

Terminology Guide

APPR - Annual Professional Performance Review

Just like students, teachers and principals will now be given a number grade at the end of every year that represents their effectiveness rating. This is thanks to the new state-required evaluation system called the Annual Professional Performance Review (or “APPR”). Teachers and principals have always been evaluated and held to standards, but the new system is more governed by rules set by the state – and, for the first time ever, a portion of teacher evaluation is directly tied to student performance on standardized tests.

1. Each teacher and principal in grades K-12 will receive a rating of either: highly effective, effective, developing or ineffective – every year.
2. Teacher and principal ratings will be based on a 100-point score. A score between 0-64 would rate a teacher as “ineffective.” Those with a score of 65-74 points are rated “developing,” and 75 to 90 points signifies “effective.” A score of 91-100 gives a teacher a rating of “highly effective.”
3. The 100-point score will come from three areas: 60 percent will be based on observations of teachers in the classroom and other factors that measure how effective their teaching practices are; 20 to 25 percent will come from student growth based on state tests OR progress made toward meeting student-learning targets (ex: Student Learning Objectives or SLOs); and the final 15 to 20 percent will be based on measures of student achievement that are selected by each school district. All three sections are guided by New York State Education Department regulations in terms of who does the evaluating, what can be included in the scoring and how the scoring rubrics are developed.
4. The exact details of the ratings will vary by district as a result of district policies and negotiations that are included in local teacher and administrator contracts.
5. For subjects without a state assessment test (such as in grades outside of 4-8), districts may use a Student Learning Objective (SLO) to gauge student growth. A SLO is an academic goal for a group of students set at the beginning of the year. Students receive a score, based on some type of assessment generated and scored by the district (ex: multiple choice test). SLOs must be based on student learning that is measurable, and must also be aligned to New York State’s Common Core Learning Standards.

LOCAL ASSESSMENTS

In addition to state assessments, 15-20% of an APPR score can be based on local assessments. Local assessments are also called SLO's, and include MAP, STAR, DIBELS, and AIMSweb, and teacher created assessments.

SLO - Student Learning Objective

Educators who teach a course that does not have a state exam must use Student Learning Objectives to determine part of their evaluation. Here is how this process works: Teachers that need to use an SLO must give a pre-assessment (benchmark) to their students. This exam could be a district, regional or corporate created test that would assess the students in what content and skills the children should obtain at the end of the school year. Basically it is giving the students an abbreviated version of the final exam. Almost all the students will score poorly on the pre-assessment because they have

not learned the curriculum yet and achieve a low baseline level. After the “pre-assessments” are scored, the districts make a prediction as to how their students will perform on the final assessment of the year. If the teacher does not meet this “expected outcome of performance”, then that educator loses points on his or her evaluation score. Examples: Social Studies SLO - a 25 multiple choice test in September covering a wide range of topics that students have not yet been taught. A 50 question plus essay final exam administered in June. Scores from both will be compared.

Art SLO - baseline test in September consisting of "art related" questions - (artists, color, form art history). Final exam with similar questions and portfolio assessment (grade for artwork the student has completed). Again, both scores will be compared.

The drawback of SLO (local) assessments : students are expected to fail the initial benchmark exams in September, since they are being tested on material not yet learned. Many of our children will begin the school year in September, with up to 10 failed exams.

For elementary school students, these tests are completely separate from their class grades, and are not even factored into their report card grades.

For middle/high school students, the baseline tests in the beginning of the year do not count. The ones given at the end of the year are often graded as a final exams, and factor into their report card grades.

Benchmarks -

Name given the the SLO's (local assessments) given at the beginning of the school year.
Definition: A standard by which something can be measured or judged

STANDARDIZED LOCAL ASSESSMENTS

MAP- Measures of Academic Performance

MAP usually tests two subjects: Math and English. Generally takes about 2 hours to complete. MAP is a computerized test given three times a year. It is an “adaptive” test so it adjusts level of difficulty according to how the child answers the question. It is computerized, so unlike paper tests, schools require dedicated computers and lab space in order to administer it. It generates a lengthy report that teachers and administrators must be taught to interpret.

