

2012-2013 TEACHER APPR Frequently Asked Questions

APPR and ePerformance

Q: What is “APPR”?

A: APPR stands for Annual Professional Performance Review. Technically, this term applies to all teacher evaluations. However, we generally use this term to apply to the new evaluation system for classroom teachers and building principals in which the evaluation is based upon student growth on State assessments, local measures of student achievement, and other measures of performance (the rubric). This document will use APPR to refer to this system of evaluation.

Q: What are the elements of APPR?

A: APPR consists of three elements: (1) Growth on State Assessments; (2) Local Measures of Student Achievement; and (3) Other Measures of Teacher Effectiveness (aka Professional Practices).

Q: Where can the District’s APPR plan be found?

A: <http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/teachers-leaders/plans/docs/rochester-appr-plan.pdf>

Q: Are the APPR and ePerformance the same?

A: No. The APPR is a system for evaluating classroom teachers that is required by State law. ePerformance is an on-line tool by which the District has converted all employee evaluations to electronic form. ePerformance simply changed the paper form to an electronic form in the PeopleSoft system.

Q: Must all employee evaluations be done using ePerformance?

A: Yes, all employees, administrators, teachers (even those not evaluated using APPR), teaching assistants, paraprofessionals, and civil service must have evaluations completed on-line.

Q: Who completes the evaluation in ePerformance?

A: The evaluator, either an administrator or Peer Reviewer, must complete the evaluation in ePerformance. An evaluator cannot require or ask a teacher to complete his or her own evaluation in the system.

Who Is Evaluated

**** Revised 10/23/12 ****

Q: Which teachers will not be evaluated using APPR?

A: School Social Workers, School Psychologists, Counselors, Adult Education teachers, and pre-school teachers are not evaluated using APPR.

Teachers who are released to provide instructional support on a full-time basis, TOAs, Lead Teachers, Mentor Teachers, Instructional Coaches, etc. are not evaluated using APPR. If a teacher spends any amount of time providing instruction in a classroom (for example, if a teacher is released 0.8 FTE, but teaches 0.2 FTE), he or she must be evaluated using APPR.

Teachers such as Library Media Specialists, Teachers of the Blind and Visually Impaired, Teachers of the Deaf, Speech & Language Teachers, will be evaluated using APPR if they are the “teacher of record” in a content area. For example, if the Library Media Specialist in a building teaches classes to students on how to conduct computerized research, he or she would be the teacher of record for that content and would be evaluated using APPR.

Additionally, substitute teachers, long-term or short-term, are not evaluated using APPR. Contract substitutes should be evaluated using the Traditional evaluation document. Part-time status does not affect APPR eligibility and part-time teachers, who are not substitutes must be evaluated under APPR if they otherwise are covered by APPR.

Q: How will teachers who are not subject to APPR be evaluated?

A: Specialized rubrics have been created for some areas, such as Psychologists, Social Workers, Counselors, and Librarians (if not evaluated using APPR). Where no specialized rubric has been created, the Traditional evaluation (*i.e.* the evaluation tool utilized before APPR was required) will be used. Teachers may voluntarily select to use the TEACHSCAPE rubric if they do not wish to be evaluated with the Traditional rubric. Teachers wishing to do this should email performance_eval@rcsdk12.org by the end of the day on September 26, 2012.

Goal Setting

**** Revised 9/23/12 ****

Q: What is goal setting?

A: Goal setting is part of the evaluation process under the Danielson TEACHSCAPE rubric. This includes teachers subject to the APPR, Psychologists, Social Workers, Counselors, Lead Teachers, and Librarians. Additionally, teachers evaluated under the Traditional rubric who wish to participate in the Professional Development Incentive will input their PDI goals into ePerformance.

Q: Who sets goals?

A: Evaluating administrators should work collaboratively with their teachers to establish goals for the school year. Peer Reviewers do not set goals with teachers.

Q: When are goals set?

A: Goals must be entered into ePerformance by October 15th.

Q: Who enters goals into ePerformance?

A: This step may be based upon the personal “styles” of the administrator and teacher. Some administrators might like to sit with a teacher with the computer and develop and enter goals together. Others might draft goals in ePerformance for the teacher to review and edit. Still other might have the teacher first enter goals for the administrator’s review and editing. In the end, it is important that both the administrator and the teacher have had input into the goals and that they are completed in a timely manner.

Q: What types of things should be included in teacher goals?

A: Goals should focus on areas of teacher growth that will promote student learning. Any areas from a prior evaluation that were rated “ineffective” or “developing” should be addressed. Additionally, goals will include any goals for the Professional Development Incentive in the RTA contract. For a more thorough discussion on goal setting, please refer to page 75 of the 2012-2013 Teacher Evaluation Guide.

Student Learning Objectives

Q: What is a Student Learning Objective (“SLO”)?

A: An SLO is the method by which the District is required to derive teachers’ State Growth score when the State does not provide a score (this also has been referred to as the “Value Added Measure”). SLOs also may be used for Local Measures; however, the District and RTA did not agree to use SLOs for the Local Measures in 2012-2013.

Q: Who will have SLOs for 2012-2013?

