



Responses to Feedback on Progress Report Methodology

Last Updated: April 12th, 2011

In the month of March, representatives of the Division of Academics, Performance, and Support facilitated over 50 feedback sessions with a total of approximately 1,000 participants, including principals, network staff and school staff. Participants provided a broad range of feedback, which we have summarized in this document, along with our responses.

Feedback from participants has informed the final changes to the 2010-11 Progress Report methodology, and will inform changes to the Progress Report methodology in future years.

We thank all those who provided feedback for helping to improve these evaluation tools and welcome additional feedback. To share comments or ask any questions throughout the year, please write to PR_Support@schools.nyc.gov.

Feedback on Proposed Changes to Scored Portion of the 2010-11 Progress Report

Topic	Feedback	Response
<p>Percent of students earning 10 or more credits (HS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed requirement of 2 credits in each of 3 of the 4 main subjects is inconsistent with some schools' course programming. • A student who earns fewer than 2 credits in all 4 subjects should not be treated differently than a student who earned credit in only 3 subjects. 	<p>2010-11 Update. Taking full year courses in English, math, science, and social studies in each of the first three years of high school is the most common path for a student to stay on track to graduate in four years. Schools have alternative course programming, however, and to accommodate that diversity, the credit by subject rule will be adjusted to be more flexible.</p> <p>For 2010-11, the new rule will change so that each student must earn six credits total in the four main subjects, with three subjects represented.</p>
<p>Attribution of students for Regents and credit metrics (HS / HST / YABC)</p>	<p>Students who graduate in the middle of the year should be counted toward metrics in the progress section even if they are discharged before June 30.</p>	<p>2010-11 Update. Schools should get credit for their mid-year graduates' Regents and credit outcomes during the time they are enrolled.</p> <p>The new student attribution rule does not exclude mid-year graduates from the high school, transfer school, or YABC progress metrics.</p>

Topic	Feedback	Response
<p>Former special education status and former English language learners (HS / HST / YABC)</p>	<p>Many students' ELL status or special education placement changes at the end of their 8th grade year. By focusing on only four years of status, our proposal would not capture the 8th grade change for students in their fourth year of high school.</p>	<p>2010-11 Update. The new rule will consider the past five years of ELL and special education status for high school students.</p>
<p>Additional credit for movement of students with disabilities to less restrictive environments (EMS / EC / HS / HST / YABC)</p>	<p>Students receiving special education services for the first time should not be included in the denominator of the less restrictive environment additional credit measure.</p>	<p>2010-11 Update. The denominator should exclude students who cannot contribute to the numerator.</p> <p>Students who received special education services (other than related services only) for the first time in 2010-11 will be excluded from the metric.</p>
<p>Additional credit for movement of students with disabilities to less restrictive environments (EMS / EC / HS / HST / YABC)</p>	<p>The less restrictive environment additional credit metric rewards a change in service provision even if the change does not result in better academic outcomes.</p>	<p>No action planned at this time. It is important to consider the less restrictive environment metric in the context of the full Progress Report. Schools are responsible for the performance and progress of all students, and existing metrics that focus specifically on the performance and progress of students with disabilities.</p> <p>Overall, a school can earn the most points on the Progress Report by placing students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment that is educationally appropriate – in other words, the setting in which the student will make the most academic progress.</p>

Topic	Feedback	Response
<p>Additional credit for movement of students with disabilities to less restrictive environments (EMS / EC / HS / HST / YABC)</p>	<p>A school should get credit for decertifying a student who begins the new placement at another school in a future year.</p>	<p>No action planned at this time. One of the important corollaries to the less restrictive environment metric is that schools are also accountable for the academic progress of the students whose placement is changed. A school that moves a student to a new placement that does not take effect until the student enrolls in a new school does not have that accountability for academic progress.</p>

Feedback on Proposed Phase-In Metrics

Topic	Feedback	Response
<p>All phase-in metrics (MS / K-8 / HS / HST / YABC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase-in metrics should not be reported in the first year because principals did not learn about them until February. • Phase-in metrics should be scored immediately because of the urgency of implementing higher standards. 	<p>No action planned at this time. We believe the new two-year phase-in approach is the best compromise between the urgency of measuring these outcomes and the need to give schools time to adjust to new accountability metrics.</p> <p>The phase-in metrics will be publicly reported for 2010-11 but will not be integrated into the Progress Report grade. The metrics will be integrated into the Progress Report grade for the 2011-12 reports.</p>

Topic	Feedback	Response
<p>Middle school core course pass rate (MS / K-8)</p>	<p>Grading standards differ from school to school and from classroom to classroom. Including these metrics in the Progress Report may lead to “grade inflation.”</p>	<p>Action planned for Spring 2011. Measuring diverse course offerings and pedagogy is one of the main benefits of the middle school course metrics, which will reward schools for innovative practices and a variety of learning outcomes. However, lack of standardization is also one of the challenges of the new metrics.</p> <p>With input from principals and other stakeholders, the DOE will provide guidance on middle school grading, similar to the policy recently announced for high school credits. The DOE will support schools in understanding and integrating this guidance, ensuring that these data are comparable across schools before using them for school evaluation. Also, to ensure that integrating these data into school accountability does not lead to inappropriate grading practices, the DOE will explore ways to increase oversight of middle school grading – for example, through an academic data audit for middle schools.</p>
<p>College Readiness Metrics (HS / HST / YABC)</p>	<p>Metrics should reward successes in achieving career readiness for our students.</p>	<p>Under consideration for 2011-12. We share this goal, and we are exploring the availability of data and possible career-readiness measures for the Progress Report for future years.</p>

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College enrollment rate (HS / HST / YABC)	There are reasons why students choose not to enroll in college that are out of schools' control.	No action planned at this time. We acknowledge that there are reasons beyond a school's control that certain students do not enroll in college, but there are also actions that schools can take to increase the likelihood that students enroll. One of the goals of this metric is to recognize schools that are taking those steps and achieving higher college enrollment rates than other schools serving similar students.

Feedback Regarding Other Aspects of the Progress Report

Topic	Feedback	Response
Peer groups and metric adjustments (All school types)	To further the goal of demographic neutrality, the Progress Report should include additional factors in the peer index or for metric adjustments, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special education placement • SIFE / long-term ELL status • School admission criteria • Age/credits of students who transfer into the school • Temporary housing status 	Under consideration for 2011-12. We will re-evaluate the peer index formula and metric adjustments for the 2011-12 Progress Report, and will consider all of the demographic characteristics suggested. Adjusting the peer index formula requires substantial analysis to determine the impact of the changes, and therefore cannot be done for 2010-11. It is worth noting that some of the suggested characteristics (such as special education placement) are already incorporated in other elements of the Progress Report. Further, many of these characteristics are highly correlated with other criteria used in the peer index (such as incoming proficiency). As a result, it is not necessary to include every characteristic related to student outcomes in the peer index.

Topic	Feedback	Response
<p>Focus on State ELA and Math exams (EMS / EC / D75)</p>	<p>State Math and ELA exams play too large a role in the Progress Reports covering grades K-8, and have a negative effect on the reports' stability as well as instructional practice.</p>	<p>Under consideration for 2011-12. We are actively seeking to diversify the Progress Report beyond State tests.</p> <p>For this reason, at the middle school level, we are phasing in metrics based on student outcomes in core and accelerated courses.</p> <p>With elementary and middle school principals and other stakeholders, we are also exploring the use of additional elementary and middle school courses and assessments other than State exams in the Progress Report.</p>
<p>School Survey (All school types)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey questions focused on the principal unfairly linked Progress Report outcomes to their personal popularity. • A small number of frustrated constituents can affect Progress Report results by offering negative responses. 	<p>No action planned at this time. Parent, teacher, and student opinions of the school environment, including school leadership, are important. Individual responses are aggregated across respondent groups so that no individual response will have too large an effect on the final score.</p>
<p>NYSESLAT progress (All school types)</p>	<p>The Progress Report should recognize schools for helping their ELL students progress toward language proficiency on the NYSESLAT exam.</p>	<p>Under consideration for 2011-12. One of the new rules, the inclusion of former ELL students in the additional credit calculations, will recognize schools' progress with ELL students.</p> <p>For the 2011-12 Progress Report, we will also consider an additional credit metric based on year-to-year progress on the NYSESLAT. Additional analysis is required to determine appropriate specifications for such a metric.</p>

