



EMPIRE STATE SUPERVISORS AND ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

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Summary of November 2023 Board of Regents Meeting

The Board of Regents conducted their monthly meeting on Monday, November 13th and Tuesday, November 14th. Chancellor Lester Young began the meeting by recognizing the month of November as **National American Indian Heritage Month**. He encouraged that the contributions of American Indians be celebrated and stressed the need to ensure that their rich histories and traditions continue to thrive.

- The opening session focused on the final recommendations of the **Blue Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures**. Prior to discussing the proposed changes, Deputy Commissioner, Angelique Johnson-Dingle, reviewed the scope of the process that was followed by the committee. Assistant Commissioner, Dr. Santosha Oliver, then reviewed the **Four Priorities** that guided the work of the commission which included:
 1. Identification of multiple pathways that lead to one high school diploma.
 2. The need for assessment flexibility in how students meet graduation requirements.
 3. The need for students to acquire meaningful life-ready credentials in earning a diploma.
 4. Prioritizing the implementation of culturally responsive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in schools.

Members of the Blue Ribbon Commission then introduced the twelve Graduation Measures recommendations. They include:

1. Replacing the three current diploma types with a single diploma that includes options to add seals and endorsements.
2. Implementing diploma credit requirements that include course work in the areas of:

- Civic Responsibility/Ethics
 - Cultural Competence
 - Financial Literacy
 - Fine and Performing Arts
 - STEM
 - Writing Skills for Real-World Scenarios
3. Improving student access to Career and Technical Education (CTE) including internships and work-based opportunities.
 4. Creating course offering models that reorganize content areas into larger categories to provide more options for meeting requirements. (e.g., Creating a larger STEM category that includes math, science and technology courses).
 5. Reducing and/or modifying diploma requirements to allow more options for students to demonstrate content knowledge through a variety of assessments.
 6. Creating state-developed rubric(s) for any performance-based assessment option which satisfies the diploma assessment requirements.
 7. Creating specific, tailored graduation requirements to address unique circumstances such as non-compulsory age students, newcomer students, and refugee students.
 8. Providing exemptions from diploma assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities, and for those who have experienced major life events or extenuating circumstances. (e.g., medical illness or death of a family member)
 9. Pursuing regulatory changes to allow the discretion to award high school degrees posthumously.
 10. Requiring all NYS teacher preparation programs to provide instruction in culturally responsive-sustaining education (CR-SE) practices and pedagogy.
 11. Requiring that school district professional development plans include culturally responsive-sustaining education practices and pedagogy.
 12. Reviewing and revising the NYS Learning Standards to:
 - Better align with college and career expectations
 - Include updates for family and consumer sciences, health, media literacy and climate education.
 - Emphasize higher-order skills and competencies in health education, communication, decision making, time management, and soft skills.
 - Ensure a stronger focus on culturally responsive instruction, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), and accessibility.

Next steps:

In the coming months, the Board of Regents and NYSED staff will review the proposals, determine priorities, and make recommendations for changes to programmatic, assessment, and credit requirements related to earning a diploma.

Below you will find a link to the slides used in presentation:

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/sites/regents/files/FB%20Monday%20-%20New%20York%20State%20Graduation%20Measures%20Initiative.pdf>

- Members of the State Aid Subcommittee continued discussions relating to the development of the **Regents Budget and Legislative Priorities for the 2024-2025** school year. Current NYS financial projections anticipate a large budget deficit this year. Combined with the end of COVID Relief funding and a projected increase in school aid related expenditures, committee members stressed that the proposed budget will need to be extremely strategic in ensuring operational effectiveness.

Regent Roger Catania emphasized the need for looking at both short and long range plans that increase support for PreK programs, address the teacher shortage by removing barriers to certification, and implement much needed APPR reforms.

Regent Frances Wills expressed concern that, while Foundation Aid was fully funded last year, the current formula is outdated and needs updating to become more equitable.

Some of the other proposed budget priorities that were discussed include:

1. Upgrading and modernizing NYSED office systems.
2. Increased support for English Language Learners and recent immigrants
3. Increased support for special education programs.
4. Expanding PreK programs.
5. Reevaluating the Foundation Aid formula.
6. Expanding student access to CTE courses
7. