teachers; specifically, 4th - 8th-grade language arts and math teachers who were:

- Assigned to a 4th - 8th-grade Language Arts or Math course for 60% or more of the year prior to the date on which the state test was administered, and
- Assigned 20 unique students by the district through the Course Roster Submission.
 - These students must have been enrolled for 70% or more of the course duration prior to the administration of the test.

SGP Calculation and Data Quality

One critical step in easing anxiety around the SGP measure is to ensure educators fully understand the measure and how it is calculated. To this end, the Department has dedicated the [SGP web page](#) on the AchieveNJ site to providing such information, including links to narrative and presentation overviews as well as an explanatory [SGP Video](#).

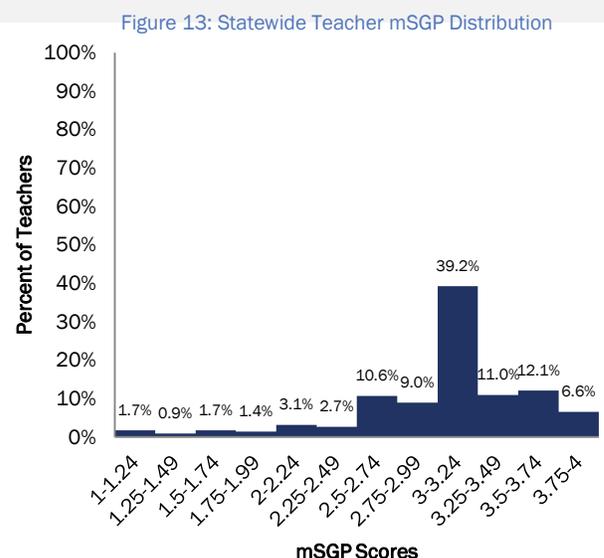
To help ensure each qualifying educator's mSGP score is based on accurate data, the Department has provided significant guidance and support since 2010:

1. Following a federal mandate for stimulus funds, in 2010 the Department began calculating SGPs; NJ SMART began providing districts with the student growth scores in 2011.
2. Starting in 2011-12, the Department began requiring districts to certify course rosters matching educators to their students – one critical element for the calculation of mSGP scores.
3. From 2011-13, the Department conducted an educator evaluation pilot program and worked with participating districts to share mSGP scores and hear feedback about their accuracy and usefulness.
4. With the passage of the *TEACHNJ* Act in 2012, state law required the use of student outcomes on the state assessment as one component of educator evaluation. The Department then worked with educators and analyzed results from the pilot program to inform regulations specifying evaluation measures.
5. In January 2014, the Department provided districts with access to 2012-13 mSGP scores for all qualifying teachers as a “practice exercise” in preparation for 2013-14. The practice exercise provided an opportunity for educators to learn more about this element of evaluation, problem-solve for data quality errors, and share feedback to help improve the process.
6. In January 2015, the Department released 2013-14 mSGP scores for teachers and principals to all districts along with a series of communications and support materials. This included a [memo to district leaders](#), detailed User Guides for both [teachers](#) and [principals](#), and [specific guidance on addressing data quality issues](#).
7. In February 2015, the Department released the [2013-14 Evaluation Score Certification Tool](#), providing districts the opportunity to verify the accuracy of all scores and make any changes necessary to ensure educators received accurate evaluation scores – and that the state had accurate records of those scores.

Findings from mSGP Data

1. Statewide, the vast majority of mSGP ratings were in the effective scoring range.

The average teacher mSGP score was 2.99 and, as shown in Figure 13, 68% of teachers scored 3 or better. While there are scores distributed across the rubric, the mSGP rating has identified more than 80% of teachers as achieving growth with their students in the effective range on the summative scale (above 2.65).



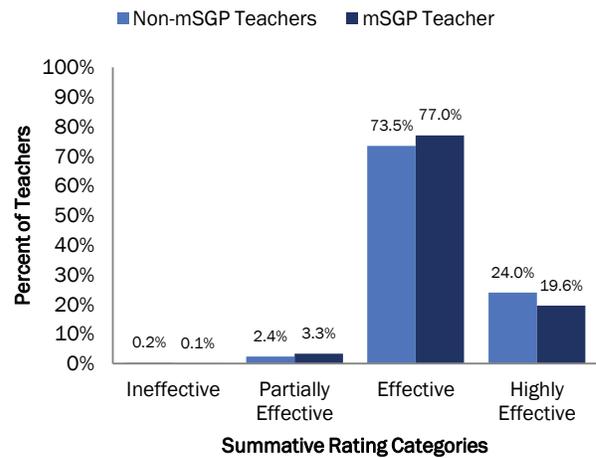
2. Final evaluation scores for teachers receiving mSGPs are very similar to those not receiving mSGP scores.

Another consideration when examining 2013-14 mSGP data is that it only applied to teachers of Language Arts and Math in grades 4 - 8. While this metric is used because it provides valuable information for those educators, the Department examined their summative ratings in comparison to their non-mSGP counterparts in order to see if it significantly changes the summative ratings. As shown in Figure 14, while there is some slight difference in the final ratings of these two groups, the scoring distributions are very similar. Like their non-mSGP counterparts, the vast majority of teachers receiving mSGP scores are being identified as either Effective or Highly Effective.

3. mSGPs provide another line of evidence to help districts improve the evaluation process and teachers improve their practice.

Many district administrators on the ANJAC have reported that the objective, data-driven mSGP measure is a very useful element of AchieveNJ. Further, inspection of potential gaps between teacher practice ratings and mSGP scores helps increase the accuracy and value of teacher observations. Districts that participated in the evaluation pilot and have several years of mSGP data report even greater value in the ability to examine trends that develop over time. This is one reason why the Department will allow up to three years of mSGP data to factor into a qualifying teacher's score on this measure in a given year, if the inclusion of multiple years is advantageous to the teacher.

Figure 14: Summative Score Comparison for mSGP and non-mSGP Teachers



“We have used mSGP data as a talking point to promote self-reflection among teachers. Since the entire purpose of the evaluation process is to support a teacher’s professional growth, reflection and productive dialogue are critical.”

~Kristin O’Neil, Chief Academic Officer, West Deptford Township Schools

State Support and Response to District Feedback

Support to Districts

As outlined above, the Department has engaged in a comprehensive effort over several years to ensure districts are informed about the use of SGPs in educator evaluations. In addition to the resource materials, communications, and score certification process, several Department staff members have worked directly with districts to answer questions, troubleshoot data quality issues, and help ensure a smooth roll-out of mSGP scores to teachers. During the ten-week period between the release of mSGP reports to districts and closing the score certification window in March 2015, the Office of Evaluation responded directly to over 1,500 phone and email requests for support. The AchieveNJ team also proactively contacted about 350 school districts to provide extra support in the final days of the certification window. By engaging in this level of direct district support, the Department can better understand the challenges and benefits of the 2013-14 approach and make necessary improvements for the future.

Regulatory Changes

The state transition from the NJ ASK to the PARCC exam in 2014-15 has resulted in questions and concerns from educators about the use of SGP based on those tests in educator evaluations. The Department has provided information about this transition, highlighting that among measures of student growth, SGP is uniquely designed to handle a transition across different types of assessments. This is because it is a norm-referenced methodology, creating a relative ranking of students within an academic performance peer

group, not a ranking based on absolute performance. Because of the careful work that the Department has undertaken over the last several years to align the NJ ASK to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), SGP in the 2014-15 school year will be comparable to SGP in the 2013-14 school year. However, in response to significant feedback from educators across the state, the Department made a regulatory change to allow for a reduction in the weight of mSGP to 10% for 2014-15 as educators adjust to the new PARCC exam (see [Section 4.2](#) for more information).

