



GUIDANCE SUMMARY:

Graduation/Course Requirement Changes Due to COVID-19 and Statewide School Closures

Background

On Tuesday, April 7, the New York State Education Department announced the cancellation of the June 2020 Regents exams and released guidance on modifications to requirements for students to graduate and earn their high school diplomas, credentials and endorsements.

In addition, due to the school closures related to COVID-19, NYSED delayed the rollout of state assessments aligned to the grades 3-8 Next Generation Learning Standards for English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics for one year, to spring 2022. Similarly, the alignment of state assessments to the New York P-12 Science Learning Standards will begin in spring 2023.

Included in this document is a summary of the guidance released by NYSED on April 7. The complete guidance, along with a “frequently asked questions” resource, can be found here:

<https://bit.ly/2JROmEG>.

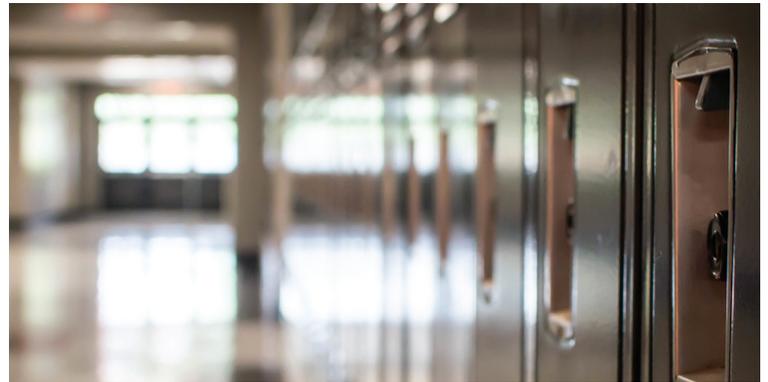
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REGENTS EXAMINATIONS

- All Regents exams scheduled for June 2020 are cancelled.
- Students typically taking June Regents exams to earn diplomas are exempted from those exams if they meet ONE of the following requirements:
 - They meet all class requirements to earn course credit by June 2020 for classes that typically culminate with a Regents test; or
 - They are seventh-graders enrolled in a class typically culminating with a Regents exam and have met the standards assessed in the provided coursework; or
 - They are currently enrolled in a course that ends in a Regents exam and have failed to earn credit by the end of the school year (in this case, they would return for summer instruction to make up the failed course credit and would subsequently be granted diploma credit in August 2020); or
 - They were previously enrolled in a course culminating with a Regents exam, earned course credit, had yet to pass the associated Regents test, but intended to take the exam in June to achieve a passing score. Schools can apply the “intended to take a Regents exam” eligibility requirement under the following circumstances:
 - the student informed the school that he/she wished to retake the exam; or
 - the student was receiving academic intervention, supplemental instruction or tutoring of some kind in preparation to take the exam; or
 - the student took the exam in June 2019, August 2019 or January 2020 in an attempt to pass or improve his/her score.
- Students who previously failed a Regents exam, but received course credit are exempt from that Regents exam.
- Students considered exempt from an exam are exempted for the remainder of their high school experience (e.g., if students were enrolled in Algebra 1, they are considered exempt due to COVID-19 for the remainder of the time that they are enrolled in high school and may progress to Geometry or Algebra II).
- The laboratory requirement of 1,200 minutes for certain science exams is waived.
- Schools/districts shall provide opportunities for students to take Regents exams in subsequent administration periods, if students so choose.
- Students cannot earn “credit by examination” using the COVID-19 exemptions.
- NYSED has yet to make a decision about administering August 2020 Regents exams and will issue a separate announcement when a decision is made.

▪ Students who **do not** obtain credit in a course ending in a Regents Exam, including through summer school, are not eligible for the COVID-19 exemption for that exam. **Students who do not receive credit for a course ending in a Regents this year (including summer school) will NOT be exempt from taking the Regents exam in future years.**



GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

- Students granted an exemption from any exam are not required to pass that exam to meet specific diploma requirements (i.e., local, Regents, or Regents with advanced designation).

