

A Performance Assessment Model

Data Report on the
New York Performance
Standards Consortium



A practitioner-developed &
student-focused performance
assessment system

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Performance Standards Consortium

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Photographs by Roy Reid

Foreword

As I read the data report on the New York Performance Standards Consortium, I thought so *this* is what accountability should look like: a model of *complex* accountability. I admit I am profoundly suspect of prevailing claims of education progress measured only by test scores, but I am equally hungry for a deep accountability framework that speaks ethically and honestly about the challenges and accomplishments of schools.

From this report we learn about the New York Performance Standards Consortium, a network of public small schools serving a range of students, with diverse needs and gifts. Without being selective, these schools beat the odds in New York City and state in rates for student graduation and college enrollment for working class and poor youth. Designed with intentionality toward intellectual inquiry and performance, the schools challenge both high achieving students and those students who are most educationally vulnerable, including English language learners and students with disabilities. An astonishing counter-story to what we read in the newspapers about public schools.

With this volume, the Consortium presents two gifts to readers. First, we encounter a rich menu of accountability indicators much more revealing, ethical, and useful than simple counts of standardized test scores. Second, at a time when I fear the public can no longer imagine what good public education looks like, for all children, where teachers stay and students engage, the Consortium has widened the public educational imagination for the schools our children deserve.

This is the investment our nation needs.

Michelle Fine
Distinguished Professor of Psychology and Urban Education,
The Graduate Center,
City University of New York

At a time when schools in New York City are struggling to find ways to increase college readiness and insure that graduating students actually have the skills to succeed in college, the results achieved by schools within the New York Performance Standards Consortium are not just noteworthy, they are remarkable. On almost every measure of need and disadvantage these schools are serving a more challenging population of students, yet they are finding ways to meet their learning needs by focusing on the types of skills that are too often ignored: critical thinking, problem solving, research and expository writing, public speaking, and independent initiative.

These schools are showing us what might be possible if we broadened our view of assessment to include a focus on evidence that students are receiving a broad range of academic and social skills. They show us that truly innovative educational environments support great teaching and produce committed teachers, and that it's possible to encourage students to take responsibility for learning without relying upon pressure, threats and fear.

Pedro A. Noguera,
Distinguished Professor of Education
Graduate School of Education and Information Sciences
UCLA

What this slim volume teaches us is that strong professional communities create powerful schools. Although the data report focuses on the startling results of the Consortium member public school students—their successful rates of graduation and college enrollment—what caught my attention is the astonishing commitment of their teachers. That is a telling bit of information—it means that in these schools, with their teacher-designed and revised assessment system, teachers finally have the professional respect, autonomy, and responsibility to make their schools work for their students. And the results speak to their success

Teachers thrive in such an environment. They aren't there for a two-year stint and then go on to "real" careers. They stay, and learn, and grow even better at what they do. Students can only benefit from the thoughtful collaboration and collegiality of caring and intelligent teachers. This report testifies to that, and it's something that those who have the power to implement education policy need to pay close attention to.

Deborah W. Meier
Senior Scholar
Steinhardt School of Education
New York University

New York Performance Standards Consortium

The New York Performance Standards Consortium (Consortium) has developed a proven practitioner-developed, student-focused performance assessment system for its 38 member schools in New York City and State. Its validity was confirmed by the NY State Education Department and the NY Board of Regents in 1998 and reaffirmed through variances since then. The main components of the system are:

- ▶ Practitioner-designed and student-focused assessment tasks
- ▶ External evaluators for written and oral student work
- ▶ Moderation studies to establish reliability
- ▶ Extensive professional development
- ▶ Predictive college enrollment of graduates

Additional components include an emphasis on:

- ▶ Inquiry-based teaching and learning
- ▶ Discussion-based classrooms
- ▶ Student choice and voice
- ▶ High expectations for all

Consortium schools have developed a culture focused on deeper learning skills. Freed of the pressures to “teach to the test,” Consortium teachers developed a multi-layered student-focused curriculum in addition to and beyond the assessment tasks. Not only assessment but instruction, too, reflect the value of open-ended questioning; intensive reading, writing, and discussion; student ownership of their work; and assignments extended over longer periods of time than the more conventional standardized approach to assessment and instruction.



Time and Space to Innovate

The Consortium has been able to thrive in New York because the state provided it with time and a “safe space” to innovate, develop, and refine its system. For decades, while we have witnessed the serious shortcomings of large-scale assessment systems imposed on teachers and classrooms “from above,” the Consortium system—teacher-designed and flourishing at the school and local levels—has nurtured a committed cadre of practitioners who believe in the system and have devoted years of work to grow it and refine it.

The Consortium includes a range of schools, from transfer schools (or “second-chance” schools) to schools in the International Network to Title One schools and schools with both the urban poor and the urban middle class. All types of schools and students have benefited, including schools with large populations of students with IEPs, who have successfully earned diplomas.

Multiple Outcomes of NY Performance Standards Consortium

The Consortium approach produces far better outcomes when compared with overall public school data. While standardized assessments limit targeted outcomes to grades on standardized exams, the Consortium broadens the definition of outcomes by looking at:

- ▶ Graduation Rates: NYC and Upstate
- ▶ ELLS and Students with Disabilities
- ▶ Meeting of Academic Targets
- ▶ 18 Month College Enrollment
- ▶ 4 Year College Readiness
- ▶ Quality of School Environment



Graduation Rates and College Readiness

The results for Consortium graduates have been far-reaching and positive. The Consortium graduation rate exceeds that of the overall corresponding public schools (see Charts 2-3). The Consortium has a proven record of producing graduates who go on to successful undergraduate careers. All this was accomplished despite the fact that the Consortium schools' pool of students include more students living at the poverty level, a higher percentage of Hispanic students and English Language Learners, and a higher percentage of students with lower English and math skills than the overall NYC public high school population (see Chart 1).



Chart 1: Demographics of Consortium and NYC Public High Schools

	Consortium	Citywide
% Black	24.5%	26.3%
% Hispanic	51.5%	40.1%
% English Language Learners	18.6%	11.5%
% Students with Disabilities	18.5%	17.0%
% Temporary Housing	13.0%	10.0%
Average Incoming Scores — Math	2.71	2.91
Average Incoming Scores — ELA	2.82	2.98
Economic Need Index	74.0%	71.0%

Source: These results were calculated using publicly available NYC DOE data (Accessed November 2019 and January 2020): 2018-2019 School Quality Guide Citywide Data; High School Citywide Results; Transfer High School Citywide Results; * New York City Graduation Rates Class of 2019 (2015 Cohort)

Note: Consortium graduation data based on 2 or more years of enrollment in a Consortium member school.

