

**Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES**  
**Curriculum and Assessment Update**  
**March 2009**

**Adjustments to High School Testing Procedures to Address Weather-Related School Closings on January 28, 2009**

As per Johanna Duncan-Poitier, Senior Deputy Commissioner, NYSED

Please note the following options are available only for schools closed on January 28, 2009:

**Regents Comprehensive Examination in English**

- All affected students who took Session One of the January 2009 English Regents may, if they choose, take only Session Two of the June 2009 examination. The raw scores earned by the student on Session One of the January 2009 English Regents may be combined with the raw scores earned on the June 2009 Session Two to constitute one complete and official examination administration.
- Affected students who choose to take both sessions of the June 2009 English Regents will be awarded a final score for the June 2009 administration, as well as a final score for the special combined-date administration.
- Further clarification from Steve Katz, Office of Assessment, NYSED - If students opt to take the entire English Regents again in June (Session One and Session Two), they are entitled to choose the better score for their transcripts, although both scores would go on their permanent records.

**Component Retesting**

To be eligible for Component Retesting in English in May 2009, the senior whose school cancelled Session Two of the January 2009 English Regents, must have done at least one of the following:

- Earned a total score for Session One of the January 2009 English Regents greater than or equal to 22 (even if the senior had not taken the English Regents previously) **OR**
- Earned a final score of 48 or higher on the most recent or next-to-last complete English Regents taken prior to the January 2009 administration.

**Regents Examination in Physical Setting/Earth Science**

Those students whose schools were closed on January 28, 2009 because of inclement weather, can use the performance test scores (lab tests) they earned in January 2009 and apply those scores to the written test component of only the June 2009 Regents Examination in Physical Setting/Earth Science. If these students wish to take the performance test again, they must be given the opportunity to do so; however, if an

affected student takes the performance test in June 2009, that performance test raw score *must* be used in determining the student's final scale score for the June 2009 Regents Examination in Physical Setting/Earth Science.

### **Differentiated Accountability Pilot Program**

As per Ira Schwartz, NYSED Coordinator, Accountability Policy and Administration

- The Differentiated Accountability Pilot Plan was approved by the USED in January 2009. A PowerPoint describing the model is included in the Curriculum Council packet. It is also located on the following website - <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/nyc/DifferentiatedAccountability/DifferenAccthp.shtml>
- The new pilot plan allows for the "right sizing" of intervention strategies, giving districts greater responsibility and latitude to work with schools with lesser needs and creating State/local partnerships to address schools with greater needs. The Differentiated Accountability Pilot Program reduces the current number of school accountability categories from 17 to 8 by integrating federal and state accountability systems and collapsing identifications for improvement into three simplified phases, each of which provides schools with diagnostic tools, planning strategies, and supports/interventions specific to that phase in the improvement process and the school's category of need.
- One key change - the pilot plan places Supplemental Educational Services (SES) before public school choice in Title I schools.
- During the winter and spring 2009, SED will be rolling out information about the pilot plan and the Regents will consider regulation changes in the spring/summer 2009.
- With Regents approval, implementation begins in 2009-2010 using 2008-2009 test results.

### **Performance of English Language Learners on the 2008 Grades 3 - 8 ELA Tests**

As per David Abrams, Assistant Commissioner for Standards, Assessment and Reporting, NYSED

At an S/CDN meeting in Albany on March 6, 2009, David Abrams summarized the performance of NYS public and charter school ELLs on the 2008 Grades 3-8 English Language Arts tests. The ELA performance of former ELLs who exited in 2006 and 2007 was also presented. The PowerPoint, included in this packet, also includes the following highlights:

- In 2008, the percentage of ELLs meeting the ELA standards increased from 18% in 2007 to 25% in 2008; the percentage of ELLs showing serious academic difficulty in ELA decreased from 29% in 2007 to 18% in 2008.

- NYSESLAT scores are good predictors of the ELA performance, accounting for 43% to 53% of the variance in ELA scale scores across grades. ELLs who scored at the proficient level on the NYSESLAT had a much better chance to meet the ELA standards than those who scored below proficient.
- ELLs in the elementary grades, with 3-6 years of service, and those from schools outside the Big 5 cities were more likely than their counterparts to score proficient on the Grade 3-8 ELA tests.

### **Standards Review Process Update**

As per Anne Schiano, Assistant Director, Curriculum, Instruction & Technology, NYSED  
A draft of the new ELA Standards will be presented to the Board of Regents sometime before June.

- "Literature" and "Literacy" will be separate and will have separate performance indicators for grades Pre-k through 12.
- Higher education will be involved in the review of the standards and there will be a period of approximately two months for public comments.
- All other reviews of standards are on hold at this time.

### **Science Regents Exam Update**

As per Anne Schiano, Assistant Director, Curriculum, Instruction & Technology, NYSED  
In response to an article in the January/February 2009 STANYS Newsletter, Anne Schiano clarified there is no discussion at the State Education Department regarding the collapsing the four individual science Regents exams into one general exam.

### **2008-09 School and District Accountability Press Release**

SED has announced that the 2008-09 school and district accountability press release is currently scheduled for Monday, March 16, 2009. This will be based on the 2007-08 school data.

### **NYS Growth Model**

As per David Abrams, Assistant Commissioner for Standards, Assessment and Reporting, NYSED

Even though the USED did not approve the NYS growth model which was submitted last year, NYSED is still going forward with a growth model proposal to the Regents regarding the next design for the grades 3 - 8 ELA and math assessments. Once NCLB is reauthorized, NYSED will determine next steps regarding a new growth model submission to USED.

### **Earning Units of Credit Without Completing Units of Study (Credit by Examination)**

As per Anita Behn, NYSED Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Technology SED has received questions about students "challenging" or "testing out" of a high school course - earning units of credit for a high school diploma without completing the time requirement (units of study). To answer these questions, the Commissioner's Regulation Part 100. 5(d)(1), Credit by Examination, states that a superintendent of schools may allow a student, based on past academic performance, to earn up to 6  $\frac{1}{2}$  units of credit without taking a particular course of study. Students must demonstrate that they have the knowledge, skills, and understanding of the content area by taking a state examination with a score of 85 percent or above and passing an oral examination or completing a special project. Additional information is available at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/part100/pages/1005.html#examCredit> or by contacting Anita Behn at [abehn@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:abehn@mail.nysed.gov) or 518-474-5922.