



BUREAU CHIEF, TEST ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS
Office of Assessment Policy, Development and Administration

January 2012

TO: Principals of Public, Nonpublic, and Charter Schools
FROM: Barbara M. Wallis *Barbara M. Wallis*
SUBJECT: Administration of the January 2012 Regents Exams and Regents Competency Tests

IMPORTANT: Test booklets for the January Regents Exam period will be shipped so as to arrive at schools (or approved storage locations) between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on January 19, 20, or 23. See "Shipment of Exam Materials" below for further information.

This memorandum provides essential information about the administration of the January exams. In addition, all persons coordinating the administration of the January 2012 exams should be familiar with the publication *School Administrator's Manual, 2012 Edition*. The new 2012 edition is available on the Department's web site at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/sam/secondary/home.html>.

Accompanying this memorandum is the list of regional centers, a memorandum regarding the content of each January exam, and the schedule for the January 2012 exam period. We appreciate all the hard work you do to help implement the New York State Testing Program.

SHIPMENT OF EXAM MATERIALS

Testing materials are delivered to schools in several shipments, depending on the exams requested.

In early January, a nonsecure shipment of the Earth Science performance test materials and Regents diplomas is delivered to schools in cardboard cartons and/or padded mailers. The Department will no longer provide printed copies of the following nonsecure materials, which will be available on the Department's web site. Schools must print sufficient copies to supply each student with:

1. **Regular edition reference tables** for Physical Setting/Earth Science, Physical Setting/Chemistry, and Physical Setting/Physics, **and the translated editions of the reference tables** for Physical Setting/Earth Science. The reference tables can be found on the Department's web site at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/reftable/home.html>. Note that the Department will continue to provide schools with the braille and large-type editions of the reference tables.
2. The **essay booklets** for the Regents Comprehensive Examination in English and the essay booklets for the Regents Examinations in U.S. History and Government and Global History and Geography. The **essay booklets** can be found on the Department's web site at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/hsgen/#fui>.
3. The **RCT in Writing Answer Booklets**. The answer booklets for the RCT in Writing can be found at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/hsgen/#fui>.

The following nonsecure materials must be printed and supplied to all school personnel involved in the administration and scoring of Regents Exams and RCTs:

4. **Directions for Administering Regents Exams** and the **Directions for Administering and Scoring RCTs**. These materials can be found on the Department's web site at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/hsgen/>.

5. **Information Booklets for Scoring Regents Exams.** These materials can be found on the Department's web site at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/hsgen/>.
6. **Scoring Keys and Rating Guides** for all nonrestricted Regents Exams or for the RCT in Writing. These materials will be made available on the Department's web site at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/scoring/home.html> at approximately 11 a.m. for morning exams and at approximately 3 p.m. for afternoon exams on the scheduled administration date. Note that schools will receive printed scoring materials for the restricted RCTs, the RCT in Reading, and the restricted Regents Examination in Physical Setting/Physics in the shipment of secure materials.

The shipment containing secure materials for the January exams will be delivered in locked Regents boxes to arrive at schools, or approved storage locations, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on January 19, 20, or 23. Please be sure that someone is available in your school, or approved storage location, during those hours to accept the exam shipment. Should any problems occur in connection with the delivery of exam materials, please call this office at 518-474-8220 or 474-5902 immediately.

The locked Regents boxes will be shipped with either two locks and a plastic crimp or one lock and two plastic crimps. Padlock keys are mailed to the principal and should arrive no later than January 19, 2012. Please call the Test Distribution Unit at 518-474-5914 if padlock keys have not been received by 12:00 noon on this date.

CHECKING THE EXAM SHIPMENT

Enclosed in each delivery is a shipping notice listing the materials included. As soon as you receive the Regents box(es), use the shipping notice and your confirmation notice to inventory the materials received. **Under no circumstances may the sealed packages of secure exam materials be opened during this inventory.** The number of test booklets contained in each of the sealed packages is indicated below:

- *English editions of Regents Exams and RCTs and (except for the restricted exams: the Regents Examination in Physical Setting/Physics, and the restricted RCTs in Global Studies, United States History and Government, Mathematics, and Science).* Each sealed package contains 25 booklets.
- *Spanish editions of the Regents Examinations in Integrated Algebra, Living Environment, Physical Setting/Earth Science, Global History and Geography, and United States History and Government.* Each sealed package contains 25 booklets.
- *Braille and large-type editions, and translations (other than Spanish) of Regents Exams.* The exact quantity requested will be shipped to the school.
- *Restricted editions— the Regents Examination in Physical Setting/Physics; the RCTs in Global Studies, United States History and Government, Mathematics, and Science; the alternative language editions of RCTs; the Regents Examination in Physical Setting/Earth Science (braille edition only); Regents Examination in Living Environment (braille edition only); and the RCT in Reading (braille edition only).* Each test booklet is numbered and sealed in a separate envelope. Exact quantities requested are shipped to the school.