DIPLOMA DESIGNATIONS

- **Advanced Designation:** Students who are exempt from Regents tests due to June 2020 exam cancellations are correspondingly not required to pass the Regents exams required to earn Regents diplomas with the advanced designation.
- **Endorsement for Mastery in Math and Science:** Students who are exempt from a math and/or a science Regents exam and pass at least two additional math Regents exams with scores of 85 or above OR pass two additional Regents exams in science with an 85 or above, are entitled to a mastery in math and/or science endorsement on their diploma.
- **Honors Endorsement:** While exempted Regents exams may be used to meet assessment requirements for any diploma type, they should be removed from the calculation for the honors endorsement. The calculation should be made ONLY from examinations taken previously or post-exemption. Students may still use a maximum of two NYSED-approved alternative tests in the calculation for an honors endorsement.
- **CTE Technical Endorsement:** Districts may grant students in a Career and Technical Education program an exemption from the three-part technical assessment as long as they have been successful in their coursework. The three-part technical assessment will be exempted for the purpose of meeting the +1 Pathway assessment for a diploma; however, districts must make an individual determination of knowledge and skill attainment in granting the technical endorsement.
- **Seal of Biliteracy:** NYSED will issue separate guidance and a full set of FAQs to address flexibility in earning this seal.

PATHWAYS

- Students who were preparing to take a +1 Pathway assessment in June 2020 will be granted an exemption for the purposes of meeting diploma requirements. In order to qualify for the exemption, students must meet ONE of the following eligibility requirements:
 - They are currently enrolled in the course of study leading to the +1 Pathway assessment and will have earned credit in that course of study by the end of the 2019-20 school year; or
 - They were previously enrolled in the course of study leading to the +1 Pathway, achieved the applicable course credit and had yet to pass the associated +1 Pathway assessment, but were intending to take the test in June to achieve a passing score (the same language applies for “intent” as for Regents examinations); or
 - They are currently or were previously identified as an English Language Learner whose home language is one that is tested by the NYSED-approved Languages Other Than English (LOTE) +1 Pathway assessments (Chinese, French, Italian, Korean or Spanish); or
 - They were deemed qualified by their school principal in consultation with relevant faculty and were intending to take the LOTE +1 Pathway assessment in June 2020 to achieve a passing score; or
 - They were deemed qualified by their school principal in consultation with relevant faculty in the use of American Sign Language (ASL) and were intending to take the LOTE +1 Pathway assessment in ASL in June 2020 to achieve a passing score.
- An exemption from the CDOS +1 Pathway assessment can be given if a determination has been made that students had otherwise demonstrated knowledge and skills outlined in the commencement-level CDOS learning standards and they are meeting or have met the expectations of the course taken in preparation for the exam.
- Students who are otherwise eligible to exit from high school in the 2019-2020 school year and have not met all of the requirements due to the COVID-19 closure may be granted the CDOS commencement credential and fulfill the CDOS +1 Pathway if the school principal, in consultation with relevant faculty, has determined that the students have otherwise demonstrated knowledge and skills in the commencement-level CDOS learning standards.
- Students not graduating in the 2019-20 school year may be exempted from requirements for a CDOS that were missed due to COVID-19 closures; however, students must fulfill any requirements scheduled or planned for subsequent school years.
- All NYSED-approved alternative examinations are also considered +1 Pathway assessments. Students can be exempt from such examination requirements if ONE of the following conditions have been met:
 - The students are currently enrolled in a course of study culminating in a NYSED-approved alternative exam and by the end of the 2019-20 school year will have earned credit in such course of study; or
 - The students were previously enrolled in a course leading to an applicable examination, had achieved course credit and had not yet passed the associated exam but were intending to take the test in June to achieve a passing score.
- Students enrolled in NYSED-approved CTE programs culminating in a CTE pathway who would have earned the applicable program credit by the end of the 2019-20 school year and intended to take the CTE +1 Pathway assessment are exempt from the assessment for graduation purposes.



