

March 2011 Board of Regents Information

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Webcast 03/07/11 – PM Meeting

http://pointers.audiovideoweb.com/stcasx/va91win1520/SED_03072011edit.wmv/play.aspx

For a complete listing of the reports and materials for the March Board of Regents Meetings:

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2011Meetings/March2011/311monthmat.html>

Regents Reform Agenda

The Regents received several updates on the four major areas of their reform agenda:

- **Standards:** Mark and John King reported that this spring's grade 3-8 ELA assessments will include more writing reflecting recently adopted curriculum standards. SED is also close to awarding a vendor contract to update math assessments. Chancellor Tisch noted that the USED is moving in the same direction and asked why we are spending money and pushing ahead with New York products when they may only be used for a short time. New York will stay flexible, not all the money has been committed and there is uncertainty about when the USED will complete their work.
- **Data Systems:** SED announced the appointment of Data Systems Director Jeff Baker, former Capital Region BOCES data warehouse specialist.
- **Teacher preparation programs:** 38 institutions have applied for funding a clinically rich model of teacher preparation, all but six of them colleges. A Blue Ribbon Panel is expected to announce funding for 12 of these programs in early May.
- **School Turnaround:** SED is expecting the number of schools in need of improvement due to AYP failure for two years to sharply increase. There was a lot of talk about who these schools are with suggestion that much of the reason for school failure was due to demographic factors and local policy decisions rather than poor instructional quality. The implications are unclear, but if these schools are applying for grants using one of the four accepted turnaround models and the "cause" for AYP failure isn't instructional, there seems to be some sort of disconnect. A more global concern will be with the future ability of the state to possibly take over schools without sufficient resources or staffing and being uncertain regarding the root causes of these schools failure in the first place.

Discussion on Mandates

While the Governor's Mandate Relief Team has issued a preliminary report, their work is not complete and Regents discussion on Mandate Relief will continue. The Regents

approved relief recommendations in areas related to instructional materials aids, claims auditing, school calendar, the requirement that districts file an Early Grade Class Size Reduction Plan and elimination of Wick’s requirements (more far reaching than the Relief Team report). They will discuss special education mandates in April. They also had some discussion on the SED staff proposal to eliminate (or make optional) the plan for shared decision making teams. What concerns PTA is the rationale that was offered. ***“In addition to participation in board of education (BOE) meetings, other opportunities exist for parent involvement in school district planning efforts, such as the Consolidated Application for Title I schools and other federal parent involvement mandates.”*** This did not seem very parent and family engagement friendly. NYS PTA will be reacting to these statements. Several Regents were also concerned with this proposal. See the [Regents item on Mandate Relief and Flexibility](#) for more information.

Other Topics/Actions

- **Potential Revision of High School Graduation Requirements**
The Board discussed ways to better align high school graduation requirements with college and career ready standards and considered increasing flexibility to provide additional pathways for students to meet the requirements.
For more information, see the [Regents item on the Potential Revision of High School Graduation Requirements](#) and the [slide presentation from the meeting](#).
- **Joint Regents Report on Accountability**
The Board was updated on the Office of Accountability and the Office of Innovative School Models efforts to support schools and districts. Discussion focused on accountability implications of raising the ELA and mathematics achievement standards for grades 3-8. It is projected that the increased rigor of New York’s revised proficiency standards will cause a decline in the percentage of schools and districts that staff project will make AYP. SED staff is currently developing plans for how to address the anticipated large increase in the number of schools that will be identified for improvement next year. The Board also discussed the launch of the State School Turnaround Office, PLA school visits, School Improvement Grants and the implementation of NY’s Differentiated Accountability Program including information on School Quality Reviews and Joint Intervention Team reviews. See the [Regents item on the Joint Regents Report on Accountability](#) for more information.
- **Public School and District Accountability**
The Board discussed proposed amendments to Commissioner’s regulations to conform to New York State’s approved amended accountability plan. This will allow New York to smoothly transition to the higher achievement standards for grades 3-8 in ELA and mathematics. See the [Regents item on Public School and District Accountability](#) for more information.
- **New York State Teacher and Principal Evaluation Policy Options**
The Board was given an update on decisions and options for consideration for teacher and principal evaluation. For more information, see the [summary of decisions and options for consideration](#) and the [slide presentation from the meeting](#).

As always, please continue to advocate for what is best for all students in New York State at your local school district Board of Education meetings and to your legislators.