It is being administered to children as young as 5 in kindergarten some of whom are unable to read. So the test is given with headphones and read to the youngest children. MAP is a costly assessment choice. According to the research I have done, the approximate cost per student per year is \$25. Fees for admin. workshops which have to accompany the tests can run over \$7,000. The costs raise significantly when you include implementation, scoring, and other related costs. Administering MAP assessments also requires computer access for every student. The initial cost for a district with an enrollment of only 3,000 students would start at over \$80,000.

NWEA - Northwest Evaluation Association

NWEA is the company that develops the MAP test.

AIMSWEB -

Costs about \$20 per student. Similar to the MAP test, AIMSweb only tests two subjects: Math and English. Generally takes about 2 hours to complete. AIMSweb is a computerized test given three times a year. It is an “adaptive” test so it adjusts level of difficulty according to how the child answers the question. It is computerized, so unlike

paper tests, schools require dedicated computers and lab space in order to administer it. AIMSweb is a Pearson designed assessment.

DIBELS

Can cost between \$25 - \$40 per student. DIBELS are often administered in a one on one format, consisting of about 30 minutes for each child, three times per year. This obviously requires a tremendous amount of time taken out of classroom instruction.

STAR -

Can cost between \$10-\$15 per student. STAR tests only two subjects: Math and English. It is also a computerized test given three times a year. It is an “adaptive” test so it adjusts level of difficulty according to how the child answers the question. It is computerized, so unlike paper tests, schools require dedicated computers and lab space in order to administer it. STAR assessments can be completed in a relatively short period of time, but the test developers recommend administering the assessments weekly.

STATE ASSESSMENTS

ELA Exam - English Language Arts

The subject areas of this assessment include reading, vocabulary, spelling, listening, speaking and writing. This test is given once a year to grades 3-8. The test is spread out over three consecutive days, and can last up to 2 hours each of these days.

Math assessment

This assessment is given once a year to grades 3-8. The test is spread out over three consecutive days, and can last up to 2 hours each of these days.

Field Tests -

Testing companies often pay test subjects to get feedback on experimental test questions. Three times a year, the testing company Pearson uses NYS children to try out test questions for future exams **FREE OF CHARGE**. As a matter of fact, your taxpayer money covers the cost of administering these tests. There are scheduled stand alone field tests in the fall and the spring, and field test questions are embedded into the spring ELA and math state assessments. This, of course, makes the ELA and math assessments even longer than they already are. About a month before the field tests are distributed, the SED puts out a field test testing schedule. About half of NYS schools are selected in the fall, and the other half are selected in the spring. Not all grades are selected. The SED has instructed schools not to make parents aware of these tests and what they are for. In a memo from last year to NYS districts, they stated, "Students should not be informed of the connection between these field tests and State assessments". Field tests have no bearing on your child's report card grades, the teachers grades, or the school grades. No feedback is given for these tests by the testing company to districts. The field tests take up to 50 minutes to administer. Refusing these tests is a given. These tests yet again take precious time away from our children's classroom learning.

PARCC - The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers

PARCC assessments are essentially the same as the current math and ELA state Common Core assessments, but they are administered on a computer. The PARCC assessment will contain two portions – a performance-based assessment (PBA) and an

End-of-Year Assessment (EOY). The PBA will take place as near to the end of the school year as possible and will have ELA/literacy students analyze and write about a text and mathematics students apply skills, concepts and understandings to solve problems. The EOY will be administered when about 90 percent of the school year is complete. This section will focus on reading comprehension for ELA/literacy students and innovative problem solving for math students.

The PARCC assessments will be ready for states to administer during the 2014-15 school year.

PARCC received an \$186 million grant through the U.S. Department of Education's Race to the Top assessment competition to support the development and design of this assessment system.

RTI - Response to Intervention

A multi-tiered approach to help struggling learners. Students' progress is closely monitored at each stage of intervention to determine the need for further research-based instruction and/or intervention in general education, in special education, or both. RTI is the of the students throughout their normal classroom settings to determine if they need AIS. Instead of waiting for a student to fail, and THEN receive support, the point of RTI is to address the weaknesses as early as possible. The goal of RTI is early intervention. However, some educators feel that RTI may delay SPED services, as they need to wait for several RTI tests before referral, when teachers could identify who needs services earlier in the year.

