

SED Update December 2011

Testing

The big news has been the abrupt "[resignation](#)" of David Abrams. This followed closely on the heels of the publication and quick retraction of the 3-8 assessment information. In case you took a look at the retracted documents, you would have noted test durations in excess of four hours. The department reports that they will employ a process that will review the demands in the retracted documents with regard to day, times, and format. They are working with the vendor on options. A revised schedule will be released soon.

The 3-8 testing calendar for 2012-2013 should be out this month in order to facilitate district calendar planning.

This year's 3-8 tests will include field test items that are aligned to the CCLS. 3-8 assessments will begin to be aligned in 2012-2013 with PARCC in 2014-2015. The next step for the PARCC consortium is to have items developed that align to the PARCC [frameworks](#).

Math assessment when aligned to the CCLS (the six shifts): Math standards not marked as priorities will be deemphasized on future assessments. Priorities will be assessed every year from different perspectives. Lesser standards will be assessed less than every year on a periodic basis. It will be assumed that students have the fluency expectations that have been published. A decision about the allowance of calculators will soon be made: whether no calculators will be allowed below 6th grade or not allowed below 8th grade.

ELA assessments when aligned to the CCLS (the six shifts): Passages will be authentic and balanced between informational and literary. Assessment will include knowledge-based questions about the informational text; students will not need outside knowledge but will get it from the passages. Passage selection will be based on text complexity that is appropriate for grade levels per Common Core (see Appendix B). Questions will require students to marshal evidence from the text, including from paired passages. Students will be tested directly on the meaning of pivotal, common terms from which the definition can be discerned from the text. Academic vocabulary will also be tested indirectly through comprehension of the text.

6-7-8 social studies and 4, 6-7-8 science tests are scheduled to be implemented in 2013-2014. The science will be designed to align to the next generation of science standards. Social studies will be aligned to the present standards infused with the Common Core – whatever that means.

The Algebra I exam will be aligned to the CCLS in 2013-2014. Test specifications are being written now. So, too, are items are being written now. Field testing will occur in 2012 and 2013.

Test Integrity

Test integrity concerns and a reliance on test-prep are a reflection of an environment of high accountability and low support. More support for teachers and leaders will resolve some of the test integrity issues and this is the stated aim of the Department.

While also providing support through the Network Teams, integrity will be a focus. The state has appointed a special investigator to handle [test security issues](#). This includes an investigation of past events and practices as well as a system that will investigate future incidents.

NCLB Waiver Application

The state is working on our waiver application with the intention of submitting it in February. Incorporated in the application will be plans to better align different tools, plan requirements, contract-funded centers, etc.

APPR

The list of State-approved assessments will be revised in February. All vendors on the current list have been asked to provide evidence of their alignment to the CCLS. Those already-approved assessments and any additional assessments will be approved for use with demonstrated alignment to the CCLS. Is it possible that assessments presently on the list might be taken off the list? Yes – so districts should hold off on those decisions until the revised list is provided in February.

[Student Learning Objectives](#) (SLO)s will guide the state's growth 20% for most teachers. Districts will be able to choose to use it to guide the local achievement 20%. It goes into effect next year when all teachers are covered by the APPR.

Districts can work regionally to develop growth assessments for the non-tested areas. It is acceptable for teachers to collaborate on the creation of tests; it is the scoring and rating of assessments when a teacher has a vested interest that is prohibited.

Certification

There is an incredible oversupply of teachers who continue to back-up in the pipeline. For example, 19,350 students were graduated in NYS with childhood certification out of a total of 62,000 certificates issued. (7,000 such positions were eliminated across the state last year; 20,000 positions eliminated over the last three years). Increasingly demanding expectations for incoming teachers in certification exams and requirements are ways to put pressure on the pipeline. E-portfolios will be employed in which certificate candidates submit evidence for certification, in addition to the Educating All Students Test, Academic Literacy Skills Test, and Revised Content Specialty Test (all of which will have to be passed).

For administrative certification, applicants will take a computer simulation test which will include an analysis of a case study with student assessment data. Additionally, applicants will watch a lesson and provide feedback using a rubric based on the NYS Teaching Standards.