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**TO:** District Superintendents  
Superintendents of Public and Nonpublic Schools

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Office of Assessment, Standards and Curriculum

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**SUBJECT:** Guidance on APPR Plans and Phase I NYSESLAT Assessments First Administered in Spring 2013

This memorandum provides information on how the transition to the Phase I NYSESLAT will affect Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) plans submitted by school districts and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) for the 2012-13 school year.

### **Changes to the NYSESLAT**

In October 2012, the Department released a memorandum from the Office of State Assessment to school administrators regarding the transition to the Phase I NYSESLAT.<sup>1</sup> That memo outlined the two-phase process that will be carried out by the Department to assess the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) with New York State's English Language Learner (ELL) test, known as the NYSESLAT.

In Spring 2013, New York State administered the Phase I NYSESLAT for the first time. The creation of the Phase I NYSESLAT is the first step in the transition to a Common Core-based test. As part of this movement to the Common Core, there were changes to question types, new grade bands for the lower grades, new reported scale scores, and a new approach to determining a student's performance level.

The Department recognizes that following the October 2012 memorandum on the two-phased change to the NYSESLAT, many districts and BOCES planned for how the associated changes to the State assessments would impact APPR plans. As such, this guidance applies only to those districts or BOCES that have not already taken steps to ensure their APPR plans for the 2012-13 school year reflect their district or BOCES

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/nyseslat/about-nyseslat-rev.pdf>

goals and expectations for student performance on the Phase I NYSESLAT. These districts or BOCES may utilize the Department's "NYSESLAT 2012 to 2013 Comparison Chart" for establishing matching targets. For the purposes of these charts, the 2012 and 2013 scale scores were matched using statewide percentile ranks. Scores for 2012 and 2013 cannot be directly compared because the 2012 NYSESLAT tests were designed to measure the ELL learning standards in a different way than the 2013 NYSESLAT. Therefore, the 2013 scores represent a new baseline. However, for the purposes of APPR, the fairest way to preserve the intended rigor of the targets based on the 2012 scale is through percentile ranks. The Department has provided tables that indicate the 2013 and 2012 scale scores that are associated with the same percentile rank. Using the percentile rank as the basis of comparison in APPR for this transition year is the most reasonable approach to preserve the intended rigor of the targets, which may have been developed with the 2012 tests in mind.

In particular, this memorandum applies to those educators without State-provided growth measures whose district or BOCES specified that they will use Student Learning Objectives (SLO) with the NYSESLAT to measure growth for the State Growth or other comparable measures subcomponent. The NYSESLAT 2012 to 2013 Comparison Chart may be used in the scenario below. The Department recommends that districts and BOCES consult with their local counsel as they implement these solutions and as they consider any future material changes to APPR plans.

**SCENARIO:** The district or BOCES chose an option for their other comparable measures Growth subcomponent and/or locally-selected measures subcomponent that relies on a SLO with a scale score expectation on the NYSESLAT for achievement or a minimum rigor expectation for growth. For example, the district set an expectation that for a teacher to be rated Effective, a targeted percentage of students in an 11<sup>th</sup> grade classroom had to make a total scale score gain of 43 points on the Phase I NYSESLAT. Note that in this scenario the total scale score for 2012 was calculated by adding a student's scale score for Listening/Speaking with a scale score for Reading/Writing; however, in 2013, the Phase I NYSESLAT utilizes a total scale score that is calculated based on the student's scores from all four modalities.

*Solution: Using the Department's NYSESLAT 2012 to 2013 Comparison Chart, the district or BOCES will determine the 2012 scale score total that corresponds to each student's 2013 overall scale score. For example, if the district set the expectation that 80 percent of 11<sup>th</sup> grade English language learners had to make a total score gain of 43 points on the New York State 11<sup>th</sup> grade NYSESLAT, then the superintendent would consult the Department's 2012 to 2013 Comparison Chart for the 11<sup>th</sup> grade NYSESLAT. If, for example, a specific student earned a scale score total of 1444 on the 2012 NYSESLAT and then scored 853 on the 2013 Grade 11 NYSESLAT, using the 2012 to 2013 Comparison Chart, the student's 2013 score is shown as corresponding to a 2012 scale score total of 1491. Accordingly, this student made a gain of greater than the 43 points required under this district's expectation since the 2013 score of 853 corresponds to a 2012 scale score of 1491, which exceeds the target of 1487 ( $1444 + 43 = 1487$ ).*

The Department has published the NYSESLAT 2012 to 2013 Comparison Chart using 2012 and 2013 data at the following: <http://www.engageny.org/resource/guidance-for-using-the-nyseslat-2012-to-2013-comparison-chart-with-appr-plans>. Districts and BOCES will only be able to apply the approach outlined in this memorandum for the 2012-13 school year. Districts and BOCES should review their target setting processes and ensure that they make adjustments that reflect the new NYSESLAT. Additionally, as applicable, districts and BOCES should review their APPR plans and make any adjustments to those plans consistent with Education Law §3012-c where they – and their collective bargaining units, where applicable – determine changes are necessary to ensure their plans reflect their goals and expectations. The Department encourages districts and BOCES to work with their BOCES and Network Team members as they consider any changes to their APPR plans or target setting approaches. Districts should also consult with local counsel regarding any potential material changes. Each material change request must be submitted by the Superintendent of the district or BOCES through [educatoreval@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:educatoreval@mail.nysed.gov). Each material change request must be submitted with signatures from the superintendent, board president, and the president of any applicable collective bargaining units, and each material change request must be approved by the Commissioner.