Part Three: Principal Evaluation

Effective leadership is a critical component in driving student success. A strong evaluation system has the potential to improve educational leadership by linking evaluation to meaningful feedback that helps administrators grow and, when necessary, facilitates the removal of those leaders whose skills and dispositions are not supporting student success.

The development of a new statewide system for evaluating principals and assistant/vice principals (APs/VPs)³ in New Jersey followed a path similar to that of teacher evaluation, including a pilot program and significant guidance from the statewide Evaluation Pilot Advisory Committee (EPAC) (see [Part One](#)). The result for principals was a multiple measures approach to evaluation that ensures regular observation, evidence-based feedback, and aligned professional development. Further, this approach highlights local control over decisions in many areas, including the context for observations, instrument selection, and measures and targets used for goal setting. Please see the [Final EPAC Report](#) (p. 34-40) for more details on how lessons learned from the principal evaluation pilot informed year one of statewide implementation.

The 2013-14 implementation of AchieveNJ represented significant progress toward the goal of effective leadership in every building. The Department also recognizes some implementation challenges that were unique to principal evaluation in year one. Districts devoted much of their time and energy in the inaugural year to implementing teacher evaluation, diverting attention away from school leaders and the critical nature of their roles. Principals focused their time and energy on supporting teachers through increased observations, SGO oversight, and other implementation activities. The Department also allocated the majority of its resources toward supporting teacher evaluation.

Given this context, the section that follows offers a broad analysis of year one results and identifies areas for improvement moving forward. In 2014-15, the Department has devoted additional time and support to studying principal evaluation implementation, which will lead to the ability to provide a more thorough analysis in future years.

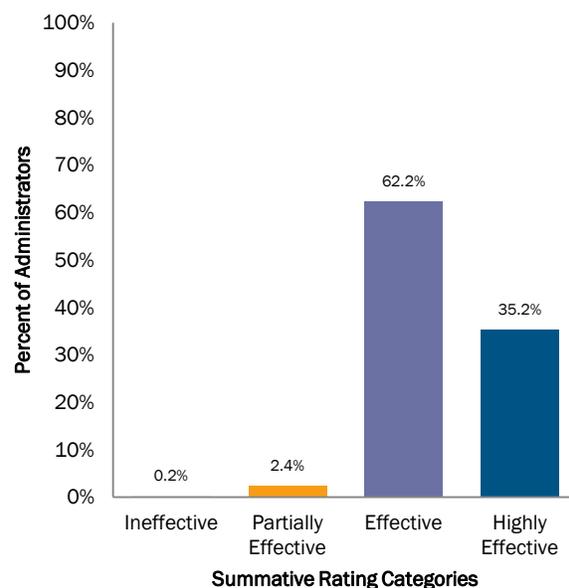
3.1 Summative Ratings for Principals

Findings from Summative Data

As with teacher evaluation data, one year of final rating results is insufficient for identifying sustained trends or making sweeping judgments about school leaders in New Jersey. Nonetheless, the same three important takeaways can be drawn from the early results shown in Figure 15:

1. Overall, the vast majority of principals are – as we have always known – performing at a high level. About three-fifths of principals were rated Effective by their supervisors and a third were rated Highly Effective.
2. A small group of struggling principals were identified as needing (and are receiving) support to help them improve.
3. A sizeable group of principals are excelling; their expertise can be leveraged to help others improve.

Figure 15: Statewide Summative Principal Ratings



³ The remainder of this section applies to principals, APs, and VPs alike but uses the term “principals” rather than principals/APs/VPs) for brevity’s sake.

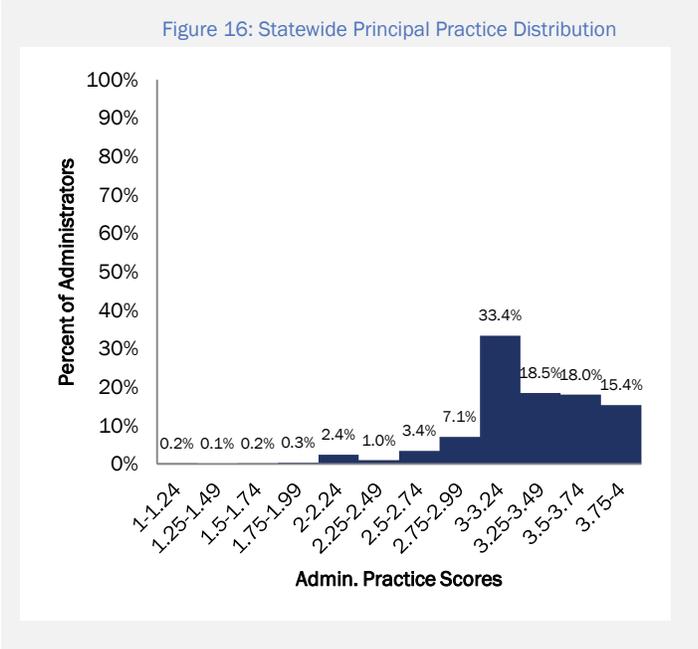
In comparison to previously available evaluation data, the distribution of principal performance through AchieveNJ provides a more nuanced picture of principal effectiveness. As with teacher evaluation, though, each district is ultimately in charge of its own evaluation system success. Thoughtful implementation by district leaders will determine how well AchieveNJ helps school leaders foster healthy school environments and a staff of effective teachers for all students.

3.2 Principal Practice

The principal practice instrument is used to observe activities including (but not limited to) building walk-throughs, staff meetings, parent conferences, and case study analyses of significant student issues. In 2013-14, the score on the principal practice instrument accounted for 30% of all principal evaluations. As with teacher practice instruments, districts had latitude to select from a list of state-approved principal practice instruments. Five instruments were used by 92% of districts (see [Appendix F](#) for a distribution by selected instrument). Principal practice instruments approved by the Department were required to meet a variety of criteria including aligning with the 2008 ISLLC Professional Standards for School Leaders, resulting in a minimum of four levels of performance, and requiring multiple sources of evidence throughout the year.

As shown in Figure 16, the practice rating of over 85% of principals was 3.0 and greater. The average principal practice score in 2013-14 was 3.28. This indicates that across the state, the vast majority of New Jersey’s principals are demonstrating effective practice and better, a long-held belief that is now supported by at least one year of solid data derived from observation rubrics.

In addition, and unlike the system prior to AchieveNJ where over 99% of principals were rated “acceptable,” data shows the quality of principal practice varies greatly. While these aggregate data indicate that AchieveNJ is being used effectively across the state, district leaders must use local evaluation information to provide principals with recognition for excellent performance and appropriate and consistent professional growth opportunities and feedback as indicated.



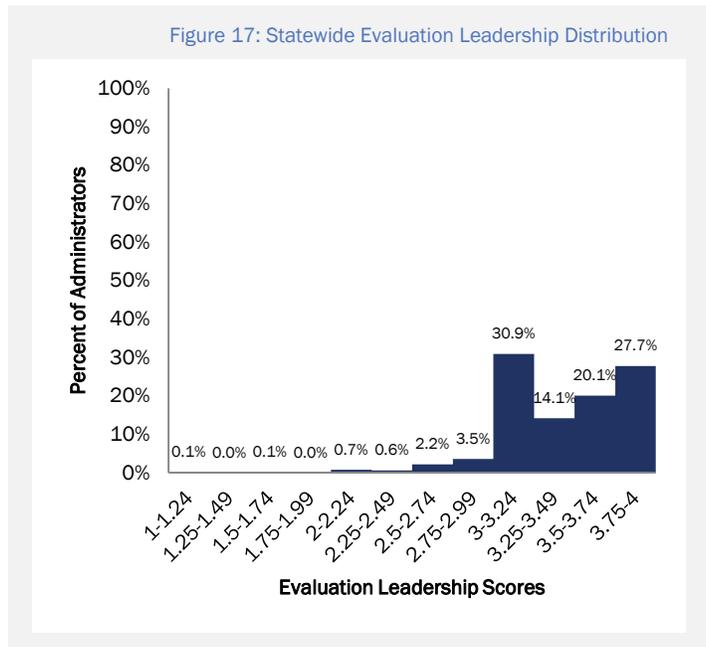
“Our administrators receive extensive, evidence-based feedback on an instrument we built in-district including job-related performance expectations and leadership standards.”
 ~Amy Stella, Director of Instruction for Math and Science, North Burlington County Regional School district

