



THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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STATEMENT ON SUPPLEMENTING THE EXISTING ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE WITH A SOUND BASIC EDUCATION REPORT

The Department of Education proposes to supplement existing oversight and planning structures and requirements with a comprehensive Sound Basic Education Report (SBE Report) that would provide all stakeholders with the information necessary to measure the performance of the Department, the City's schools, and the City's students. The SBE report will both track every dollar of additional funding ordered by the Court in *Campaign for Fiscal Equity v. State of New York* and measure student performance and other benchmarks. The proposed SBE Report will build upon existing planning and participation requirements and significantly enhance public reporting. It will consolidate current plans and reports that the Department must submit separately into a single, accessible document. This statement briefly describes existing processes and how the Department's proposed SBE Report will enhance those processes.

I. Existing School, District and Regional Planning and Public Participation Requirements

A. **School-based Comprehensive Education Plans.** Chancellor's Regulation A-655, which implements requirements for school-based planning in State Education Law § 2590-h(15)(b-1) and Commissioner's Regulation 100.11, requires each school to develop a Comprehensive Education Plan ("CEP"). The CEPs contain a systematic review and analysis of the school's student needs and activities to determine how instructional areas can be improved. School Leadership Teams ("SLTs") in every school are responsible for developing the school-based CEP. The SLT is composed of the school's principal, the President of the school's Parent Association or Parent/Teacher Association, and the school's United Federation of Teachers chapter leader, as well as additional parents and staff of the school. At the high school level, two students must also be members. Each SLT may also include representatives of community-based organizations, such as not-for-profit groups that provide educational services or universities that have partnered with a school.

- B. **Region- and District-based Comprehensive Education Plans.** Each Regional Superintendent chairs a Regional Leadership Team, which includes parents, principals, teachers, other school staff, and community-based organizations. The Regional Leadership Team prepares a Regional CEP. Additionally, similar committees prepare a District CEP for each community school district within each region. Together, the Regional and District CEPs include various reporting and planning requirements under state regulations and federal programs under certain provisions of the No Child Left Behind Law (NCLB).
- C. **Plans for poorly performing schools.** Specific planning processes govern City schools that have failed to meet performance standards as follows:
1. **SINI schools.** Under NCLB, every City school designated “in need of improvement” (“SINI schools”) must, within three months, develop a school improvement plan. These plans must include specific strategies for improving instructional techniques targeted at students, or subgroups of students, who did not meet the annual progress targets established by the State Education Department, and the plans must set measurable goals for improved student achievement. School improvement plans must be developed in consultation with school and district staff, parents and outside experts. Similarly, corrective action plans under NCLB must be developed in consultation with staff and parent representatives. When a school is required to plan for restructuring under NCLB, parents and teachers also must be promptly notified and invited to participate in the development of the restructuring plan. *See* 20 USC § 6316.
 2. **SURR, SRAP schools.** Similar stakeholder involvement is required under the State’s SURR and SRAP regulations. Depending on performance over a number of years, SURR schools must implement corrective action or redesign plans. SRAP schools must implement school improvement, corrective action or restructuring plans, also depending on performance over a number of years. The planning processes for these plans require the same level of parent and staff input mandated for development of CEPs. *See* 8 NYCRR § 100.2(p)(6); 8 NYCRR § 100.2(p)(10).

SINI, SURR, and SRAP plans are developed at the school level by SLTs, in consultation with the district and/or region, and are integrated into the school-based CEP developed by each SLT.

II. Existing Mechanisms for Public Input That Will Be Applicable to the SBE Plan

- D. **Panel for Educational Policy Hearings.** Public hearings on matters affecting the City's schools are held regularly by the Panel for Educational Policy (the "Panel"). Under the Education Law, the Panel advises the Chancellor on matters of policy affecting the welfare of the City School District, and it must approve policies directly related to student achievement and performance. It also must approve the estimate of the Department of Education's overall budget prior to submission to the City Council, and it must approve the DOE's five-year capital plan and any amendments to that plan. At its meetings, which must be public under the Open Meetings Law, the Panel regularly invites public comment on matters it has before it. The Panel will hold a public hearing to consider and invite public comment on the City's SBE Plan and will do the same regarding any future amendments of the Plan.
- E. **City Council Hearings.** Public hearings are part of the City Council's deliberations and final vote on DOE's operating and capital budgets as part of the overall City budget process. Additional public hearings are held concerning the City Council's review and approval of DOE's five-year capital plan, as mandated under the Education Law. Furthermore, pursuant to Local Law 24, the Department submits to the City Council on a quarterly basis a report about every capital project undertaken. The quarterly report monitors the schedule and budget performance of all active projects in the Capital Plan.
- F. **Community Education Council Hearings.** The proceedings of each Community Education Council ("CEC") must be open to the public. Each CEC has eleven members, nine of whom are parents of schoolchildren within the district and are appointed by the presidents and officers of parent associations within the district, and two of whom are appointed by the relevant borough president. Pursuant to statute, each CEC must hold monthly public hearings at which the public may express concerns about the educational system, and each CEC must also hold a public hearing on the Department's proposed capital plan and make recommendations to the Chancellor. Education Law §§ 2590-e(12), (14), 2590-p(3)

