

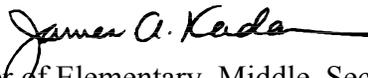


THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY
12234

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To: District Superintendents
Superintendents of Schools

From: Rebecca H. Cort 
Deputy Commissioner of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with
Disabilities

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Deputy Commissioner of Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education

Subject: Extension of the Provision of Locally Selected Assessments: Supplemental
Guidelines for Participation of Students with Disabilities in State Assessments

The availability of locally selected assessments to meet State assessment requirements for certain students with disabilities has been extended for an additional year to include the 2004-05 school year.

Prior guidelines for Committees on Special Education (CSEs) on the participation of students with disabilities in locally selected assessments were issued in March 2002 in the field memorandum, *Supplemental Guidelines for Participation of Students with Disabilities in State Assessments: Locally Selected Assessments* which is available on the Department's website at <http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/participate.htm>. These guidelines focus on the provision of locally selected assessments (elementary 4th and 5th grade, intermediate 8th grade and commencement assessments) for certain students with disabilities.

The identified group of students who may qualify for locally selected assessments are those students who, due to a performance gap resulting from the students' unique disability, are unable to meet the grade/age level expectations to take the general State assessments and who do not meet the eligibility criteria for the State Alternate Assessment for Students with Severe Disabilities (NYSAA). The administration of locally selected assessments to this group of students will ensure that objective and appropriate measures of students' progress toward the New York State learning standards are available for all students. Results of such assessments will provide important information to direct instruction to these students and to provide a measure of accountability for schools.

The March 2002: *Supplemental Guidelines for Participation of Students with Disabilities in State Assessments: Locally Selected Assessments* also has information on:

1. criteria for locally selected assessments;
2. when students must participate in locally selected assessments;
3. the participation criteria for determining which students will participate in locally selected assessments;
4. the role of the CSE in recommending students to participate in locally selected assessments; and
5. requirements to report student participation in locally selected assessments.

The following guidelines are provided to determine when students should be tested and in what content areas if determined eligible for the locally selected assessment.

Grade/Age Eligibility for Testing and Reporting Using the Locally Selected Assessment

Elementary Level

- Grade 4 students must be tested in English language arts, mathematics, and science.
- Grade 5 students must be tested in social studies.
- Ungraded students must be tested in the school year (July 1–June 30) in which the student reaches his or her 11th birthday.

Middle Level

- Grade 8 students must be tested in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. These students should be tested in technology if general education students in the school are tested on the State technology assessment. Technology results are *not* reported to the Department.
- Ungraded students must be tested in the school year (July 1–June 30) in which the student reaches his or her 15th birthday.

Secondary Level

- Graded cohort members must be tested in English, mathematics, science, and social studies.
- Ungraded cohort members must be tested in the school year (July 1–June 30) in which the student reaches his or her 18th birthday.
- Locally selected assessments should be administered to an eligible student at the same time that the general assessment in the related subject is administered.

Note: If a student with a disability participates in a locally selected assessment rather than a Regents examination or Regents competency test, the student will **not** meet the assessment requirements for a local or Regents diploma but will be eligible for an IEP diploma.

For purposes of school and district accountability, students who participate in the locally selected assessment will be counted towards the required 95% participation rate under the No

Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Results will be counted as though they performed at Level 1 on the elementary and middle-level State assessments in English language arts, mathematics and science. SED will not include these students when reporting results on these assessments in other contexts.

Secondary-level students who participate in locally selected assessments will not be removed from the school accountability cohort. For accountability purposes, these students will be counted as though they scored at Level 1 on the general assessment. These students will **not** be counted as meeting the assessment requirements for a local or Regents diploma.

The 2004-05 school year will be the last year the locally selected assessment will be available. SED is exploring other possibilities to provide appropriate assessments for this group of students.

If you have questions regarding this information, please contact the Office of State Assessment at (518) 474-5099 or the Special Education Policy Unit at (518) 473-2878. Questions may also be directed to your Regional Associate at one of the following Special Education Quality Assurance Regional Offices:

Central New York Regional Office	(315) 428-3287
Eastern Regional Office	(518) 486-6366
Hudson Valley Regional Office	(914) 245-0010
Long Island Regional Office	(631) 884-8530
New York City Regional Office	(718) 722-4544
Western Regional Office	(585) 344-2002, ext. 420