

SED Update January 2014

Assessment

The Board of Regents, by emergency action, adopted the accelerated math “double-testing elimination” provision:

- If a district opts to have accelerated students take the NYS Grade 7 or 8 Common Core Mathematics Test in addition to one or both Regents Examinations in Algebra, the results from the NYS Grade 7 or 8 Common Core Mathematics Test will be used for institutional accountability purposes rather than the results from a Regents Examination in mathematics. Students who take the Regents Examination in Algebra I (Common Core) in grade 7 or 8 will be counted as participants when determining the participation rate in mathematics for the school they attend in grade 7 or 8.
- The result on the Regents Examination in Algebra I (Common Core) taken in grade 7 or 8 will not count towards the participation rate in mathematics for the high school in which they later enroll.
- The same rule would apply for any students who take the Regents Examination in Geometry in grade 7 or 8.
- Results for students who take only the Regents Examination in Algebra I (Common Core) in grade 7 or 8 will be incorporated into the Performance Index for the school in which the student is enrolled. Grade 7 or 8 students who accelerate and obtain, at a minimum, the score on the Regents Examination in Algebra I (Common Core) necessary to meet Regents Diploma requirements will, for the purposes of calculating a school’s or a district’s Performance Index, be counted at the “full credit” level. Grade 7 or 8 students who do not obtain scores on the Regents Examination in Algebra I (Common Core) necessary to meet Regents Diploma requirements will earn the school or district “no credit” for the student’s performance. The same rule will apply to seventh and eighth grade students who take another Regents Examination in mathematics (e.g., Geometry).
- The waiver and proposed regulatory amendments pertain to institutional accountability requirements, not to the requirements that individual students must meet in order to graduate from high school. The waiver does not change (i.e., the waiver neither increases nor decreases) the requirements students must currently meet in order to obtain a diploma. However, for institutional accountability, high schools will only get credit in the Performance Index for Regents exams or their equivalents that are taken after a student first enters ninth grade, even if students have taken Regents exams in math or their equivalents in grade 7 or 8.

Graduation

SED will implement the State Seal of Biliteracy Program in two phases, beginning with a one year Pilot Implementation Program (during the 2014-15 academic year) which will be followed by a full, implementation program. The pilot would allow NYSED to work with a few targeted districts/schools to develop a State Seal of Biliteracy proposal and implement it with high school juniors and/or seniors.

Curriculum and Standards

At this point, it looks like neither the Regents Research paper requirement nor the Next Generation Science Standards will be considered by the Board of Regents any time soon. The Department is reluctant to undertake these initiatives at this time.

NCLB Waiver Request

NYSED is just about ready to seek another waiver to NCLB (the previous waiver is expiring). After some public comment and a working group, it looks like they will seek these adjustments to the present waiver:

- Assess students with significant cognitive disabilities (who are ineligible for the New York State Alternate Assessment) based on their instructional level rather than their chronological age
- Create an explicit alignment between the DTSDE rubric ratings and the list of allowable activities that districts and schools can choose from when creating a District Comprehensive Improvement Plan (DCIP) and/or a School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP)
- Allow the “all students” group in a district or school to be reported as making AYP if all the accountable subgroups in the school or district make AYP by meeting their respective AMO or Safe Harbor
- Revise the AMOs for Grades 3-8 English language arts and mathematics to reflect the lower scores on the Common Core aligned assessments
- Exempt newly arrived ELLs from participating in the ELA assessments for two years and use the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) for accountability purposes for these students
- Develop a Performance Index for newly arrived ELLs in their first two years using the NYSESLAT assessment

English Language Learners

The Board of Regents has endorsed SED's newly developed Blueprint for ELL Success. SED believes that all teachers are teachers of ELLs. Resources that districts can use based on the blueprint principles and aligned to Common Core will be developed. The Blueprint includes these points:

- All teachers are teachers of English Language Learners and need to plan accordingly.
- All school boards and districts/school leaders are responsible for ensuring that the academic, linguistic, social, and emotional needs of ELLs are addressed.
- Districts and schools engage all English Language Learners in instruction that is grade-appropriate, academically rigorous, and aligned with the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core and P-12 Common Core Learning Standards.
- Districts and schools recognize that bilingualism and biliteracy are assets and provide opportunities for all students to earn a Seal of Biliteracy upon obtaining a high school diploma.
- Districts and schools value all parents and families of ELLs as partners in education and effectively involve them in the education of their children.
- Districts and school communities leverage the expertise of bilingual, ESL, and Language Other Than English (LOTE) teachers and support personnel while increasing their professional capacities.