



Ira Schwartz, Assistant Commissioner
Office of Accountability
55 Hanson Place, Room 400
Brooklyn, New York 11217
Tel: (718) 722-2796 / Fax: (718) 722-4559

To: District Superintendents and Superintendents of Public Schools
From: Ira Schwartz *Ira Schwartz*
Subject: Progress of Priority Schools, Focus Districts and Focus Schools
Date: June 2013

The purpose of this memo is to provide each Focus District with information regarding whether the district and its identified Focus and Priority Schools made progress on the 2011-12 assessment results. Additional memos on preliminary 2013-14 accountability statuses, the identification of Local Assistance Plan Schools (LAP), and the identification of Reward Schools will be released separately.

On August 30, 2012, the New York State Education Department (SED or “the Department”) announced the accountability designations for schools and districts, as required by New York’s approved Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility waiver. Pursuant to Commissioner’s Regulations 100.18, the identified Priority Schools, Focus Districts and Focus Schools are required to show progress for two consecutive years in order to qualify for removal from status.

The list containing the preliminary accountability statuses of all the schools in your district, including Focus and Priority Schools, LAP and Reward Schools is posted to the IRS portal at <http://portal.nysed.gov/portal/page/pref/PortalApp>. The 2011-12 assessment data used to determine the accountability statuses of schools and districts is available in the New York State Report Card at: <https://reportcards.nysed.gov/>. For your reference, the criteria for identification of Priority Schools, Focus Districts, and Focus Schools can be found at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/ESEAMaterials.html>.

Below is the list of files posted to the IRS portal. The files have been generated based on your district’s identification status. Therefore, some of the files listed below may not be posted to the IRS portal for your district.

File Name	District Type		
	Good Standing	Focus District due to the presence of a Priority School	Focus District due to low achieving accountability group
AccountabilityStatusfor2013-14.xls	X	X	X
LocalAssistancePlanSchoolsfor2013-14.xls	X ¹	X ¹	X ¹
FirstYearPerformanceFocusDistrict.xls		X	X
FirstYearPerformanceFocusSchools.xls		X	X
FocusSchoolRankOrderListfor2013-14.xls			X
FirstYearPerformancePrioritySchools.xls		X	X ¹
RewardSchoolsfor2013-14.xls	X	X	X
District&SchoolSGPfor2011-12.xls	X	X	X
DataDictionaryfor2013-14.xls	X	X	X

¹ If identified

Focus School Rank Order List for 2013-14

As required by Commissioner's Regulations, SED has created two Focus School rank ordered lists for Focus Districts based on 2011-12 school year data. List A shows the schools with the highest count of non-proficient student results and non-graduates from the groups for which the district was identified, and List B rank orders schools with the highest percentage of non-proficient student results and non-graduates from the groups for which the district was identified.

This preliminary data is currently embargoed and is being provided to districts now so that it can be reviewed prior to publication. The methodologies used to calculate the progress of Priority Schools, Focus Districts, Focus Schools, and Focus School rank order list is posted at the following website: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/ESEAMaterials.html>.

Although it is not required, districts may choose to substitute a Focus School that has shown progress with another low performing school (from List A or B) for the 2013-14 school year. However, substitutions are subject to SED approval. The district must maintain the same number of Focus Schools for the 2013-14 school year as were identified for the 2012-13 school year and continue with the planned interventions outlined in the District Comprehensive Improvement Plan (DCIP).

Priority Schools and Focus Districts are eligible for removal from status only after showing progress for two consecutive school years. Please also note that a Focus School removed from status could be re-identified as a Local Assistance Plan (LAP) school when the final LAP determinations are made in August 2013.

Appeals regarding the first year progress calculations or Focus School rank order lists should be submitted using the attached appeal form (see Attachment A). If the district is requesting substitution of a Focus School(s), please submit the substitution form with justification (see Attachment B). All applicable forms can be found in electronic format at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/ESEAMaterials.html> and must be sent via e-mail to accountinfo@mail.nysed.gov no later than **July 12, 2013**.

Next Steps for Focus Districts, Focus Schools and Priority Schools

Commissioner's Regulations require that each Focus District use the results of a diagnostic tool of quality indicators to inform the creation of a DCIP. Districts that participated in a SED led Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) District Review must use that review as the basis for development of the 2013-14 school year DCIP. Districts that did not participate in an IIT District Review in the 2012-13 school year may use School Quality Reviews, External School Curriculum Audits, Joint Intervention Team reports or other appropriate diagnostic tools to inform 2013-14 school year DCIP development. Commissioner's Regulations similarly require that each Priority and Focus School use the results of a diagnostic tool to inform development of the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP). Each Priority or Focus School was expected during the 2012-13 school year to have participated in either an IIT School Review, a District led Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness (DTSDE) Review, or a School Review focused on DTSDE Tenet 3 with District Oversight. The results of these reviews are to inform the development of the 2013-14 school year SCEP.