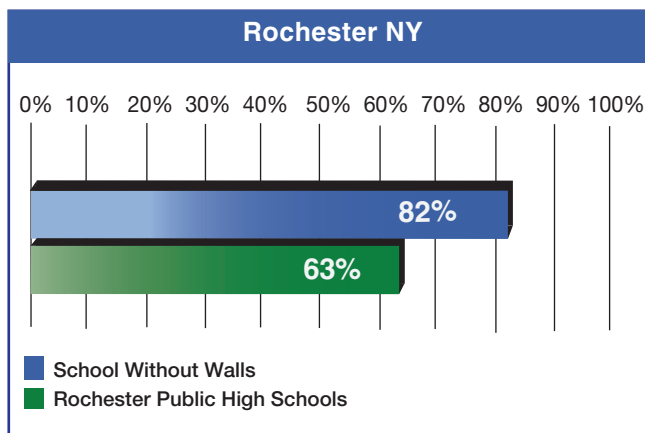
Chart 2: High School Graduation Rates for Consortium and NYC Public High Schools

	Consortium	Citywide
4-Year Graduation Rate for 9-12 High Schools*	84.0%	77.3%
4-Year Grad Rate – Black*	84.0%	73.7%
4-Year Grad Rate – Hispanic*	80.0%	72.0%
4-Year Grad Rate – English Language Learners	75.0%	69.0%
4-Year Grad Rate – Students with Disabilities	73.0%	68.0%

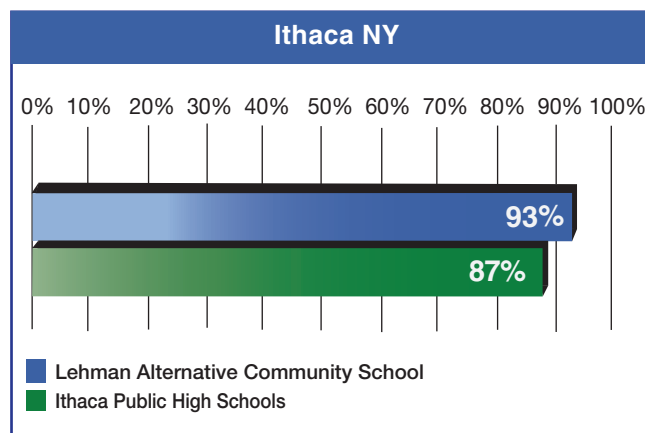
Source: These results were calculated using publicly available NYC DOE data (Accessed November 2019 and January 2020): 2018-2019 School Quality Guide Citywide Data; High School Citywide Results; Transfer High School Citywide Results; * New York City Graduation Rates Class of 2019 (2015 Cohort)

Note: Consortium graduation data based on 2 or more years of enrollment in a Consortium member school.

Chart 3: High School Graduation Rates for Consortium and Upstate Public High Schools



Source: <https://data.nysed.gov/profile.php?instid=800000050527> (Accessed February 2020)



Source: <https://data.nysed.gov/gradrate.php?year=2019&instid=800000036424> (Accessed February 2020)

Meeting or Exceeding Academic and Quality Targets

The NYC Department of Education has established targets for the expected level of academic rigor and school environment supports. Recent reports show that Consortium schools meet and exceed DOE targets for both academics and the quality of teaching and school environment.

The performance-based assessment tasks (PBATs), which have become the basis of the Consortium’s assessment work and teacher collaboration reflect the complexity of learning that Conley refers to in his work on college readiness “A Complete Definition of College and Career Readiness” (2012): analyzing conflicting phenomena, supporting arguments with evidence, solving complex problems that have no obvious answer, and thinking deeply about what is being taught. These are specific skills that Tony Wagner has argued are needed to prepare students for the 21st century (“Rigor Redefined,” 2011) and that have led to Consortium schools’ success.

Chart 4: Academic Outcomes

% Meeting or Exceeding DOE Academic Target Set for the School	Consortium 9-12	Citywide 9-12
Student Achievement	90%	72%
Credit Accumulation Grade 9	71%	55%
18-month college enrollment	72%	57%
4-year college readiness	96%	68%

Source: Thee above results were calculated using publicly available NYC DOE data (Accessed November 2019 and January 2020): 2018-2019 School Quality Guide Citywide Data; High School Citywide Results; Transfer High School Citywide Results

Chart 5: Quality Outcomes

% of Schools Meeting or Exceeding DOE Quality Target Set for the School	Consortium	Citywide
Rigorous Instruction	98%	77%
Collaborative Teachers	98%	83%
Supportive Environment	97%	83%
Effective School Leadership	94%	85%

Source: Thee above results were calculated using publicly available NYC DOE data (Accessed November 2019 and January 2020): 2018-2019 School Quality Guide Citywide Data; High School Citywide Results; Transfer High School Citywide Results

Transitioning to Performance Assessment

In the fall of 2014, a number of NYC Regents exam-based high schools began the transition to becoming performance assessment-based schools within the Consortium. Some of the schools were relatively new, but others had been Regents-based schools for years.

Under the Consortium’s policy for transitioning to performance assessment, the school staffs participated in intense professional development, both school-based and Consortium-based, redesigned their curricula, and introduced the performance-based assessment tasks (PBATs).

After only two years into the transition process, the teachers involved agreed that they had experienced significant changes in both their pedagogy and outcomes for their students.

