



# Update

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## September 20<sup>th</sup> – Be There!

My dog, Luger, is not the only one who despises APPR. As a matter of fact, the only beings in the state of New York who like it are the misguided politicians who created it. Teachers, administrators and Boards of Education across the state are shaking their collective heads. As educators, we know that test scores are only a small measure of a student's growth. Our students come to us as tiny, nervous seventh graders; and six years later, they leave us as adults – educated, socialized, well-rounded and balanced. If we were producing widgets, I could understand the need for increased "production." But as you all know, we don't produce widgets .... we *create* people. And that, brothers and sisters, is the fundamental flaw in this insipid legislation.

So what do we do with it? A broken law from its inception.... we abide by it as best we can. The SFT's APPR committee worked many long hours poring through guidance documents from NYSUT and SED. The committee used several available plans to model our APPR document. We worked as a collaborative team with the District. Each step of the process was guided by NYSUT's review and input. We had to find a balance between SED's regulations and a model that would protect our teachers from the myriad defects in this law. We believe that we have done just that.

On August 30<sup>th</sup> you received a copy of the APPR plan; and I know that many of you left the meeting confused, overwhelmed and irritated. You were exposed to a tremendous amount of information in a short amount of time. I have been reading APPR documents for over a year; and I'm still confused, overwhelmed and, yes, angry. I am angry about the law and what it means for all of us. But I am pleased and satisfied with our plan and feel confident that, under the circumstances it is as strong and fair as we could have hoped for.

On Thursday, September 20<sup>th</sup> there will be a membership vote to accept this document. I ask each of you to vote "**yes**." Voting "**yes**" simply means that the developed plan is acceptable to you. Voting "**yes**" will allow the committee to continue working collaboratively with the District to modify and change our plan to make it stronger and safer in future years. Again, a "**yes**" vote shows acceptance of our District's plan - not of the SED's legislation.

For those of you considering a "no" vote please understand that voting "no" will not send a message to the State, nor will voting "no" stop APPR from being implemented this year. In the event the vote fails, the District will not be found out of compliance with this law. The Board of Ed, Dr. Ferrie and the administration will unilaterally impose the plan upon us. Should that occur, the SFT and NYSUT would file a lawsuit through PERB against the District. The lawsuit would be fought, but APPR would still be in place and would be carried out.

Your anger and frustration toward the APPR legislation are understood and recognized. We all feel the same way. Calling and writing your politicians is the most effective fight at the moment against APPR. In November we can send a stronger message by voting against the State officials who concocted this insanity.

On the reverse is a concise explanation of each of the APPR documents which you have received. The entire APPR plan can be found on First Class. **Please continue to ask questions and voice your concerns. The APPR committee and the District need to hear from you.**

In Unity,

**The complete APPR document including all forms can be found on First Class.**

**OBSERVATIONS**

State law requires at least two observations per year, one of which must be unannounced. By law, observations must be a minimum of 31 points out of the 60 points locally developed. Our observations are worth 40 points total. Equal weight will be given to each observation. Untenured teachers will continue to have 6 observations. Tenured teachers may opt to have one announced observation and one unannounced observation or they may opt for two unannounced observations. Should an observation be less than effective in each domain, a tenured teacher may request a different observer and may also request a third observation. In no event shall the observations weigh more than 40 points.

The classroom observation form is still based on the Danielson model but needed to be changed in order to be in compliance with SED regulations. You will notice that each domain is now rated on a numerical basis. These four domain ratings will be plugged into a spreadsheet document that will compute a portion of your final APPR rating at the end of the year. Information shared during pre and post conferences will allow the observer to complete the observation form as not every item is observable during a classroom observation.

**PROFESSIONAL ARTIFACT COLLECTION (PAC)**

State law requires that the remainder of the 60 points be gathered from outside observers, surveys from students and parents, peer evaluations, or artifact collections. The PAC is attainable for everyone and leaves the individual teacher in total control of those twenty points; whereas outside observers, surveys and peer evals. take control away from the teacher. The list of possible artifacts you may include is extensive but not limited to those written in the APPR plan. Each teacher will select the means of presentation (folder, binder, electronically) and will submit a minimum of 16-20 artifacts with representation in each of the four domains. Time will be allotted during the January Regents testing to analyze and work on your PAC.

**TEACHER IMPROVEMENT PLAN (TIP)**

Any teacher who is rated as Ineffective or Developing will be placed on a TIP the following school year within the first ten days of classes. The TIP calls for a balanced committee to develop and implement a strategy to guide a teacher toward improvement. The plan will be reviewed and possibly modified at least 3 times in the school year.

**APPEALS**

Any teacher who is rated as Ineffective or Developing can appeal to the Superintendent. The APPR rating and evidential documentation presented by the teacher and building administration will be carefully examined. The timeline for appeals is explained in the APPR document.

**STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES (SLO's)**

SLO's are perhaps the most confusing aspect of APPR. The SED has strict guidelines as to the creation and grading of these high stakes exams as well as which classes are to be targeted. Placing District teachers on committees to create these assessments gave us much control as to their content. Allowing the teacher to choose the SLO target and the Percent Mastery again, keeps the control with the classroom teacher. The SLO calculators are easy to manipulate and were designed to have fair outcomes.

**HEDI BANDS**

The HEDI bands found on the SLO's (Appendices A1 & A2), the SLO Calculators (Appendices B1 & B2), the Conversion Chart (Appendix E) and Final Hedi Score (Appendix F) are controlled by the SED. We cannot change these scoring bands.

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Is our plan perfect? No. Is it solid and built for the success of our teachers? The committee believes it is. Will problems arise as we work with this APPR plan during the course of the year? Yes. Will we get through it together and work collaboratively to improve this plan? We must.

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