

Summary of March 2021 Board of Regents Meeting

The Board of Regents conducted their monthly meeting on Monday, March 15, 2021 via video conference. Chancellor Young began the meeting by welcoming two newly appointed Board members, Dr. Aramina Vega Farrar (Bronx) and Ms. Ruth Turner (Western New York).

Regent Kathleen Cashin offered some reflective thoughts in commemoration of March being designated as Developmental Disability Awareness Month and Women's History Month. Regent Cashin shared how she has so often been inspired observing the resilience and determination of individuals with disabilities. With regards to Women's History Month, Regent Cashin spoke about the accomplishments of Harriet Tubman and her heroic work as an antislavery activist.

- Board of Regents members voted unanimously to cancel all Regents exams this year except for the four federally mandated tests required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Commissioner Rosa stressed that NYSED continues to advocate in hopes that the Department of Education will grant a waiver request which would exempt the state from all exams.

As part of the discussion, Deputy Commissioner Kim Wilkins presented updated information on the current plans for administering the required assessments and the amended graduation requirements associated with the cancelled exams. Key items discussed included:

- If the pending USDE assessment waiver is approved, all June 2021 and August 2021 Regents Exams will be cancelled.
- If the USDE assessment waiver is denied, NYSED will administer the following Regents examinations in June 2021 - ELA, Algebra 1, Earth Science, and Living Environment. Students taking these assessments will still be offered the graduation exemptions associated with these examinations.
- August 2021 Regents Exams will be cancelled.
- 3-8 assessments will be significantly shortened to include only 1 session.
- Extending the deadline for administering the NYSESLAT into the second week in June.

- Only students who have met the standards of the course of study, as locally determined, are eligible for an exemption from the examination requirements, including students in grades 7 or 8 taking advanced classes.
- Exempting students from requirements associated with pathway assessments, alternative assessments, technical assessments and locally developed tests.
- Exempting students from unfinished requirements for the CDOS (Career Development and Occupational Studies) credentials.
- Criteria for Mastery and Honors endorsements.
- Science Laboratory completion requirements.

Commissioner Rosa and Dr. Wilkins emphasized that NYSED is working to address all the questions that are coming into the Department with regards to unique situations that will arise. They are working on assessment and graduation requirement guidance documents that will be released on Tuesday, March 16th and will continue to release FAQ updates as questions from stakeholders continue to be addressed.

The link below provides more detailed information on each of the areas that were discussed during the presentation.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/FB%20-%20Monday%20AM%20-%20COVID%20II.pdf>

- Assistant Commissioner for Libraries, Lauren Moore, updated the Board on the two Digital Equity Summit meetings held recently that included over 200 participants.

A report is currently being developed from the information that was collected to identify priorities in preparation for the final meeting in June.

- The Board formally adopted the newly developed World Languages Learning Standards with a gradual phase-in timeline that calls for full implementation by September 2028.

The Board also approved an amendment that formally changes the terms “Languages Other Than English” and “Foreign Language” to “World Languages” or “World Languages Other Than English” throughout certification, teacher preparation programs, and tenure regulations.

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

- The Board discussed a proposed amendment which would allow candidates who are enrolled in a registered school psychology program to be eligible for an internship certificate similar to the option currently available to teacher, school leadership, and school counseling programs.

The internship certificate enables candidates, who have successfully completed one-half of the required semester hours for the program, to be employed by a school district or BOCES during their internship experience. This would increase the pool of candidates currently available to work in schools. It is anticipated that the amendment will be presented for adoption at the July 2021 Board of Regents meeting.

- As part of the consent agenda, the Board extended the current safety net for the School Building Leader Assessment. Candidates now have the option of taking either the 2013 SBL Assessment or the new 2019 SBL Assessment through August 31, 2024.