A: All teachers evaluated under APPR, except teachers of students in Grades 4-8 ELA and/or Math, will have an SLO. (Teachers of Grades 4-8 ELA and/or Math might have an SLO if they have fewer than 16 total students and/or less than 50% of their students are in 4-8 ELA and/or Math.)

Q: What are the SLOs for 2012-2013?

A: The District and the RTA have agreed to uniform student growth targets for all subjects and grade levels. These targets are based upon student pre-test scores and post-test scores on agreed upon assessments. The chart for individual student growth targets can be found in Appendix A of the District’s APPR plan.

Elementary teachers of common branch subjects (except for Grades 4-6) must have one SLO for Math and one SLO for ELA (unless they teach individual subjects). For teachers of multiple grades/subjects, an SLO is created for each grade/subject matter taught until at least a majority of the students taught by a student are covered.

The District will be preparing a webinar demonstrating how to determine which of a teacher’s courses will be subject to an SLO.

Q: What assessments will be used for SLOs?

A:

Grade/Subject Area	Assessment
K-2 Common Branch	NWEA ELA and Math assessment for applicable grade
Grade 3 Common Branch and Courses, <i>other than 4-8 ELA and Math</i> , where State Assessments, Regents Examinations and/or Regent equivalent assessments are available	State assessment, Regents examination and/or Regent equivalent
All Grades 9-12 courses within the English Instructional Department for which there are no State Assessments, Regents Examinations and/or Regent equivalent assessments	NWEA ELA assessment for applicable grade
All other subject areas and Career and Technical Education courses	BOCES/Locally developed assessments which shall be performance-based assessments when available

Q: What documentation need to be completed for SLOs for 2012-2013?

A: The State requires that SLOs be written on a State-approved form. For 2012-2013, we will use a paper form. Starting 2013-2014, electronic SLO forms will be included in PeopleSoft. The required State form will need to be completed for each SLO. A copy of the required form can be found at:

<http://engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-student-learning-objective-template/>

Q: What information must be included in the SLO form?

A: An SLO must include the student population covered, the learning content (what will be taught in the class), the time interval (length of course), the evidence

(what assessment will be used), baseline data (students' pretest scores), target and HEDI criteria (set by the Agreement), and teacher rationale.

For 2012-2013, Central Office will prepopulate the SLO forms with all information except for the baseline data and teacher rationale. Teachers can complete the baseline data by attaching a report of their applicable student roster(s) with the students' pretest scores. Teachers will also be required to complete their rationale, identifying how they will use the learning content and baseline data to improve student learning and reach the targets.

Q: Where will SLOs be stored?

A: For the 2012-2013 school year, paper SLOs should be scanned and attached to final teacher evaluations.

Q: Will there be additional information about SLOs?

A: Yes, on-line training and separate document discussing SLOs will be published.

Observations and Procedures

**** Revised 9/23/12 ****

Q: What do we use for guidance to evaluate teachers?

A: APPR evaluation procedures and timelines for the Danielson TEACHSCAPE rubric are contained in the 2012-2013 Teacher Evaluation Guide.

All other evaluations should follow the timelines and requirements in the 2008-2009 Teacher Evaluation Guide which was in place prior to APPR. Note, however, that School Psychologists, Guidance Counselors, and School Social Workers will have goal setting as part of their evaluation.

Q: How many times must an administrator observe a teacher under APPR?

A: The District is requiring that all probationary teachers evaluated using APPR have at least three observations, two formal observations and one unannounced, informal observation, under APPR. All tenured teachers evaluated using APPR must have at least two observations, one formal observation and one unannounced, informal observation.

Q: What is meant by "formal" and "informal" observations?

A: A "formal" observation is one that meets all of the requirements set by the RTA contract: (1) pre-observation conference within 1 week of observation; (2) observation of at least 30 minutes, and (3) post observation conference within one week after the observation. Formal observations also have an electronic template that will be available on ePerformance.

An “informal” observation is any observation that does not meet these three criteria. There are no contractual requirements or template for informal observations at this time, although the District and RTA are discussing this for the future.

Q: Does this mean that informal observations do not have parameters?

A: No. Good educational practices should apply to all observations. An evaluator should observe for a sufficient period of time to be able to make a judgment on relevant TEACHSCAPE domains and should record the amount of time spent in the observation, the evaluator’s opinion of the observation, and all factual information from the observation that forms the basis of that opinion. Remember, the informal observation provides evidence to support the final evaluation. At least one informal observation must be unannounced and is required by law.

Q: May evaluators conduct more than the required number of observations?

A: Yes, an evaluator (administrator or peer reviewer) may conduct as many observations as necessary to provide a solid basis for the evaluation.

Q: How are observations documented in ePerformance?

A: ePerformance will automatically create two formal observation templates for all teachers. Formal observations should be captured using these templates. Additional formal observation templates can be created if additional observations are done.

Carlos Leal in the Office of Professional Development and ASAR have examples of guidance documents that may be used to record informal observations. Documentation of the informal observation should be scanned as a pdf file and attached to the teacher’s final evaluation.

Alternate Evaluations – Peer Review/PART ** Revised 10/23/12 **

Q: May teachers select any alternative evaluation procedures under APPR?

