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NYSUT Position Statement on Recommended Changes to APPR

Carrying forth a resolution passed unanimously by the NYSUT Representative Assembly, this NYSUT position statement calls for necessary changes to the APPR system. A NYSUT APPR Workgroup was charged with drafting recommendations on APPR that subsequently were approved by the NYSUT Policy Council and disseminated to local presidents and members for review and comment. A NYSUT Board of Directors APPR Task Force incorporated member and leader feedback in developing the position paper below, which was unanimously adopted by the NYSUT Board of Directors on January 24, 2015.

NYSUT supports an evaluation system that de-emphasizes testing and emphasizes teacher development and growth. An evaluation system should be fair to teachers, include multiple measures of professional practice and student learning, and allow for differentiated evaluations. Teacher professional development must be central to the teaching and learning process. Evaluation systems must hold school districts and the state accountable for the conditions of successful teaching and learning. To achieve these goals, NYSUT supports the following changes to APPR:

NYSUT supports districts and locals working together to reduce the time students spend on testing in order to increase time on learning.

NYSUT supports elimination of the state growth model from the calculation of a teacher evaluation score in order to diminish the high stakes nature of the grade 3-8 state assessments.

NYSUT supports local control of evaluations by requiring the evaluation plan be developed through collective bargaining, allowing the plan to reflect the needs of the local school community.

NYSUT supports reducing the percentage of the student performance subcomponents from 40 percent to 20 percent to reduce the emphasis on testing while meeting current federal requirements by allowing districts and locals to determine the make-up of the 20 percent.

NYSUT supports increasing the percentage of the teaching practice subcomponent from 60 percent to 80 percent to reflect the importance of the professional dialogue between the teacher and administrator around student learning.

NYSUT supports changing the teacher effectiveness rating categories to reflect the extent the teacher's practices meet state teaching standards.

NYSUT supports including in the district's evaluation plan a requirement that educators, parents, students and principals survey the school's conditions of teaching and learning to ensure district and state accountability for essential elements of teaching and learning.

NYSUT supports allowing districts and locals to negotiate differentiated teacher evaluations to customize professional learning and replace the one-size-fits-all approach.

NYSUT supports strengthening initial certification and re-certification of evaluators to ensure they maintain inter-rater reliability.