In accordance with Commissioner's Regulations, a Focus District with LAP Schools will be required to work with the identified school(s) to complete the applicable sections of the Self-Review Document and Report Template, and incorporate the supports and interventions for the identified schools into its DCIP. Within the DCIP template, the district will be required to clearly identify those supports and interventions that are to be implemented in the identified LAP Schools. These supports and interventions do not count towards satisfying the improvement set-aside or parent engagement set-aside requirements. The Self-Review Document and Report Template must be

approved by the local board of education for the district (or Chancellor in New York City) and posted to the districts' website by November 22, 2013. The Diagnostic Self-Review Document can be found online at the following website: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/ESEAMaterials.html>. Further information with regard to the Diagnostic Self-Review Document and Report Template for LAP Schools will be provided in a separate memo.

DCIPs and SCEPs must:

- Be updated annually as approved by the Board of Education (in New York City the Chancellor or his designee) and implemented no later than the first day of regular student attendance.
- Be developed in consultation with parents, school staff, and others pursuant to Commissioner's Regulations Part 100.11.
- Include an analysis of achievement of prior year goals.
- Be made widely available through public means, such as posting on the Internet, and distribution through public agencies.

Please note that once approved by SED any significant modification of an approved plan requires the prior approval of the Commissioner.

All Title I schools designated as Priority or Focus Schools, except for public charter schools, will be required to offer Public School Choice (PSC). Districts must provide all enrolled students in these schools with the option to transfer to another public school within the district that is not a Priority or Focus School. Focus Districts with Title I Focus or Priority Schools are required to notify parents about the Priority and/or Focus status of the schools. In addition, parents must be notified of the PSC option no later than 14 days before the start of the 2013-14 school year.

Priority Schools are required to implement a whole school reform model no later than the 2014-15 school year. Attachment C contains information regarding the requirements for the whole school reform models. Focus Districts must complete the Priority School Implementation Status Form specifying what intervention model has been or will be implemented in each Priority School for the 2012-13, 2013-14 or 2014-15 school year. Attachment D contains instructions to complete the form, which must be returned to SED no later than October 1, 2013. To verify the list and obtain details pertaining to Priority schools in your district, please visit the "FirstYearPerformancePrioritySchools.xls" file in your district's portal.

SED plans to release the final accountability status of all schools and districts, as well as the progress status of identified schools and districts, to the public in August 2013.

Questions concerning the information contained in this memo may be directed to: accountinfo@mail.nysed.gov.

Attachments (4)

cc: John B. King, Jr.
Ken Slentz
Sally Bachofer
Pat Geary
Lisa Long

ATTACHMENT A

Instructions for Completing the Appeal Form for First Year Progress or Focus School Rank Order List

This form must be completed and certified by the Superintendent (for New York City, the Chancellor). It must be submitted via e-mail to accountinfo@mail.nysed.gov by July 12, 2013. The form can also be downloaded at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/ESEAMaterials.html>. *Please do not use this form to submit the District's Focus School Substitution list. Additionally, this form should not be used to appeal the 2011-12 school year results.*

To appeal the first year performance calculation or the Focus School rank order list based on 2011-12 results, districts and public schools must submit a completed, signed, and dated Appeal Form for First Year Progress or Focus School Rank Order List, with all required supporting evidence. Districts must submit the appeal by July 12, 2013. Appeals may be granted if the district can prove to the satisfaction of NYSED that its identification was based on inaccurate computations applied to data in the Student Information Repository System (SIRS) as of the 2011-12 reporting deadline, August 24, 2012.

Resource Documents on First Year Progress Calculation and Focus School Rank Order List

The following Microsoft Excel files are available for verification on the Information and Reporting Services (IRS) Portal at <http://portal.nysed.gov/portal/page/pref/PortalApp>:

1. FirstYearPerformancePrioritySchools.xls
2. FirstYearPerformanceFocusDistricts.xls
3. FirstYearPerformanceFocusSchools.xls
4. FocusSchoolRankOrderListfor2013-14.xls

Districts seeking an appeal for individual schools within the district must submit one form per school being appealed. The district must identify the BEDS codes and the reason for the appeal requests, and provide evidence to support the appeal.

