



ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER
Office of Assessment Policy, Development and Administration

June 2011

TO: Principals of Public, Nonpublic, and Charter Schools

FROM: David Abrams 

SUBJECT: Administration of the June 2011 Regents Exams and Regents Competency Tests

IMPORTANT: Test booklets for the June 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 June 13 or June 14. See “Shipment of Exam Materials” below for further information.

This memorandum provides essential information about the administration of the June exams. In addition, all persons coordinating the administration of the June 2011 exams should be familiar with the publication *Regents Examinations, Regents Competency Tests, and Second Language Proficiency Examinations: School Administrator’s Manual, 2008 Edition*. This manual is available on the Department’s web site at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/sam/secondary/home.html>.

Accompanying this memorandum are the list of regional centers, a memorandum regarding the content of each June exam, and the schedule for the June 2011 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. The performance test (Part One) of the Comprehensive Regents Exams in foreign languages has already been shipped to schools that requested those exams.

Nonsecure materials for the June exams are shipped to schools in cardboard cartons and/or padded mailers and were delivered in May. This shipment included answer booklets for the Regents Competency Test (RCT) in Writing; answer booklets for the Regents Exams in English, social studies, and foreign languages; Earth Science Performance Test materials; science reference tables; and Regents diplomas. **Directions for administering and scoring exams will no longer be included in the shipment of nonsecure materials. All directions will be e-mailed to school principals and will be made available on the Department’s web site at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/hsgen/>.**

Note: Schools will receive printed scoring materials for the RCTs in Global Studies, Mathematics, Reading, Science, and U.S. History and Government but will not receive printed copies of scoring materials for the RCT in Writing or for any of the June 2011 Regents Exams. Instead, for each of these exams, the scoring keys and rating guides 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. Schools must print sufficient copies of the non-restricted scoring materials to supply one to each rater. (See page 4.)

The final shipment, comprising secure materials for June 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 June 13 or June 14. Please be sure that someone in your school or approved storage location is available 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.

All packages containing secure exam materials for your school will be shipped via UPS and will be delivered between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on either or both of the dates indicated above.

The locked plastic sliding-lid Regents boxes will be secured 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 June 13. Please call the Test Distribution Unit at 518-474-5914 if padlock keys have not been received by 12:00 noon on June 13.

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 school's confirmation notice to ensure that all appropriate exam materials have been received for each subject. If your inventory shows that the shipment contains excess exam materials or that it contains exam materials that you did not request, please notify the Office of Assessment Policy, Development and Administration (APDA) immediately by 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 next page under "Safeguarding Exam Materials." 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.

- *Regular English editions of most Regents Exams and RCTs in Reading and Writing* — Each sealed package contains 25 booklets.
- *Spanish editions of the Regents Exams 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 RCTs in Global Studies, United States History and Government, Mathematics, and Science; the alternative language editions of these RCTs; and the braille editions of all RCTs except Reading and Writing.* Each test booklet is numbered and sealed in a separate envelope. Exact quantities requested are shipped to the school.

EMERGENCY SUPPLIES OF EXAM MATERIALS

If a shipment for your school does not include all the materials needed, additional materials may be obtained from a nearby regional center. The regional center must be contacted immediately to ensure that a sufficient supply of examination materials will be available when your representative arrives. Advise the regional center of the exact number of test booklets that your school will require.

A list of regional centers accompanies this memorandum. Supplies will be available at regional centers of all examination materials other than braille, large-type, and alternative language editions of all examinations. If you require an emergency supply of materials that are not ordinarily available at the regional centers or if you require more than 25 booklets of an examination 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 Deadlines (10:00 a.m. for morning exams, 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 his/her school's 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 or teacher dictation copies without the express written prior approval of the Office of Assessment Policy, Development and Administration. 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 exam 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 padlock keys for the Regents boxes 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. The principal must notify the Department by fax to 518-474-2021 if any of the packages of secure exam materials were not sealed properly when received.

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 violation of storage procedures 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 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 **Exam Scoring Certificate, Deputy and Proctor Certificate, and Exam 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, pages 1–2, of the *School Administrator's Manual*.

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 were e-mailed and posted on the Department's web site 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 the restricted RCTs and the RCT in Reading. Schools must print sufficient copies of the non-restricted 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 Examinations*. The same scoring materials are provided for the regular English editions and the alternative language and braille editions of all exams except Living Environment, Physical Setting/Chemistry, Physical Setting/Earth Science, and Physical Setting/Physics. Separate scoring materials are provided for the braille editions of Living Environment, Physical Setting/Chemistry, Physical Setting/Earth Science, and Physical Setting/Physics.
- *RCT in Mathematics*. Two scoring keys are provided — one for the English edition, the second for the alternative language and braille editions.
- *RCT in Science*. The same scoring key is provided for the English, alternative language, and the braille editions.
- *RCT in Reading*. The same scoring key is provided for the regular English edition and for the braille edition.
- *RCT in Writing*. The same 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 sequentially numbered restricted 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 EXAM IN EARTH SCIENCE

All students taking the Regents Exam 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 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 Exam 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 exams. 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, June and August 2011 Administrations* under the heading "Rating Exam Papers" on pages 13–14.
- 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 either the scoring of the papers or recording of the scores in students' permanent records.

Principals must report all such occurrences in writing by fax to 518-474-1989 or by 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, June and August 2011 Administrations*.

TESTING ACCOMODATIONS

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, pages 15–16, of the *School Administrator's Manual*.

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 half that amount), 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 Exam in English. This accommodation is **not** permitted on State exams in foreign languages.
- *Bilingual Dictionaries and Glossaries*: English language learners may use bilingual dictionaries and glossaries when taking State exams in all subjects **except** foreign languages. 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 State 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 and foreign languages. 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 and the Bilingual/ESL Technical Assistance Centers (BETACs) 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 and the BETACs 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 also may 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 2009 or Spring 2010. These accommodations may not be provided to former English language learners who were identified as English language proficient prior to the 2009 NYSESLAT administration.

DEPARTMENT REVIEW

Selected principals requesting exams will receive notice concerning Department review by the end of the June Regents Exam period. This notice will indicate each subject for which answer papers must be submitted via traceable mail to the Department. All answer papers not requested must remain on file in the school for one year.

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 or regional scoring site 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, they 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.

MATERIALS RETURNED IN THE REGENTS BOXES

The materials that must be returned to the Department in the Regents boxes are listed on pages 1–2 of Section Four of the *School Administrator's Manual*. Please combine all materials to be returned to the Department in one Regents box whenever possible.

Return all Regents boxes no later than July 11. 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 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. Go to <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/teacher/evaluation.html> to complete and submit your evaluation of State exams.

Thank you for everything you do on behalf of New York State students.