If your inventory shows that the shipment contains excess exam materials or that it contains exam materials that your school did not request, please notify the Office of Assessment Policy, Development and Administration (APDA) immediately via fax to 518-474-2021. It is the principal's responsibility to maintain these excess materials under the same strict security as the exams that your school will be administering, as outlined on the following page under "Safeguarding Exam Materials."

EMERGENCY SUPPLIES OF EXAM MATERIALS

A list of regional centers accompanies this memorandum. If a shipment for your school does not include all the materials needed, additional materials may be obtained from a nearby regional center. Supplies will be available at regional centers of all exam materials other than braille, large-type, and alternative language

editions of all exams. If your school requires an emergency supply of materials that are not ordinarily available at the regional centers or more than 25 booklets of an exam that is ordinarily available at the regional center, please send a fax to APDA at 518-474-2021.

Exam materials are available at the regional centers only on the day of the exam. Secure materials for morning exams will be released in the morning; secure materials for afternoon exams will not be released until after 11:00 a.m. Scoring materials will not be released by regional centers until after the Uniform Statewide Admission Deadline, which is 10:00 a.m. for morning exams and 2:00 p.m. for afternoon exams. Subject to these limitations, materials may be picked up at regional centers between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

In order to obtain exam materials at a regional center, an individual must present a letter of authorization written on school letterhead and signed by the principal. The letter must identify the person picking up the materials and list the specific materials requested. Anyone obtaining exam materials must provide identification with a photograph and countersign the authorization letter before the exam materials will be released.

School personnel are forbidden to make or authorize photocopies of secure State exam booklets without the express written prior approval of APDA. Such approval will be considered only when it is not feasible for the school to obtain the secure exam materials from a regional center.

SAFEGUARDING EXAM MATERIALS

The principal of each school requesting exams must make the necessary arrangements to safeguard the materials requested for the school. Upon delivery, the locked Regents boxes must immediately be placed in the Department-approved safe or vault at the storage location designated by the school. Exam materials may be removed from locked Regents boxes only for inventory and for administration of the exams on the scheduled date.

If the locked Regents boxes containing a school's shipment of secure exam materials are found to be too large for the approved storage location, the principal who requested the exams must contact this office immediately at 518-474-8220 or 474-5902 to make arrangements for storage of the boxes in an alternative approved location.

The Regents box keys and the combination or key to the safe or vault must be maintained under strict security conditions to preclude access to exams by students and other unauthorized persons. When the safe or vault where the Regents boxes are stored is unlocked, it must be kept under continuous supervision by school personnel. Additionally, the locked Regents boxes must be visually checked daily by the person in charge of the administration of the exams to ensure that they have not been tampered with and that their contents remain secure.

The sealed packages containing exam booklets and teacher dictation copies must not be opened until the day each exam is scheduled to be administered, and no earlier than is necessary for distribution to proctors. Scoring key packages must be kept secure and may not be opened until after the Uniform Statewide Admission Deadline of 10:00 a.m. for morning exams and 2:00 p.m. for afternoon exams.

Department personnel will make unannounced visits to some schools after the exam materials have been delivered in order to verify that they are being properly stored. If a storage violation is found, all exam materials will immediately be removed from the school and transferred to a location designated by the Department. The school principal will have to arrange to pick up exam materials from that location each morning and afternoon during the Regents Exam period and to pick up printed scoring materials after the morning and afternoon Uniform Statewide Admission Deadline on the appropriate days. The school will then be required to store all exam materials at a location designated by the Department for a period of at least one year. In addition, the Department may rescind the school's authorization to administer exams.

Following the exam period, in addition to other materials, the principal must return to the Department the completed **Examination Scoring Certificate, Deputy and Proctor Certificate, and Examination Storage Certificate** (received in the shipment of secure materials). For a complete list of items to be returned, refer to the Checklist for Return of Exam Materials in Regents Boxes (DET 536) or to Section 4 of the *School Administrator's Manual* available at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/sam/secondary/home.html>.

ADMINISTERING AND SCORING EXAMS

The general administration procedures for secondary-level exams are provided in the *School Administrator's Manual*. Specific directions for administering regular and restricted exams are available on the Department's website at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/hsgen/>. These materials must be distributed to teachers before the exam date in order to give them time to become familiar with the instructions.

The Department is no longer providing printed scoring materials for any exams other than scoring materials for restricted RCTs, the RCT in Reading, and the restricted Regents Examination in Physical Setting/Physics. Schools must print sufficient copies of the nonrestricted scoring materials to supply one to each rater.

