



## GLOSSARY OF COMMONLY USED ADVOCACY TERMS

### GENERAL:

**Advocacy** -- Recognizing and communicating needs, rights and interests on behalf of a child; making informed choices

**Common Core Learning Standards** – The Common Core State Standards adopted by The Board of Regents in 2010 identify what students in Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade should know and be able to do in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics to be prepared for college and career success. The standards emphasize critical thinking, careful reading of fiction and non-fiction, writing with evidence, effective communication of ideas, and real world problem solving in mathematics. The Common Core is a set of standards or expectations; it is not a prescribed curriculum.

**Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR)** -- Just like students, teachers and principals will now be given a number grade at the end of every year that represents their effectiveness rating. This is thanks to the new state-required evaluation system called the Annual Professional Performance Review (or “APPR”). Teachers and principals have always been evaluated and held to standards, but the new system is more governed by rules set by the state – and, for the first time ever, a portion of teacher evaluation is directly tied to student performance.

**APPR HEDI scale** –  
Highly Effective, Effective, Developing and Ineffective

Fig. 1

		Observation			
		Highly Effective (H)	Effective (E)	Developing (D)	Ineffective (I)
Student Performance	Highly Effective (H)	H ◀▶	H ▲	E ▶▶	D ▼
	Effective (E)	H ▲	E ◀▶	E ▲	D ◀▶
	Developing (D)	E ▶▶	E ▲	D ◀▶	I ▼
	Ineffective (I)	D* ▼	D* ◀▶	I ▼	I ◀▶

▶▶ Ratings for observation and student performance have equal value in overall HEDI score  
 ▲ Overall HEDI score is pulled up by the higher score on either observation or student performance  
 ▼ Overall HEDI score is pulled down by the lower score on either observation or student performance  
 D or I Teacher is given an improvement plan

\* If a teacher is rated ineffective on the student performance category, and a state designed supplemental assessment was included as an optional subcomponent of the student performance category, the teacher can be rated no higher than ineffective overall.

Source: State Education Department; NYSSBA research

### TESTING:

**Assessment** -- Process of identifying strengths and needs to assist in educational planning; includes observation, record review, interviews, and tests.

### **Standardized test** --

This is a test that is in the same format for all who take it. It often relies on multiple-choice questions and the testing conditions—including instructions, time limits and scoring rubrics—are the same for all students; sometimes accommodations on time limits and instructions are made for disabled students.



**NYS Assessments** -- These examinations are administered to students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 enrolled in public, nonpublic, and charter schools throughout the State.

**“high stakes testing”** – A high-stakes test is any test used to make important decisions about students, educators, schools, or districts, most commonly for the purpose of accountability—i.e., the attempt by federal, state, or local government agencies and school administrators to ensure that students are enrolled in effective schools.

**Stand-alone field testing-**

Field tests are essentially product development, where the test creator, Pearson, tests out (or “fields”) possible questions for use on future exams; they do not help the student or the school. Prospective questions can be embedded within the actual exams that count, so students don’t know which questions count and which do not because they are “field” questions. In contrast, NY also utilizes “stand-alone” field tests, where the tests comprise only prospective questions.

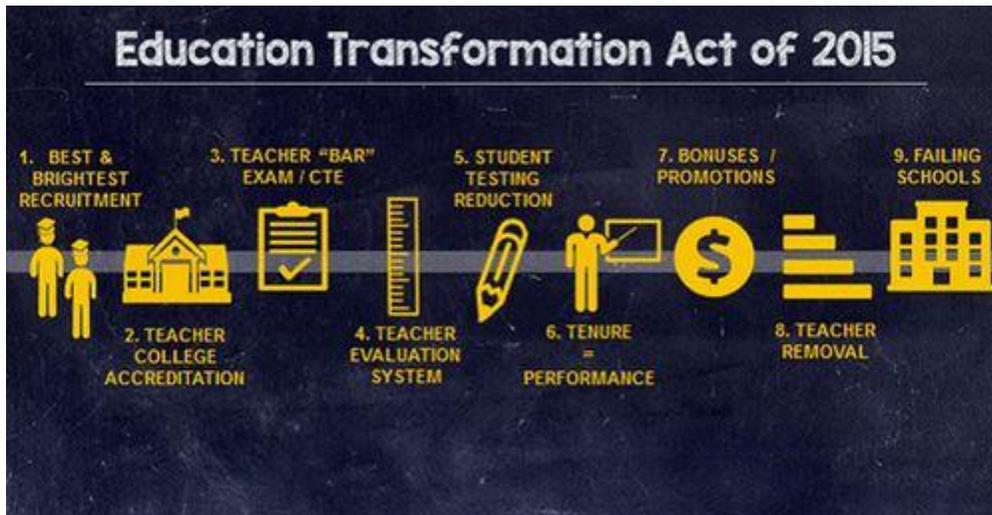
**EDUCATION REFORM:**

**No Child Left Behind (NCLB) --**

Signed into law by President Bush in 2002, No Child Left Behind sets performance guidelines for all schools and also stipulates what must be included in accountability reports to parents. It mandates annual student testing, includes guidelines for underperforming schools, and requires states to train all teachers and assistants to be “highly qualified.” It will soon to be renamed “ESEA,” the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