Completing the Appeal Form:

1. Within the designated fields, provide the district's Name and BEDS Code.
2. Please provide the school's name and BEDS Code.
3. Check the corresponding box next to the appropriate accountability designation for the school or district that is being appealed.
4. Check the corresponding box next to the appropriate reason for the appeal.
5. Please provide a narrative rationale for why the designation should be changed. The rationale should be brief and based on facts related to the submitted evidence. Note: Excessive details are unnecessary. Please eliminate information that is unrelated to the evidence submitted.
6. Protect personal identification information. Documents submitted to NYSED should not include social security number(s) (except the last 4 digits), date of birth, race/ethnicity, disability status, or other non-directory information. Protecting this information from unauthorized access is a legal requirement and is an important priority for NYSED. To ensure the security, if the supporting evidence for your appeal includes any of the sensitive and protected information listed above, please send this evidence to NYSED either (1) in an enclosed envelope via secure ground mail, or (2) electronically over the internet via secure file transfer protocol (SFTP). Data sent via e-mail and standard FTP (including FTP sites with password protection) is unencrypted and therefore not secure. Consequently, these methods must not be used to transmit sensitive and protected data.
7. The superintendent (for New York City, the Chancellor) must certify the document and submit it via e-mail to accountinfo@mail.nysed.gov by July 12, 2013.



Appeal Form for First Year Progress or Focus School Rank Order List

District Name:	
District BEDS Code:	

Please provide the school details and check the accountability status and the reason(s) for your appeal. If the appeal is for multiple schools, please use a separate form for each school. Attach any data and/or supporting material to this form.

School Name:	
BEDS Code:	
2012-13 Accountability Status	Reason for Appeal
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus School	<input type="checkbox"/> First Year Progress Calculation
<input type="checkbox"/> Priority School	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus School Rank Order List Calculation
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus District	<input type="checkbox"/> Data Issue
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (e.g., school closure)
Please briefly explain the rationale for this appeal (use additional sheets if necessary)	

I certify that the information provided above and in the attached documents is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. In the event the appeal is denied, I understand that the accountability status determination reported in the Information Reporting Services (IRS) portal will be official and that the district and its school must meet all federal and State requirements pertaining to such accountability status.

Superintendent's Name:	
Superintendent's Signature	Date:

ATTACHMENT B

Instructions for Completing the Focus School Substitution Form

Focus Districts have the option to substitute a Focus School that has shown first year progress with another low performing school in the rank order lists (List A or List B) generated by SED. Please submit this form if the district wants to appeal for a substitution. If the district does not want to make any changes to the existing Focus Schools, then this form should not be submitted. Please review the Focus Schools lists before submitting this form. After accessing the Information Reporting Services (IRS) portal:

- Open the file "FirstYearPerformanceFocusSchools.xls"
- Determine which Focus School(s) to remove
- Open the file "FocusSchoolRankOrderListfor2013-14.xls"
- Determine which school(s) (in List A or B) the district wants to substitute for the removed schools

The district has the option of recommending a different list of schools, but must recommend no fewer than the existing count of Focus Schools.

If the district wants to appeal the calculations used for the first year performance or 2011-12 Focus School rank order determinations, then it must submit the "Appeal Form for First Year Progress or Focus School Rank Order List" (attachment B in this memo) or available at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/ESEAMaterials.html>.

Completing the Focus School Substitution Form:

1. On the designated fields, provide the district's Name and BEDS Code.
2. Select for removal the existing Focus School(s) that has shown progress.
3. Select for substitution for the removed schools, schools from List A or List B. If schools outside of these lists are selected, please provide justification. Attach any data or supporting material to this form.
4. The superintendent (for New York City, the Chancellor) must certify the document and submit it via e-mail to accountinfo@mail.nysed.gov by July 12, 2013.



Focus School Substitution Form for 2013-14

This form must be completed and certified by the Superintendent (*for New York City, the Chancellor*). It must be submitted via e-mail to accountinfo@mail.nysed.gov by July 12, 2013. The form can also be downloaded at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/ESEAMaterials.html>. (Note: This form should not be used to appeal the calculations used for the first year performance or 2013-14 Focus School rank order determinations, then the district must submit the "Appeal Form for First Year Progress or Focus School Rank Order List" that can also be downloaded at the abovementioned webpage, for that purpose.)

District Name:	
District BEDS Code:	

Focus School(s) for removal from status (Use additional sheets, if necessary.)			
	School Name	BEDS Code	Justification
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			

School(s) in List A or List B for substitution with the removed schools (Use additional sheets, if necessary.)			
	School Name	BEDS Code	Justification (List A or List B)
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			

I certify that the district has selected the above schools as the new Focus Schools to replace the existing Focus Schools that has shown progress. I understand that the New York State Education Department reserves the right to decline or modify the list. I certify that the district will implement all State and federal requirements as required of Focus Schools.

