



Regents issue graduation guidance during an interrupted school year

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Editor-in-Chief

Today, the State Education Department officially announced the cancellation of the June 2020 administration of Regents exams and provided [guidance](#) on changes to graduation requirements and other credentials.

"During this time of great uncertainty, the department has developed this guidance to ensure that students who were on track to graduate this year will have that opportunity," said Interim Commissioner Shannon Tahoe.

According to an [SED news release](#), "Students who, during the June 2020 examination period would have taken one or more Regents examinations, will be exempted from passing the assessments in order to be issued a diploma."

"No student should be denied course credit or a high school diploma or otherwise penalized due to these extraordinary circumstances," said NYSSBA Executive Director Robert Schneider. "While teachers and administrators are making every effort to deliver instruction, and should be applauded for that, it would unrealistic to expect education at home to meet the same high standards we expect educators to achieve in classroom settings."

He added: "The guidance issued by the State Education Department focuses on ensuring learning outcomes and standards, rather than on testing. In our view, that is the proper focus."

To qualify for an exemption from a Regents exam, a student must meet one of the following eligibility requirements:

- The student is currently enrolled in a course of study culminating in a Regents examination and will have earned credit in such course of study by the end of the 2019-20 school year; or
- The student is in grade 7, is enrolled in a course of study culminating in a Regents examination and will have passed such course of study by the end of the 2019-20 school year; or
- The student is currently enrolled in a course of study culminating in a Regents examination and has failed to earn credit by the end of the school year. Such student returns for summer instruction to make up the failed course and earn the course credit and is subsequently granted diploma credit in August 2020; or
- The student was previously enrolled in the course of study leading to an applicable Regents examination, has achieved course credit, and has not yet passed the associated Regents examination but intended to take the test in June 2020 to achieve a passing score.

Previous [guidance from SED issued in March](#) indicated that districts using distance or online learning, or other methods of instruction, should focus on preparing students to meet the learning outcomes for the course. If extended closure hinders a district's ability to provide a full course of instruction by the end of the school year, students should be granted the diploma credit if they have met the standards assessed in the provided coursework.

In today's guidance, SED provided details on how districts should work with students on pathways to graduation that do not involve passing five Regents exams. This included information on SED-approved +1 pathway assessments; Languages Other Than English (LOTE) locally developed Checkpoint B examinations; and Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential and +1 Pathway.

The guidance also discusses use of safety nets; diploma endorsements including Honors, Mastery and CTE Technical Endorsement; and accountability determinations.

SED also announced that new state assessments aligned to the Next Generation Learning Standards for English language arts (ELA) and math in grades 3-8 will be delayed for one year to spring 2022. State assessments in science will be updated in spring 2023 to align with the New York P-12 Science Learning Standards.

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