AIS - Academic Intervention Service

A program designed to provide extra help in reading, speech language or math based on state, local and building level assessments. Its main purpose is to raise test scores. AIS is required for students who do not score a 3 or 4 on the state assessments in English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies, and can consist of small group instruction, whole class remediation, and one-on-one interventions. Whether or not parents can "opt-out" of AIS for their child is unclear. While some districts claim it is mandated, others will allow for the option. Another thing to consider - in some districts, AIS follows a test prep format, while other districts use it to aid with curriculum instruction and skills development. Check with your school and ask to see the type of work the child will be doing in his/her AIS class.

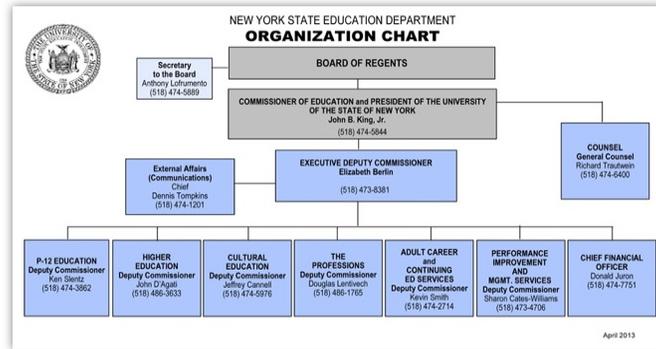
*AIS has become a "grey area". The state claims it is mandated, and SED lawyers have sent a memo to schools stating parents should be told they cannot opt-out of AIS.

However, some districts are still choosing to allow parents a choice. An argument can be made that the extreme drop in test scores should in fact invalidate them for use of important placement decisions.

NYSED - New York State Education Department

Overseen by the Board of Regents, and led by Commissioner John King. It is responsible for the supervision for all public schools in New York and all standardized testing, as well as the production and administration of state tests and Regents Examinations.

The main offices of the department are housed in the New York State Department of Education Building, located at 89 Washington Avenue in Albany, the state capital.



NYCDOE - New York City Department of Education

The New York City Department of Education is the branch of municipal government in New York City that manages the city's public school system. It is the largest school system in the United States, with over 1.1 million students taught in more than 1,700 separate schools. The department covers all five boroughs of New York City. The department is run by the New York City Schools Chancellor. The current chancellor is Dennis M. Walcott. The NYCDOE, while under the umbrella of the NYSED, can make up its own rules and regulations, in addition to that of the SED.

TITLE 1-

The Title I program under No Child Left Behind provides funds to local school districts to improve the education of disadvantaged students from birth through the 12th grade. It is the largest federal program supporting elementary and secondary education. Funds are distributed to school districts according to a set of four separate formulas: the Basic Grant, Concentration Grant, Targeted Assistance Grant, and the Education Finance Incentive Grant funding formulas. School districts have some discretion in how they distribute Title I funds among schools within the district, but the law requires them to prioritize the highest-poverty schools. Some districts receive no title 1 money. Some receive large sums. You can find out how much your district receives on the NYSED website. There are very strict guidelines as to what a school can use title 1 money for. Some uses for title 1 money:

Pre-K programs (universal pre-k)

Laptops/iPads

AIS

Free/supplemented lunch programs

Kindergarten screening tests

Teachers aides

Title 1 money is what was the "deciding factor" for many parents that did not opt their children out last spring. Many districts have claimed that if they do not have 95% participation of state assessments, their district would lose funds, services, and extra curricular activities for district students. This is simply not true. (See AYP and waiver info.)

An example of amounts of title 1 money:

Waiver

The information about the federal waiver is extremely convoluted and confusing. Many

school administrators themselves have had difficulty understanding just what this waiver means. here are the basics:

1) NYS was granted a waiver from the United States Department of Education in May 2012, so that NY has flexibility with implementing the federal law “No Child Left Behind”. In exchange, NY agreed to set higher standards, provide a rigorous curriculum aligned with the “Common Core” standards, and look at student growth and graduation rates in addition to test scores as a way to measure school performance.

2) New York was required to identify all schools as either “Priority Schools”, “Focus Schools”* or schools “in good standing”. Most schools on Long Island are “in good standing”. The designation of “in good standing” CAN’T BE CHANGED until the 2015-16 school year – regardless of test scores and student participation.

3) “Adequate Yearly Progress” (AYP) is the way NYS measures school performance. It includes evaluation of test scores, graduation rates, and participation on tests.