Chart 6: Second Year of Transition: Observations of Pedagogy and Outcomes

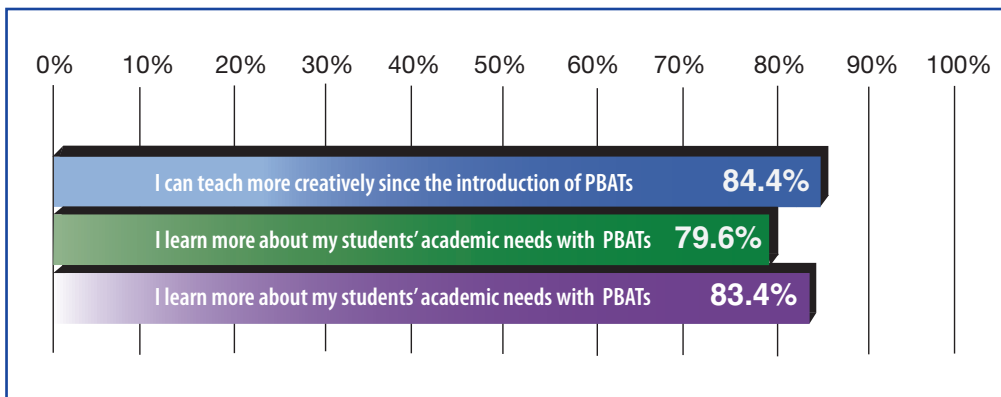
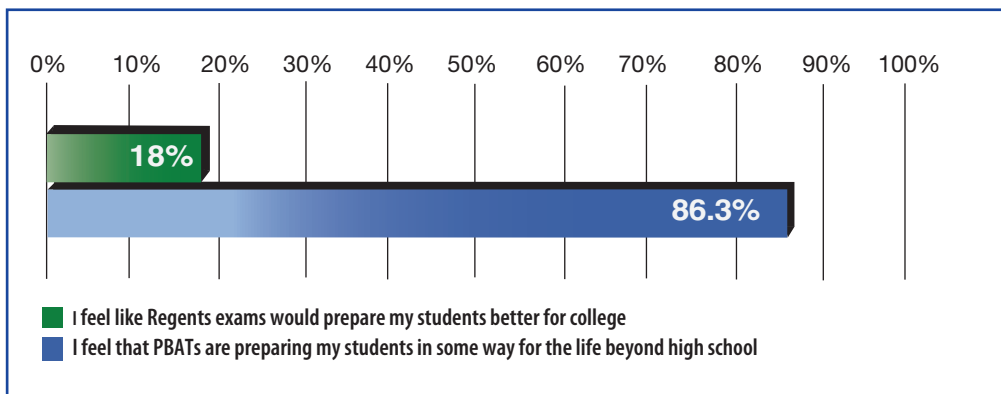


Chart 7: Second Year of Transition: Outcomes



Hantzopoulos, M., Rivera-McCutchen, R., and Tyner-Mullings, A. (2016). "Preliminary Data Report of Years 1 and 2: In Transition: How School Actors Negotiate the Change from High-Stakes Testing to Project Based Assessment."

Citations of Consortium Success (selected)

Abeles, Vicki (2015) *Beyond Measure*, Simon and Schuster Argument to reconsider how we define success in American education and to radically alter the approach we've taken to get there. Includes descriptions of schools belonging to the New York Performance Standards Consortium

Bader, Eleanor, "Alternative High": Raising the Bar on Public Education *Truth Out. Org.* July 2014. Descriptions of student oral defenses and how the New York Performance Standards Consortium has created a system of performance based assessments.

Barlowe, Avram & Cook, Ann (Spring 2016), "Putting the Focus on Student Engagement" *American Educator*, Vol. 40, No 3. The Consortium's approach to performance-based assessments—essays, research papers, science experiments and mathematical problem-solving—to engage students and measure their knowledge and skills in a deep and meaningful way over time.

Blankstein, Alan & Noguera, Pedro, *Excellence Through Equity*, Barlowe, Avram & Cook, Ann, "Empowering Students and Teachers Through Performance-Based Assessment," 2015. Highlights educational initiatives focused on equity goals. The chapter explores the connection between curriculum and instruction and how eliminating high stakes testing allows teachers to achieve a greater level of professionalism.

Conley, David (2012). "A Complete Definition of College and Career Readiness" Educational Policy Improvement Center (ERIC). Conley argues for a more complex definition of "college readiness," one that goes beyond cut scores on test to include broader and more inclusive measures.

Cook, Ann and Tashlik, Phyllis (Fall 2005), "Challenging Bad Education Policy: Making the Pendulum Swing in New York State" *Horace*, Vol. 21, No. 4. Early challenge to the dominance of high stakes standardized tests and the history of the NY Performance Standards Consortium and its performance assessment system.

Cook, Ann and Tashlik, Phyllis (Summer 2005). "Standardizing 'Small'" *Rethinking Schools*, Vol. 19, No.4. A description of how test-driven policy and the testing industry undermine the goals and mission of small schools.

Darling-Hammond, Linda (2002). *Redesigning Schools: What Matters and What Works (School Redesign Network at Stanford University) "High Standards and Performance-Based Assessment,"* 14-19.

Fine, Michelle and Priyomka, Karyna (July 2020). "Assessing College Readiness Through Authentic Student Work: How the City University of New York and the New York Performance Standards Consortium Are Collaborating Toward Equity," Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute

Foote, M. (2007). *Keeping Accountability Systems Accountable. Phi Delta Kappan*, 88(5), 359-363. Despite serving a more disadvantaged student population than NYC high schools in general, Consortium schools have higher graduation rates, students do well in college and persist at a rate better than the national average.

Foote, M. (2012). "Freedom from high-stakes testing: A formula for small school success." *Critical Small Schools (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing)*. Consortium schools, freed from state testing mandates, succeed in preparing students for college persistence.

Gerwertz, Catherine, *Education Week*, July 2015. N.Y.C. High School Strives for Authentic Assessment. Description of projects and in-depth work that determine high school graduation for students in NY Performance Standards Consortium high schools.

Hagopian, Jesse, *More Than a Score*, Haymarket Books (2015). *More Than a Score* is a collection of essays, poems, speeches, and interviews with an account of the New York Performance Standards Consortium offers a viable alternative to high stakes testing.

Harvey, Hillary, in *Hudson Valley: Chronogram, "Opting Out" 2015.* Alternatives to high stakes standardized testing discussed by NY State parents and educators. Includes discussion of NY Performance Standards Consortium.

Katz, Jonathan (2014). *Developing Mathematical Thinking: A Guide to Rethinking the Mathematics Classroom (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield)*. A vision for bringing beauty and inquiry back to the teaching of mathematics and also guidelines and projects that can help teachers implement that vision.

Knoester, Matthew & Meier, Deborah, Beyond Testing: Seven Assessments of Students and Schools More Effective Than Standardized Tests (2017). Cook, Ann & Tashlik, Phyllis, "Building a System of Assessment: Examining the New York Performance Standards Consortium." Authors argue that assessment cannot be reduced to a test score.

