

Evaluating Teachers with Extended Leaves/Absences

Requirements for Summative Evaluation Ratings

Under AchieveNJ, all teachers are evaluated on multiple measures of teacher practice and student achievement. Even teachers who are not present for a portion of student school days may receive a summative evaluation rating as long as they have **both a practice score and a student achievement score** meeting the minimum requirements summarized in the chart below and described in more detail in the sections that follow.

Component	Minimum Requirements
Teacher Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 observations¹ (non-tenured teachers) • 2 observations (tenured teachers) • 1 extra observation if on a Corrective Action Plan
Student Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Student Growth Objective (SGO) scores or • 1 median Student Growth Percentile (mSGP) score and at least 1 SGO score

Teachers without both component scores should not receive a final summative rating for that school year.

Teacher Practice Requirements

Observation requirements for teachers are explained in the following chart:

Teacher Status	Minimum Observations (at least 20 minutes each)	Multiple Observers
Non-tenured	3	Required
Tenured	2	Recommended
Corrective Action Plan	Plus One	Required

Additional notes on observations:

- **Announced vs. Unannounced:** Within the minimum requirements, all teachers must have at least one unannounced and one announced observation with a pre-conference.
- **Non-tenured teachers present for less than 40% total school days in an academic year:** A minimum of 2 observations are required.
- **Post-conferences:** Post-conferences between teachers and their supervisors are required following each observation. These conferences must all be face-to-face for non-tenured teachers and at least one must be face-to-face for tenured teachers.

A teacher should not receive a final teacher practice score (and thus cannot receive a summative evaluation rating) unless the minimum observation requirements have been met.

Student Achievement Requirements

Student Growth Objectives (SGOs) and Median Student Growth Percentiles (mSGPs): All teachers must set at least one SGO and must calculate and record at least one SGO score by the end of the school year. Teachers who do not instruct 4th- 8th-grade Language Arts and 4th- 7th-grade Math must record two SGO scores.

¹ Teachers present for less than 40% of the total school days in an academic year must receive at least 2 observations. Districts with waivers should refer to the conditions of their waivers for observation requirements.

- For teachers on extended leave, observations and SGOs may have to occur in a narrower timeframe. For SGOs, it is best if teachers are present for a continuous 9-week period. In cases where this is not possible the teacher should set SGOs for as much time as is available, provided that the teacher has an opportunity to have a significant impact on students' learning during that abbreviated period of time.

Teachers who did not set SGO(s) before the deadline due to an extended absence should set the SGO(s) as soon as possible after returning to the classroom.

In order to receive the mSGP score, teachers must:

- Instruct a 4th-8th-grade Language Arts or 4th-7th-grade Math class assessed by the state standardized exam;
- Have at least 20 separate students with SGPs enrolled at least 70 percent of the time prior to the test; and
- Be the teacher of record at least 60 percent of the time prior to the exam.

Teachers who do not meet the above requirements due to an extended absence will not receive an mSGP score and must calculate and record two SGO scores before the end of the school year.

Implications for Tenure

Earning Tenure: According to the TEACHNJ Act, to earn tenure all teachers hired after August 12, 2012 must:

- Be employed in the school district for
 - Four consecutive calendar years;
 - Four consecutive academic years plus one day at the beginning of the succeeding academic year; or
 - The equivalent of more than four academic years within a period of any five years.
- Earn at least two summative evaluation ratings of Effective or Highly Effective within the last three academic or calendar years leading to tenure.

Impact of Extended Leave on Tenure: According to the TEACHNJ Act, to earn tenure all teachers hired after August 12, 2012 must:

- Be employed in the school district for
 - Four consecutive calendar years;
 - Four consecutive academic years plus one day at the beginning of the succeeding academic year; or
 - The equivalent of more than four academic years within a period of any five years.
- Earn at least two summative evaluation ratings of Effective or Highly Effective within the last three academic or calendar years leading to tenure.

For example, if after the first mentoring year, a teacher does not receive a summative rating for one year but has two years of at least Effective ratings, an extended absence may not delay the earning of tenure. However, if a teacher has earned a Partially Effective or lower rating within the last three years leading to tenure and did not receive a rating one of those years, the teacher must wait to earn an Effective or better rating to be eligible as shown below. The table below provides operational guidance but is not exhaustive. LEAs should feel free to reach out to the Department for additional support as needed.

Scenario	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Result in Year 5
No Leave of Absence	Mentoring Year – no impact on tenure	Less than Effective	Effective	Effective	Tenure is earned after one day of employment.
Leave in Year 3 with two years of Effective ratings	Mentoring Year – no impact on tenure	Effective or higher	Leave from Sept. - Apr.; No Rating	Effective	Tenure is earned later in the year (exact month depends on length of leave)

Leave in Year 3 with one year of a Partially Effective rating in Year 2	Mentoring Year – no impact on tenure	Less than Effective	Leave from Sept. - Apr.; No Rating	Effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rating of Effective or Highly Effective results in tenure being awarded. • A rating of Partially Effective or Ineffective and tenure is not awarded.
Leave in Year 3 with a Partially Effective rating in Year 4	Mentoring Year – no impact on tenure	Effective or higher	Leave from Sept. - Apr.; No Rating	Partially Effective	

Losing Tenure: The TEACHNJ Act establishes standards for filing an inefficiency tenure charge against a tenured teacher in accordance with the chart below:

Summative Rating A	Summative Rating B (Consecutive)	Action
Ineffective	Ineffective	The superintendent shall file a charge of inefficiency. ²
Partially Effective	Ineffective	
Ineffective	Partially Effective	The superintendent may file a charge of inefficiency or may defer by filing written evidence of exceptional circumstances. After the following summative evaluation (i.e., the third consecutive), the superintendent shall file a charge of inefficiency if the rating is Ineffective or Partially Effective.
Partially Effective	Partially Effective	

The following chart displays how a missing summative evaluation rating **could affect** a tenured teacher. Summative Ratings 1, 2, and 3 represent three consecutive years during a teacher’s tenure:

Summative Rating 1	Summative Rating 2	Summative Rating 3	Action
Ineffective	No Rating	Ineffective	The superintendent shall file a charge of inefficiency.
Partially Effective	No Rating	Ineffective	
Ineffective	No Rating	Partially Effective	The superintendent may file a charge of inefficiency or may defer the filing until the next year; in the following year (i.e., the fourth consecutive year), the superintendent shall file a charge of inefficiency if the annual rating is Ineffective or Partially Effective.
Partially Effective	No Rating	Partially Effective	

² In addition, a superintendent **may** file a charge of inefficiency without two years of poor summative evaluation ratings and may also file tenure charges for incapacity, conduct unbecoming such a teaching staff member, or other just cause.

Evaluation of Substitutes

New Jersey's evaluation requirements apply to teaching staff members who are employed in a public school district and do NOT apply to a temporary substitute who is not earning tenure in the district. However, the

Department recommends that any staff member responsible for students be appropriately monitored through walkthroughs or observations to assure that students receive proper instruction.

Long-term substitutes under contract in the district who are currently working toward earning tenure or may soon be working toward earning tenure in the district should be evaluated in the same way all contract teachers are evaluated in that district.

For more Information

- Visit the [AchieveNJ website](#)
- Contact your school and district administration to ask about your School Improvement Panel and District Evaluation Advisory Committee.
- Questions or feedback? E-mail educatorevaluation@doe.state.nj.us, or call the AchieveNJ Help Line at 609-376-3974.