3) This means that if you are “in good standing”, your school has “immunity” from consequences of not making “Adequate Yearly Progress” (AYP) until the 2015-16 school year – IT DOESN’T MATTER HOW MANY KIDS TAKE OR DO NOT TAKE THE ASSESSMENT TESTS! According to the waiver, there is NO consequence for less than 95% participation on state tests, or for low scores.

4) This has been a big issue for some parents – if your school is in good standing and doesn’t make AYP for 3 consecutive years, the school is still NOT identified in any negative way during those 3 years! They still continue to be “in good standing”. NO plan has to be put in place, NO funding is affected at all. The school simply reports their progress to the state, as they’ve always done.

**Schools that were labeled “Priority” or “Focus” schools as of May 2012 have to implement an improvement plan and/or whole school reform.

AYP - Adequate Yearly Progress

This is a term established with the No Child Left Behind Act. Adequate Yearly Progress means that a school has made sufficient improvement in student performance over the course of one year. We are presently under a federal waiver (see information regarding waiver). But even if we were NOT under this waiver, this is how it would work.

Example: Your school did not meet AYP last year due to less than 95% participation.

This year: no changes. The school simply has the "negative mark" of not meeting AYP.

If the school fails to meet AYP a second year: the school is identified as being "in need of improvement". School must develop a 2 year improvement plan. Students are eligible in some cases to transfer to a district that has made AYP. 5-15% of title one money must be set aside/spent on teacher and professional development, and transportation costs for students choosing to transfer.

If the school fails for a third year in a row: schools continue with improvement plans.

Districts must make supplemental educational services available to low income students.

Up to 20% of title money must be set aside/used for professional development and transportation costs.

If schools then continue to fail to meet AYP by the end of the fourth year, extensive plans are put in place to replace teaching staff, administrators, and in some extreme cases, close the school (this action has been taken with NYC, Rochester, and Buffalo schools. This would NEVER happen as a result of a testing boycott).

We have never come across language that describes money being taken away from schools in any scenario. The title 1 funds (that already can only be used in very specific ways), is simply re-allocated for services specified by the SED.

RttT - Race To The Top

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), legislation designed to stimulate the economy, support job creation, and invest in critical sectors, including education. ARRA provided \$4.35 billion for the Race to the Top fund, of which approximately \$4 billion was used to fund comprehensive statewide reform grants under the Race to the Top program.

The Race to the Top program is a competitive four-year grant program designed to encourage and reward States that are creating the conditions for education innovation and reform; achieving significant improvement in student outcomes, including making substantial gains in student achievement, closing achievement gaps, and improving high school graduation rates; with the goal that students are prepared for success in college and careers. All reform plans must be submitted to the U.S. Dept. of Education for approval. New York developed a Race to the Top reform agenda, approved by the Dept. of Education, that integrates into other statewide goals, such as the Regents Reform Agenda. The State agenda aims to better prepare all students for "college and career success", use data to inform instruction, evaluate educators based on performance, and identify low-achieving schools. To accomplish this, the State adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), changed its systems for collecting and using student data, and created a new educator evaluation system (APPR). As of 2013, 18 states plus the District of Columbia have applied for and received RTTT funds for Phase 1 and 2, including New York. The amount of funds received varies by district and state. New York was awarded \$696,646,000. Half of this money goes to Title 1 districts that volunteered to participate in RTTT, the other half (approx \$350 million) goes to NYSED, to be used for implementing the state's educational reforms. This money may be used for paying testing companies, such as Pearson, to create NY assessments, for the scoring of assessments, for implementation of Common Core, and for "enhanced" student data collection. Each participating district was required to sign a "Memorandum of Agreement" for a Final Scope of Work, consisting of a detailed work plan, including the participating district's specific goals, activities, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures. This can be found here: <http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/application/mou.pdf>

NY districts that received RTTT funds: (funds are distributed over 4 years)
<http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/allocations/lea-allocations-12-05-12.pdf>

NCLB - No Child Left Behind

The federal legislation that requires accountability for students and teachers by yearly assessments in Grades 3-8. NCLB was responsible for the beginning of standards-based education reform based on the premise that "setting high standards and establishing measurable goals can improve individual outcomes in education." The Act required states to develop assessments in basic skills. To receive federal school funding, States must give these assessments to all students at select grade levels. NCLB expanded the

federal role in public education through annual testing, annual academic progress, report cards, teacher qualifications, and funding changes.