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<p>Data tools / Modelers (All school types)</p>	<p>Educators have expressed a desire for additional tools to use in planning such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of students in the lowest third groups for the current school year • A list of the top 33% of schools (in terms of ELA/Math performance or 4 year graduation rate) for the previous year • Guidance in how to use the Progress Report to set goals • A tracker for transfer school / YABC graduation cohorts <p>Some have expressed concern that discontinuing the modelers removes a useful goal-setting tool.</p>	<p>Under consideration for 2011-12. Providing useful data tools for schools is an important priority. We discontinued the modeler because it was not fulfilling the objectives we had for it. It was released too late in the year for use in goal-setting for the school year. Also, because it used preliminary data, it was not an accurate predictor of final Progress Report outcome. We are working on developing better tools, but we do not have anything concrete to announce at this time.</p>
<p>Minimum number of students for additional credit metrics (All school types)</p>	<p>For small schools, the minimum number of students for additional credit metrics can be too high. For other schools, it can be too low because 10 or 15 is not enough for a reliable sample or because schools may qualify for additional credit without having a large number of students that fit the criteria.</p>	<p>Under consideration for 2011-12. We will explore possible adjustments to the minimum student requirements for additional credit metrics for the 2011-12 Progress Report. Additional analysis will be required to determine the impact of such a change.</p>
<p>Weighted Regents pass rates (HS / HST / YABC)</p>	<p>The weighted Regents pass rates do not sufficiently recognize the growth of students in schools serving high-achieving students because the metrics give no credit for performance above passing and these students are very likely to pass.</p>	<p>Under consideration for 2011-12. We are considering several significant changes to the Regents metrics for 2011-12 that would differentiate among students who pass the exam at different levels. Additional analysis will be required to determine how to implement such a change.</p>

Topic	Feedback	Response
<p>Performance and progress measures for students with disabilities (All school types)</p>	<p>The Progress Report should use alternative performance measures for students with disabilities, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP promotion criteria for grades 3-8 • 5 or 6 year graduation rates • Regents scores of 55 in the Regents completion rate 	<p>No action planned at this time. The growth percentile adjustments for students with disabilities in grades 3-8 approximate modified promotion criteria. The Progress Report already takes into account 6th year graduation outcomes for all students. And the State has not yet made clear whether and for how long it intends to retain the exception permitting students with disabilities to graduate with diplomas based on RCTs or Regents scores of 55. We will continue to re-evaluate treatment of students with disabilities in the Progress Report as the city and state policies evolve.</p>
<p>Balance of performance and progress (All school types)</p>	<p>Principals of schools with high absolute performance have suggested that performance should be weighted more heavily on the Progress Report. Principals of schools with low absolute performance have contended that absolute performance should receive less weight than it currently does, and progress should be weighted more heavily.</p>	<p>No action planned at this time. The Progress Reports are intended to measure the contributions of schools to the academic progress and performance of their students, in a way that is not correlated with student demographics or starting proficiency. The emphasis on progress, along with the peer comparison methodology, helps to balance these goals.</p> <p>At the same time, we must hold our students and our schools to high standards of performance, and the new phase-in metrics focused on college and high school readiness, as well as the forthcoming assessments based on the Common Core standards, will highlight and more precisely measure student outcomes at the top of the achievement scale.</p>