All scoring keys and rating guides posted on the Department's web site will be password protected. The school principal will receive an e-mail from the Department on the day of the exam that provides the password to be used to access all scoring keys and rating guides being posted that day. In order to access these documents, all schools will be required to enter the password sent by the Department.

- *Regents Exams*. The same scoring materials are provided to score the regular English editions and the braille and alternative language editions for all Regents Exams, except for the braille edition of Living Environment and Physical Setting/Earth Science.
- *Regents Examination in Physical Setting/Earth Science*. Two scoring keys are provided — one for the English and alternative language editions, and the second key for the restricted braille edition.
- *Regents Examination in Living Environment*. Two scoring keys are provided — one for the English and alternative language editions, and the second key for the restricted braille edition.
- *RCT in Mathematics*. Two scoring keys are provided — one for the restricted regular English edition, the second for the restricted alternative language and braille editions.
- *RCT in Science*. One scoring key is provided for all editions.
- *RCT in Reading*. One scoring key is provided for all editions.
- *RCT in Writing*. A single scoring key is provided for the regular English edition and for the braille edition.
- *RCT in Global Studies*. One set of scoring materials is provided for all editions — the semi-transparent overlay for the Part One multiple-choice questions, and the restricted sequentially numbered rating guide for the Part Two essays.
- *RCT in United States History and Government*. One set of scoring materials is provided for all editions — the semi-transparent overlay for the Part One multiple-choice questions, and the restricted sequentially numbered rating guide for the Part Two essays.

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS RETAKING THE REGENTS EXAMINATION IN EARTH SCIENCE

All students taking the January 2012 Regents Examination in Physical Setting/Earth Science must take the performance test, even if they have taken it in conjunction with a prior administration of the written exam. Only the performance test score earned by the student in the weeks immediately preceding the January 2012 written exam may be used to determine the student's final exam score for this Regents Exam.

Consequently, all schools planning to administer the Regents Examination in Physical Setting/Earth Science must make arrangements for all students who will be taking the written exam to take the performance test as well. The performance test must be administered during the last two weeks of the Earth science course and no later than the day before the written exam. This requirement applies both to students enrolled in the course of study and to students who plan only to retake the exam. All schools administering this exam must notify students of the date and time to appear for the performance test.

REPORTING ADMINISTRATION AND SCORING IRREGULARITIES TO THE DEPARTMENT

The building principal is responsible for all aspects of the school's administration of State exams and must take appropriate measures both to prevent, as much as possible, and to investigate all irregularities associated with the administration and scoring of these examinations. In addition, the principal must report the following events in writing to APDA:

- All student infractions of the Department's policy prohibiting the use of cell phones and other communications devices during State exams.
- All confirmed cases of students having committed fraud on State exams.
- All interruptions of testing sessions including those caused by power outages or fire alarms.
- All suspected or confirmed cases of teachers, administrators or paraprofessionals giving aid to students during a State exam or altering student responses on an exam paper.
- All instances in which a State exam is administered without Department authorization at a time outside the published Statewide schedule.
- All instances in which a school does not conform to the Uniform Statewide Admission Deadline in administering a State exam.
- All instances in which scorers do not rate State exams in accordance with the scoring materials provided by the Department.
- All cases in which a school official does not adhere to the Department policy concerning the finality of exam scores as determined by the teacher scoring committees. This policy is explained in the *Directions for Administering Regents Examinations, January 2012 Administration* under the heading "Rating Exam Papers."
- All cases in which a school official or staff member alters or otherwise misrepresents a student's earned exam score during scoring, recording, or reporting.
- All cases in which student answer papers are lost prior to the recording of scores in students' permanent records.

Principals must report all such events in writing by fax to 518-474-1989 or via e-mail to emscassessinfo@mail.nysed.gov.

More complete information on strategies for avoiding the occurrences listed above and for addressing them should they occur may be found in the *School Administrator's Manual* and in the *Directions for Administering Regents Examinations, January 2012 Administration*.

TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with Disabilities

Principals must ensure that students with disabilities are provided the testing accommodations specified in their Individualized Education Programs or Section 504 Accommodation Plans when they take State exams. Under certain conditions, special exam arrangements may be made for general education students taking State exams. The guidelines to be followed in such circumstances are provided in Section Two of the *School Administrator's Manual* available at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/sam/secondary/home.html>.

