



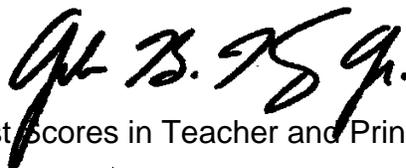
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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August 2, 2013

TO: BOCES District Superintendents
Superintendents of Public Schools

FROM: John B. King, Jr. 

SUBJECT: Use of State Test scores in Teacher and Principal Evaluations

The State Education Department will soon be releasing the 2012-13 state assessment scores in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math for grades 3-8. As you know, those scores are expected to be significantly lower than the 2011-12 scores. This change in scores -- which will effectively create a new baseline measurement of student learning -- is largely the result of the shift to assessments that measure the Common Core Learning Standards, which more accurately reflect students' progress toward college and career readiness.

Because the State provided growth scores to be used in teacher and principal evaluations are based on year-to-year comparisons for similar students, all of whom took New York's Common Core assessments for the first time in 2012-13, these growth scores will result in similar proportions of educators earning each rating category (Highly Effective, Effective, Developing and Ineffective) in 2012-13 compared to 2011-12 on the State subcomponent rating category. New York's state-provided growth scores will not identify a larger proportion of teachers and principals at lower rating categories in their growth scores as a result of the anticipated lower student proficiency levels.

We recognize, however, that some districts negotiated use of the 3-8 State tests in other parts of the evaluation. For those districts whose 2012-13 annual professional performance reviews (APPR) plans did not anticipate the proficiency rates on the new State tests, the Department is developing a methodology that could be used in the 2012-13 school year to compare rigor across the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years.

The teacher and principal evaluation system established in Section 3012-c of the Education Law involves multiple measures of teacher and principal performance to ensure an accurate assessment of a teacher and principal. In light of the new baseline in student scores set with the 2012-13 state tests, it is even more important for school district officials to consider all aspects of a teacher's or principal's evaluation when making employment decisions using the 2012-13 composite evaluations.

Education Law §3012-c(1) states that APPRs shall be a significant factor in employment decisions. Employment decisions are made by local school districts, in accordance with law and any applicable locally negotiated procedures. Districts should take into consideration that 2012-13 is the first year student progress was assessed against new and more rigorous learning standards. Information gathered from each measure of educator effectiveness should be used judiciously when employment decisions are made.

Thank you for your continued support as we move forward with this important and challenging work.