“We support and fund collaborative release time for true principal PLCs.”
 ~David Cittadino, Superintendent, Old Bridge Township Public Schools

3.3 Evaluation Leadership

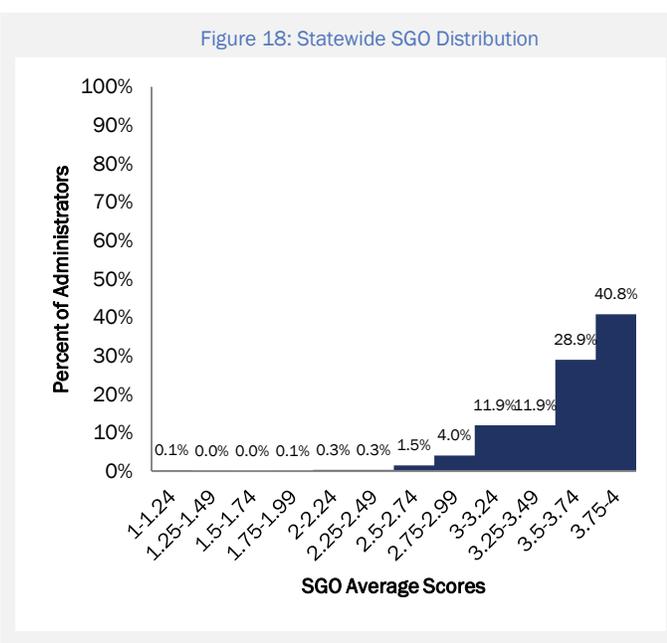
In 2013-14, the score on the state Evaluation Leadership Instruments comprised 20% of each principal's summative rating. Separate instruments were posted for principals and for assistant/vice principals (see [Appendix G](#)). Informed by feedback from the field, these instruments replaced a human capital component included for principals during the pilot year, since hiring and retention were not consistently found to be in the principal's purview. The instruments focus on aspects of a principal's work that maximize the effectiveness of his or her teaching staff through effective implementation of AchieveNJ; in short, demonstrating instructional leadership. This emphasis aligns with shifts in the 2014 ISLLC standards and reflects the commitment of principals in New Jersey to focus time and energy where it will make the most difference for students.

As shown in Figure 17, the evaluation leadership rating of over 92% of principals was 3.0 and greater. The average score in 2013-14 was 3.41. Districts should inspect their local data on this measure to ensure the rubric is being used fairly and accurately and to provide information to principals to help them improve AchieveNJ implementation.



In 2014-15 and moving into year three, the Department will be investigating ways to make sure this tool is providing as much value as possible to educators, such as modifying various elements to better align to the workflow of APs and VPs.

3.4 Student Growth Objectives



Principals were rated using the average of their assigned teachers' SGO scores. Principals provide collaborative support in development, approval for targets and assessments, and final scores for the SGOs of their staff. Their efforts in this regard are factored into their scores through the Evaluation Leadership instrument and in the average SGO score weighted at 10%. This component of principal evaluation ensures that the instructional leaders of schools share in the successes of their teachers and students.

As shown in Figure 18, the SGO rating of over 94% of principals was 3.0 and greater. The average principal average SGO score in 2013-14 was 3.58. This reflects the high SGO scores of teachers around the state. An analysis of this finding, recommended approaches, and the state's response is discussed more fully in [Section 2.2](#). However, while it is important that school leaders

share in the success of their teachers, it is also important that this success is based on high-quality measures. Principals must ensure teachers set goals that are “achievable *and* ambitious,” use accurate and consistent assessments, and set targets that make sense.

As described in [Section 2.2](#), the Department is committed to helping districts improve their SGO processes. Many districts have reported benefit from the guidance provided by the Department through SGO 2.0 support and training. Districts have noted that in 2014-15, more teachers used multiple measures to establish a student’s baseline, tiered students’ targets, and showed greater sophistication in their choice of assessments. Thoughtful and gradual improvement in SGO processes should be reflected appropriately in the evaluations of both teachers and principals in 2014-15 and beyond.

3.5 Administrator Goals

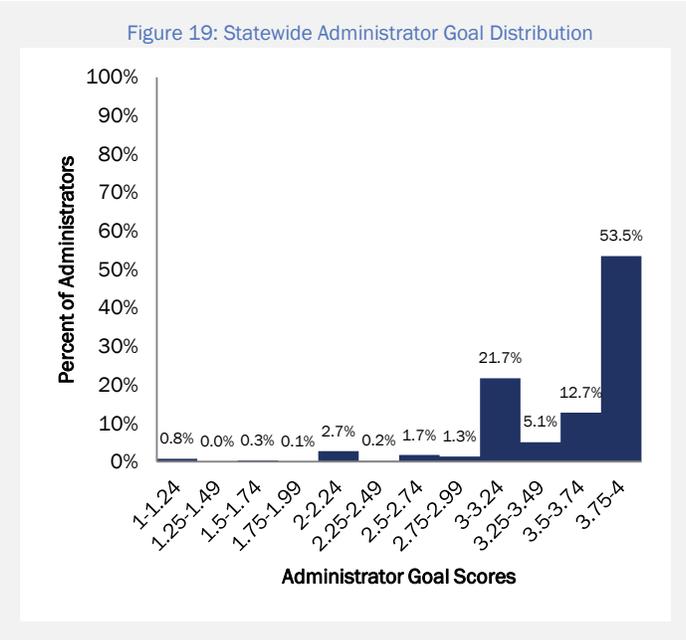
In consultation with the superintendent, each principal set 1-4 administrator goals for student growth and/or achievement. In 2013-14, the final Administrator Goal score accounted for 40% of summative ratings for principals not receiving SGP data, 20% for those assigned to one SGP school/grade, and 10% for those assigned to more than one SGP school/grade. These goals were generally set on schoolwide measures such as improvement in Advanced Placement, SAT or ACT scores, college acceptance rates, and graduation rates.

Demonstrating a similar pattern of distribution to SGO scores for teachers, Administrator Goal scores indicate that principals were very successful in meeting the goals they set for their students and schools. As shown in Figure 19, the Administrator Goal rating of over 93% of principals was 3.0 and greater. The average principal Administrator Goal score in 2013-14 was 3.56.

While these generally high scores may indicate excellent attainment of ambitious goals, it is likely that in the first year of goal setting, many administrators and their supervisors struggled to select appropriate targets. This is an understandable result of setting goals for the first time and focusing efforts on evaluating teachers more thoroughly and accurately.

The Department has spent significant time developing tools and supports for teachers developing SGOs. Reports from educators indicate that SGO 2.0 has led to significant improvement in the formulation of SGOs in year two. Therefore, the Department will develop similar tools and supports for Administrator Goals in 2014-15.

One practice that can enhance goal-setting throughout a district is aligning district goals with individual educator goals. Using this approach, the academic goals set by the school board and superintendent would inform those set by school leaders and by individual teachers, providing an integrated approach to improving the whole educational community.



