
Current Trends

Current Trends in
Reform Efforts,
Educational Practices,
and Program
Evaluation Methods

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The public educational system in the United States is unlike any in the world. Public education is overseen on a federal level; however, most of the direction and funding is determined by individual states. Federal funding in the past has been attained by states with minimal requirements. In the present economic climate, federal funding has taken on a new role. Staying current with the new trends in reform, educational practices, and program evaluations must become a district leader's initial focus to ensure securing federal funding.

Educational Practices (past and present)

It seems, in New York State, educational practices change often. According to the New York State Education Department in 2000 all students entering into ninth grade in September 2001 were required to earn a Regents Diploma to graduate. The local diploma was to be phased out. This was a major shift for students in New York State. This was the beginning of many changes. The current practice for graduation requirements is changing once again. Students will be required to have 4 credits of math and science instead of 3 credits in each. This will impact scheduling, staffing, textbook purchases, and many other areas for every district.

In September 2000, all students entering the ninth grade were required to earn a Regents diploma. The following local diploma options are available for students who first enter grade nine in September 2002, 2003 or 2004:

- Students who score 55-64 on **any** of the required Regents examinations may earn a local diploma as determined by the local school district.
- Students with disabilities who fail one or more Regents Examinations and who pass the corresponding Regents Competency Test (RCT) will receive a local diploma (Instruction, Summary of Diploma Requirements 2002-2004, 2001).

The requirements remained the same for a Regents Diploma or a Regents diploma with Advanced Designation. The requirements for a local diploma changed slightly. The following local diploma options are available for students who first enter grade nine in September 2005:

- General education students who score 55-64 on no more than **three** of the required Regents examinations and who score 65 or above on at least two of the required Regents examinations may earn a local diploma as determined by the local school district.
- Students with disabilities who score 55-64 on any of the required Regents examinations may earn a local diploma.
- Students with disabilities who fail one or more Regents Examinations and who pass the corresponding Regents Competency Test (RCT) will receive a local diploma.
- Students who successfully appeal two Regents Examination scores within three points of the 65 passing score and who meet the other requirements of the appeals process specified in CR 100.5(d)(7) will earn a local diploma (Instruction, Summary of Diploma Requirements For 2005, 2005).

The requirements for a local diploma changed again in 2006. General education students who score 55-64 on no more than **two** of the required Regents examinations and who score 65 or above on at least two of the required Regents examinations may earn a local diploma as determined by the local school district. The change in the number of Regents examinations that general education students could score 55-64, went from **three** down to **two** (Instruction, Summary of Diploma Requirements 2006, 2006). In 2007 the number of Regents examinations that general education students could score 55-65 went down to **one** according to New York State Education Department. For students entering ninth grade in September 2008-2010 the option of a local diploma was limited to students with disabilities only. Students with disabilities who score 55-64 on any Regents examination receive a local diploma. Students with disabilities who fail one or more Regents Examinations and who pass the corresponding Regents

Competency Test (RCT) will receive a local diploma. Beginning in September 2011, students with disabilities entering the ninth grade will not be offered the Regents Competency Test (RCT). The New York State Education Department has eliminated the RCT. This is just the beginning of the changes. The New York State Education Department has eliminated the administration of January Regents examinations and the elimination of all foreign language Regents examinations. This will have a huge impact on students who have failed courses or who aspire to graduate early. Districts that operate on a semester schedule will now have to completely change their schedules. In these difficult economic times, New York State is taking drastic moves to save money and still qualify for Race To The Top funding.

Program Evaluations

The current uproar is over the new Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) for teachers and principals. One of the most controversial parts of the new APPR is the attachment of student growth to assessments. Also, the percentage of the evaluation based on student growth on assessment is currently at twenty percent. How is student growth going to be measured? Many teachers and principals are questioning the validity of this evaluation. How is student growth defined? How are students with disabilities measured? Are all districts measured the same? Are urban districts at a disadvantage? Are small rural districts able to compete? These are just a few questions many educators have. The new APPR is to go into effect beginning September 1, 2011. The need for a new evaluation does exist, but is New York State jumping to fast just to qualify for Race to the Top funds? There are many unknowns in this evaluation system; hopefully, it will improve with time and practice.

The primary answer to the measurement of student growth is the use of the PARCC assessment. PARCC (Partnership for Assessment for Readiness for College and Careers) is a 24-state consortium working together to develop next-generation K-12 assessments in English

and math. These new K-12 assessments will build a pathway to college and career readiness by the end of high school, mark students' progress toward this goal from 3rd grade up, and provide teachers with timely information to inform instruction and provide student support. The PARCC assessments will be ready for states to administer during the 2014-15 school year (PARCC Online, 2011). PARCC received \$186 million grant through U.S. Department of Education Race to the Top Funds. The assessments won't be ready for implementation until 2014-2015, and the implementation of the new APPR is 2011. This creates a problem for validity of the APPR used prior to the implementation of PARCC. There will be many legal issues that arise from this situation.

