

Principal APPR
Considerations for Principal Improvement Plans
From 2012-13 Evaluations

Introduction:

Principals who receive composite scores in the Ineffective or Developing ranges are required to have an improvement plan in place no later than 10 school days after the opening of classes for the school year (that date will vary by district).

Carefully read your APPR agreement and/or what was submitted and approved by NYSED in Review Room, found at <http://usny.nysed.gov/rtt/teachers-leaders/plans/>. Know what process and format must be followed for the PIP.

Can you file an appeal? Have you or will you? SAANYS recommends that every Ineffective Composite Rating/Score be appealed. Check your APPR agreement and/or the NYSED approved APPR Plan regarding the appeals process, including required time frames. Technically, your score is not final until the appeal process is complete. However, it appears that law/regulation require the PIP to be in place by 10 school days after the opening of classes, even if the score is under appeal. Should the appeal result in an Effective or Highly Effective rating/score, the PIP should be rescinded.

Frequently asked questions regarding PIP's:

1. **Q:** Who is responsible for developing the PIP? **A:** Typically, management is responsible for developing improvement plans. However, with the advent of the APPR law, PIPs are mandatorily negotiable. Therefore, bargaining units have input into the PIP plan. Responsibility for the issuance of a PIP plan depends on what was negotiated and could be any combination of the principal's supervisor or some other district administrator, and, possibly, the principal. Determine what your negotiated APPR agreement and/or the NYSED approved APPR Plan indicate regarding the issuance of the PIP. For example, does the plan require mutual agreement or just input from the principal, if the principal has a role?
2. **Q:** What must be included in a PIP plan? **A:** According to NYSED Guidance Documents: *"An improvement plan defines specific standards-based goals that a principal must make progress toward attaining within a specific period of time, such as a 12-month period, and shall include the identification of areas that need improvement, a timeline for achieving improvement, the manner in which improvement will be assessed, and, where appropriate, differentiated activities to support improvement in these areas."* Your agreement or approved plan may call for additional aspects.
3. **Q:** When does the clock start for an appeal of the issuance and/or implementation of a PIP? **A:** If included in your APPR agreement and/or NYSED approved APPR Plan, the time period for an appeal of the issuance of a PIP starts when you receive the PIP in final form or if you failed to receive a PIP in the required time frame. An appeal of the implementation of the PIP plan starts when you know or reasonably should have known that the district has not complied with implementation mandates of the PIP. This, of course, is dependent on the language of your APPR agreement and/or the NYSED approved APPR plan.
4. **Q:** Can there be more than one appeal of the implementation of the PIP? **A:** Yes, each substantive violation of the implementation of PIP constitutes a separate and distinct ground for appeal, assuming your agreement or approved plan provide for appeal of the implementation of a PIP.

Questions and considerations regarding a PIP's issuance, implementation, and potential appeals under §3012-c:

1. Review your APPR plan and/or review room document to make sure every aspect of the PIP has been followed.
2. If the process was not faithfully implemented (including time frames, collaboration or input, all components included), you may appeal the issuance of the PIP. What appeal process, if any, is available if the district does not follow its obligations for implementation of the PIP? This should be found in your APPR agreement and/or in what was submitted and approved by NYSED in Review Room, found at <http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/teachers-leaders/plans/>.
3. In reviewing appeals of the issuance of a PIP plan, pay careful attention that the process for developing and issuing the PIP was followed. If not, you have grounds to appeal the PIP's issuance.
4. Who is responsible for developing the PIP: the supervisor or some other district administrator, the principal, or both? If both, is it by mutual agreement (not typical) or through collaboration? If you have any role, be proactive in a timely manner.
5. Does the PIP clearly identify what support and resources the district will provide? We suggested this be part of the PIP language. However, we also believe it is an implied expectation in law/regulation based on NYSED APPR Guidance Documents available on the EngageNY website: "*The supervisor should clearly state in the plan the additional support and assistance that the educator will receive.*" Districts should not put all responsibility for improvement on the employee. What does your PIP plan provide for?
6. What activities must you complete during the implementation of the PIP? What documents must be submitted? When?
7. How will you receive feedback on progress on the PIP? When? In writing, orally or both?

General suggestions regarding improvement plans:

1. Goals/objectives should be actions, products, activities, events – things you can see, hear, touch and/or quantify. AND they should be reasonable, verifiable, and generally within the scope of your responsibility.
2. Goals/objectives should not be lofty or unmanageable, or not within your ability to accomplish.
3. Be cautious of goals/objectives that require resources you may not have or have any ability to acquire.
4. Improvement plans should include a built-in, periodic review and feedback piece from your supervisor (i.e. documentation/reporting to supervisor; monthly or quarterly meetings and verbal feedback/mentoring from supervisor; written assessments/feedback from supervisor). At least suggest it and try to get written agreement.

5. Keep good notes and records, including detailed notes of verbal interaction with supervisor(s).
6. Keep all written communications to and from supervisor(s) – e.g., emails, memos, progress assessments, reports.