III. Planning And Public Participation In The City's Sound Basic Education ("SBE") Operating and Capital Plans

- G. **Operational planning.** Once the level of SBE funding is established, the City will update the Operating Plan and will obtain substantial public input prior to finalizing the Plan. The updated Plan will match

funds to the identified priority areas and specific initiatives. Additionally, the updated Operating Plan will include specific year-to-year benchmarks for student performance and programmatic indicators.

1. **Public hearings.**

(a) *Panel for Educational Policy hearings.* DOE will present the updated Operating Plan to the Panel for Educational Policy, and the Panel will hold a public hearing on the updated Operating Plan.

(b) *Borough-wide special hearings.* The City will hold public hearings in all five boroughs to obtain further public input and to ensure that stakeholders and citizens in all geographic areas of the City have an opportunity to participate in formulation of the Operating Plan.

(c) *City Council hearings.* The City Council will review the City's Plan to spend the additional operating funds as part of their review of the Department's overall budget.

Annual amendments to the Operating Plan would be subject to the same public processes and opportunities for public input as noted above.

H. **Capital planning.** After the amount of additional capital funding to be provided by the State is determined, the Department will incorporate that information into the next annual amendment to the Capital Plan. The annual amendments will be subject to the planning and public participation processes outlined above, including consultation with the CECs, approval of the plan by the Panel for Educational Policy and the City Council, and accompanying public hearings.

IV. Transparency: Measuring and Publicly Reporting Student Performance and Expenditures

The SBE Report will track how the City has spent the additional funding provided and include benchmarks to measure the success of DOE's programs and initiatives. The SBE report will enhance the existing planning, reporting, and oversight requirements by making available in one place detailed information on DOE's activities and their effect on the City's schools.

1. Consolidated information. The SBE Report will consolidate the multitude of separate reports currently submitted to the State into one comprehensive report as recommended by the State Education Commissioner.¹
2. Student performance benchmarks. The SBE Report will include student performance indicators that will measure by school, district, region, and Citywide test scores in grades 3-8, promotion rates, Regents scores, graduation rates and drop-out rates. This data will be reported in absolute terms, measured against identified benchmarks laid out in the SBE Plan, and, where possible, on a value-added basis. Value-added metrics track the improvement of individual students in a particular class or school by comparing last year's results for students with this year's results for the same students.
3. Programmatic benchmarks. The programmatic indicators will measure at a school, district, regional, and City-wide level whether programmatic benchmarks have been met. Such benchmarks could include, for example, whether the forecasted number of additional 4 year-olds were served by pre-k, whether average class size reductions in grades k-3 met DOE estimates, or whether the number of projected new schools were built.
4. Fiscal transparency. The SBE Report will track how DOE spends every dollar of additional SBE funding. In addition, the SBE Report will include expenditure reports for the City as a whole, by region, by district, and by school. At the school level, the expenditure reports will track expenditures by category. For example, it will include breakdowns of funds spent on various categories of classroom instruction (e.g., teacher salaries, textbooks, and instructional supplies), instructional support (e.g., counseling services and after school activities), leadership and supervision (e.g., principal salaries), ancillary support (e.g., food services and transportation), and building services (e.g., custodial services and building maintenance).
5. Capital expenditures. The SBE report will report on the status and progress of all capital projects undertaken by the Department.
6. Enhanced school report cards. Student performance data, programmatic indicators, and expenditure reports will be combined

¹ See "A Proposal on Planning and Reporting By New York State School Districts For the Strategic Use of School Resources for School Improvement," issued in 2003.

into a single school report card for each school that will be posted on the DOE's website. Such report cards will provide stakeholders a useful snapshot of relative school performance.

The information provided in the SBE report will enhance the ability of all stakeholders—including parents, teachers, administrators, State and federal agencies, elected officials, and the public-at-large—to see how the DOE uses the additional funding ordered by the Court and to judge the progress of the City's schools. By consolidating existing reports and planning documents into a single report, the SBE Report will enhance existing planning processes by making more information more easily available to the stakeholders participating in planning throughout the system. It will also make the various public processes, such as public hearings and City Council review, function more efficiently. Finally, by making information readily available from a single source, it will enhance the public's ability to hold the Mayor and the Chancellor accountable for the way they run the City schools.