

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Executive Order to Implement New Policies for the 2020-2021 School Year

01/11/2021

TRENTON - Governor Phil Murphy today signed Executive Order No. 214 (<https://nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-214.pdf>) to affect the following changes for the 2020-2021 school year: 1) waiver of the graduation assessment test requirement for any 12th grade student who has satisfied all other statutory graduation requirements; 2) removal of Student Growth Objectives (SGOs) as a component of formal educator evaluations; and 3) extension of the time in which certificated teachers or those in the process of becoming certificated teachers can serve as substitute teachers.

"The pandemic has presented significant challenges to school districts across our State that have affected our administrators, educators, staff, and students," said **Governor Murphy**. "Today's executive order will provide sensible adjustments to support our school districts during this unprecedented time."

"Today's action, which provides a meaningful step towards helping our education system adapt to the challenges posed by COVID-19, is the direct result of ongoing engagement with stakeholders," said **Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan, Acting Commissioner of Education**. "This collaboration will help ensure that districts have the flexibility needed to better address students' and educators' instructional and support needs, while maintaining stability and continuity in classroom instruction."

Effective immediately, the executive order will direct the following:

Waive Graduation Assessment Requirement

To receive a high school diploma in New Jersey, a student must demonstrate proficiency on a state assessment and satisfy statutory requirements with respect to credits, curriculum content, and attendance. Executive Order No. 214 will waive the graduation proficiency test requirement for all 12th grade students who have not yet met the requirement. All other statutory graduation requirements remain in place.

Remove SGOs from Teacher Evaluations

Student Growth Objectives (SGOs) are measurable and specific academic goals for groups of students set by educators in consultation with their supervisors. In light of the pandemic, Executive Order No. 214 will remove SGOs as a component of formal educator evaluations for the 2020-2021 school year. As a result, all educators will be evaluated solely on observations conducted by supervisors, principals, or other school leaders. SGOs may still be utilized for other purposes, such as professional development.

Extend Service Time Limitations for Certain Substitutes

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, Executive Order No. 214 will help districts manage the increase in temporary and permanent teacher vacancies by allowing (1) those in the process of becoming certificated teachers to fill teaching vacancies for a maximum of 60 school days instead of 20 school days; and 2) fully certificated teachers who are currently employed as substitutes in an area outside of their credentials to fill teaching vacancies for a maximum of 60 school days instead of 40 school days.

Governor Phil Murphy

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