Mathews, Jay. (2011). Give Us Your Ideal Schools. *Washington Post*, 08/29/2011. Columnist Jay Mathews highlights the Consortium schools for their success in graduating urban students at high rates and preparing them for the academic rigors of college.

Robinson, Gareth and Cook, Ann (2017). "Case Study: The New York Performance Standards Consortium" *Vue*, No. 46 (Annenberg Institute for School Reform: Voices in Urban Education) 14-19.

John W. Saye, Jeremy Stoddard, David M. Gerwin, Andrea S. Libresco & Lamont E. Maddox (2018) Authentic pedagogy: examining intellectual challenge in social studies classrooms, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/00220272.2018.1473496 National study of social studies classrooms found the Consortium classrooms exhibited the highest level of authentic intellectual work, "a necessity to maintain democratic societies."

Schmoker, M. (2009). *Educational Leadership*, 66(4), 70-74. A consortium of New York schools show how schools can collect data that serve a 21st century agenda. The author discusses how Consortium schools, unconstrained by state standardized testing mandates, use data to support instruction for such complex learning as critical thinking and problem solving.

SCOPE: Rethinking Accountability: Linda Darling-Hammond, Conference; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qonPZLHilBk> (2014). Presentation by Gemma Venuti, NY Performance Standards Consortium graduate on her work utilizing the NY Performance Standards Consortium's system of performance-based assessments.

Tashlik, Phyllis. (2010). "Changing the National Conversation on Assessment", *Phi Delta Kappan*, 91(6), 55-59. The author shows how Consortium schools use qualitative data to make substantive decisions about students.

Teacher to Teacher Publications (New York: Teachers College Press). A series of books and DVDs published by the Consortium, providing a valuable and practical resource for the classroom teacher.

- Back to the Books: Creating a Literacy Culture in Your School (2010)**
- Inquiry in Action: Teaching Columbus (2006)**
- Inquiry Teaching in the Sciences (2004)**
- Looking for an Argument? (2004; 2014)**
- Serving the Community: Guidelines for Setting Up a Service Program (2006)**
- Talk, Talk, Talk: Discussion-based Classrooms (2004)**
- Teaching American History: An Inquiry Approach (2004)**

United Federation of Teachers Task Force on High Stakes Testing (2007, April). Report of the UFT Task Force on High Stakes Testing. New York: United Federation of Teachers. Retrieved 5/6/10 from <http://www.uft.org/news/issues/reports/taskforce/index.html>. The task force, concluding that high-stakes testing policies are harming teaching and learning, singles out the Consortium's assessment system as an alternative model for improving instruction and developing strong learners.

Wagner, T. (2008). *The Global Achievement Gap*: Why even our best schools don't teach the new survival skills our children need – and what we can do about it (New York: Basic Books). The author, a Harvard education professor, cites the Consortium for its outstanding assessment and accountability systems that ensure students learn the skills they need to survive in the 21st century.

Wagner, T. (2008). *Rigor Redefined. Educational Leadership*, 66(2), 20-25. In this article, Wagner recounts his interviews with hundreds of leaders in a variety of fields to learn what skills students will need in the future to be successful in careers as well as good citizens.

Wolk, R. (2010). *Education: The Case for Making it Personal. Educational Leadership*, 67(7), 16-21. The author discusses the inquiry-based learning and performance assessment at a Consortium school, concluding that they foster the complex skills needed to develop life-long learners.

Zelon, Helen, (2014). *How a Group of NYC High Schools Ditched Most Regents Exams—and Created Better College Students. Village Voice.* Description of the history of the NY Performance Standards Consortium and the differences between Consortium graduates and their Regents test-taker peers.

The Tasks

Performance-based Assessment Tasks (PBATs): Multiple ways to express learning

All Consortium schools require students to complete academic tasks to demonstrate college and career readiness and to qualify for graduation. Topics emerge from class readings and discussion. In some classes, the tasks are crafted by the teacher and in other instances by the student. Thus, each semester different questions may be developed. All graduation level tasks are evaluated using the Consortium rubrics.

Literature Task

The student will write a well-developed literary analysis, using a text of appropriate complexity and showing connections between the text and other substantial issues, such as a larger issue or theme, another work of literature, the historical or biographical context, a filmed version of the text, or noted works of relevant criticism.

The paper is organized around a compelling argument and thesis, uses relevant evidence and quotations that support the argument, and provides meaningful interpretation of texts. In addition to demonstrating accepted conventions for writing, the paper also has evidence of a student's voice and style.

Each student also presents orally, either defending the paper or by demonstrating ability to adapt skills to a new text, which the student has read independently.

External evaluators assess both written and oral work using the Consortium rubric.

Sample Literature PBATs:

- ▶ Who is an American? Does the American dream change depending upon the identity of the dreamer? What qualifies as a triumph or a failure? Who emerges heroic and who allows the pursuit of the dream to turn him villainous? Use two of the novels we've read this semester to explore these questions.
- ▶ In his essay, "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*," Chinua Achebe argues that Conrad is a "bloody racist." Based on the ideas made explicit in his essay and those implicit in Conrad's novel, do you agree or disagree with Achebe's argument? Is the real monster in *Heart of Darkness* Conrad himself? Or did Achebe misconstrue Conrad's intentions, which were to expose the evils of colonialism?
- ▶ The conflict between moral law and state law in *Antigone* and *A View From the Bridge*
- ▶ The role of gender in the tragedies of *Othello* and *Antigone*

Math Task

The math PBAT is built around problem solving and applications of higher levels of mathematics.

The student is expected to use sound mathematical procedures accurately when solving problems; justify all mathematical statements efficiently and accurately; and create appropriate models, inherent to the task, that represent the problem accurately and elegantly.

Communication is an important aspect of the mathematical task. Students are expected to use mathematical terminology and notation, communicate clearly the process and solution used, and make predictions. Students will also discuss how mathematical concepts interconnect, build on each other, and apply to real-world situations.

External evaluators assess both written and oral work using the Consortium rubric.

