



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

Summer 2012

TO: Principals of Schools Administering August 2012 State Exams

FROM: Barbara M. Wallis *Barbara M. Wallis*

SUBJECT: Administration of the August 2012 Regents Exams and Regents Competency Tests

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

Accompanying this memorandum is the list of regional centers, a memorandum regarding the content of each August exam, and the schedule for the August 2012 exam period.

IMPORTANT: The Department policy concerning the prohibition of student use of communications devices during state exams has been revised, effective with the August 2012 administration. **Please see page 9.**

SHIPMENT OF EXAM MATERIALS

NOTE: Regents boxes will be delivered to single-shipment storage locations on Tuesday, August 14 or Wednesday, August 15. For daily-delivery locations, deliveries are scheduled for Wednesday, August 15 and Thursday, August 16, with each shipment containing the next day's exams. In all cases, delivery can be expected between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

In early August, a nonsecure shipment of the Earth Science performance test materials 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 and 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/>. 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 Regents Exams and 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/> at approximately 10:30 a.m. for morning exams and at approximately 2:30 p.m. for afternoon exams on the scheduled administration date. Note that schools will receive printed scoring materials for the restricted RCTs in the shipment of secure materials.

Shipments of August exams to each school (and/or Department-approved storage location) will occur on August 14 or 15 for single-shipment schools and on August 15 and 16 for daily-delivery schools. Single shipment schools will receive one delivery with exams for both days whereas daily-delivery schools will receive one delivery for each day for which exams were requested. Refer to the confirmation notice you previously received to identify your school's status as either single shipment or daily delivery. The shipments of the locked Regents boxes containing these materials will be delivered to schools or approved storage locations between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. at least one day before the date the exams are scheduled to be administered. The printed scoring materials will be delivered with their corresponding exams.

Please be sure that someone in your school, or approved storage location, is available to accept the exam shipments when deliveries are expected. Should any problems occur with the delivery of exam materials, call this office at 518-474-8220 or 474-5902 immediately.

The locked Regents boxes will be secured with either two locks and a plastic crimp or one lock and two plastic crimps. Padlock keys will be mailed in one or more envelopes to the principal and should arrive before the locked Regents boxes. If padlock keys for each day of the exam period have not been received three days before the expected delivery date, please call the Test Distribution Unit at 518-474-5914.

CHECKING THE EXAM SHIPMENT

Enclosed in each delivery is a shipping notice listing the materials included. As soon as you receive the shipment, 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 is indicated below. The number of test booklets contained in each of the sealed packages is indicated below.

- *All Regents Exams, including Spanish editions, and the RCT in Writing.* Each sealed package will contain 25 booklets.
- *Restricted editions – All editions of the RCTs in Mathematics, Reading, Science, Global Studies, and U.S. History and Government.* Each test booklet is numbered and sealed in a separate envelope. The exact quantity requested will be shipped to the school.
- *Braille and large-type editions of all Regents Exams and RCTs.* The exact quantity requested will be shipped to the school.

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 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 next page under "Safeguarding Exam Materials."

EMERGENCY SUPPLIES OF EXAM MATERIALS

If a shipment to your school does not include all the materials needed, additional materials may be obtained from a regional center. A list of regional centers accompanies this memorandum. The regional center must be contacted immediately to ensure that a sufficient supply of exam materials will be available when you or your representative arrives. Advise the regional center of the exact number of test booklets that your school will require. Ordinarily, supplies will be available at regional centers of all exam materials *other than* braille and large-type test booklets, alternative language editions of the RCTs, and Spanish editions of Regents Exams. If your school requires an emergency supply of ten or more test booklets of any regular English edition of any exam, or if you require materials that are **not** ordinarily available at the regional centers, please fax a brief statement of your summer school's needs 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 10:30 a.m. Restricted RCT scoring keys will not be released by regional centers until after the Uniform Statewide Admission Deadlines (9:15 a.m. for morning exams, 1:15 p.m. for afternoon exams). Subject to these limitations, materials may be picked up at regional centers between 7:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

In order to obtain exam materials at a regional center, an individual must present a letter of authorization written on his or 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 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 to fit into the Department-approved safe or vault, the principal must contact this office immediately at 518-474-8220 or 518-474-5902 to make arrangements for the storage of the boxes in an alternate 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 the 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 may not be opened until the day each exam is scheduled to be administered, and no earlier than is necessary for distribution to proctors. RCT scoring key packages must be kept secure and may not be opened until after the Uniform Statewide Admission Deadlines of 9:15 a.m. for morning exams and 1:15 p.m. for afternoon exams. The principal must notify the Department via fax to 518-474-2021 if any of the packages of secure exam materials were not sealed properly when received.

No school administrator is authorized to redistribute any State exam to any location outside of New York State by any means, including but not limited to use of common carrier, hand carrying, facsimile, or e-mail, without the Department's express written approval. If there is a circumstance that may warrant the administration of a State exam at a location outside of New York State, the school official must contact APDA to request prior Department approval.

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 RCT scoring materials after the morning and afternoon Uniform Statewide Admission Deadlines 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, the principal must sign and 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](#).

ADMISSION OF STUDENTS TO EXAMS

Students who have not completed the appropriate course(s) may not be admitted to State exams. Students must provide written authorization from the home school principal or superintendent to "challenge for credit." In all cases, nonresident students and any others not enrolled in your summer school program may be admitted to State exams only at the written request of the home school principal. Public school districts may not charge resident students a fee for admission to the August exams. Nonresident students may be charged a reasonable fee to cover administration and scoring costs.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION AND RECORDKEEPING

Plans should be made before the administration of the exams to verify the identity of each student entering the exam room, especially those not enrolled in the summer school program. Accurate attendance records must be kept for each exam. The school must have attendance records that can be used to verify the presence or absence of any student for any of the August exams.