A: Yes, teachers may elect to have up to 29 of the 60 points available for Professional Practice based upon Peer Review or PART.

Q: When and how will this election be made?

A: Teachers will have until September 21st to elect alternative evaluation procedures. This election will be made electronically. Information about the election procedures was be posted in the Bulletin and teachers were sent individual emails.

Q: What is Peer Review?

A: Peer Review is an evaluation by a trained Lead Teacher/Peer Reviewer. All Peer Reviewers were required to take the TEACHSCAPE training and pass the certification test. Peer Reviewers are required to observe teachers at least twice per year: one evaluation must be formal and one evaluation must be unannounced. Peer Reviewers will complete their own evaluation of the teacher on ePerformance. The Peer Reviewer's scores for Domain 2 and Domain 3 of the rubric will be factored into the teacher's Professional Practice subcomponent score.

Q: Will administrators have the ability to change a Peer Reviewer's rating of a teacher?

A: No. The Peer Reviewer's rating cannot be changed.

Q: Are administrators and Peer Reviewer's required to consult with each other prior to rating a teacher's performance?

A: There is no RTA contractual requirement for consultation. However, administrators should take steps to ensure inter-rater reliability, including, but not limited to consulting with Peer Reviewers, if applicable. The CIT Panel has also encouraged Peer Reviewers to consult with administrators.

Q: Does having a Peer Reviewer change any responsibilities for the evaluating administrator?

A: No. An evaluating administrator must complete all of the same evaluation steps even if there is a Peer Reviewer.

Q: How is a Peer Reviewer selected?

A: The CIT Panel creates a pool of qualified Peer Reviewers. If Peer Review is selected, CIT provides up to three names to the teacher requesting Peer Review and the teacher may select one of the names and inform CIT. **CIT will attempt to meet the teacher's request; however, the final assignment will depend upon availability and capacity.**

A Peer Reviewer may not evaluate a teacher in his or her own school.

Q: Is PART under APPR the same as PART under the prior RTA contract?

A: No. Previously, PART evaluations occurred over a three-year period. Now, an evaluation must occur every year. The structure of PART, a project with two colleague ratings and an administrator rating, will be the same. The PART project, however, must be evaluated using the Danielson TEACHSCAPE rubric.

Teacher Improvement Plans

**** Revised 9/23/12 ****

Q: Will teachers evaluated under APPR for the 2011-2012 school year be required to have a TIP?

A: Under State law, teacher improvement plans are required for teachers who received “ineffective” or “developing” ratings. For this year, principals will collaborate with teachers to develop formal improvement plans for teachers who received ineffective composite ratings on their 2011-2012 evaluation. Teachers with a rating of developing will work with principals on targeted goal setting as part of the goal setting process in the 2012-2013 school year and no separate plan document will be required.

Q: What will happen with a teacher’s 2011-2012 evaluation?

A: The APPR agreement for 2011-2012 was a pilot and was not finalized until February 2012 due to late changes in State law and guidance. The District realizes that teachers did not have a fair understanding of what would be expected of them. To that end, per the District’s agreement with the RTA, teacher evaluations that resulted in composite ratings of “ineffective” or “developing” will not become part of their personnel file. The District will take steps to sequester evaluations in the system so that they will not be available, now or in the future, for viewing by anyone other than your current principal.

Q: What must a Teacher Improvement Plan (TIP) include?

A: A TIP must identify the areas of performance that need improvement, a timeline for achieving this 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 professional learning activities that the teacher must complete. These activities should be directly connected to the areas needing improvement and should describe what artifacts/evidence can serve as benchmarks of improvement. (I.e. lesson plans, student work, etc.)

The supervisor should clearly state the additional support the educator will receive and should meet with the teacher regularly to ensure that adequate improvement has been made in the areas specified as in need of improvement.

Q: Who must receive a TIP?

A: Teachers who receive an APPR rating of “ineffective” must receive a TIP. Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the plan for teachers who receive an APPR rating of “developing” will be called a “Development Plan”.

Q: Who creates a TIP or Development Plan?

A: Plans should be created through collaboration between the administrator and the teacher.

Q: When must a Teacher Improvement Plan (TIP) begin?

A: Within 10 days of the beginning of the school year or within receipt of State Growth scores for the prior school year if the State issues scores after the beginning of the school year.

Q: What is the difference between a Teacher Improvement Plan (TIP) and a Teacher Development Plan?

A: A Development Plan consists of targeted goal setting during the goal setting process including recommended professional development designed to address any rubric domain or APPR subcomponent for which the teacher received an ineffective or developing rating and a timeframe for meeting the established goals.

A Teacher Improvement Plan consists of a comprehensive improvement plan, which includes a Mentor Teacher, where available pursuant to the CIT Handbook. Any teacher receiving consecutive APPR composite ratings of “ineffective” must be offered CIT Intervention.

Q: What if a teacher does not agree with the implementation of a TIP or Development Plan?

A: The District and the RTA negotiated an Appeals process that may be utilized by any teacher who disagrees with their APPR rating or who disagrees with the implementation of a TIP.