Sample Math PBATs:

- ▶ **Texas Tech -vs- Oklahoma:** A comparative statistical analysis that exhibits how data can be manipulated to convey a variety of messages.
- ▶ **Plinko:** Students design their own Plinko board, then use Pascal's Theory to compare their empirical data against expected outcome data.
- ▶ **How can matrices be used to solve multivariable mathematical situations?**
- ▶ **How can the properties of parabolas be employed in producing solar energy?**
- ▶ **What equations can be used for parabolic solar panels?**

Social Studies Task

The social studies task requires students to develop a text-based research and analytical paper in history or the social sciences. The paper consists of an argument organized around an idea, thesis or question and is supported by accurate and persuasive evidence from both primary and secondary sources. Alternative points of view are presented, explained, and analyzed. In addition to demonstrating accepted conventions of standard English, the paper is also expected to show evidence of a student's voice and writing style.

External evaluators assess both written and oral work using the Consortium rubric.

Sample Social Studies PBATs:

- ▶ **Why did Lincoln support abolition? Did his views change over time, and why?**
- ▶ **Looking Abroad—France and the headscarf ban in public schools.**
- ▶ **How has France defined national identity in comparison with the U.S.? What conflicts have arisen when different cultures meet? How is multiculturalism defined or restricted? Discuss what can be learned from this case study about our own society.**
- ▶ **Why did the United States lose the Vietnam War? Consider the role of the American media, the anti-war movement, and the Pentagon Papers.**
- ▶ **The Stimulus Package: Is this the decline of the American Dream? An in-depth investigation of one aspect of the Recovery Act of 2009, including funding sources, allocations, and arguments for and against the legislation.**
- ▶ **What are the connections between population trends and immigration laws? Analyzing U.S. Census statistics for race, language, income, education, and other basic demographic indicators, nationally and for NYC.**

Science Task

The science task is an extended science project or original experiment that grows out of research studied in class. Students contextualize and develop the hypothesis, develop the design for carrying out their research, and collect data consistent with the problem. Necessary charts, tables, and graphs are generated to facilitate analysis of the data and interpretation of the results. Finally, the students suggest revisions for the experimental plan and questions for future research.

External evaluators assess both written and oral work using the Consortium rubric.

Sample Science PBATs:

- ▶ How do particle size and density influence the erosion of beach sand? What are the alternatives to beach replenishment?
- ▶ Mitochondrial DNA Project: Student researches origin of modern humans, exploring both the Multi-Regional and Out of Africa theories, creates hypothesis, then analyzes own mitochondrial DNA sequences to determine if the data support the hypothesis.
- ▶ Which digestive system is the most effective: A comparison of fetal pig, human, and cow digestive systems.

Supplementary Tasks

In addition to the four required academic tasks, schools may choose to include supplementary tasks. Below are a few of the tasks that individual schools have chosen to include among their curricular and graduation requirements.

The Arts

Extensive work in one of the arts and public presentation of accomplishments. Includes visual arts, music, playwriting, theater, ceramics, poetry, fiction writing. Visiting artists provide critiques and feedback.

Arts Criticism

Using the resources available in the city, students visit galleries and museums, choose an artist to study in-depth, develop and conduct interviews of those active in the arts, and present to students and others.

Internships

In-depth internship over a significant amount of time at an organization—private or public—or with an individual practitioner in an area of concern and interest to the student. Followed by a presentation to students and others.

Foreign Language

Students learn a language other than English and develop comfort and fluency in the language.

**New York Performance Standards Consortium
Performance Assessment: Literary Analysis**

Student _____

Title /Texts _____

Circle one: Written Oral

Circle one: Teacher External Evaluator

Evaluator (Print name) _____

Overall Holistic evaluation

Signature _____ **Date** _____

09/2019

Performance Indicator	Outstanding	Good	Competent	Needs Revision
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generates a clear thesis or central idea that makes a compelling point Uses relevant, convincing evidence and quotations that thoroughly support thesis or central idea Makes explicit and elegant transitions from one idea to next, developing thesis or central idea effortlessly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generates a clear thesis or central idea that make an interesting point Uses relevant evidence and quotations that support central thesis or central idea Makes seamless transitions, flows easily from one idea to the next, developing thesis or central idea cohesively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has an identifiable thesis or central idea, though may lack focus at times Uses mostly relevant evidence and quotations to support thesis or central idea Has mostly coherent organization Uses transitions but may lack smooth flow from one idea to the next 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a central idea, but vague, unfocused, and undeveloped Unfocused organization Insufficient, irrelevant, or no evidence used to support a central idea Few or incorrect use of transitions so ideas do not flow smoothly
Analysis & Interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides deep insight and creates meaningful interpretation of text(s) Elaborates and extends thesis or central idea and meaning of supporting evidence; answers question, So what? May consider author's language, craft, and/or choice of genre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates meaningful interpretation of text(s) Explores thesis or central idea and meaning of supporting evidence; answers question, So what? May consider author's language, craft, and/or choice of genre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides basic interpretation of text(s) though somewhat limited exploration of meaning Develops a thesis or central idea and explains choice of evidence and quotations, but has not fully developed their meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited or no meaningful interpretation of texts Uses faulty analysis or merely summarizes Insufficient or no use of evidence or appropriate quotations
Style and Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of passion for subject or deep curiosity Writer willing to take risks Displays intellectual engagement Creative, clear, and appropriate use of language and word choice based on the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of a mind at work, grappling with ideas Clear and appropriate use of language and word choice based on the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds to the question asked and communicates ideas clearly Shows some awareness of appropriate language and word choice based on the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds to question asked but lacks clarity Shows little or no evidence of formal or appropriate use of language and word choice
Connections (Optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes innovative and insightful connection between a text and one of the following: Another work of literature <i>or</i> Historical/cultural context <i>or</i> Biographical context <i>or</i> Film version of text <i>or</i> Substantial criticism <i>or</i> Creative element (e.g., writing of poetry based on poet being analyzed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes insightful connection between text and one of the following: Another work of literature <i>or</i> Historical/cultural context <i>or</i> Biographical context <i>or</i> Film version of text <i>or</i> Substantial criticism <i>or</i> Creative element (e.g., writing a poem based on poet being analyzed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes some connection between text and one of the following: Another work of literature <i>or</i> Historical or cultural context <i>or</i> Biographical context <i>or</i> Film version of text <i>or</i> Substantial criticism <i>or</i> Creative element (e.g., writing a poem based on poet being analyzed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connection is attempted, but it is inappropriate or not relevant to thesis or ideas that are the main focus of the paper
Conventions (for writing assignment only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mechanical and grammatical errors are rare or non-existent; follows accepted conventions for quotations and citations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few mechanical or grammatical errors; follows accepted conventions for quotations and citations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some mechanical or grammatical errors but communication is not impaired; demonstrates knowledge of accepted conventions for quotations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication is impaired by errors; little or no use of conventions for quotations and citations
Presentation (for oral component only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to respond to questions and expand on ideas during discussion; communicates ideas clearly in appropriate, sophisticated, and original way to audience; presents complex, accurate, substantive ideas and information clearly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to respond to questions and expand somewhat on ideas during discussion; communicates clearly in appropriate and original way to audience; presents accurate, substantive ideas and information clearly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to respond accurately to questions though may have difficulty expanding on ideas; communicates clearly in appropriate way to audience; presents information accurately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not respond well to questions during discussion; unclear or inappropriate presentation to audience; some information presented may be inaccurate



New York Performance Standards Consortium Student _____
 Performance Assessment: Mathematics Project Title (e.g. Mathematical Modeling, The Can Project): _____

Circle One: Written Oral
 Circle One: Teacher External Evaluator
 Project Topic (e.g. Linear programming, Volume -surface area optimization): _____
 Evaluator (Print name) _____

Overall Holistic Evaluation _____ Signature _____ Date _____

09/2016

Performance Indicators	Outstanding	Good	Competent	Needs Revision
Problem Solving	Selects appropriate and efficient strategies to solve non-routine problems. Provides in-depth analysis of strategies Executes conceptually sound mathematical procedures accurately.	Selects appropriate and efficient strategies to solve non-routine problems. Provides some analysis of strategies Executes conceptually sound mathematical procedures with minor computational errors.	Selects appropriate, but inefficient, strategies to solve non-routine problems, and executes conceptually sound mathematical procedures with minor computational errors. or Selects appropriate and efficient strategies to solve non-routine problems but executes mathematical procedures with minor conceptual and computational errors.	Selects an inappropriate strategy or Makes major conceptual errors or procedural errors.
Reasoning & Proof	Makes valid conceptual/theoretical argument(s) and mathematically justifies it logically and thoroughly.	Makes valid conceptual/theoretical argument(s) and mathematically justifies it logically.	Makes argument(s) and justifies most mathematical statements accurately.	Makes arguments but does not justify mathematical statements accurately.
Communication	Always uses mathematical language and notations accurately. Always clearly explains mathematical thinking in an organized and detailed way.	Mostly uses mathematical language and notations accurately. Mostly clearly explains mathematical thinking in an organized and detailed way.	Sometimes uses mathematical language and notations accurately. Sometimes clearly explains mathematical thinking in an organized and detailed way.	Limited use of mathematical language and notation in an accurate manner. Rarely clearly explains mathematical thinking in an organized and detailed way.
Connections	Demonstrates an in-depth understanding of the relationships between mathematical concepts, procedures, and/or strategies.	Demonstrates an understanding of the relationships between mathematical concepts, procedures, and/or strategies.	Demonstrates a limited understanding of the relationships between mathematical concepts, procedures, and/or strategies.	Does not demonstrate understanding of the relationships between mathematical concepts, procedures, and/or strategies.
Representation	Creates an accurate and sophisticated mathematical representation(s), inherent to the task, to solve problems or portray solutions.	Creates an accurate mathematical representation(s), inherent to the task, to solve problems or portray solutions.	Creates an accurate mathematical representation(s), inherent to the task, to solve problems or portray solutions, but may be imprecise or contain minor errors.	Does not create an accurate mathematical representation, inherent to the task, to solve problems or portray solutions.

New York Performance Standards Consortium **Student** _____
Extended Science Project or Original Experiment

Title of Experiment _____

Circle One: Teacher External Evaluator **Evaluator (Print name)** _____

Overall Holistic Evaluation _____ **Signature** _____ **Date** _____

03/2017

Performance Indicators	Outstanding	Good	Competent	Needs Revision
Contextualize	Background research has been thoroughly conducted using at least two original sources. • Sources are all appropriately cited. • The significance of the problem is clearly stated. • The hypotheses/theses are grounded in the background research.	Background research has been thoroughly conducted. • Sources are appropriately cited. • The significance of the problem is stated. • The hypotheses/theses are relevant to the background research.	Background research is included in the introduction. • Sources are cited. • The significance of the problem is stated. • The hypotheses/theses are clearly stated.	Background research is not included in the introduction. • Sources are not cited. • The significance of the problem is not stated. • The hypotheses/theses are not stated.
Critique Experimental Design	Identifies, describes and controls all relevant variables. • Thoughtfully evaluates the procedure, data sampling method*, and/or set up • Clearly describes bias in the design	Identifies, describes and controls most relevant variables. • Evaluates the procedure, data sampling method*, and/or set up • Clearly describes bias in the design	Identifies, describes and controls some relevant variables. • Evaluates the procedure, data sampling method*, and/or set up • Attempts to describe bias in the design	Does not identify, describe or control any variables. • Does not evaluate the procedure or sampling method and/or set up • Does not attempt to describe bias in the design
Collect, Curate*, Organize, and Present Data	Collects or curates* data in a reliable and valid manner. • Presents relevant data that is consistent with the problem. • Generates appropriate tables, charts and graphs with data and makes appropriate calculations. • Conducts thorough mathematical analysis of the data.	Collects or curates* data in a reliable and valid manner. • Presents relevant data that is consistent with the problem. • Generates appropriate tables, charts and graphs with data and/or makes appropriate calculations. • Conducts mathematical analysis of the data.	Collects or curates* data in a reliable and valid manner. • Presents data that is consistent with the problem. • Generates tables, charts and graphs with data. • Conducts analysis of the data.	Collects or curates* data in a non-reliable and/or invalid manner. • Does not present data or presents data that is not relevant to the problem. • Does not generate tables, charts and graphs. • Does not analyze the data.
Analyze and Interpret Results	Draws thoughtful conclusions that are supported by the data. • Relates conclusions to original question. • Thoroughly describes sources of error and their effects on the data or identifies limitations of data & conclusion*.	Draws conclusions that are supported by the data. • Relates conclusions to original question. • Describes several sources of error and their effects on the data or the limitations of data & conclusion*.	Draws conclusions that are partially supported by the data. • Attempts to relate conclusions to original question. • Describes sources of error and attempts to describe their effects on the data or the limitations of the data & conclusion*.	Draws no conclusions or draws conclusions that are not supported by the data. • Does not attempt to relate conclusions to original question. • Does not describe sources of error or does not attempt to describe their effects on the data or limitations of data*.
Revise Original Design	Proposes effective and relevant revisions for the experimental plan (and investigative plan*) to lessen the effects of bias and sources of error. • Poses thoughtful and relevant questions for future research.	Proposes relevant revisions for the experimental plan (and investigative plan*) to lessen the effects of bias and sources of error. • Poses relevant questions for future research.	Proposes revisions for the experimental plan (and investigative plan*) to lessen the effects of bias and sources of error. • Poses questions for future research.	Does not propose revisions for the experimental plan (and investigative plan*). • Does not pose questions for future research.
Defense (for oral component only)	Thoroughly answers questions relevant to the experiment and related topics.	Adequately answers questions relevant to the experiment and related topics.	Adequately answers questions relevant to the experiment..	Does not adequately answer questions relevant to the experiment.

