



SENIOR DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION – P-16
Office of Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education
Office of Higher Education

To: Superintendents/Chancellor of School Districts in New York State
Completing Contracts for Excellence

From: Johanna Duncan-Poitier

Date: June 21, 2007

Re: Important information for school districts completing Contracts for Excellence

The 2007-08 State budget provides a tremendous opportunity to invest new resources in new and innovative ways to help all students achieve greater success. To ensure accountability for this historic investment in education, certain qualifying school districts¹ will be required to enter into a Contract for Excellence with the State that will specify how new funds will be used to improve student achievement.

Over the past several months, the State Education Department has worked extensively with educational leaders, professional organizations, representatives of the Governor's office and the Legislature, union leaders, researchers, and others from across the State and the nation to implement the Contracts for Excellence. Special thanks to those of you who have provided very valuable feedback and recommendations in the development of the Contracts. As a result of your input, the Department has developed a customized and streamlined on-line system for you to submit your district's Contract for Excellence. We look forward to working with you to use the Contracts as tools for improving student achievement.

This memorandum provides important information regarding the proposed timeline and process for the submission and review of the Contracts for Excellence. We have added a link to the NYSED Application Portal to allow each superintendent to immediately access a working version of the Web-based Contract for Excellence application. It will be in "pilot-mode" for the next week to allow you to become familiar with the application and prepare **for final submission beginning Wednesday, June 27, 2007**. To help ensure that, consistent with the statute, your district has a Contract in place for the 2007-08 school year, your completed Contract for Excellence will be due by July 15, 2007.

The Department will review and approve your Contract by August 15, 2007. We will provide early notification, guidance and detailed suggestions to districts with Contracts that must be revised and resubmitted, so that they may be approved by that date.

¹ School districts with at least one school currently identified as: requiring academic progress, in need of improvement, in corrective action, or in restructuring status and that receives an annual increase in Foundation Aid which is at least either 10 percent or \$15 million, or receives a supplemental educational improvement plan grant.