ESEA - Elementary and Secondary Education Act

"The ESEA was passed as a part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty" and has been the most far-reaching federal legislation affecting education ever passed by Congress. The act is an extensive statute that funds primary and secondary education, while explicitly forbidding the establishment of a national curriculum. It also emphasizes equal access to education and establishes high standards and accountability. In addition, the bill aims to shorten the achievement gaps between students by providing each child with fair and equal opportunities to achieve an exceptional education. As mandated in the act, the funds are authorized for professional development, instructional materials, for resources to support educational programs, and for parental involvement promotion. The act was originally authorized through 1970; however, the government has reauthorized the act every five years since its enactment. The current reauthorization of ESEA is the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, named and proposed by President George W. Bush." - Wikipedia

Title 1 and AYP come directly from this legislation. (See above)

CCLS - Common Core Learning Standards

The New York State P-12 Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy and the New York State Common Core Learning Standards for Mathematics include all of the national Common Core State Standards, in addition to the New York-recommended additions approved by the Board of Regents on January 10, 2011. New York State also added Prekindergarten standards. These standards are intended to express a progression of skills and knowledge that all students should attain at the end of each grade level to be on track for "college and career readiness". Many are under the impression that the CC was developed by the Federal Government. It was not. The nation's governors and corporate leaders founded Achieve, Inc. in 1996 as a bi-partisan organization to raise academic standards, graduation requirements, improve assessments, and strengthen accountability in all 50 states. The initial motivation for the development of the Common Core State Standards was part of the American Diploma Project. In 2009 the National Governors Association hired David Coleman and Student Achievement to write curriculum standards in the areas of literacy and mathematics instruction.

So why has CC essentially become a "national curriculum"? The copyright ensures that the standards will be the same throughout the nation, creating a de-facto national curriculum. The standards also carry a generous public license which waives the copyright notice for State Departments of Education to use the standards; however, two conditions apply. First, the use of the standards must be "in support" of the standards and the waiver only applies if the state has adopted the standards "in whole." This use of a copyright for public policy document is unprecedented in U.S. political history. The effect of the copyright and public license is consistency across the states; the standards cannot be changed or modified, creating in effect, a national curriculum.

To be eligible for RttT states had to adopt "internationally benchmarked standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the work place." This meant that in order for a state to be eligible for these grants, the states had to adopt the

Common Core State Standards or a similar career and college readiness curriculum.

The competition for these grants provided a major push for states to adopt the standards. The adoption dates for those states that chose to adopt the Common Core State Standards Initiative are all within the two years following this announcement. The common standards are funded by the governors and state schools chiefs, with additional support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, and others.

inBloom/Data Mining -

"inBloom Inc. is a non-profit corporation, funded by the Gates and Carnegie Foundations to the tune of \$100 million, created to collect personally identifiable student and teacher data from states and districts and share it with vendors. The data is being stored on a cloud run by Amazon.com, with an operating system created by Wireless/Amplify, a subsidiary of News Corporation owned by Rupert Murdoch. inBloom is planning to commercialize this data, with the agreement of states and districts, by offering it up to for-profit companies. All this is being done without parental notification or consent." - Class Size Matters

There is a tremendous amount of information on what data is being collected, when, and how, on this website - please check it out

<http://www.classsizematters.org/updated-faq-frequently-answered-questions-on-inbloom-inc/>

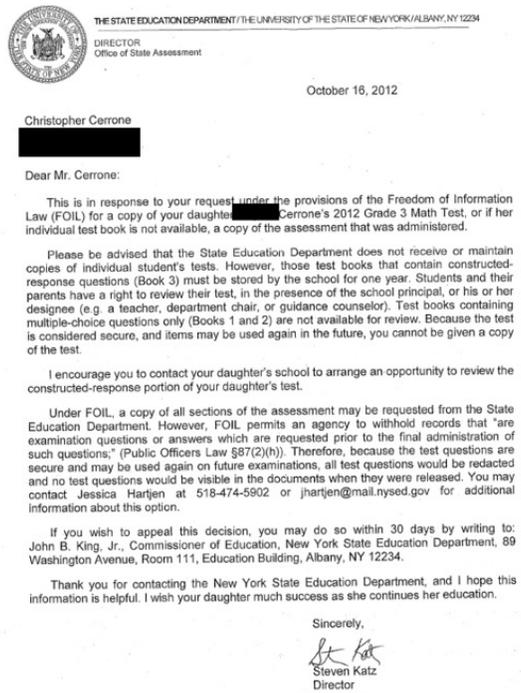
FERPA - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level.