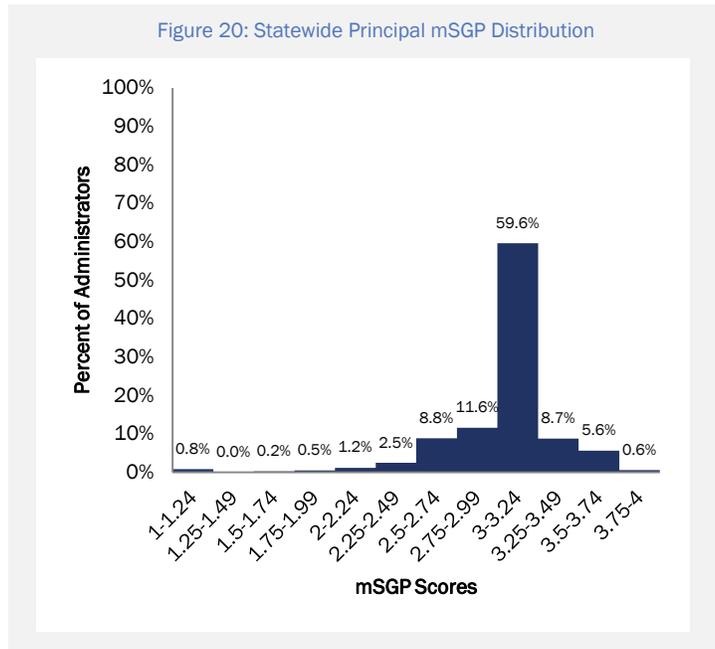
3.6 Median Student Growth Percentiles

Median SGP (mSGP) scores provided by the Department are translated from a 1 - 99 growth percentile assigned to the student, into a 1 - 4 score for the educator, according to the state designed [conversion chart](#) (see [Section 2.4](#) for more information). Principals were assigned the mSGP of all students if they were assigned to buildings including one or more tested grades (4 - 8) by October 15, 2013; this included about 55% of New Jersey principals and APs/VPs. For those individuals, the mSGP accounted for 20% of the final evaluation score if assigned to one SGP school/grade and 30% if assigned to more than one SGP school/grade.

As shown in Figure 20, mSGP ratings of over 74% of principals was 3.0 and greater. The average principal mSGP score in 2013-14 was 2.99.

As with evaluations of teachers with mSGPs, principals qualifying for an mSGP score have one more measure that can be used to inform conversations between principals and their supervisors regarding their performance. Using SGP and other measures of student success as a starting place allows the data to inform Administrator Goals. This practice also highlights the role of student achievement data in a cycle of decisions ranging from resource allocation and professional development planning to lesson planning and choosing instructional strategies.

As noted in [Section 2.4](#), the Department is addressing district data quality issues through the Evaluation Score Certification process to make sure that educators receive the correct mSGP score. The Department has also responded to feedback from educators across the state by reducing the weight of the mSGP measure to 10% in 2014-15 as educators and students adjust to the new state test.



“mSGP data should be the starting point for the conversation.”

Michael Gorman,
Superintendent,
Pemberton Township
Schools

Part Four: District Implementation Successes and Challenges

4.1 DEAC and ScIP Roles and Activities

The District Evaluation Advisory Committee (DEAC) and the School Improvement Panel (ScIP) are two important groups that can guide decisions and communications about evaluation policies and practices. Following the state requirement for a DEAC in pilot districts, feedback from pilot educators indicated that such a group was essential for ensuring successful implementation of evaluation changes at the local level. Therefore, evaluation regulations codified the requirement for this group to exist in each district across the state through at least the 2016-17 school year. The *TEACHNJ* Act also included a requirement for the ScIP in response to feedback from educators that a school body was needed to help ensure educator leadership in evaluation at that level.

2013-14 Findings

In order to determine the rate at which these bodies were in place and being utilized in 2013-14, the Department examined data from the statewide survey used to track compliance with basic evaluation components, as well as partner district qualitative survey data.

- Over 99% of districts have a DEAC in place that is "providing guidance on implementation of the district's evaluation policies and procedures."
- When partner districts were asked how they were using the DEACs, nearly all respondents listed several ways in which their DEACs were being utilized, with about 80% noting that they are "gathering feedback from educators" and 60% sharing that they used the group to "analyze implementation successes and challenges to recommend improvements."

Similarly, over 99% of districts across the state reported having their ScIPs in place.

- 100% of partner districts noted that their ScIPs were formed and meeting, though only about 20% said the ScIP was highly functioning and leading implementation.
- When asking partner districts about their utilization of the ScIP, the top two responses included "gathering feedback from educators about evaluation" and "analyzing implementation successes and challenges to recommend improvements," with about 80% of respondents identifying these as primary activities for ScIPs.
- Other activities identified included "linking evaluation outcomes to professional development plans," "working with the DEAC," and "leading communications with educators about evaluation." All respondents identified at least one of these areas as something their ScIP was engaged in.

State Response to Lessons from Year One

In supporting implementation of DEACs and ScIPs in 2013-14, the Department remained mindful of the need for local ownership of and investment in such groups. The goal of state guidance and support was to respond to educator requests and questions, rather than to offer prescriptive solutions that might not work in a given context.

The Department continues to engage with the AchieveNJ Advisory Committee (ANJAC) and other educators to examine the need for guidance and support for these important local bodies. In response to educator requests for guidance and examples to inform the best use of DEACs and ScIPs, the Department has built out sections of the AchieveNJ website and posted various resources for each group. The [DEAC Corner](#) includes [specific suggestions on the effective use of DEACs](#) from pilot districts,

The goal of state guidance and support was to respond to educator requests and questions, rather than to offer prescriptive solutions that might not work in a given context.

sample agendas, and other information. The [SciP Corner](#) offers initial [guidance on the best use of SciPs](#) from districts in 2013-14 as well as answers to frequently asked questions and other resources. In addition, the Department offered a [SciP workshop](#) to groups of educators across the state in the fall of 2014. Feedback from educators attending these sessions and that gathered from interviews and district visits by the Office of Evaluation's Implementation Managers is now informing development of additional resources and support structures.

4.2 Requests for Flexibility and State Response

Throughout the 2013-14 school year, the Department worked with districts to better understand challenges with implementation and to provide flexibility where appropriate to ease district burden. In addition to the daily support of three state Implementation Managers visiting schools and districts to answer questions and provide guidance, the Department utilized two key mechanisms for broader support: waivers and regulation updates.

Waivers

Recognizing challenges facing many New Jersey districts, the Department offered a simple waiver process to address the following issues:

- Capacity challenges in tenured teacher observations in some districts: The Department granted waivers to districts encountering problems in completing three observations for tenured teachers due to administrative capacity limitations.
- Observation time in Marshall districts: The Department also granted waivers to districts using the Marshall Rubrics practice instrument to resolve the discrepancy between the frequent 10-minute observation requirement in that instrument and the less frequent 20- and 40-minute minimum state requirement.
- Multiple observer requirement in very small districts: The Department granted a few waivers to districts without the personnel to fulfill the multiple observer requirement.

Regulatory Updates

Several implementation challenges that emerged in 2013-14 were common enough across all districts that the Department proposed changes to regulation to improve the system.

April 2014 Proposal

The following changes went through the State Board approval process from April – September 2014 and were adopted on October 1:

- Slightly delay the deadline for setting SGOs, changing it from October 15 to October 31, to allow educators more time to identify student starting points and set high-quality learning targets.
- Amend the SGO personnel file procedure so SGOs are filed at the end of the year, not at multiple intervals to ease burden (note: SGOs remain part of the personal evaluation record that is confidential by law).
- Remove the December 1 deadline for completion of at least one co-observation to provide flexibility with implementation (note: two co-observations are still required at some point in the school year).
- Allow districts to use electronic observation reports to save time.
- Clarify that a teacher present for less than 40% of the total school days in an academic year can receive at least two observations to earn a teacher practice score.

The full text of these regulations is found in the [current Administrative Code](#).

