



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

Office of Elementary, Middle, Secondary, and Continuing Education

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TO: District Superintendents
Principals of Public and Nonpublic Secondary Schools
Directors of Occupational Education

FROM: Steven E. Katz *SEK*

SUBJECT: Requesting and Storing State Examinations for the January 2004 Regents Examination Period

IMPORTANT: Your school's completed request booklet for January 2004 examinations must be returned to the Department no later than October 20. Requests for additional materials received by November 16 will be included in the examination shipments to schools. If your school requests additional examination materials after November 16, you will most likely have to obtain them from a regional center on the scheduled day of the examination.

This memorandum provides essential information about the administration of the January examinations. In addition, all persons coordinating the administration of State examinations should be familiar with the *Regents Examinations, Regents Competency Tests, and Proficiency Examinations: School Administrator's Manual, 2001 Edition*. This publication may be accessed at www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/assess.html on the Department's web site.

Accompanying this memorandum are the School Data Sheet, an examination request booklet, the January examination schedule, the School Record of Examinations Requested, a sheet listing examinations requested for students enrolled in other schools, and a return label.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Materials for the January examination period must be requested in the enclosed machine-scannable request booklet, which must be completed and returned intact no later than October 20. Do not fax this booklet. Page 8 must be signed by the principal. After your request has been processed by the Department, you will be sent a confirmation notice indicating the titles and quantities of examinations to be shipped to your school or Department-approved storage site. The information on the confirmation notice must be carefully checked for accuracy to ensure that the correct quantities of examination materials will be shipped to each school.

Administrators who determine that additional materials are needed after submission of their school's request booklet may send a fax to us at 518-474-2021 to place a supplemental request. Check all confirmation notices as soon as you receive them so supplemental requests may be placed by November 16. Administrators requesting additional examination materials after that date may have to obtain them from a nearby regional center on the day of the examination.

REQUESTING ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXAMINATION MATERIALS

Request only those quantities of examinations actually needed for January 2004. Enclose a separate letter with your request booklet if you need sample copies of test booklets for review purposes; these will be shipped after the January examination period. This procedure will reduce the number of test booklets included in the secure shipments and help to ensure the timely packing of examination materials actually needed for the January 2004 examination period. Guidelines for requesting specific materials:

- *Regular test booklets:* Request the exact quantity needed, plus five percent for unanticipated increases.
- *Large-type test booklets:* Large-type test booklets are available for all examinations. Request the EXACT quantity needed for students specifically identified as requiring this accommodation; that is, students who are actually provided instructional materials (e.g., textbooks), locally developed tests, etc., in this format. Sample copies of past examinations in large type may be obtained from the New York State Resource Center for the Visually Impaired, 2-A Richmond Avenue, Batavia, NY 14020 (716-343-8100).
- *Braille test booklets:* Braille test booklets are available for all English language examinations. Request the EXACT number of booklets needed for administration in January 2004.
- *Answer sheets:*
 - Regents Examinations:* Hand-scorable answer sheets are printed as part of the test booklets for all January Regents Examinations except the Regents Comprehensive Examinations in Spanish and French. Schools may substitute other types of answer sheets. Answer booklets for the Regents Comprehensive Examinations in Spanish and French and essay booklets for the Regents Examinations in English, Global History and Geography, and U.S. History and Government will be provided.
 - Regents Competency Tests and the Introduction to Occupations Proficiency Examination:* All schools will be sent the answer pads and student identification sheets for the Regents Competency Test (RCT) in Writing. Separate answer sheets are provided upon request for the other RCTs and for the Introduction to Occupations Proficiency Examination. The answer sheets may be machine scored, or hand scored using scoring overlays provided by the Department. Indicate on the request booklet whether you want the Department to send the machine-scorable answer sheets for those examinations.¹
- *Teacher dictation copies, scoring keys, and teacher directions:* Sufficient quantities of these materials will be included in the examination shipment based on the number of test booklets requested.
- *Performance Tests:*
 - Regents Examination in Physical Setting/Earth Science:* Sufficient quantities of the written materials for the performance test will be sent to each school requesting the Regents Examination in Physical Setting/Earth Science.
 - Regents Examinations in French and Spanish:* Sufficient quantities of speaking tasks (Part 1) will be sent to each school based on the number of test booklets requested. The Regents Comprehensive Examination in French is available **only in restricted form**. Each copy of a restricted test is numbered and sealed in its own individual envelope and must be returned, whether used or unused, to the Department. Therefore, request only the exact number of restricted booklets required. *Do not request samples or extra copies.* School administrators are responsible for the return of all restricted examination materials shipped to their schools.
- *Regents-endorsed diplomas:* These may be requested in the enclosed booklet and will be shipped with the nonsecure materials.
- *Braille or large-type auxiliary test materials:* Teacher directions, teacher dictation copies, scoring keys, etc., for English editions of State examinations may be requested for use by teachers with visual disabilities. These

¹ *Answer sheets for New York City public schools:* New York City public schools will be sent the answer pads and student identification sheets for the RCT in Writing, but will not be sent machine-scorable answer sheets for the other RCTs or for the Introduction to Occupations Proficiency Examination. Special machine-scorable answer sheets for these tests will be provided to New York City public schools by the New York City Division of Assessment and Accountability.

materials will be prepared only when written requests from principals are received no later than the October 20 deadline for receipt of original request booklets.