ADMINISTERING AND SCORING NONRESTRICTED EXAMS

The general administration procedures for Regents Exams and for the RCT in Writing are outlined in the [School Administrator's Manual](#). Specific directions for administering and scoring each exam will be posted on the Department 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. It is not acceptable for proctors to rely on their recollection of these instructions from past administrations.

The Department no longer provides printed scoring materials for any exams other than the scoring materials for the restricted RCTs. 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.

ADMINISTERING AND SCORING RESTRICTED EXAMS

The administration procedures for restricted exams (the braille editions of Living Environment and Physical Setting/Earth Science and all RCTs except the RCT in Writing) are different from those for nonrestricted exams. General information about the administration of restricted exams is provided in the [*School Administrator's Manual*](#). Specific instructions for administering and scoring each of the restricted exams will be provided to principals by e-mail and posted on the Department's web site at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/hsgen/>. Each person who will administer the restricted editions must be thoroughly familiar with the procedures detailed in both publications.

The scoring key provided for the alternative language and braille editions of the RCT in Mathematics is different from that for the English language edition. This scoring key will be shipped only to those schools requesting these editions. To ensure that correct scores are recorded, make certain that all persons responsible for rating any State exam are provided with the appropriate scoring materials.

The scoring keys provided for the braille editions of Living Environment and Physical Setting/Earth Science are different from the scoring keys provided for the regular editions of these exams.

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS RETAKING THE REGENTS EXAMINATION IN PHYSICAL SETTING/EARTH SCIENCE

All students taking the August 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 August 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 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 possession and/or 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. The policy is explained under the heading "Rating Exam Papers" on pages 12–14 of the [*Directions for Administering Regents Examinations, August 2012 Administration*](#).

- 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 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 Section Two of the *School Administrator's Manual* and in the *Directions for Administering Regents Examinations, August 2012 Administration*.

TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with Disabilities

Summer school principals must ensure that students with disabilities are provided the testing accommodations specified in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Accommodation Plans (504 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 "Administering Examinations to Students with Disabilities" in Section Two of the *School Administrator's Manual*, available at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/sam/secondary/>.

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. Schools 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 when administering 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 edition of the tests *one hour prior* to administration. The Department's Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies (telephone 518-474-8775) and the Regional Bilingual Education Resource Networks (RBE-RNs), formerly BETACs, can assist schools in locating suitable translators. A list of RBE-RNs is available at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/biling/bilinged/betac.html>.

- *Writing Responses in the 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. If needed, the Department's Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies and the RBE-RNs 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.

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 and integrity 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 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*](#) 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 when possible.

Return all Regents boxes no later than August 27. 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 Regents boxes for a school are returned collect, the Department will refuse delivery.

DEPARTMENT REVIEW

Selected summer school principals requesting exams will receive notice concerning Department review by the end of the August 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 submitting them to the Department.

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 (except restricted editions) where teachers may respond to several specific questions and may make suggestions on the Department's web site at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/teacher/evaluation.html>.

REPORTING AND RECORDING TEST SCORES

Summer schools must record the names and test scores of all students tested and then send the scores for each student to the student's home school. Information about recording test scores on the permanent record is provided in Section Three of the *[School Administrator's Manual](#)*.

Use of Communications Devices

PLEASE NOTE: This procedure has been revised effective with the August 2012 administration.

All students are prohibited from bringing cell phones and certain other electronic devices, as defined in the script below, into a classroom or other location where a State exam is being administered. Test proctors, test monitors, and school officials shall retain the right to collect and hold any prohibited electronic devices prior to the start of the test administration. Admission to the test shall be denied to any student who is in possession of a cell phone or other prohibited electronic device and refuses to relinquish it.

At the beginning of each test administration, proctors must read the following statement to all students taking secondary-level State exams:

You cannot have any communications device, including a cell phone, with you during this exam or during any breaks (such as a restroom visit). Such devices include, but are not limited to:

- Cell phones
- Blackberry devices and other PDAs
- iPods and MP3 players
- iPads, tablets, and other eReaders
- Laptops, notebooks, or any other personal computing devices
- Cameras or other photographic equipment
- Headphones, headsets, or in-ear headphones such as earbuds, and
- Any other device capable of recording audio, photographic or video content, or capable of viewing or playing back such content

If you brought any of these items to the building today, and have not already stored it in your locker or turned it over to me, a test monitor or school official, you must give it to me now. You may not keep your cell phone or any of these items with you, or near you, including in your pockets, backpack, desk, etc. If you keep a cell phone or any of these items with you, your exam will be invalidated and you will get no score. Is there anyone who needs to give me any of these items now? [*proctor: repeat list of devices*]. This is your last opportunity to do so before the test begins.

For Principals and Proctors:

- a. Any student observed with any prohibited device while taking a State exam must be directed to turn it over to the proctor or monitor immediately. To allow for all possible outcomes of procedural due process, the student should be allowed to complete the exam. The incident must be reported promptly to the school principal. If the principal determines that the student had a prohibited device in his or her possession during the test administration, the student's test **must** be invalidated. No score may be calculated for that student.
- b. The incident must be promptly reported, in writing, to APDA by fax to 518-474-1989 or by e-mail to emscassessinfo@mail.nysed.gov, as is the case for all testing irregularities, misadministrations, or other violations of State testing policy and procedures.

Note: Some students with disabilities may use certain recording/playback devices ONLY IF this accommodation is specifically required as a provision of the student's IEP or 504 Plan. In addition, a student may be allowed to retain an otherwise prohibited device in his or her possession if there is documentation on file at the school from a medical practitioner that the student requires such a device during testing. Without such documentation, the general policy on communications devices as provided above is in effect, and the school may not allow the student to retain any such equipment while testing.