August 2014 Proposal

Feedback from pilot districts in 2011-13 indicated that implementation improved significantly between the first two years employing the new evaluation system. The Department originally intended to keep the same evaluation component weights for 2014-15 to allow districts to build on the progress made in 2013-14 and

focus on specific areas of improvement identified through that work. However, state officials continued to listen to feedback from educators around key areas of concern – one of which is the transition of the state assessment from the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK) to the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) and its impact on the use of test scores in evaluation. As explained in [Section 2.4](#), based on concerns about the assessment transition, the Department proposed to lower the weight of the mSGP component for 2014-15 for teachers from 30% to 10%. The Department presented regulations that would allow for these changes to the State Board in August 2014; the regulations were adopted in December.

The proposal also included a review process for 2013-14 SGO and Administrator Goal scores for cases where such a score was the sole reason why an educator’s summative rating dropped from Effective to Partially Effective or from Partially Effective to Ineffective. This review process – conceived to address concerns in districts where SGO implementation may have faced significant challenges – ensured that educators will not be unfairly penalized for having inaccurate or incomplete goals in place due to extenuating circumstances. Full details on the August 2014 regulatory proposal are included in this [August 12, 2014 memo](#).

The Department has worked to demonstrate a commitment to a cycle of continuous learning and improvement. State officials continue to work with educators to make the evaluation system as flexible and reasonable as possible – while also ensuring high expectations

By making these regulatory changes, the Department has worked to demonstrate a commitment to a cycle of continuous learning and improvement. State officials continue to work with educators to make the evaluation system as flexible and reasonable as possible – while also ensuring high expectations for all teachers and students.

Part Five: Moving Forward: 2015 and Beyond

Just one year of AchieveNJ implementation has resulted in significant improvements in how districts evaluate and support educators. However, this work is far from done. The Department is continuously learning from New Jersey's 584 districts in order to make AchieveNJ of the highest value to educators. Going forward, the Department remains committed to providing high quality support, soliciting extensive educator input, and increasing flexibility in the system, as needed.

5.1 Continued High-Quality State Support

The kind of system and culture change that accompanies implementation of new evaluations challenges leaders at every level – school, district, and state. One great point of pride in the rollout of AchieveNJ thus far is the collaborative spirit that so many educators have embodied in working toward the common goal of student success. The Department remains committed to working hand-in-hand with these educators to hear success stories and critical feedback that can ultimately improve the system and ensure it works at the local level.

Tens of thousands of educators have had face-to-face contact with representatives of the Office of Evaluation since the launch of AchieveNJ. In just a three-week period alone at the start of the 2014-15 school year, more than 6,000 educators participated in workshops, presentations, and keynote addresses at several district openings provided by the AchieveNJ team. The Department pledges to increase this level of support through the following work:

Coordinating Support and Empowering District Leaders

The Office of Evaluation will work with other Department offices and stakeholder groups to empower districts to continue to take ownership of local evaluation systems. This includes improving coordination with the Department's academic offices, county offices, and Regional Achievement Centers. In addition, state implementation managers are directly sharing a suite of resources with districts to promote the skills and information necessary to continuously improve. The Department will expand and refine this capacity-building outreach in response to continued feedback from educators.

The Office of Evaluation will work with other Department offices and stakeholder groups to empower school districts to continue to **take ownership of local evaluation systems.**

Achievement Coaches Program

As evidence of its commitment to keeping educators at the center of evaluation leadership, the Department is leading a \$1.25 million grant initiative to recognize and empower a cadre of highly effective educators or "[Achievement Coaches](#)." During a week-long Summer Institute in 2015, 150 teachers and administrators, selected by their districts for their professional capabilities and leadership skills, will be prepared to deliver high quality professional development sessions to tens of thousands of their colleagues around the state. These sessions, being developed through the grant by educators at three New Jersey school districts, will focus on areas of high-need and lasting-value; effective use and development of high quality assessments, including alignment with Common Core Standards; evidence-based decision-making in high-functioning collaborative teams; and best pedagogical practices that address challenging aspects of teaching such as engaging students and using questioning techniques in the classroom. Achievement Coaches will lead these sessions at the start of the 2015-16 school year and will share feedback from the educators they reach with the Department.

Statewide Training Sessions and Resources

The Department will provide high-quality training sessions on various aspects of the AchieveNJ system particularly in the areas of assessment literacy, data use, SGO development, and improving the quality and usefulness of observations. In addition, the Department will continue to update and add to the extensive [library of online resources](#) so they are easily accessible to all educators.

5.2 Extensive Educator Input

The Department made very few changes to AchieveNJ in 2014-15 to give districts time to adjust to the new system and increase the quality of their implementation work. Now that districts are in a place of greater stability, the Department is seeking to learn about those parts of AchieveNJ that are providing highest value to educators, those with which districts are still struggling, and those that may be hindering the work of teaching and learning in schools. Through strategic work with teachers and administrators in districts and analysis of a variety of statewide and local evaluation data, the Department will identify AchieveNJ implementation barriers and best practices in the following areas:

- Expectations and Communication
- Educator Training and Capacity Building
- Evaluation Activity Execution and Monitoring
- Organizational Capacity and Culture
- Data Systems and Infrastructure

In addition to this work, the Department will continue to convene groups of educators such as the ANJAC. Frequent interaction with such groups provides another chance to learn first-hand from those employing AchieveNJ and to gather feedback on potential improvements in guidance and policy.

5.3 Flexibility to Enhance Implementation

As mentioned in [Section 4.2](#), the Department has responded to districts' requests for flexibility within AchieveNJ by providing waivers to those with demonstrated need. This practice will continue to potentially expand flexibility for innovative ideas in districts that have demonstrated high quality AchieveNJ implementation.

Supporting and Encouraging Innovation

Not surprisingly, the best ideas for improving AchieveNJ have come from practicing educators. Through pilots and the waiver process, the Department seeks to support districts to innovate within and outside of the regulations governing AchieveNJ to address certain areas of evaluation that might include:

- Differentiation of observation protocols for Highly Effective educators, including the use of portfolios;
- Using surveys to provide another measure of teacher and principal effectiveness; and
- Adjusting components of principal evaluation to provide a more streamlined approach.

The AchieveNJ team is ready to partner with districts whose good ideas can help the whole state move forward in the work of evaluating and supporting educators.

By supporting innovations that hold promise, continuing to listen carefully to educators, and thoughtfully examining data from the evaluation system, the Department is building a foundation on which to make deliberate and effective changes to guidance and policy as needed. By providing direct support through in-person interactions and high quality resources, the Department is helping districts overcome some implementation obstacles and enhance the value for educators. This approach will further the common goals shared by everyone – effective leadership, instruction, and high levels of academic growth for all 1.4 million schoolchildren in New Jersey.

Appendices

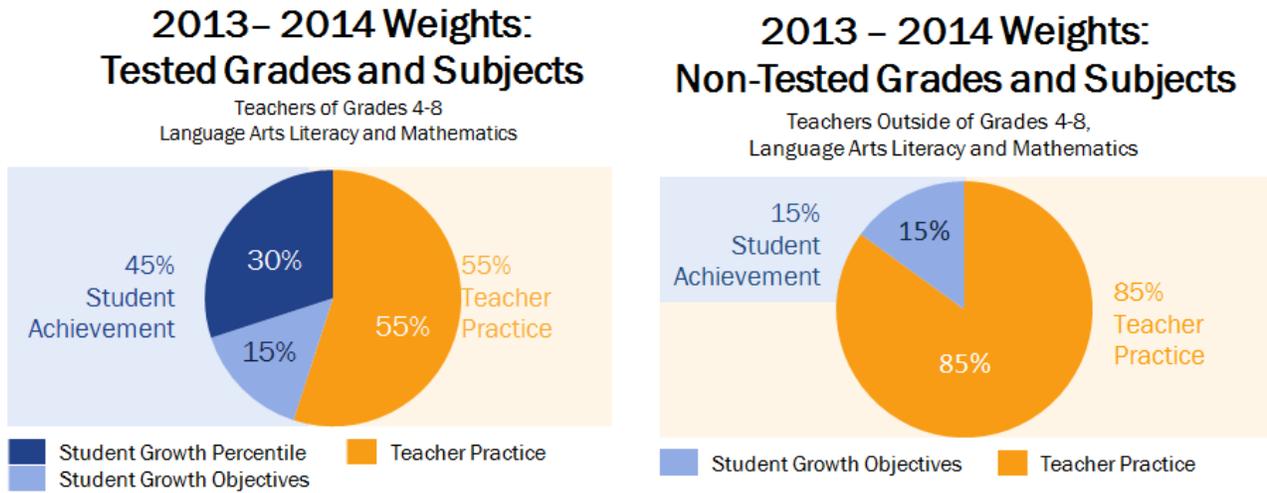
Appendix A: Educator Involvement in Developing AchieveNJ