English Language Learners

Schools may provide the following testing accommodations to English language learners:

- *Time Extension*: Schools may extend the test time for English language learners. Principals may use any reasonable extensions, such as “time and a half” (the required testing time plus one-half of that amount of time), in accordance with their best judgment about the needs of the English language learners. Principals should consult with each student’s classroom teacher in making these determinations.
- *Separate Location*: Schools are encouraged to provide optimal testing environments and facilities for all students. They may administer State exams to English language learners individually or in small groups in a separate location.
- *Third Reading of Listening Selection*: Proctors may read the listening passage a third time to English language learners who are taking the Regents Comprehensive Examination in English.
- *Bilingual Dictionaries and Glossaries*: English language learners may use bilingual dictionaries and glossaries when taking State exams. The bilingual dictionaries and glossaries may provide **only** direct translations of words. Bilingual dictionaries or glossaries that provide definitions or explanations are **not** permitted.
- *Simultaneous Use of English and Alternative Language Editions*: For those Regents Exams for which the Department provides direct written translations, English language learners may use both an English and an alternative language edition of the test simultaneously. However, they should be instructed to record all of their responses in only one of the two editions. The alternative language edition used by the student should be so indicated on the student’s answer document. (Note: the alternative language editions of RCTs provided by the Department are often not direct translations of the English editions being administered during the same exam period and may **not** be used simultaneously with an English edition.)
- *Oral Translation for Lower Incidence Languages*: Schools may provide English language learners with an oral translation of a State exam when there is no translated edition provided by the Department. This accommodation is permitted for State exams in all subjects **except** English. All translations must be oral, direct translations of the English editions — written translations are not allowed. No clarifications or explanations may be provided. Translators should receive copies of the English editions of the tests one hour prior to administration. The Department’s Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies can assist schools in locating suitable translators.
- *Writing Responses in Native Language*: English language learners making use of alternative language editions or of oral translations of State exams may write their responses to the open-ended questions in their native language. Scoring the tests is the responsibility of the school. However, the Department’s Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies can assist schools in locating persons who can translate the students’ responses into English to facilitate scoring of the answer papers.

Former English Language Learners

Schools may also provide the testing accommodations listed above under the heading “English Language Learners” only to former English language learners who were identified as English language proficient based on their scores on one of the two most recent administrations of the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT), either Spring 2010 or Spring 2011. These

accommodations may not be provided to former English language learners who were identified as English language proficient prior to the 2010 NYSESLAT administration.

MATERIALS RETURNED IN THE REGENTS BOX

The materials that must be returned to the Department in the Regents boxes are listed in Section Four of the *School Administrator's Manual* available at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/sam/secondary/home.html> and on the checklist provided to schools in the shipment of secure test materials. Please combine all materials to be returned to the Department in one Regents box whenever possible.

Return all Regents boxes no later than February 17. Please check all storage locations for any boxes remaining from previous exam periods and return those boxes as well. Each school must pay for the return shipment of its own Regents boxes; the boxes may not be returned collect. The boxes may be returned by United Parcel Service (UPS) or any other carrier. Regardless of the carrier, the school must call the carrier, make the necessary arrangements, and pay for the return shipment. If the Regents boxes for a school are returned collect, the Department will refuse delivery.

ONLINE SUBMISSION OF TEACHER EVALUATIONS OF EXAMS

Suggestions and feedback from teachers are an important contribution to the test development process. The Department provides an online evaluation form for State assessments where teachers may respond to several specific questions and may make suggestions. Complete and submit your evaluation of any exam (except restricted editions) on the Department's web site at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/teacher/evaluation.html>.

DEPARTMENT REVIEW

Selected principals requesting exams will receive notice concerning Department review by the end of the January Regents Exam period. This notice will indicate each subject for which answer papers must be submitted in the Regents box to the Department. All answer papers not requested must remain on file in the school for one year with the exception of restricted edition exams. The latter must be returned to the Department. Schools asked to submit answer papers for Regents Exams should produce and retain, in the school, photocopies of all answer papers prior to being submitted to the Department.

HANDLING OF STUDENTS' COMPLETED EXAM MATERIALS

When a student has completed a State exam, the student's answer materials should be collected and confirmed, or "checked in," by a proctor and logged in to a list of examinees before that student is permitted to leave the testing room. When they are hand scored, answer papers for all State exams must remain in the custody of teachers or administrators in the school building until the rating process is complete and scores are recorded on the students' permanent records. When answer papers are scored in cooperation with another school, answer papers may be transported to the cooperating school for such scoring. It remains the principal's responsibility to ensure the security of such papers while they are out of the building. Answer papers that are sent to a scanning center for scoring may be stored either at the scanning location or in the schools where the exams were administered, as long as storage conditions are maintained that will not limit the principal's access to an individual student's answer paper. As an additional precaution, all scrap paper should be retained until all exam scores have been recorded.

If a student's answer paper is lost, the principal or superintendent must conduct an inquiry and file a written report with this office. This report must include (1) a description of the loss or disappearance, including a list of all students whose papers are missing; (2) the exam title and administration date; (3) the likely cause of the loss or disappearance; and (4) what steps will be taken to prevent a similar occurrence in the future.