The FERPA laws were amended on June 6, 1991, the U.S. Department of Education revised federal regulations concerning research with human beings, experimental procedures used in public schools to develop new instructional methods. Curricula or classroom management techniques are now exempt from the regulations. No institutional review board (IRB) review is necessary for experiments in public schools and therefore, no protections gained from IRB review are afforded to students. No explanation of potential risks is necessary. No permission is necessary. Protection has been essentially stripped away from children. U.S. children can legally be forced to take part in experiments to develop new instructional methods and curricula (psychological and otherwise) despite the objections of their parents. New ideas can legally be tested in individual public school classrooms with no accountability if something goes wrong.

FOIL - Freedom of Information Law

Allows members of the public to access records of governmental agencies. When parents tried to FOIL the state assessments that their children took, this is an excerpt from the response Chris Cerrone from "At the Chalk Face" got when he attempted to FOIL:



Freedom of Information Law requests for State Education Department records may be made by:

Mail:

Records Access Officer
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Ave, Room 121 EB
Albany, NY 12234
Phone: 518-408-1818
Fax: 518-473-2827
Sample FOIL Request for Records

E-Mail: FOIL@mail.nysed.gov

Fee for Duplication of Records:

SED charges the statutorily permitted fee of \$.25 per page for duplication of records requested under FOIL.

Board Of Regents-

The Regents are responsible for the general supervision of all educational activities within the State, presiding over The University and the New York State Education Department.

To understand what the Board of Regents is, and why we have this governing body, it's important to understand it's history.

"The Board of Regents of the USNY was established by statute in 1784 to provide oversight to King's College – today known as Columbia University – a private institution, and other colleges and academies incorporated in the state thereafter.

Originally the Board of Regents consisted of the governor, other state officers, and the mayors of New York City and Albany, plus 24 other persons who were appointed for life. This arrangement proved too unwieldy for day-to-day administration of the university, and in 1787 the legislature enacted a law that allowed individual educational institutions to have their own trustees and gave the Regents broader responsibilities for overseeing education in New York. The new law empowered the Regents to "visit and inspect all the colleges, academies, and schools" in the state, award higher academic degrees, hold and distribute funds, and exercise other powers of a corporation.

Early in the 19th century the Regents established standards for incorporating private academies and colleges, including specifying the texts or subjects that academies must teach to qualify for state aid. Aid was restricted to those students who had passed local entrance examinations. To combat the problem of academies lowering their standards in order to attract students and get state aid, during the later nineteenth century the Regents developed and instituted educational standards for high schools statewide, through use of the Regents examinations and syllabi." - Wikipedia

The Board of Regents oversees USNY. The Board includes 17 members elected by the New York State Legislature for five-year terms. Thirteen of the Regents represent the State's 13 judicial districts (one appointed from each district), and four are at-large. The Regents serve without salary. The Regents are responsible for hiring a Commissioner of Education. That is why, when we call for commissioner King's resignation, we ask that you call and write to the Board of Regents.

The Board of Regents uses NYSED as a vehicle to carry out policy created by the Regents. In other words, USNY's Board of Regents generally creates policy, whereas NYSED generally administers policy. The New York State Legislature can also create some education policy; such statutory education policy would become official education policy that the Commissioner of Education would also be responsible for administering. Merryl Tisch is the head of the Board of Regents, and therefore she holds the most power when it comes to education policy in NYS.

BOE - Board of Education

A group of community members invested in the local educational system that meets regularly to set policy, provide fiscal oversight, approve initiatives, and provide a setting for communication between the community and the academic institution. BOE members are elected by community members. They are also responsible for hiring school superintendents.

EXTRAS

Financial Benefactors

When Congress increased this year's budget for the Department of Education by \$11 billion, it set aside \$400 million to help states develop and administer the tests that the No Child Left Behind Act mandated for children in grades 3 through 8. Among the likely benefactors of the extra funds were the four companies that dominate the testing market -- three test publishers and one scoring firm.