Date/Year	Activity	Educator Involvement
9/2010	Governor Christie establishes Educator Effectiveness Task Force	9 Task Force members, all education professionals
9/2010 – 3/2011	Educator Effectiveness Task Force conducts meetings; drafts report	20 presentations from a range of educators and evaluation experts
3/2011	NJDOE releases Educator Effectiveness Task Force Report	9 Task Force members, all education professionals
9/2011 – 6/2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) conducts teacher evaluation pilot NJDOE contracts with Rutgers University Graduate School of Education (RUGSE) to evaluate pilot 	4,229 teachers across 10 pilot districts
9/2011 – 6/2013	NJDOE convenes state Evaluation Pilot Advisory Committee (EPAC)	22 original appointed members (with approximately 100 attending most meetings) consisting of teachers, principals, district leaders, higher education, parents, education associations and representatives from each pilot district.
6/2012 – 6/2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NJDOE adds principal evaluation to pilot program NJDOE requires capacity-building activities for all non-pilot districts to prepare for new evaluations 	7,354 teachers, 276 administrators across 30 pilot districts; All NJ teachers/leaders prepare for new system
7/2012	NJDOE expands Office of Evaluation	Recent EPAC members/NJ educators named as Director, Policy Manager
8/2012	Governor Christie signs TEACHNJ Act , which calls for new evaluations based on multiple measures and ties tenure decisions to evaluation outcomes	All major education stakeholder groups (NJEA, NJASA, NJPSA, NJSBA, etc.) offer unanimous support for bipartisan legislation
1/2013	RUGSE releases Pilot Year 1 Report	Includes surveys of pilot educators
2/2013	NJDOE releases EPAC Interim Report with initial recommendations based on first pilot year	Reflects feedback from EPAC members
3/2013	NJDOE announces proposed regulations for statewide evaluation system in 2013-14 and begins educator outreach initiative to share information and gather feedback	Several hundred educators offer additional feedback and input
9/2013	State Board adopts evaluation regulations	Reflects input from educators in comment/response period
9/2013 – 6/2014	NJDOE rolls out first year of statewide implementation of AchieveNJ	Educators engaged in ongoing collaborative efforts

Date/Year	Activity	Educator Involvement
9/2013 – Present	NJDOE convenes AchieveNJ Advisory Committee (ANJAC)	37 teachers, principals, district leaders, and representatives of higher education, parents, and education associations
11/2013	NJDOE releases Final EPAC Report	Reflects feedback from EPAC members
1/2014	RUGSE releases Final Pilot Report	Includes surveys of pilot educators
2/2014	NJDOE releases 2012-13 teacher median Student Growth Percentile scores as practice exercise for all districts	All qualifying teachers receive data in preparation for 2013-14 results
5/2014 – 8/2014	NJDOE partners with districts to collect quantitative and qualitative data for 2013-14 Implementation Study	Varying data elements from over 8,000 educators across 17 partner districts
9/2014 – 6/2015	NJDOE conducts year 2 of statewide AchieveNJ implementation	Educators engaged in ongoing collaborative efforts

Appendix B: 2013-14 Evaluation Weights and Measures

The following charts depict teacher evaluation weights and measures for 2013-14:



The following charts depict principal evaluation weights and measures for 2013-14:



Appendix C: District Participants in Year 1 Report

In order to complete this study, the Department used data from a variety of sources and partnered with several volunteer districts to gather additional qualitative and quantitative data through surveys, interviews, etc. The following list includes districts that provided information in one or more of these areas:

- Bogota School District
- Camden City Public Schools
- Collingswood Public Schools
- Delsea Regional School District
- Glen Rock Public Schools
- Hillsborough Township Public Schools
- Manchester Township School District
- Montgomery Township School District
- Morris School District
- Mt. Olive School District
- Newark Public Schools
- North Bergen School District
- Parsippany-Troy Hills School District
- Passaic Public Schools
- Paterson Public Schools
- River Dell Regional School District
- Upper Saddle River School District

Appendix D: Educator Feedback and State Response in Shaping AchieveNJ

What the Department Heard	In Response, the Department...
Pilot Years (2011-13)	
Time constraints, heavy training load, balancing district activities provided significant challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delayed statewide implementation • Set capacity-building requirements for all districts
At end of SY11-12, non-tested grades and subjects, and summative ratings had not been adequately addressed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researched these topics in expanded pilot • Discussed issues in EPAC meetings • Shared information in reports/communications
Collaborative, transparent approach to adopting new evaluations was most valued.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added time for collaboration in EPAC meetings • Required District Evaluation Advisory Committee (DEAC) and School Improvement Panel (SciP) groups statewide
EPAC advised districts should choose from a wide variety of high quality observation instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining and updating state-approved list of teacher and principal practice instruments
Process for ensuring number, accuracy, and fidelity of observations needed improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required training for all districts as part of capacity-building • Established universal observation requirements
EPAC advised DOE to balance announced/unannounced observations, support new teachers with multiple observers and pre- and post-conferences, and incorporate double-scoring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built these parameters into universal observation and training requirements
Districts did little to prepare to use observation data to make personnel decisions or to plan collective professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared recommendations in final EPAC report • Linked PD to AchieveNJ in recent PDP templates • Continuing to develop relevant guidance
Evaluation rubric should be simplified in first year of full implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Included one practice instrument and two measures of student achievement (mSGP, SGO)
State must acknowledge SGO learning curve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited total SGOs to 2 at most
Frequent and accurate two-way communication needed between DOE and educators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required DEAC and SciP groups statewide • Provided communications recommendations in Final EPAC Report and on website • Planning additional guidance
Growing size of EPAC plus meeting structure/time constraints created frustrations among members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved EPAC meeting structure/feedback mechanisms in second pilot year • Designed ANJAC to be smaller, more interactive

What the Department Heard	In Response, the Department...
Statewide Implementation Year 1 (2013-14)	
State advisory committee should continue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched ANJAC in November 2013
To maximize DEAC potential, state should provide more guidance on their operation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicited input from ANJAC • Launched DEAC Corner page of website
In many cases, SGOs have been set with top-down, compliance-based processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produced clarifying materials/workshops stating explicit intent that SGOs should be teacher-driven
Educators need more information about high-quality SGO assessments and target setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produced SGO 2.0 materials/workshops focusing specifically on these areas
Educators need a wider variety of SGO examples.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working to triple exemplars
October 15 deadline for SGO approval is too tight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed to extend SGO deadline to October 31
Teachers struggle with effective discussion and questioning techniques in the classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering statewide workshops for teachers on this topic
Information is not reaching all audiences who need it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased scope of communications via county offices and superintendents, superintendent round tables, principal email newsletter, <i>The Bridge</i> newsletter • Tailored support for delivery through many channels (implementation managers, workshops, website, etc.) • Reorganized website to make resources more accessible
District leaders and educators feel overwhelmed by new initiatives, too much information and are concerned about impact of new measures such as SGOs and PARCC on evaluations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiated changes to streamline evaluation processes • Proposed review process for educators negatively impacted by SGO score alone for 2013-14 • Proposed reduction in weight for PARCC component (mSGP) for 2014-15 • Produced key points for principals and county offices

Appendix E: Teacher Practice Instrument Selection Data

The following table illustrates the distribution of teacher practice instruments chosen by the 571 districts that completed the survey.