* When working with "big data."



New York Performance Standards Consortium
STEM rubric

Circle one: **Teacher** **External Evaluator**
Circle one: **Written** **Oral Defense**

Holistic evaluation (circle one): **Outstanding**
Good **Competent** **Needs Revision**

Student _____

Title of Design _____

Evaluator (Print name) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

06/2014

Performance Indicator	Outstanding	Good	Competent	Needs Revision
Contextualize the Design Problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineering/design problem is clearly defined and explained in terms of the human needs that are to be solved or fulfilled. Specific design constraints are clearly explained. Specific criteria for success are clearly explained. Background research on the project's content and context has been thoroughly conducted using relevant and credible resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineering/design problem is defined and explained in terms of the human needs that are to be solved or fulfilled. Specific design constraints are explained. Specific criteria for success are explained. Background research on the project's content and/or context has been conducted using relevant and credible resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineering/design problem is defined but only partially explained in terms of the human needs that are to be solved or fulfilled. Specific design constraints are mentioned but not fully explained. Some criteria for success are explained but may not be specific. Background research on the project's content and/or context has been conducted but uses few relevant and credible resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineering/design problem is defined but not explained in terms of the human needs that are to be solved or fulfilled. No or few specific design constraints are mentioned or explained. Few criteria for success are explained. Little or no background research on the project's content and/or context has been conducted.
Critique the Design Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thoroughly describes the design phase including thoughtful evaluation of models (e. g., diagrams, replicas, analogies, computer simulations, mathematical formulas) and design priorities. Thoroughly justifies how the selected prototype will best satisfy all criteria for success. Thoroughly justifies why all alternative prototypes were rejected. Thoroughly identifies and describes all relevant variables including any appropriate controls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes the design phase including evaluation of models (e.g. diagrams, replicas, analogies, computer simulations, mathematical formulas) and design priorities. Justifies how the selected prototype will best satisfy some of the criteria for success. Justifies why some of the alternative prototypes were rejected. Identifies and describes most relevant variables including any appropriate controls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes but does not sufficiently evaluate the design phase including models (e. g., diagrams, replicas, analogies, computer simulations, mathematical formulas) and design priorities. Only partially justifies how the selected prototype best satisfies some of the criteria for success. Only partially justifies why some of the alternative prototypes were rejected. Identifies and describes some relevant variables including any appropriate controls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes but does not evaluate the design phase including models (e. g., diagrams, replicas, analogies, computer simulations, mathematical formulas) or design priorities. Does not justify how the selected prototype best satisfies some of the criteria for success. Does not justify why some of the alternative prototypes were rejected. Identifies but does not describe relevant variables including any appropriate controls.
Test the Design Prototype: Collect, Organize & Present Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collects extensive relevant data in a reliable manner for the purpose of optimizing the design. Thoroughly represents data appropriately in multiple ways (e.g., tables, charts, graphs). Conducts thorough mathematical analysis of the data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collects relevant data in a reliable manner for the purpose of optimizing the design. Represents data appropriately in multiple ways (e. g., tables, charts, graphs). Conducts mathematical analysis of the data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collects sufficient and relevant data for the purpose of optimizing the design. Represents data in multiple ways (e. g., tables, charts, graphs). Conducts analysis of the data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collects insufficient and/or irrelevant data. Does not represent data appropriately. Does not analyze the data.
Evaluate the Design (Prototype)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thoughtfully analyzes the extent to which prototype satisfies all criteria for success. Thoughtfully explains how data were used in optimizing the design through multiple iterations. Thoughtfully proposes effective - and relevant revisions to the design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyzes the extent to which prototype satisfies some of the criteria for success. Explains how some of the data were used in optimizing the design through multiple iterations. Proposes some relevant revisions to the design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes but does not analyze the extent to which prototype satisfies some of the criteria for success. Only partially explains how some of the data were used in optimizing the design through multiple iterations. Proposes few relevant revisions to the design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not describe or analyze the extent to which prototype satisfies all criteria for success. Does not explain how the data were used in optimizing the design through multiple iterations. Does not propose any relevant revisions to the design.
Defense (for oral component only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thoroughly answers questions relevant to the design and related topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequately answers questions relevant to the design and related topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequately answers questions relevant to the design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not adequately answers questions relevant to the design.