Those four companies are Harcourt Educational Measurement, CTB McGraw-Hill, Riverside Publishing (a Houghton Mifflin company), and NCS Pearson. According to an October 2001 report in the industry newsletter Educational Marketer, Harcourt, CTB McGraw-Hill, and Riverside Publishing write 96 percent of the exams administered at the state level. NCS Pearson, meanwhile, is the leading scorer of standardized tests. Even without the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act, testing is a growing industry. The National Board on Educational Testing and Public Policy at Boston College compiled data from test sales each year, and reported that while test sales in 1955 were \$7 million (adjusted to 1998 dollars), that figure was \$263 million in 1997, an increase of more than 3,000 percent. Today, press reports put the value of the testing market anywhere from \$400 million to \$700 million.

DASA - Dignity for All Student Act

The Dignity for All Students Act was signed into law on September 13, 2010. The legislation amended State Education Law by creating a new Article 2, Dignity for All Students, and revising Section 801-a regarding instruction civility, citizenship, character education, tolerance, respect for others, and dignity. It combats bias-based bullying, harassment, and discrimination in public schools, and includes awareness and sensitivity in the relations of people including individuals of different races, weights, national origins, ethnicity, religions or religious practices, mental or physical abilities, sexes, sexual orientations, gender identities or expressions.

This could possibly be used if the school refuses to allow you to refuse on behalf of your child, or if the school does not allow the child to read quietly after refusing.

Refusal letters

Grades K-2 - will cover all local assessments

Date _____

Dear

We are writing today to formally inform _____ of our decision to refuse to allow our child, _____, to participate in any standardized assessments imposed on children across the state for the 2013-2014 school year. Our refusal should in no way reflect on the teachers, administration, or school board. This was not an easy decision for us, but we feel that we have no other choice. We simply see these tests as harmful, expensive, and a waste of time and valuable resources. Our child will not participate in

any assessments other than those solely used for diagnostic purposes for the individual classroom teachers.

We refuse to allow any data to be used for purposes other than the individual teacher's own formative or cumulative assessment. Any assessment whose data is used to determine school ranking, teacher effectiveness, state or federal longitudinal studies or any other purpose other than for the individual classroom teacher's own use to improve his or her instruction may not be presented to our child.

Therefore, _____ will not participate in the following:

- Any benchmark exams / pre-assessments / standardized assessments connected to "Student Learning Objectives", such as MAP/NWEA, AIMSweb, or STAR
- Any surveys, or "field tests" given by corporate or government entities or testing companies
- Any exam used to formulate an evaluation or score for _____ teachers or school

We believe in and trust our highly qualified and dedicated teachers and administrators. We believe in the high quality of teaching and learning that occurs at _____. We hope our efforts will be understood within the context in which they are intended: to support the quality of instruction promoted by (school name) _____, and to advocate for what is best for all children.

We anticipate that _____ will be treated fairly during assessment periods, as this was not his decision, but ours, as his parents. Since the benchmark assessments will be taking place early in the school year, please inform us as to the plan for _____ during the time when the assessments will take place. We do apologize in advance for the inconvenience to the administration, the faculty, and staff.

Sincerely,

Grades 3-6 - will cover all local assessments, state assessments, and field tests

Date _____

Dear

We are writing today to formally inform _____ of our decision to refuse to allow our child, _____, to participate in any standardized assessments imposed on children across the state for the 2013-2014 school year. Our refusal should in no way reflect on the teachers, administration, or school board. This was not an easy decision for us, but we feel that we have no other choice. We simply see these tests as harmful, expensive, and a waste of time and valuable resources. Our child will not participate in any assessments other than those solely used for diagnostic purposes for the individual classroom teachers. We refuse to allow any data to be used for purposes other than the individual teacher's own formative or cumulative assessment. Any assessment whose data is used to determine school ranking, teacher effectiveness, state or federal longitudinal studies or any other purpose other than for the individual classroom teacher's own use to improve his or her instruction may not be presented to our child.

Therefore, _____ will not participate in the following:

-Any benchmark exams / pre-assessments / standardized assessments connected to “Student Learning Objectives”, such as MAP/NWEA, AIMSweb, or STAR

-Any surveys, or “field tests” given by corporate or government entities or testing companies

-Any exam used to formulate an evaluation or score for _____ teachers or school

-Any state assessment, including the ELA and Math assessments

We believe in and trust our highly qualified and dedicated teachers and administrators.

