



TO: Higher Education Committee
P-12 Education Committee

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SUBJECT: Teacher Improvement Plans (TIPs) and Principal Improvement Plans (PIPs)

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SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

The Department will provide the Board with information regarding the development and implementation of teacher improvement plans (TIPs) and principal improvement plans (PIPs) by districts and BOCES in conjunction with professional development efforts.

Reason(s) for Consideration

For information.

Proposed Handling

This item will come before a joint meeting of the Higher Education Committee and P-12 Education Committee for discussion at the March 2015 meeting.

Background Information

The purpose of the evaluation system is to ensure that there is an effective teacher in every classroom and an effective principal leading every school. The evaluation system is also intended to foster a culture of continuous professional growth for educators to support and improve their instructional practices. In order for teachers and principals to improve, they need specific, actionable feedback that addresses targeted areas for improvement.

Teacher and Principal Improvement Plans

History

Prior to 1998, the Commissioner's Regulations did not explicitly require districts or BOCES to provide improvement plans for their educators (struggling or otherwise). In their July 1998 report, "Teaching to Higher Standards" (<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED426996.pdf>), the Regents Task Force on Teaching identified major gaps between the state of education in New York and the goal of an educational system with competent teachers who guide their students to mastery of the knowledge and skills needed for success in life. One of the gaps identified by the Task Force was that an insufficient number of teachers maintained the knowledge and skills needed to teach to increasingly higher standards throughout their careers.

Through surveys, the Task Force found that only a minority of teachers received enough ongoing training to keep up with the demands of their profession. While the State was responsible for certifying the competence of teachers prior to entry into the profession, the local school district was responsible for evaluating how well teachers performed in the classroom. However, the Task Force noted that the evaluation system did not always ensure this was taking place in ways that improved student learning. Through various statewide forums, the Regents discovered that teachers wanted fair and objective evaluations, and to receive follow-up training to remedy deficiencies.

In the "Teaching to Higher Standards" report, the Task Force recommended that, effective September 1, 1999, all districts provide substantial professional development opportunities for their teachers related to student learning needs as well as State initiatives, standards, and assessments. Additionally, the report recommended that school districts provide training for conducting performance evaluations to staff. Further, classroom teachers whose performance was evaluated as unsatisfactory by a school administrator were required to undertake a TIP established by the district in consultation with the teacher. Such a plan could include peer review and assistance, and professional development activities to meet the teacher's needs. These recommendations were codified, effective September 2000, in §100.2 of the Commissioner's Regulations (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/part100/pages/1002.html>), which also held districts accountable for establishing annual or multi-year performance reviews and providing staff development opportunities when weaknesses are identified. However, these requirements applied exclusively to teachers and, at that time, there were no regulatory requirements surrounding the evaluation of principals.

The work begun by the Board of Regents in 1998 was enhanced in the State's Scope of Work and New York's successful Phase 2 Race to the Top Application (<http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/application>). This application built off of the enactment of Chapter 103 of the Laws of 2010, which amended the Education Law to incorporate the new §3012-c statute, i.e., the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) evaluation system. This evaluation system required school districts and BOCES to evaluate teachers and principals based on four new qualitative rating categories of

Highly Effective, Effective, Developing, and Ineffective that incorporates multiple measures of effectiveness (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/part100/pages/1002.html#o>).

The new law, as amended by Chapter 21 of the Laws of 2012, further required that, upon a teacher or principal being rated Developing or Ineffective on their APPR, the school district or BOCES must formulate and commence implementation of a TIP or PIP for such teacher or principal as soon as practicable but in no case later than 10 school days after the opening of classes for the school year. Such improvement plans were to be consistent with the Commissioner's Regulations and developed locally through negotiations conducted pursuant to Article 14 of the Civil Service Law. In response to this legislative change, the Board of Regents adopted Subpart 30-2 of the Rules of the Board of Regents, which includes §30-2.10 specifically addressing teacher and principal improvement plans.

Current Use of Improvement Plans

Today, an improvement plan defines specific standards-based goals that a teacher or principal must make progress toward attaining within a specific period of time, such as a 12-month period. As defined in Education Law §3012-c, there are four required elements of a teacher or principal improvement plan, including:

- identification of areas that need improvement;
- a timeline for achieving improvement;
- the manner in which improvement will be assessed; and
- where appropriate, differentiated activities to support improvement in these areas.

The plan should clearly describe the professional learning activities that the educator must complete. These activities should be connected directly to the areas needing improvement. The artifacts that the teacher or principal must produce that can serve as benchmarks of improvement and as evidence for the final stage of the improvement plan should be described and could include items such as lesson plans and supporting materials, including student work. (Please see Section C18 of APPR Guidance, available at <https://www.engageny.org/resource/guidance-on-new-york-s-annual-professional-performance-review-law-and-regulations>.)

The supervisor should clearly state in the plan the additional support and assistance that the educator will receive. In the final stage of the improvement plan, the teacher or principal should meet with his or her supervisor to review the plan, alongside any artifacts and evidence from evaluations, in order to determine if adequate improvement has been made in the required areas outlined within the plan for the teacher or principal. (Please see Section C18 of APPR Guidance.)

During the past two school years, approximately 5% of teachers and approximately 7% of principals were rated Ineffective or Developing on their overall composite rating requiring them to have improvement plans.

