



## **EMPIRE STATE SUPERVISORS AND ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION**

**Supporting school leaders, every day.**

### **Summary of March 2022 Board of Regents Meeting**

The NYS Board of Regents conducted their monthly meeting on Monday, March 14th, and Tuesday, March 15th. The meeting began with the unanimous reelection of Chancellor Lester Young and Vice Chancellor Josephine Finn to three-year terms.

Regent Christine Cea offered reflective remarks recognizing the month of March as both National Disability Awareness Month and Women's History Month.

Chancellor Young recognized the service of Regent Nan Eileen Mead as she is leaving the Board of Regents. A member of the Board since 2016, Regent Mead has been an active voice for families, a strong advocate for underserved youth and has consistently worked to ensure that the parent perspective has been a strong consideration in policy decisions.

The P-12 agenda began with a review and discussion of the newly proposed revisions to the Substantial Equivalence regulations. The law requires that instruction provided to students in nonpublic schools be "substantially equivalent" to the instruction provided at the public schools of the district where the nonpublic school is located. Original revisions released by NYSED in 2018 required that public school districts periodically carry out an accreditation process for nonpublic schools located within their districts to ensure substantial equivalence compliance. Many stakeholders from both public and private school communities raised concerns with the requirement that local school authorities make the school equivalency determination. After a Supreme Court challenge by three groups representing nonpublic schools, NYSED reissued amended regulations which were again released for public comment.

After outlining the extensive and inclusive outreach process that occurred to obtain stakeholder feedback to further amend the new regulations, Senior Deputy Commissioner for Educational Policy, Jim Baldwin, reviewed the key components of the new draft proposal. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized that a major change includes provisions which now provide alternative pathways to allow nonpublic schools to be accredited without an actual review by the local school district. Nonpublic schools now have the option of earning accreditation by demonstrating compliance through the curriculum and academic accountability measures that are in place.

The draft regulations will be released for the 60-day public comment period at the end of March. Following a thorough review of the feedback received, it is anticipated that the new proposal will be presented to the Board of Regents for adoption in the Fall of 2022, with full implementation scheduled for the 2024-2025 school year.

During the discussion after the presentation, Regent Wells asked for clarity on the burden of responsibilities for local school authorities in having to carry out the accreditation reviews. Deputy Commissioner Baldwin expressed that NYSED was responsive to this concern by offering the various pathway options for nonpublic schools to be exempt from the review process.

The link below provides a summary of the key components of the presentation.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/P-12%20-%20Draft%20Substantial%20Equivalence%20Regulation.pdf>

The Board was updated on the work being done with the Teaching in Remote/Hybrid Learning Environments (TRLE) Grant. The \$20 million Rethink K-12 Education Models project, funded by the US Department of Education, is focused on building the capacity of teachers and educational leaders to effectively implement remote/hybrid learning.

Executive Director of Educational Innovation and Strategic Initiatives, David Frank, outlined the overall scope of the project and updated the Board on progress to date. Members of the TRLE Advisory Board presented the TRLE Core Competencies and Promising Practices guiding the work along with an example of a learning module teachers can utilize.

The link below includes a summary of the presentation and the TRLE website link address for more detailed information on potential resources.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/P-12%20-%20Quality%20Remote-Hybrid%20Teaching%20Framework.pdf>

The Board was updated on the Performance Assessment Network Pilot (PAN). Funded through a philanthropic grant of \$500,000 from the Carnegie Corporation, the PAN pilot will explore how performance-based assessments can be used to both enhance instruction and effectively evaluate learning.

Allison Amour Garb, Special Advisor to the Executive Deputy Commissioner, reviewed the purpose and goals of the project, and presented the research design. A major goal of the grant will center around how the use of performance-based assessments can support the DEI and Graduation Measures Initiatives.

NYSED is partnering with Dr. Michelle Fine, a distinguished professor at City University of NY (CUNY), as the Lead Researcher for the project. Former NYC Department of Education Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Debra Lamb, is serving as the Pilot Program Manager.

A PAN Pilot Advisory Committee is currently being formed to assist with various aspects of the project. It is anticipated that, in the coming months, several schools from across the state will be selected to participate in the first phase of the pilot program. Students participating in the pilot will be able to meet graduation requirements through performance assessments rather than Regents exams.

The link below includes a more detailed outline of the presentation with the web address for the PAN pilot website.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/P-12%20-%20Performance%20Assessment%20Networks%20.pdf>

In January 2020 the Board of Regents discussed replacing the special education classification “emotional disturbance” due to the fact that the term “disturbance” carries very negative connotations. Assistant Commissioner for Special Education, Chris Suriano, presented a recommendation that proposes to replace the classification of “emotional disturbance” with the term “emotional disability.”

Following the 60-day public comment period, it is anticipated that the proposed amendment will be presented for formal adoption at the July board of regents meeting.

<https://www.regents.nysesd.gov/common/regents/files/322p12d3.pdf>

The Board discussed a proposed amendment to extend the current waivers that are in place for districts that are not able to meet the instructional hour requirement as a result of the COVID – 19 crisis through the 2022-2023 school year. To be eligible for the waiver, superintendents must certify the cause of the inability to meet the requirement and explain why the district is unable to make up the required hours.

<https://www.regents.nysesd.gov/common/regents/files/322p12d2.pdf>