We believe in the high quality of teaching and learning that occurs at _____.

We hope our efforts will be understood within the context in which they are intended: to support the quality of instruction promoted by (school name) _____, and to advocate for what is best for all children.

We anticipate that _____ will be treated fairly during assessment periods, as this was not his decision, but ours, as his parents. Since the benchmark assessments will be taking place early in the school year, please inform us as to the plan for _____ during the time when the assessments will take place. We do apologize in advance for the inconvenience to the administration, the faculty, and staff.

Sincerely,

Middle School Refusal Letter (7-8) - will cover all fall local assessments, all state assessments, and field tests. Specifies that the student WILL take local exams counted towards a final grade

Date _____

Dear

We are writing today to formally inform _____ of our decision to refuse to allow our child, _____, to participate in any standardized assessments imposed on children across the state for the 2013-2014 school year. Our refusal should in no way reflect on the teachers, administration, or school board. This was not an easy decision for us, but we feel that we have no other choice. We simply see these tests as harmful, expensive, and a waste of time and valuable resources. Our child will not participate in any assessments other than those solely used for the individual classroom teachers (diagnostic), regents exams, and those that will be used to calculate _____ report card grades.

We refuse to allow any data to be used for purposes other than the individual teacher’s own formative or cumulative assessment. Any assessment, besides final exams, whose data is used to determine school ranking, teacher effectiveness, state or federal longitudinal studies or any other purpose other than for the individual classroom teacher’s own use to improve his or her instruction may not be presented to our child.

Therefore, _____ will not participate in the following:

-Any state assessment

-Any benchmark exams / pre-assessments connected to "Student Learning Objectives"

-Any surveys, or "field tests" given by corporate or government entities or testing companies

-Any exam used to formulate an evaluation or score for _____ teachers or school, other than the final exams for each subject area

We believe in and trust our highly qualified and dedicated teachers and administrators.

We believe in the high quality of teaching and learning that occurs at _____.

We hope our efforts will be understood within the context in which they are intended: to support the quality of instruction promoted by the _____, and to advocate for what is best for all children.

We anticipate that _____ will be treated fairly during assessment periods, as this was not his decision, but ours, as his parents. Since the benchmark assessments will be taking place early in the school year, please inform us as to the plan for _____ during the time when the assessments will take place. We do apologize in advance for the inconvenience to the administration, the faculty, and staff.

Sincerely,

High School Refusal Letter - will cover all fall local assessments and field tests. Specifies that the student WILL take local exams counted towards a final grade and regents exams

Date _____

Dear

We are writing today to formally inform _____ of our decision to refuse to allow our child, _____, to participate in any standardized assessments imposed on children across the state for the 2013-2014 school year. Our refusal should in no way reflect on the teachers, administration, or school board. This was not an easy decision for us, but we feel that we have no other choice. We simply see these tests as harmful, expensive, and a waste of time and valuable resources. Our child will not participate in any assessments other than those solely used for the individual classroom teachers (diagnostic) and those that will be used to calculate _____ report card grades.

We refuse to allow any data to be used for purposes other than the individual teacher's own formative or cumulative assessment. Any assessment, besides final exams and regents assessments, whose data is used to determine school ranking, teacher effectiveness, state or federal longitudinal studies or any other purpose other than for the individual classroom teacher's own use to improve his or her instruction may not be

presented to our child.

Therefore, _____ will not participate in the following:

- Any benchmark exams / pre-assessments connected to “Student Learning Objectives”
- Any surveys, or “field tests” given by corporate or government entities or testing

companies

- Any exam used to formulate an evaluation or score for _____ teachers or school, other than the final exams and regents assessments for each subject area

We believe in and trust our highly qualified and dedicated teachers and administrators. We believe in the high quality of teaching and learning that occurs at _____. We hope our efforts will be understood within the context in which they are intended: to support the quality of instruction promoted by the _____, and to advocate for what is best for all children.

We anticipate that _____ will be treated fairly during assessment periods, as this was not his decision, but ours, as his parents. Since the benchmark assessments will be taking place early in the school year, please inform us as to the plan for _____ during the time when the assessments will take place. We do apologize in advance for the inconvenience to the administration, the faculty, and staff.

Sincerely,