Technology will play a tremendous role in the implementation of the new APPR. In an effort to trim cost, New York State is considering online assessments. The Board of Regents is considering putting future Regents examinations online. The PARCC assessment may also be available online. Veteran teachers and principals will need to be current with technology. Many districts if not all districts will need to offer professional development on the new technology that will be used. Technology is already an issue with the credit recovery program. How do you monitor a student's progress? How do you assure the security of the assessments? How do you assure the integrity of the program? District leaders must address these issues and train their staff appropriately.

Reform

One of the biggest reforms in education today is the implementation of Common Core Standards. This is an effort by the U.S. Department of Education to standardize the curriculum across the nation. Today's students move from district to district and from state to state often. In

an effort to keep a students' education consistent, the implementation of Common Core Standards would offer a student the opportunity to stay current even after a move. The implementation of Common Core Standards will also create an expectation of readiness for college or a career nationwide.

Many of the current reforms being considered by New York State are aligned with the effort to qualify for Race to the Top funds. New York State, among many other states, is in need of federal funding to continue educating the nation's children. In today's global economy we, as a nation, need to prepare our children to compete with students all over the globe.

As far back as the 1960s, education of our nation's youth was a priority. President John Kennedy may have said it best, "Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength for our nation." President Obama has the same dream for our children. Implementation of common core standards, common teacher and principal evaluations, and common standardized testing are hopefully a step towards national improvement in public education.

Appendix A

(New York State Education Department, 2011)

New York State Teacher and Principal Evaluation: Summary of Provisions in Draft <u>Regulations</u> Student Achievement Measures: Teachers		
ELA/Math 4-8 (2011-12 and beyond)	All Other Classroom Teachers (2012-13 and beyond)	
Growth on State Assessments 20 points (25 points with approved VA model)	Result of student growth percentile model, which may include consideration of poverty, ELL, SWD status. Value-added model with additional controls when approved, which can be no earlier than 2012-13. Policies on Teacher of Record and linked students. State to issue RFP for provider of growth and value-added measures.	<input type="checkbox"/> Approach 65% coverage of teachers with growth/value-added measures by extending growth/value-added model, as applicable, to existing and new (if resources available) state assessments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 9-11 ELA 2011 ○ Math Regents ○ PARCC as available ○ If approved: 6-8 science, social studies and related Regents ○ If approved, progress monitoring in K-3 ELA, math <input type="checkbox"/> Feasibility analysis with each expansion area to determine applicability of growth/value-added methodology to pre/post tests.
Growth Using Comparable Measure 20 points <i>[when no State assessment with an approved growth/VA model]</i>	N/A	For all applicable grades/subjects: State-determined district-wide student growth goal-setting process used with assessment from options below: For 9-11 ELA/Math and 6-11 Science and Social Studies: District determined assessment from state-

		<p>approved list of 3rd party and State assessments</p> <p>For other grades/subjects: District-determined assessments from options below:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">List of State-approved 3rd party, State and Regent-equivalent assessments.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">District- or BOCES-developed assessments provided that the district or BOCES verifies comparability and rigor.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">School-wide, group, or team results based on State assessments.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">School or teacher-created assessment agreed to in goal-setting process.</p>
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**Student Achievement Measures:
Teachers
(Continued)**

<p>Locally Selected Measures of Student Achievement 20 points (15 points after approval of VA model)</p>	<p>Locally comparable means: The same measures of student achievement across all classrooms in same grade/subject in District or BOCES. Variance available to permit different local measures to apply to different groups of teachers within a grade/subject if districts/BOCES prove comparability based on standards of Education and Psychological Testing. May choose growth or achievement measure from these options:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">List of State-approved 3rd party, State or Regent-equivalent assessments.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">District- or BOCES-developed assessments provided that the district or BOCES verifies comparability and rigor.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">School-wide, group, or team results based on State or local assessments.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Structured District-wide goal setting process for use with any State, local, or school (teacher-created) assessment agreed to by evaluator and teacher.</p>
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	May not use the same measure of student growth on a State assessment for both the growth and locally-selected measure for any group of educators.
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Appendix B

(New York State Education Department, 2011)

