

Summary of December 2020 Board of Regents Meeting

The Board of Regents conducted their monthly meeting on Monday, December 14th via video conference. Interim Commissioner Betty Rosa, began the session with an update on NYSED's continued efforts to address inequities with digital access across the state. Her update included information on:

- The 94.8% response rate to the Digital Equity Survey that was sent out to the field in the fall. The Interim Commissioner is optimistic that this data will be very helpful in evaluating the needs across the state.
- Recent webinars hosted by the NYS Library to gather stakeholder feedback on issues associated with digital equity.
- The use of funds from the Re-think K-12 Schools Grant to support professional development for teachers in the area of remote instruction.
- An allocation request in the 2021-22 Non-State Aid Budget proposal for funding to support parent education on how to better support their children with online learning.
- The upcoming NYSED sponsored Digital Equity Summit meetings beginning in January. The sessions will bring together stakeholders from a variety of areas to develop a plan for improving digital access equity.
- Director of the Office of Government Relations, Jennifer Trowbridge, presented a summary of the finalized 2021-22 Non-State Aid Budget Proposal. The plan is consistent with drafts that had been presented in previous meetings, with the exception of an added request for funds allocated to increasing Cultural Responsiveness resources for schools. The Board unanimously approved the proposed budget.

A summary of the proposed budget can be accessed in the link below.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/122obra6revised.pdf>

Director of Education Finance, Brian Cechnicki, presented the proposed \$1.8 billion Regents State Aid budget. The proposal includes several policy related priorities which include:

- Repealing the Pandemic Adjustment and restoring each district's state aid levels.
- Amending current Education Law to allow district's to be reimbursed for transportation costs that have been incurred to deliver school meals, homework packets and provide wi-fi access.
- Proposing that, if permanent state aid reductions must be made, the formula be based on a progressive, wealth adjusted basis with comparable treatment to charter schools.

Mr. Cechnicki emphasized that during the development of the budget proposal, there was a need to consider the state's current fiscal situation in evaluating what the legislature may be realistically willing to approve. The Board unanimously approved the proposed budget.

A comprehensive summary of the budget proposal is included in the link below.

https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/FB%20Morning%20-%202021-2022%20Regents%20State%20Aid%20Proposal_1.pdf

The Board extended several recently adopted amendments and approved new COVID-19 related emergency regulations.

New amendments include:

- An amended timeframe and new guidelines for APPR Variance Applications
- Extending the Graduation Assessment Exemption to include the cancelled January 2021 Regents Exams

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

Existing provisions which were extended are summarized in the link below.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1220bra4.pdf>

The Board formally adopted the new K-12 Computer Science and Digital Fluency Learning Standards. Coordinator for Technology Policy in the Office Educational Design and Technology, Shannon Logan, reviewed the timeline for the revision process and updated the Board on recent changes that were included based on the recent feedback received from stakeholders. Implementation of the new standards will begin in September 2023 with full implementation scheduled for Fall 2024.

The link below includes the slides used in the Board presentation summarizing the new standards and the steps that were followed in their development.

https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/P-12%20-%20NYS%20K-12%20Computer%20Science%20and%20Digital%20Fluency%20Learning%20Standards_o.pdf

This second link provides a much more detailed and thorough summary including a breakdown of the standards by grade level.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1220p12a2.pdf>

Also related to the Computer Science and Digital Fluency, Bill Murphy, Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Higher Education, presented a proposal to revise the twelve semester hour teacher certification course requirements to align with the newly adopted standards. Commissioner Murphy added that his office is currently working with university teacher preparation programs to develop logistics and timelines. It is anticipated that the changes will be presented for adoption at the April 2021 Board of Regents meeting.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1220hed2.pdf>

Associate Commissioner for the Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages, Elisa Alvarez, updated Board of Regents members on progress with revising the current P-12 NYS Languages Other Than English (LOTE) Standards. During the past three years, classroom teachers, administrators, representatives from higher education, and other stakeholders have been

working toward revising the standards to reflect current research and best practices. Representatives from the committee reviewed the timeline associated with the work that has been completed, and presented a summary of the changes that are recommended.

The workgroup is proposing revisions in four key areas:

1. Languages Other than English (LOTE) is recommended to be renamed to World Languages.
2. Adjusting the scope of the Modern Language Standards to emphasize the development of student ability to communicate more effectively in a variety of contexts.
3. Updating curricular topics under four overarching themes which incorporate the culture(s) of areas where the specific World Language is predominantly spoken
4. Establishing benchmarked P-12 performance indicators for evaluating ranges of proficiency at various levels

The revised standards will now be released for the 60 day public comment period. It is anticipated that they will be presented to the Board for formal adoption at the April 2021 Board of Regents meeting.

The link below includes a summary of the work that has been completed and a breakdown of the changes that being recommended.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/P-12%20-%20Languages%20Other%20Than%20English%20LOTE%20Learning%20Standards%20Update.pdf>

Also relating to LOTE, Associate Commissioner Alvarez presented proposed changes to the prerequisites for earning the Seal of Biliteracy. The Seal recognizes high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages, in addition to English.

It is anticipated that the proposed changes will be presented for adoption at the April 2021 Board of regents meeting after a 60 day public comment period.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1220p12d1.pdf>

The Board unanimously adopted regulations for implementing the provisions of Erin's Law. Adopted in August 2019, the legislation requires all K-8 students receive instruction relating to the prevention of child sexual exploitation and child sexual abuse as part of a school's health education program.

NYSED currently maintains an Erin's Law website [Erin's Law | New York State Education Department](#) that includes background on Erin's Law and school district responsibilities and grades K-2, 3-4, and 6-8 curriculum guidelines and links to resources.

The Board discussed recommendations from the Safe Schools Task Force toward the goal of:

- Refining School Safety and Educational Climate definitions.
- Addressing inaccuracies in calculating the School Violence Index (SVI) and the Persistently Dangerous (PD) Determination.
- Addressing findings resulting from the Audit of 2018 School Safety Plans.
- Addressing the newly enacted Red Flag Law.

Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Student Support, Kathleen DeCataldo, presented summary data related to incident reporting which has led to the recommendations for revising VADIR categories and definitions. Also included is a recommendation to amend the formula for calculating the School Violence Index used to identify Persistently Dangerous Schools.

The proposed regulations will now go out for public comment though March 1st. It is anticipated that they will be presented for adoption at the April 2021 Board of Regents meeting.

The link below provides more detailed information on the proposed changes.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/P-12%20-%20Proposed%20Amendments%20to%20Regulations%20Relating%20to%20the%20Categories%20of%20School%20Safety%20and%20Educationa%20Climate.pdf>

The Board viewed a demonstration video highlighting the capabilities of the newly developed Principal Talent Management System software. Scheduled to launch in early 2021, the computer system is designed to use NYSED databases to assist superintendents in finding qualified candidates for administrative vacancies. ESSAA representatives will be requesting an opportunity to view the video and ask pertinent questions at the January 2021 stakeholder meeting.