Teacher Practice Instrument	Number	Percentage
Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching (2013 Edition)	97	17%
Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching (2011 Edition)	136	24%
Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching (2007 Edition)	96	17%
Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching: Instructionally Focused Edition (2013)	8	1%
Stronge Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Performance System	65	11%
Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) Teacher Evaluation Standards	44	8%
Marzano's Causal Teacher Evaluation Model	53	9%
The Marshall Rubrics	35	6%
Rhode Island Model: Teacher Evaluation & Support System (Edition II)	7	1%
The New Jersey LoTi Teacher Evaluation	4	1%
Other instrument approved through RFQ process	26	5%
Total	571	100%

Appendix F: Principal Practice Instrument Selection Data

571 districts completed the survey. Some of these have one person who acts as superintendent/principal and is evaluated by the local board of education. These districts are not required to choose a principal practice instrument and have been placed in the other (or not applicable) category.

The following table illustrates the distribution of principal practice instruments chosen by the 571 districts that have completed the survey and have selected one.

Principal Practice Instrument	Number	Percentage
The Marshall Principal Evaluation Rubrics	132	23%
Multidimensional Principal Performance Rubric (MPPR)	106	19%
Stronge Leader Effectiveness Performance Evaluation Model	113	20%
Marzano's School Leadership Evaluation Model	64	11%
Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) Balanced Leadership: Principal Evaluation System	48	8%
Focal Point Principal Evaluation Instrument	9	2%
The New Jersey LoTi Principal Evaluation Instrument	11	2%
Multidimensional Leadership Performance System	5	1%
Rhode Island Model: Building Administrator Evaluation & Support Model (Edition II)	9	2%
District Developed	6	1%
Other (or not applicable)	68	12%
Total	571	100%

Appendix G: 2013-14 Principal and AP/VP Evaluation Leadership Instruments⁴

2013-14 State Practice Instrument for Evaluation Leadership: Principal Evaluation

Domain 1: Building Knowledge and Collaboration

Component	Highly Effective Exceptional Practice and Outcomes	Effective Consistent Practice and Outcomes	Partially Effective Inconsistent Practice and Outcomes	Ineffective Unacceptable Practice and Outcomes	Examples of Evidence
1A. Preparing Teachers for Success	Actively solicits teacher input and involvement in providing ongoing opportunities to increase teachers' knowledge of evaluation instrument and shared understanding of effective teaching	Provides ongoing opportunities to increase teachers' knowledge of evaluation instrument and shared understanding of effective teaching	Inconsistently provides opportunities to increase teachers' knowledge of evaluation instrument and shared understanding of effective teaching	Fails to provide opportunities to increase teachers' knowledge of evaluation instrument and shared understanding of effective teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher surveys following training - Written communication to teachers and school community - Faculty meeting agendas
	Articulates vision of effective teaching clearly and frequently; vision is widely shared by stakeholders	Articulates vision of effective teaching	Inconsistently articulates vision of effective teaching	Fails to articulate vision of effective teaching	
1B. Building Collaboration	Provides effective, collaborative leadership to School Improvement Panel (ScIP), ensuring the group exceeds required responsibilities	Ensures ScIP fulfills required responsibilities	Holds ScIP accountable inconsistently for fulfilling required responsibilities	Fails to ensure ScIP fulfills required responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ScIP meeting agendas - Written communication to teachers - Survey results - Aggregate evaluation data - Teacher team meeting agendas, logs, and other documents
	Enables shared learning from aggregate evaluation data	Shares aggregate evaluation data with ScIP	Inconsistently shares aggregate evaluation data with ScIP	Fails to share aggregate evaluation data with ScIP	
	Leads evaluation process with transparent, regular communication	Provides regular communication on evaluation issues	Provides limited communication about evaluation issues	Fails to communicate about evaluation issues	

Domain 2: Executing the Evaluation System Effectively

Component	Highly Effective Exceptional Practice and Outcomes	Effective Consistent Practice and Outcomes	Partially Effective Inconsistent Practice and Outcomes	Ineffective Unacceptable Practice and Outcomes	Examples of Evidence
2A. Fulfilling Requirements of the Evaluation System	Always completes observations with fidelity to district and state requirements	Always completes observations with fidelity to district and state requirements	Usually completes observations with fidelity to district and state requirements	Fails to complete observations with fidelity to district and state requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schedule of observations - Schedule of walkthroughs - Sample of observation reports
	Meets all evaluation deadlines and ensures that other administrators who report to the principal also do	Meets all evaluation deadlines	Meets majority of evaluation deadlines	Fails to meet multiple evaluation deadlines	
	Regularly coordinates and/or conducts "walkthroughs" of all classrooms in building	Regularly coordinates and/or conducts "walkthroughs" of classrooms of struggling teachers	Rarely coordinates and/or conducts "walkthroughs" of classrooms	Fails to coordinate or conduct "walkthroughs" of classrooms	
Component	Highly Effective	Effective	Partially Effective	Ineffective	Examples of Evidence

⁴ The New Jersey Department of Education expresses appreciation to the District of Columbia Public Schools, Newark Public Schools, and the Rhode Island Department of Education whose principal evaluation instruments informed this work.

	Exceptional Practice and Outcomes	Consistent Practice and Outcomes	Inconsistent Practice and Outcomes	Unacceptable Practice and Outcomes	
2B. Providing Feedback and Planning for Growth	Guarantees observation reports and annual performance reports provide thorough, personalized feedback aligned to components of evaluation rubric	Guarantees observation reports and annual performance reports provide satisfactory level of feedback aligned to components of evaluation rubric	Allows some observation reports and annual performance reports to provide limited feedback aligned to components of evaluation rubric	Fails to guarantee observation reports and annual performance reports provide feedback aligned to components of evaluation rubric	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observation reports - Annual performance report - Evaluation data - Student learning data - List of professional development activities
	Analyzes trends in evaluation and student learning data to guide targeted professional development	Identifies trends in evaluation and student learning data to guide targeted professional development	Inadequately identifies trends in evaluation and student learning data to guide targeted professional development	Fails to use trends in evaluation and student learning data to guide targeted professional development	
2C. Assuring Reliable, Valid Observation Results	Leads calibration activities such as ongoing training, viewing instruction with other observers, and discussing shared understandings of effective classroom instruction	Participates in calibration activities such as ongoing training, viewing instruction with other observers, and discussing shared understandings of effective classroom instruction	Minimally participates in calibration activities such as ongoing training and viewing instruction with other observers	Fails to participate in calibration activities such as ongoing training and viewing instruction with other observers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training agendas and rosters - Schedule of observations and co-observations
	Completes State requirement for co-observing twice during school year; provides opportunity for all observers in school to share learning from co-observation experience	Completes State requirement for co-observing twice during school year	Completes only 1 of 2 State required co-observations during school year	Fails to complete any of the State required co-observations during school year	
2D. Assuring High-Quality Student Growth Objectives (SGOs)	Makes certain all teachers create rigorous, curriculum-aligned SGOs with specified methods of assessing achievement of goals	Makes certain all teachers create feasible, curriculum-aligned SGOs with specified methods of assessing achievement of goals	Makes certain a majority of teachers create feasible, curriculum-aligned SGOs with specified methods of assessing achievement of goals	Fails to ensure a majority of teachers create feasible, curriculum-aligned SGOs with specified methods of assessing achievement of goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sample of SGOs
	Ensures SGOs are recorded, monitored, and assessed accurately while enabling real-time learning from pursuit of objectives	Ensures SGOs are recorded, monitored, and assessed accurately	Inconsistently ensures SGOs are recorded, monitored, and assessed accurately	Fails to ensure SGOs are recorded, monitored, and assessed accurately	

