

Briefing for Board of Regents: Proposed SED Actions; RFP and 2 RFQs

SED plans to issue in April an RFP for a provider of Teacher and Principal growth and value-added scores and two “Request for Qualifications”, one for providers of commercially-available student assessments and one for 3rd party providers of Teacher and Principal Practice Rubrics. These actions in no way constrain the Board of Regents as it moves toward rule-making to implement the teacher and principal evaluation statute. However, the timing is necessary to ensure no option related to these subjects is closed off to the Board because of required implementation timelines.

I. Growth/Value-added RFP

The Department proposes to issue an RFP in Spring 2011 for a provider or providers to develop the methodology to construct Teacher and Principal growth scores and, in the following year, subject to consultation with the Task Force and approval by the Board, Teacher and Principal value-added scores. Also required is support for converting these scores into evaluation scores for educators. Detailed reporting of results that is clear, understandable and useful for instructional planning and professional development will also be provided.

- The RFP contains principles to guide the provider and SED that come from the Regents Task Force report.
- Services requested include providing teacher and principal growth scores based on a student growth percentile model, and later, using additional data about students, classrooms and schools, constructing teacher and principal value-added scores. These services will utilize student assessment data from grades 3-8 ELA and Math.
- In addition the provider(s) will test the feasibility of expanding the value-added methodology (and, if feasible, to implement, subject to Task Force consultation and Board of Regents approval) to “progress toward graduation” measures, and to additional grades and subjects in which there are existing, or if funded, new state assessments.
- Two noted experts on use of value-added modeling will advise SED on the RFP design and provide comments on the technical merits of each proposal: Jane Hannaway (Urban Institute) and Dan Goldhaber (University of Washington).

II. Two “Requests for Qualification” (RFQs)

As with an RFP, the Department would solicit, in spring 2011, submissions from vendors—but instead of purchasing the approved services, the Department will instead issue a list of providers that meet prescribed criteria. By starting the RFQ process now, the lists would be available by summer, 2011, in time for districts to utilize the lists if the Board of Regents chooses to feature the pre-approved lists in their regulations. (This is similar to the process the Department uses to approve providers of Supplemental Educational Services under No Child Left Behind.) Because the educator evaluation landscape is changing rapidly, with the development of new assessment approaches and the availability of new research on the effectiveness of evaluation tools and practices, the Department would plan to revisit the criteria and repeat the RFQ process annually.

The two RFQs are:

1. **Student assessments** that meet prescribed criteria for “growth in non-tested subjects” and/or “locally-selected student assessments.”

Each school district/BOCES will need to decide how to measure student achievement for the “locally-selected” 20% of educator evaluation. Some members of the Regents Task Force have also recommended that Commissioner’s regulations should provide for district choice of student growth measures for non-tested grades and subjects. To assist districts/BOCES in making their selections, this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) will solicit commercially available student assessments that meet

prescribed criteria below. (Note: Regents regulations will determine whether and under what conditions Districts must or may select from this pre-approved list)

In order to be included on the Department's list of pre-approved student assessments, a provider will have to meet the following minimum criteria and any supplemental criteria outlined by the Commissioner in the RFQ process:

- (1) the assessment must be aligned with the New York State learning standards;
- (2) the assessment must comply with industry standards of reliability and validity as defined in the Standards of Educational and Psychological Testing;
- (3) (growth only): the vendor must provide a detailed recommended procedure for measuring growth using the instrument that will result in normative inferences about each individual student's growth;
- (4) (growth only): the vendor shall provide information on the one or more norming groups used to calculate normative growth as well as the required test administration procedure (including a recommended testing timeline) when using the instrument to measure growth.

The RFQ would also solicit vendors to apply to provide technical support for districts and schools in determining district-wide student learning expectations for any/all grades and subjects and for setting school and classroom student growth or achievement goals using any available assessment.

2. Teacher and Principal Practice Rubrics

To assess teacher and principal practices for the "60% other measures" and to provide a framework for targeting professional development aimed at improving those practices, school districts/BOCES will need to use professional practice rubrics. The Regents Task Force recommends that each district be permitted to select a teacher practice rubric and a principal practice rubric from a menu of rubrics that meet criteria specified in Commissioner's regulations. (The task force also recommends a district variance procedure to obtain approval for other rubrics.) To assist districts/BOCES in making their selections, the Department proposes to use a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process to pre-approve rubrics that meet, at minimum, criteria that closely align with those recommended by the Task Force.

In order to be included on the Department's list of approved practice rubrics for classroom teachers, a teacher practice rubric will have to meet minimum criteria and any supplemental criteria outlined by the Commissioner in the RFQ process. Note: the Regents regulations will determine whether and under what conditions districts must choose from this pre-approved list, and whether or not there be a district variance process.

Criteria for Teacher Practice Rubrics

In order to be included on the Department's list of approved practice rubrics for classroom teachers, a teacher practice rubric will have to meet the following minimum criteria and any supplemental criteria outlined by the Commissioner in the RFQ process:

- (1) the rubric must broadly cover the New York State teaching standards, and its related elements;
- (2) the rubric must be grounded in research about teaching practice that supports positive student learning outcomes;
- (3) the rubric must have four performance rating categories. If a rubric does not have four levels that match the rating categories of Highly Effective, Effective, Developing and Ineffective, the rubric's

summary ratings must be easily convertible to the four rating categories that New York State has adopted;

- (4) the rubric must clearly define the expectations for each rating category. The Highly Effective and Effective rating categories must encourage excellence beyond a minimally acceptable level of effort or compliance;
- (5) to the extent possible, the rubric should rely on specific, discrete, observable, and/or measurable behaviors by students and teachers in the classroom with direct evidence of student engagement and learning;
- (6) the rubric must use clear and precise language that facilitates common understanding among teachers and administrators;
- (7) the rubric must be specifically designed to assess the classroom effectiveness of teachers;
- (8) the rubric must include descriptions of any specific training and implementation details that are required for the rubric to be effective; and
- (9) rubrics shall be applicable to all grades and subjects or if designed explicitly for specific grades and/or subjects, they will only be approved for use in the grades or subjects for which they are designed.

Criteria for Principal Practice Rubrics

In order to be included on the Department's list of approved practice rubrics for building principals, a teacher practice rubric will have to meet the following minimum criteria and any supplemental criteria outlined by the Commissioner in the RFQ process:

- (1) the rubric must broadly cover the Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISLLC 2008 and its related domains and elements;
- (2) the rubric must be grounded in research about leadership practice that supports positive student learning outcomes;
- (3) the rubric must have four performance rating categories. If a rubric does not have four levels that match the rating categories of Highly Effective, Effective, Developing, and Ineffective, the rubric's summary ratings must be easily convertible to the four rating categories that New York State has adopted;
- (4) the rubric must clearly define the expectations for each rating category. The Highly Effective and Effective rating categories must encourage excellence beyond a minimally acceptable level of effort or compliance;
- (5) to the extent possible, the rubric should rely on specific, discrete, observable, and/or measurable behaviors by principals and their staff and students;
- (6) the rubric must use clear and precise language that facilitates common understanding among building principals and their evaluators;
- (7) the rubric must be specifically designed to assess the effectiveness of school leaders;
- (8) the rubric must include descriptions of any specific training and implementation details that are required for the rubric to be effective.