REQUESTING MATERIALS FOR STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Limited English proficient students may take State examinations either in an alternative language edition or in English, whichever is better for the student. The Regents Examinations in Mathematics A, Global History and Geography, United States History and Government, Living Environment, and Physical Setting/Earth Science are translated into Chinese, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, and Spanish. Only English language editions are provided for the other Regents examinations and for the Introduction to Occupations Proficiency Examination.

The RCT in Mathematics and the Native Language Writing Test (NLWT) are provided in 29 languages other than English as part of the alternative competency testing procedures for students with limited English proficiency. The RCTs in Science, Global Studies, and U.S. History and Government are offered in six languages other than English: Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese. These alternative language competency tests do not appear in the request booklet. They must be requested in a separate letter, on the school's letterhead stationery and signed by the principal, and returned with your school's request booklet.

Because the alternative language editions of the RCTs are not direct translations of the English language editions, students *may not* be given both the English and alternative language editions of an RCT and then permitted to choose which edition they wish to take. This decision must be made by the school *before* tests are requested. Request only the number of alternative language test booklets actually needed for students with limited English proficiency who are eligible to take these examinations.

SHIPPING OF EXAMINATION MATERIALS

The January examination materials for your school may be delivered in up to five separate shipments, depending on the specific examinations requested. The first shipment, containing materials for Part 1 of the Comprehensive Regents Examinations in French and Spanish, will be delivered only to schools requesting those examinations. If your school's request booklet is received by the October 20 submission deadline, this shipment should arrive in mid-November. The second shipment, containing the Native Language Writing Test materials requested by schools, will be delivered in early December.

The third shipment, packaged in cardboard cartons and/or padded mailers, will be delivered in early January. This shipment will contain the Earth Science performance test materials, Regents-endorsed diplomas, and nonsecure materials for the examinations requested for your school. The fourth shipment, scheduled for delivery about a week before the beginning of the examination period, will be a mailer containing the padlock keys needed for the locked Regents boxes packed with your school's secure testing materials. The final shipment(s), comprising locked Regents boxes containing the secure examination materials, will be delivered prior to the scheduled time of examinations.

EXAMINATION STORAGE REQUIREMENTS

Every principal requesting State examinations must provide any information required on page 8 of the enclosed request booklet and sign the affirmation at the bottom of that page. Your signature indicates that you understand and agree to comply with the examination security requirements described in this memorandum and in the School Administrator's Manual. If arrangements have been made to store examination materials at a location other than the school administering the examinations, this office must receive written verification of the storage arrangements from the person in charge of the "host" storage location before secure examination materials can be shipped to that address.

For schools whose storage plan has not already been approved as part of the request process associated with an earlier examination period, an Examination Storage Plan form is provided on page 8 of the enclosed request booklet. The vault or safe used for storage of your school's secure examination materials must have been

approved by the Department for this purpose. If no preapproval is indicated on the School Data Sheet for your building, your examination request will not be processed until the completed storage plan is returned.

All secure examination materials must be stored in locked Regents boxes, and all locked Regents boxes containing examination materials must in turn be stored in the **Department-approved** safe or **Department-approved** walk-in vault. Newly constructed vaults, existing vaults that have been modified, or newly purchased safes must be inspected by a Department representative before secure materials may be stored in those facilities. Approval of such storage facilities is contingent upon the facilities' meeting **all** the criteria outlined below.

WALK-IN VAULTS must have ALL the following:

- poured concrete floor
- no windows or access panels
- walls of reinforced cement block or concrete, sealed to a poured concrete floor below and structural floor or roof deck above
- metal door in a metal frame with inside or welded-pin hinges
- built-in combination or deadbolt key lock that allows exiting at all times

SAFES must meet or exceed Underwriters Laboratories (UL) **TRTL-30** performance standards for burglary resistance, and must have:

- steel door at least 1½" thick
- steel walls at least 1" thick
- 750 lbs. minimum weight
- built-in combination lock
- sufficient capacity to store the Regents boxes for the school's typical examination request (minimum acceptable **unobstructed inside** dimensions: 11" X 20" X 27")

If your school's safe or vault has not been approved (that is, if there is a secure status code other than "1" indicated on the School Data Sheet), but you believe it meets the criteria outlined above, please contact this office (via fax, 518-474-2021) to arrange for an inspection to be conducted during the regular school year. *Secure examination materials will not be shipped to any location that has not received Department approval.*

The principal of a school building *without* a Department-approved safe or vault must arrange to store the locked Regents boxes containing secure examination materials in an approved safe or vault in another school, school district building, or BOCES building. Regents boxes may **not** be stored in a bank or any other noneducational building. Principals who cannot make arrangements for secure storage of examination materials must notify this office at 518-474-8220.

All school personnel permitted to accept delivery of Regents boxes, either during or after school hours, must be informed of the procedures to be followed to safeguard the secure examination shipment. Access to any vault or safe where locked Regents boxes are stored must be restricted so as to prohibit entry by students and other unauthorized persons. The locked Regents boxes must be visually inspected daily by the person in charge of the examinations to ensure that no one has tampered with them.

In order to control costs, the Department must maximize its use of technology in communicating with school administrators. With the exception of the confirmation of your school's examination request, further information concerning the January examination period, which we have in the past sent by mail to school administrators, will from now on be provided exclusively as postings on the Department's web site. Please visit our web site on or after January 6 to obtain detailed information pertaining to the delivery and administration of the January examinations. You may access this information at: <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/testing/hsgen.html>.

Enclosures