**Race to the Top Program (RTTT)** – Race to the Top is a \$4.35 billion United States Department of Education competitive grant created to spur and reward innovation and reforms in state and local district K-12 education. This program was announced by President Barack Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan on July 25, 2009. It was started as an effort to ensure that every student was “college and career ready” and to achieve “educational equity” by “turning around” the lowest-performing schools (or by closing them if they didn’t turn around fast enough.) The program was a competition among states whereby states were awarded points for satisfying certain educational policies such as performance-based evaluations for teachers and principals based on multiple measures of educator effectiveness, and adopting common standards (though adoption of the Common Core State Standards was not required). The program became controversial as some critics said it represented federal intrusion into local education (though states were not required to participate) and critics wondered how a competition among states – which would create winners and losers – could create educational equity.

**Education Transformation Act of 2015** – This is Governor Cuomo’s latest education reform initiative for New York, announced in April 2015, which can be broken down into major subsections as follows:



For more information on the Education Transformation Act of 2015, go to Cuomo’s announcement at:

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-highlights-passage-2015-16-state-budget>

**Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** – ESSA does away with much of the federal government's involvement in assessing an individual school's success or failure and also tries to take away some of the predesigned interventions required under No Child Left Behind (NCLB.) Much of the power the federal government previously held in determining a school's success was turned over to the states. Under the new law, if a high school has a graduation rate below 67 percent, the federal government requires states to intervene.

**GOVERNING BODIES:**

**Board of Regents** – The Regents are responsible for the general supervision of all educational activities within the State, presiding over The University and the New York State Education Department (NYSED). The Regents are organized into standing committees, subcommittees and work groups whose members and chairs are appointed by the Chancellor. The current Chancellor is Merryl Tisch. Tisch recently announced that after 7 years as Chancellor, and 20 years as a member of the Board, she will not seek another term in March 2016.

The Board comprises 17 members (including the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor) elected by the State Legislature for 5-year terms; 1 from each of the State’s 13 judicial districts and 4 members who serve at large. Regents are unsalaried and are reimbursed only for travel and related expenses in connection with their official duties.

**New York State Education Department (NYSED)** – The New York State Education Department is responsible for the supervision of all public schools in New York and all standardized testing, as well as the production and administration of state tests and Regents Examinations. NYSED also oversees higher education, cultural institutions such as museums and libraries, and the licensing of numerous professions. It is headed by the regents of the University of the State of New York and administered by the Commissioner of Education.



In May 2015, The New York State Board of Regents voted to appoint Mary Ellen Elia as the next Commissioner of Education and President of the University of the State of New York (USNY). Ms. Elia replaced former Commissioner John King, who left the Department at the end of 2014 to take a job with the U.S. Department of Education.

**FUNDING FOR EDUCATION:**

**Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA)** – The Gap Elimination Adjustment is a concept that was introduced by Governor David Paterson in 2009 when the economy was in decline and the State could not balance its budget. At that time, the State had a \$10 billion budget deficit. As a result, it decided to eliminate a portion of every school district’s State Aid to help close this gap. That adjustment, or deduction, to our usual State Aid, became known as the Gap Elimination Adjustment, or the GEA for short. The state was, in essence balancing its budget by “taking back” aid originally projected for school districts based on the State’s aid formula.

**Foundation Aid Formula:** As with the current year, the budget allocates the vast majority of operating aid through the Foundation Aid Formula, which uses objective criteria to better target State funds to high needs districts, and is tied to the Contracts for Excellence accountability measures created last year.

Ex:

**School Aid Lookup**

**Quick Lookup**

This will provide a bottom line figure for the amount of aid each district will receive.

To find the school aid for a district, start typing your district name in the search box below.

**District Name:**

If you would prefer to limit your search to a specific county, [open the list of counties](#) and make your selection.

**Pelham School District: Westchester County**

2007-08 Formula & Building Aid:	\$5,030,739
2008-09 Formula & Building Aid, NYC EXCEL:	\$5,088,956
Year-to-Year Change:	\$58,217
Percent Change:	1.16%

**Detailed Lookup**

Comprehensive information about each type of aid each district will receive can be found at the [NYSED State Aid Homepage](#).