- During the 2012-13 school year, there were 6,819 teachers and 213 principals on improvement plans.
- During the 2013-14 school year, there were 8,218 teachers and 290 principals on improvement plans.¹
- The following percentage of educators received an improved overall composite rating category in the 2013-14 school year as compared to how they were rated in the 2012-13 school year:
 - 93% of teachers and 84% of principals rated Ineffective moved to a rating of Developing or better
 - 89% of teachers and 78% of principals rated Developing moved to a rating of Effective or better

Personal Professional Development Plans

In addition to requiring improvement plans for all teachers and principals who are rated Ineffective or Developing, Education Law §3012-c also requires that APPRs be a “significant factor in teacher and principal development, including but not limited to, coaching, induction support and differentiated professional development, which are to be locally established in accordance with procedures negotiated pursuant to the requirements of article fourteen of the civil service law.”

The Department believes that all educators, regardless of their APPR rating, can benefit from the implementation of Personal Professional Development Plans (PPDPs), which are similar to TIPs and PIPs in their structure, elements, and desired outcomes. These PPDPs do not take the place of TIPs and PIPs, but rather complement them and ensure that all educators, including those rated Effective and Highly Effective are provided with the necessary support to continuously improve over time. The primary goal of the APPR is to help teachers and principals of all skill levels understand how they can improve their practice and to inform job-embedded professional development. Research shows that sustained and intensive professional development, connected to practice, specific academic content, and other school initiatives, is not only related to student achievement gains but also builds strong working relationships among faculty as well. (Please see “Professional Learning in the Learning Profession: A Status Report on Teacher Development in the United States and Abroad,” available at <http://learningforward.org/docs/pdf/nsdcstudy2009.pdf>.)

A Comprehensive Approach to Professional Development as Seen in the Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (STLE) Grant Program

The New York State Department of Education (NYSED) recognizes that the APPR system will have more beneficial effects if it is implemented in ways that bolster the preparation, recruitment, development, and retention of the most effective educators. Doing so involves numerous activities beyond the technical completion of APPR negotiations and the implementation of annual educator ratings. NYSED created an \$83 million competitive grant opportunity under the Strengthening Teacher and

¹ Please note that these numbers are significantly larger because they include educators from the New York City School District, whose APPR plan was first implemented in the 2013-14 school year.

Leader Effectiveness (STLE) program that currently involves 221 Local Education Agencies (LEAs), over half a million students, approximately 42,000 teachers, and nearly 1,000 principals. Across the four rounds of the STLE program, NYSED has been able to identify multiple proof points of places that have successfully implemented comprehensive systems of educator effectiveness rooted in sound implementation of their evaluation system.

Through STLE, nearly one-third of all LEAs in New York State have begun to establish a culture focused on performance-based growth, leading to powerful transformation of teaching and learning. LEAs are developing unified programs that support professional growth and are informed by needs assessments and evidence gathered through APPR. These programs are focused on improving the preparation of educators, ensuring all teachers and principals have access to high-quality, targeted coaching and embedded professional development, and promote strategic compensation and innovative staffing models in an effort to retain our most effective educators. This has enabled the collective expertise of the most effective educators to expand past individual classrooms and has empowered teachers and their administrators to extend their spheres of influence.

For instance, a number of STLE grantees rely on Teacher and Principal Leaders to collaborate and provide targeted feedback for *all educators*, including those on TIPs and PIPs. LEAs are using evidence gathered through APPR to inform individualized, small group, and building- and district-wide professional development. In many cases, Teacher and Principal Leaders are working one-on-one as mentors with educators to ensure they are provided with regular feedback and support. These Leaders work collaboratively with their peers to conduct instructional focus walks, peer observations, and to co-plan, co-teach, model and critique lessons, and review student work products to inform individualized and group professional development. LEAs have developed rigorous criteria and frameworks for identifying Teacher and Principal Leaders that serve as thought partners, coaches, and readily-available resources. Some STLE grantees are coupling technology platforms and evidence review to create ongoing differentiated professional development offerings based on identified grade-level, building, and district trends.

Panel Presentation

To help illustrate how districts are using evidence gathered through APPR to provide educators with the necessary support to continuously improve over time, there will be a panel discussion with Superintendent Dr. Roberto Padilla, Sara Feliz, and Melanie Lofaro from the Newburgh City School District. Representatives will share how formal TIPs and PIPs are developed and implemented throughout the district, as well as how the personal professional growth of all educators is integrated with the district's comprehensive professional development efforts.

Using over \$2.2 million through STLE 3 and STLE-D, Newburgh City School District is developing a core cadre of Effective and Highly Effective educators in various disciplines that support professional learning in each building. These educators are

enabling the district to provide more timely, targeted, and rigorous professional development to all educators based on identified needs. Teacher and Principal Leaders are supporting instructional practice, curriculum implementation, and increased student performance in each building through structures such as non-evaluative observations and walkthroughs, collaborative planning sessions with instructional coaches, modeling of best practice by effective and highly effective educators, specific referral to resources in the professional libraries, and participation in targeted building and district level professional development.

Members of the panel include:

- ***Dr. Roberto Padilla*** is the superintendent of Newburgh City School District, located in Orange County. The district is made up of 12 schools, approximately 11,000 students, and over 860 teachers.
- **Sara Feliz**, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, serves as a lead evaluator of principals in the district. Mrs. Feliz also oversees the professional development of administrators and teachers.
- **Melanie Lofaro**, Director of School Support, works closely with principals to monitor and support teachers on TIPs. Mrs. Lofaro is also responsible for training and supervising the instructional coaches who work to provide not only direct support to teachers on TIPs, but teachers across the district.