Student Achievement Measures: Principals		
Elem/Middle (2011-12 and beyond)	High Schools (2012-13 and beyond)	
<p>Growth on State Assessments 20 points (25 with approved VA model)</p>	<p>Result of student growth/value-added model. Add grades and/or subjects as growth/value-added model applies.</p>	<p>Result of growth/value-added model as applied to English and math State assessments. Add subjects and a “progress to graduation” metric as growth/value-added model applies.</p>
<p>Growth Using Comparable Measures If principal has no grades with State assessment and an approved VA model</p>	<p>Districts will select growth measures from one or more of the other comparable measures used to measure growth for teachers in these schools.</p>	
<p>Locally Selected Measures of Student Achievement 20 points (15 after approval of VA model)</p>	<p>Comparable means the same measures used for all principals in same or similar programs or grade configurations across District or BOCES. May not use the same measure of student growth on state assessments for both the growth and locally-selected measures for any group of educators.</p>	
	<p>May choose growth or achievement measure from these options: Student performance on any or all district-wide locally selected measures approved for use in teacher evaluations. Achievement on State tests (% proficient). Growth or achievement for student subgroups (SWD, ELL, students</p>	<p>May choose growth or achievement measure from these options: Applicable options from elem/middle school column. Percent of cohort achieving specified score on Regents exams, AP, IB or other Regents-equivalents. Graduation rates and/or drop out rates. Graduation % with Advanced Regents designation. Credit accumulation (e.g. 9th and 10th grade) or other strong predictor of progress to graduation.</p>

	<p>starting at specific performance levels (e.g. level 1, 2)) on State or other assessments.</p>	
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Other 60 Points Teachers	Principals	
Standards	NYS Teaching Standards	ISLLC 2008
Choice of rubrics	<p>Menu of state-approved choices for rubrics to assess performance based on standards. Also district variance process available for district or BOCES that seeks to use a rubric not on State-approved list. State to issue RFQ for rubrics that meet prescribed criteria.</p>	
Requirements and options:	<p>Requirements: Multiple measures. To support continuous professional growth, at least half of the 60 points based on classroom observation. Observation by principal or other trained administrator is required. Any remaining standards not addressed in classroom observation must be assessed at least once a year.</p> <p>Optional: Observation by trained evaluators independent of school and/or trained in-school peer teachers may be included in portion of 60 points assigned to classroom observation. Observations may be in person or by video. Structured review of student work and/or teacher artifacts using “portfolio” or “evidence binder” processes. Feedback from students, parents, and/or other teachers using structured survey tools. Individual professional growth goals with teacher self-</p>	<p>Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple measures. <input type="checkbox"/> At least half of 60 points based on supervisor’s broad assessment of principal leadership and management actions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Must incorporate supervisory visit(s) to school and at least two sources of evidence from the following options: structured feedback from constituencies including: teachers, students, and/or families; school visits by other trained independent evaluators; review of school documents, records, state accountability processes, and/or other locally-determined sources.. <input type="checkbox"/> In addition, evaluations must include a locally selected measure of principal contribution to improving teacher effectiveness. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Examples: improved retention of higher performers, student growth scores of teachers granted vs. denied tenure, teacher satisfaction with feedback and PD opportunities, or, quality/effectiveness of

	reflection (maximum 5 points).	teacher evaluations. <input type="checkbox"/> Any remaining standards not addressed through above requirements must be assessed at least once a year. Optional: Student attendance. School academic or learning environment goals. Individual professional growth goals with principal self-reflection (maximum 5 points).
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Appendix C

(New York State Education Department, 2011)

Level	Growth	Local assessment growth or achievement	Other (Teacher and Leader standards)
Ineffective	Results are well-below state average for similar students (or district goals if no state test).	Does not achieve District or BOCES-adopted expectations for growth or achievement of student learning standards for grade/subject.	Overall performance and results are well below standards.
Developing	Results are below state average for similar students (or district goals if no state test).	Partially achieves District or BOCES-adopted expectations for growth or achievement of student learning standards for grade/subject.	Overall performance and results need improvement in order to meet standards.
Effective	Results meet state average for similar students (or district goals if no state test).	Achieves District or BOCES-adopted expectations for growth or achievement of student learning standards for grade/subject.	Overall performance and results meet standards
Highly Effective	Results are well-above state average for similar students (or district goals if no state test).	Exceeds District or BOCES -adopted expectations for growth or achievement of student learning standards for grade/subject.	Overall performance and results exceed standards

Level	Measures of student growth	Local measures of student achievement	Other 60 points	Overall Composite Score
Ineffective	0-5	0-5	Ranges determined locally	0-50
Developing	6-11	6-11		51-74
Effective	12-17	12-17		75-90
Highly Effective	18-20	18-20		91-100

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