CHECKPOINT A AND B EXAMINATIONS

- The school or district may grant an exemption to the LOTE Checkpoint B examination requirement for any student scheduled to take the exam in June 2020 in order to meet the requirements for an advanced diploma, as long as the student will earn at least three diploma credits in the LOTE subject prior to the end of the school year.
- If the principal, in consultation with relevant faculty, determines that a student has met the standards assessed in the provided coursework leading to the Checkpoint A LOTE exam, the district may choose to waive the exam requirement and grant the student his/her first unit of diploma credit in LOTE.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

- If a student with disabilities meets the requirement to earn a local diploma through a superintendent determination and has been working toward earning a CDOS credential, a district may waive the required 216 hours of CTE instruction (of which 54 hours must be work-based learning).
- Students with disabilities who are otherwise eligible to exit from high school in the 2019-20 school year may be awarded the CDOS commencement credential without having met all of the requirements, for purposes of eligibility for the superintendent determination option, provided that the school principal, in consultation with relevant faculty, has determined that the students have otherwise demonstrated knowledge and skills in the commencement-level CDOS learning standards.
 - If a student with a disability is granted the CDOS commencement credential through such a waiver as described above, the credential can be counted as the student's +1 Pathway toward a Regents or local diploma.
- All waived exams for all students should be considered scores of 65 for the purposes of making diploma determinations. However, no score shall be reported on students' transcripts.
- Students with disabilities have access to the compensatory safety net option where a 65 or above on one exam can compensate for a score of 45 to 54 on another exam. An exempted Regents exam CANNOT be used to compensate for a lower Regents exam score (45 to 54 on science and social studies Regents exams only) using the compensatory safety net option.
- Any student, including a student with a disability, who does not earn a Regents or local diploma continues to be eligible for a free, appropriate public education until the end of the school year in which the student turns age 21, or until the receipt of a Regents or local high school diploma.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- NYSED will not make high school accountability determinations for the 2019-20 school year based on the performance of the 2016 accountability cohort (i.e., the students who first entered grade 9 in September 2016). Instead, in the 2020-21 school year, all schools and districts will maintain the same accountability status that the school or district was assigned for the 2019-20 school year.

DATA REPORTING

- NYSED will be developing and disseminating future guidance on how schools/districts should record the exemptions from examination requirements in their student management systems.
- Student transcripts should not reflect a score for any examination in which the student is granted an exemption.

STANDARDS AND NYS 3-8 ASSESSMENTS, NYSAA AND NYSESLAT

- Testing aligned to the new NYS standards in math and ELA (previously scheduled for spring 2021) is delayed until spring 2022.
- Testing aligned to the new elementary and intermediate science standards (previously scheduled for spring 2022) is delayed until spring 2023.
- First administration of the new U.S. History and Government Regents exam (previously scheduled for June 2020) is postponed until June 2021.
- NYSAA results will be reported to parents, teachers and students for instructional purposes only.
- NYSESLAT examinations are postponed until spring 2021.

EXITING HIGH SCHOOL OR POST-GRADUATION

- When students take and pass a Regents exam but do not earn a high school diploma and then decide to obtain their high school equivalency diploma, they are exempt from the corresponding subject sub-test of the Test Assessment of Secondary Completion (TASC) exam. NYSED will treat these students in the same way as any other student.
- Students who produce a transcript showing that they were exempt from one or more Regents exams, will also be exempt from that section (sub-test) of the TASC.
- All students are entitled to a free and appropriate public education until either they receive a local or Regents diploma, or until the end of the school year in which they turn 21 years of age.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

- All current safety net options remain in effect for all students and must be considered in the determination of which diploma type can be awarded. To determine whether English Language Learners are eligible to earn either a Regents or local diploma, districts should consider an exempted examination to be a score of 65.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT AND INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

- Advanced Placement examinations will be offered as tests that can be taken at home. See Request Student Access to Remote AP Learning and Assessments for information on how to obtain needed technology: <https://collegeboard.tfaforms.net/74>. Additional information on the administration of AP exams can be obtained on the College Board's website: <https://apcoronavirusupdates.collegeboard.org/educators>
- International Baccalaureate examinations will be offered in November. See: <https://www.ibo.org/> for more information.