2013-14 State Practice Instrument for Evaluation Leadership: AP/VP Evaluation

Component	Highly Effective Exceptional Practice and Outcomes	Effective Consistent Practice and Outcomes	Partially Effective Inconsistent Practice and Outcomes	Ineffective Unacceptable Practice and Outcomes	Examples of Evidence
A. Fulfilling Requirements of the Evaluation System	Always completes observations with fidelity to district and state requirements	Always completes observations with fidelity to district and state requirements	Usually completes observations with fidelity to district and state requirements	Fails to complete observations with fidelity to district and state requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schedule of observations - Schedule of walkthroughs - Sample of observation reports
	Meets all evaluation deadlines and ensures other administrators also do	Meets all evaluation deadlines	Meets majority of evaluation deadlines	Fails to meet multiple evaluation deadlines	
	Conducts “walkthroughs” of classrooms beyond those assigned by the principal	Regularly conducts assigned “walkthroughs” of classrooms	Rarely conducts assigned “walkthroughs” of classrooms	Fails to conduct “walkthroughs” of classrooms	
B. Providing Feedback and Planning for Growth	Guarantees that assigned observation reports and annual performance reports provide thorough, personalized feedback aligned to components of evaluation rubric	Guarantees that assigned observation reports and annual performance reports provide satisfactory level of feedback aligned to components of evaluation rubric	Allows some assigned observation reports and annual performance reports to provide limited feedback aligned to components of evaluation rubric	Fails to guarantee assigned observation reports and annual performance reports provide feedback aligned to components of evaluation rubric	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observation reports - Annual performance report - Evaluation data - Student learning data - List of professional development activities
C. Assuring Reliable, Valid Observation Results	Organizes and participates in calibration activities such as ongoing training, viewing instruction with other observers, and discussing shared understandings of effective classroom instruction	Participates in calibration activities such as ongoing training, viewing instruction with other observers, and discussing shared understandings of effective classroom instruction	Minimally participates in calibration activities such as ongoing training and viewing instruction with other observers	Fails to participate in calibration activities such as ongoing training and viewing instruction with other observers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training agendas and rosters - Schedule of observations and co-observations
	Completes State requirement for co-observing twice during school year; shares learning from co-observation experiences with colleagues in order to strengthen observation process	Completes State requirement for co-observing twice during school year	Completes only 1 of 2 State required co-observations during school year	Fails to complete any State required co-observations during school year	
D. Assuring High-Quality Student Growth Objectives (SGOs)	Supports all assigned teachers in the creation of rigorous, curriculum-aligned SGOs with specified methods of assessing achievement of goals	Supports all assigned teachers in the creation of feasible, curriculum-aligned SGOs with specified methods of assessing achievement of goals	Supports some assigned teachers in the creation of feasible, curriculum-aligned SGOs with specified methods of assessing achievement of goals	Fails to support assigned teachers in the creation of feasible, curriculum-aligned SGOs with specified methods of assessing achievement of goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sample of SGOs

Appendix H: Glossary and Acronyms

AchieveNJ – The new educator evaluation and support system outlined in regulations that support the *TEACHNJ Act*, implemented statewide in SY13-14.

Annual Summative Evaluation Rating (or Summative Rating) – An annual evaluation rating that is based on appraisals of educator practice and student performance, and is the sum of all measures captured in a teaching staff member's evaluation rubric. The four summative performance categories are Highly Effective, Effective, Partially Effective, and Ineffective.

Corrective Action Plan (CAP) – An individual professional development plan for educators who are rated Ineffective or Partially Effective on the annual summative evaluation, focused on meeting the needs for improvement identified through the evaluation. Teachers with a CAP will receive an additional mid-year observation and conference.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) – The state standards for English language arts and math, adopted by the State Board of Education in 2010, which define what is expected of students at each grade level.

Chief School Administrator (CSA) – The superintendent or designee in charge of a school district.

District Evaluation Advisory Committee (DEAC) – The DEAC oversees and guides the planning and implementation of the district board of education's evaluation policies and procedures.

Evaluation Rubric – A set of criteria, measures, and processes used to evaluate all teaching staff members in a specific school district or local education agency. Evaluation rubrics consist of measures of professional practice, based on educator practice instruments and student outcomes. Each district board of education will have an evaluation rubric specifically for teachers; another specifically for principals, assistant principals, and vice principals; and evaluation rubrics for other categories of teaching staff members.

Evaluation Pilot Advisory Committee (EPAC) – The statewide advisory group convened at the start of the evaluation pilot in 2011 to provide feedback and guidance to the State in developing evaluation policies.

Observation – A method of collecting data on the performance of a teaching staff member's assigned duties and responsibilities that will be included in the determination of the annual summative evaluation rating.

- **Announced Observation:** An observation for which the person conducting an observation for the purpose of evaluation will notify the teaching staff member of the date and the class period when the observation will be conducted.
- **Co-observation:** An observation for which two or more people observe simultaneously, or at alternate times, the same lesson or portion of a lesson for the purpose of increasing accuracy and consistency among observers. Also known as “double scoring.”
- **Long Observation:** An observation for the purpose of evaluation that is conducted for a minimum duration of 40 minutes or one class period, whichever is shorter.
- **Post-observation Conference:** A meeting, either in-person or remotely between the teaching staff member and the person who conducted the observation for the purpose of evaluation, to discuss the data collected in the observation.
- **Short Observation:** An observation for the purpose of evaluation that is conducted for at least 20 minutes.
- **Unannounced Observation:** An observation for which the person conducting an observation for the purpose of evaluation will not notify the teaching staff member of the date or time when the observation will be conducted.

Observation Instrument – A teaching practice observation instrument or principal evaluation observation instrument selected by a district from state-approved lists. The instrument provides scales or dimensions

that capture competencies of professional performance, and differentiation of a range of professional performance as described by the scales, which must be shown in practice and/or research studies. The scores from the instrument, whenever applicable, are components of the teaching staff member's evaluation rubrics and the scores are included in the summative evaluation rating for the individual.

Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) – A consortium of 19 states plus the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands working together to develop a common set of K-12 assessments in English and math anchored in what it takes to be ready for college and careers (<http://www.parcconline.org/about-parcc>).

Professional Development (PD) – A comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving teachers' and administrators' effectiveness in raising student achievement.

Professional Development Plan (PDP) – The Teacher PDP is an individualized plan, which includes at least 20 hours per year of qualifying activities, developed annually by each teacher's supervisor in consultation with the teacher and aligned with the Professional Standards for Teachers. The School Leader PDP is an individualized plan that he or she develops annually in collaboration with the chief school administrator and that aligns with the Professional Standards for School Leaders.

School Improvement Panel (ScIP) – A group required in each school by the *TEACHNJ Act* to include the school principal or designee, an assistant principal or vice principal, and a teacher who has a demonstrated record of success in the classroom. The ScIP's role is to ensure, oversee, and support the implementation of the district's evaluation, professional development, and mentoring policies at the school level.

Student Growth Objective (SGO) – An academic goal that teachers and administrators set and supervisors approve for groups of students.

Student Growth Percentile (SGP) – A specific metric for measuring individual student progress on statewide assessments by tracking how much a student's test scores have changed relative to other students statewide with similar scores in previous years.

TEACHNJ Act (Teacher Effectiveness and Accountability for the Children of New Jersey Act) – The tenure reform law passed unanimously by the New Jersey Legislature and signed into law by Governor Chris Christie in August, 2012. The AchieveNJ evaluation and support system was developed to support requirements of this law.