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Subject: Observation & Evaluation Protocols During COVID 19

Regardless of how we open, a virtual schedule, a hybrid schedule, or an in-person schedule, we will still have to evaluate staff members. One of the most challenging matters will be the supervision and evaluation of classroom teachers. Law, Code, Board Policy, CBA procedures, and district practices are well established but will require us to be creative as we deal with the problems that arise because of the nature of our school schedule for students and staff.

The purpose of staff supervision and evaluation is to improve performance by assessing strengths, identifying areas that are in need of improvement/identifying areas of deficiency and then, providing staff with suggestions about how to maintain their areas of highly effective and/or effective performance and/or how to improve their performance in those areas that are either in need of improvement (partially effective) or which are ineffective.

What follows is information and guidance about the requirements for teacher observations and evaluations of non-tenure and tenure instructional staff.

School leaders must be familiar with the legal requirements for the observation of teachers. These requirements are not optional; they are mandatory! Although administrators have broad discretion about the when, how and what of observations, there are certain requirements that cannot be ignored. Please remember that the procedural aspects of the evaluation MAY compromise the validity of the evaluation, especially as it may affect a future tenure dismissal hearing.

All teachers, principals, APs/VPs and Other Certificated Staff who are to be evaluated and receive summative scores must be notified of policies and procedures related to the evaluation rubrics by October 1, 2020.

Non Tenure teachers must be observed and evaluated at least three (3) times during each school year but not less than once each semester. All evaluations must be completed before April 30, except for those teachers hired after September 30. Each evaluation must be followed by a conference between the teaching staff member and his/her supervisor. The purpose of the procedure is to make a recommendation concerning reemployment, to identify any deficiencies of the teaching staff member, to improve professional competence and to provide assistance to the teaching staff member (NJSA 18A:27-3.1).

Tenure teachers must be evaluated at least two times per year for at least 20 minutes each. There must be one unannounced observation and one announced observation preceded by pre-conference, which must occur at least one but not more than seven work days prior to the observation. The chief school administrator has discretion to decide if additional observations (beyond the two required) will occur and if they will be announced/unannounced, if they will be preceded by a pre-conference and whether or not they will be longer than 20 minutes.

A post-conference must follow every observation and must take place within 15 teacher work days. The post-observation conference must be held prior to further evaluative observations.

The teacher and the administrator must discuss data and the evidence collected from the observation, as well as additional evidence brought to the conference related to the district's teacher practice instrument and the teacher's Professional Development Plan or progress made on a Corrective Action Plan, where applicable.

One written report is required for each observation; it may be signed (electronically or on paper) by the supervisor who conducted the observation/post-observation and the observed teacher. The teacher may attach a written objection to the observation within 10 work days.

It is also important for administrators to remember that all observers must be trained pursuant to NJAC 6A:10-2.2 (b), as follows:

1. Receive updates and refresher training, including training on each component of the evaluated teaching staff member's evaluation rubric, before he/she evaluates the teaching staff member
2. Complete at least two (2) co-observations during the school year

There are other procedural requirements relative to the evaluation process for teaching staff members, which are outlined in **NJAC 6A:10-2.4 c.**

**Please see [Overview of Observation and Summative Practices](#) for more information.**

Of note, especially during the current health emergency, we must be aware of any modifications of the evaluation process resulting from waivers issued by the DOE, or temporary legal or regulatory changes.

[Department Releases 2020-2021 Educator Evaluation Guidance](#)