Superintendent's Name:			
Superintendent's Signature		Date:	

ATTACHMENT C

Requirements for a Whole School Reform Model

A whole school reform model means the Turnaround Model, Restart Model, Transformation Model, or Closure Model funded by a 1003(g) School Improvement Grant, or a three year plan that provides for the redesign of a school by implementation of all of the following turnaround elements:

- Providing strong leadership by:
 - reviewing the performance of the current principal;
 - either replacing the principal, if such a change is necessary to ensure strong and effective leadership, or demonstrating to the Commissioner that the current principal has a track record in improving achievement and has the ability to lead the turnaround effort; and
 - providing the principal with operational flexibility in the areas of scheduling, staff, curricula, and budget.
- Ensuring that teachers are able to improve instruction by:
 - reviewing the quality of all staff and retaining only those who have the ability to be successful in the turnaround effort;
 - preventing ineffective teachers from transferring to these schools; and
 - providing job-embedded, ongoing professional development informed by the teacher evaluation and support systems and tied to teacher and student needs.
- Redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration, provided that such redesigning does not conflict with any applicable collective bargaining agreement.
- Strengthening the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with Common Core Learning Standards.
- Using data to inform instruction and for continual improvement, including the provision of time for collaboration on the use of data.
- Establishing a school environment that improves school safety and discipline, and addressing other non-academic factors that have an impact on student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs.
- Providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.

ATTACHMENT D

Instructions for Completing the Priority School Implementation Status Form

This form must be completed and certified by the Superintendent. It must be submitted via e-mail to accountinfo@mail.nysed.gov by Tuesday, October 1, 2013. The form can also be downloaded at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/ESEAMaterials.html>. (Note: This form should **not** be used to appeal the status of a Priority School. Please use the *Appeal Form for First Year Progress or Focus School Rank Order List* that can be downloaded at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/ESEAMaterials.html> for that purpose.)

A Focus District with one or more Priority Schools must submit the status of which each of the Priority Schools shall implement, as part of the school's Comprehensive Improvement Plan, a whole school reform model. A school implementing a Transformation, Turnaround or Restart Model pursuant to a 1003(g) School Improvement Grant (SIG) or a School Innovation Fund (SIF) Grant or Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP) aligned with the USDE's Turnaround Principles will be deemed to be implementing a whole school reform model.

Completing the Priority School Implementation Status Form:

1. In the designated fields, provide the name and BEDS Code of each identified Priority School in the district.
2. Identify, by year of implementation in the appropriate column, the intervention model for which the school will implement, for each designated Priority School.
3. Any school that was a persistently lowest achieving (PLA) school in the 2011-12 school year and was later identified as a Priority School for the 2012-13 school year, must indicate the approved intervention model that it began implementing in the 2012-13 school year.
4. At least two-thirds of the Priority Schools in the district must be scheduled to begin implementing a whole school reform model no later than the beginning of the 2013-14 school year. (For example, if a district has six Priority Schools, a total of four schools must have begun or will begin implementation of the model in either the 2012-13 or 2013-14 school year.)
5. This form must be completed even if the district has appealed/ has plans to appeal the first year performance calculation of the district or any school in the district.
6. The superintendent must certify the document and submit it via e-mail to accountinfo@mail.nysed.gov by October 1, 2013.

Please open the file "FirstYearPerformancePrioritySchools.xls" in the Information Reporting Services (IRS) portal at <http://portal.nysed.gov/portal/page/pref/PortalApp>, and review the list before submitting this form.



Priority School Implementation Status Form

District Name:			
District BEDS Code:			
Completed By:	Name/Title	Phone Number	Email Address

Please list the Priority schools in your district and indicate the intervention model and which year the district had begun or will begin to implement the School Improvement Grant (SIG) plan in each school. Instructions to complete the form are enclosed. To verify the list and obtain details pertaining to Priority schools in your district, please visit the "FirstYearPerformancePrioritySchools.xls" file in your district's portal. Please complete the "Appeal Form for First Year Progress" to appeal the progress status of a school.

All Priority Schools						
	School Name	BEDS Code	Model and Year of Implementation			
			(Please select the intervention model by indicating the year of implementation)			
			Turnaround	Transformation	Restart	Closure
	<i>Sample ABC School</i>	<i>123456789012</i>		<i>2013-14</i>		
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						

I certify that the schools listed above are Priority Schools. I understand that the New York State Education Department reserves the right to modify the model selected and the year of implementation, if it was not previously approved. I certify that the district will implement all State and Federal requirements, as applicable to Priority Schools.

Superintendent's Name:			
Superintendent's Signature		Date:	