

Summary of April 2020 Board of Regents Meeting

The Board of Regents conducted an abbreviated monthly meeting on Monday, April 6, via phone conference. Chancellor Rosa began the session by welcoming newly appointed Regents member Frances Wills, who will represent the 9th Judicial District which includes Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland and Westchester Counties. Regent Wills is replacing Regent Judith Johnson who passed away last October.

Chancellor Rosa shared some thoughts on the COVID-19 Pandemic offering praise for all those who are on the frontlines including first responders and healthcare workers. She also commended Governor Cuomo for his leadership as well as Interim Commissioner Shannon Tahoe, the NYSED staff, and all the educators across the state for their ongoing efforts to continue serving the educational needs of students.

Interim Commissioner Tahoe, along with several Deputy and Assistant Commissioners, provided Board members with a summary of NYSED's response efforts to the ongoing coronavirus crisis. Their work has included the organization of nutritional support to children through meal programs, assisting with securing child care, providing social/emotional support resources, supplying virtual instruction support, responding to questions from stakeholders, and setting up online and virtual platforms to communicate with the field. The link below provides a summary of the efforts that have been taken by the various NYSED Departments to support students and educators during the crisis, including links to resources and Guidance Documents.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/COVID-19%20Response%20Presentation.pdf>

While school buildings have remained closed, NYSED has closely monitored and supported the shift to virtual teaching and learning across New York State. The Interim Commissioner made a special point to mention that one of the major lessons she has learned from this experience is the inequity that still exists across New York State with regards to the access students have to technology. She expressed her hope that the COVID-19 crisis will push New York toward establishing more technological equity for students in the future.

The remainder of the meeting agenda focused primarily on the adoption of a series of emergency amendments that relax various requirements and offer educators flexibility in addressing many of the issues they are dealing with. The amendments include adjustments to regulations in areas such as Accountability, Special Education, English Language Learners, Curriculum and Instruction, Early Learning, and the 180 Day School Calendar requirement. Many of the changes have been previously publicized by NYSED.

The link below provides an item by item description of the various amended regulations broken down by each NYSED department.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/COVID-19%20Emergency%20Regulations.pdf>

It is important to note that these amendments are intended to be temporary while New York deals with the COVID-19 virus situation. Once the current executive orders associated with the crisis are rescinded, the temporary regulations will no longer be in effect..

During the meeting, Chancellor Rosa announced that the administration of June 2020 Regents Exams would be cancelled. On Tuesday, NYSED released the specific guidelines for amended graduation requirements relating to the cancellation of the exams. The links below include the details of the guidelines along with access to the Frequently Asked Questions website NYSED has set up.

Amended Graduation Requirement Guidelines

<http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/coronavirus/nysed-covid-19-memo-cancellation-june-2020-regents-exams.pdf>

Frequently Asked Questions

<http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/coronavirus/nysed-covid-19-regents-grad-req-faq.pdf>