**New York Performance Standards Consortium
Social Studies Research Paper**

Student _____

Title of Experiment _____

Circle One: Teacher External Evaluator

Evaluator (Print name) _____

Overall Holistic Evaluation _____

Signature _____

Date _____

06/2015

Performance Indicators	Outstanding	Good	Competent	Needs Revision
Viewpoint: Thesis/Claim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has sharply defined, concise, compelling thesis in response to a debatable question. Clear introduction presents thesis in a highly engaging, compelling manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has clearly defined thesis in response to a debatable question. Clear introduction presents thesis in an engaging manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thesis or response to debatable question is comprehensible but not especially clear. Introduction presents thesis in mostly comprehensible manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thesis or response to debatable question is not clear. Introduction is not clear.
Evidence and Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting arguments include specific, relevant, accurate and verifiable, and highly persuasive evidence, drawn from both primary and secondary sources. Provides specific, relevant, accurate evidence for counter-argument, where appropriate. Uses quotations and paraphrasing appropriately to sustain an argument. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting arguments include relevant, accurate and verifiable, and mostly persuasive evidence, drawn from both primary and secondary sources. Provides relevant, accurate evidence for counter-argument, where appropriate. Uses quotations and paraphrasing appropriately to sustain an argument. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence for supporting arguments is accurate and verifiable, mostly specific and relevant, and generally persuasive drawn from secondary sources. Use of quotations and paraphrasing is mostly evident. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting arguments may include inaccurate evidence and lack clear persuasive, or relevant evidence. Quotations and paraphrasing do not effectively support arguments.
Analysis and Persuasion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherent, complex, sophisticated arguments support thesis. Examines multiple, [historical] interpretations, evaluating the context, reasoning, bias or reliability of varied sources and applies these through analysis to its arguments. Clearly, thoughtfully, and thoroughly explains and analyzes the connection between all evidence and argument being made. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherent, sometimes complex arguments support thesis. Argument draws on, explains and critiques evidence from alternative points of view. Mostly clear and thoughtful explanation or analysis of how the evidence supports each argument. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherent but rarely complex or sophisticated arguments support thesis. Some alternative perspectives are presented but not always well examined or integrated. Some explanation of how the evidence presented supports each argument, but the explanations are not always clear and thorough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arguments lack coherence and/or clarity. Alternative arguments/perspectives are either missing or poorly integrated. No explanation or analysis of how or why the evidence supports each argument.
Effective Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each argument clearly flows in support of an overall structure. Consistent, effective transitions develop ideas and arguments Distinct, compelling, persuasive conclusion synthesizes arguments that support thesis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each argument presented supports an overall structure. Usually uses effective transitions to connect ideas and arguments. Distinct, persuasive conclusion partly synthesizes, but mostly represents the major arguments to support thesis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most arguments presented clearly support the overall structure. Transitions are sometimes abrupt but the arguments mostly connect. Conclusion represents major arguments and connects them to thesis; some synthesis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arguments are not organized in coherent paragraphs. Arguments presented are not clearly or supportively connected to the overall structure. Transitions between arguments are largely unclear. Conclusion is either vague or unclear and poorly connected to the paper's major arguments.
Understanding of Implication & Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arguments, ideas, and voice reflect a highly informed awareness of the larger historical, political, and cultural context surrounding discipline-specific questions addressed in the paper. Broader implications of the central arguments are presented and thoroughly explored. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arguments, ideas, and voice reflect an informed awareness of the larger historical, political, and cultural context surrounding discipline-specific questions addressed in the paper. Some broader implications of the central argument are presented and explored. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arguments, ideas, and voice reflect a general awareness of the larger historical, political, or cultural context surrounding discipline-specific questions addressed in the paper. The broader implications of the central argument are alluded to but not necessarily explored. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arguments, ideas and voice reflect almost no awareness of the larger historical, political, or cultural context surrounding the questions addressed in the paper. The broader implications of the central argument are neither presented nor explored.
Student Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confident, highly fluid writing style; lively, engaging, articulate language. Paper has distinct, individual voice that serves to develop and further the argument throughout. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confident writing style; engaging, mostly articulate language. Paper has an individual voice that manifests itself at important points. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged but somewhat tentative or basic writing style. Student voice is present, but inconsistent. Writing is generally clear, but may be awkward or formulaic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing is confusing.
Conventions (for writing task only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammar and punctuation nearly flawless. Appropriate and consistent documentation of accessible sources (complete, well-organized bibliography and citations). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammar and punctuation mostly correct. Appropriate and consistent documentation of accessible sources (complete, well-organized bibliography and citations). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammar and punctuation sometimes flawed, but not in a manner that undermines the clarity of the paper's ideas. Accessible, complete but somewhat imprecise bibliography and citations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently defective grammar and punctuation. Inappropriate and/or mistaken documentation of sources (poorly organized, incomplete bibliography and citations).
Presentation (for oral component only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates clear understanding of the paper's ideas and arguments in an appropriate, consistently sophisticated way that demonstrates ownership of work. Presentation and response to questions reflect the coherence and depth of the paper. Answers questions accurately, thoughtfully, and effectively, developing new ideas when they are appropriate. Presents relevant evidence that may not have appeared in the paper. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates clear understanding of the paper's ideas and arguments in an appropriate, sometimes sophisticated way that demonstrates ownership of work. Presentation and response to questions reflect the coherence and depth of the paper. Answers questions accurately, thoughtfully, and effectively, developing new ideas when they are appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates a mostly clear and basic understanding of the paper's ideas and arguments in an appropriate, thoughtful though not necessarily sophisticated manner. Presentation and response to questions may not fully reflect the coherence and depth of the paper, but they are nevertheless clear and thoughtful. Answers to questions are mostly accurate, thoughtful, and effective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fails to communicate a clear and basic understanding of the paper's ideas and arguments in an appropriate, thoughtful manner. Presentation and response to questions reflects the incoherence and general weakness of the paper. Answers questions superficially, inappropriately, or incorrectly.

Commentators from all parts of the political spectrum have identified education as the “civil rights issue of the 21st century.” For too many students of color and special needs students, schools have functioned as part of a “school-to-prison pipeline,” funneling students from the education system into the criminal and juvenile justice system. But in the midst of these prevailing bad news, comes the New York Performance Standards Consortium report “Redefining Assessment.” The Consortium illustrates how the education system can prepare all students to achieve their full potential and take their rightful place in society. Serving a population that mirrors the overall New York City high school student population in terms of race, ethnicity, special needs and poverty, high schools in the Consortium significantly outperform other schools. They graduate more students of every race and ethnicity as well as English Language Learners and special needs students at significantly higher rates than those of other city schools, and their graduates persevere once they are in college. And all of this is achieved through the development and implementation of a student assessment system designed to foster innovative and meaningful learning rather than teaching to standardized, high-stakes tests. If only more schools were to follow their example, we would be taking a serious step toward addressing the serious disparities in our education system.

Dennis D. Parker
Director
National Center for Law & Environmental Justice

... the Consortium is an example of “some of the most sophisticated performance assessments for graduating high school students in the country.”

Linda Darling-Hammond
President & CEO, Learning Policy Institute
Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education Emeritus at Stanford University



www.performanceassessment.org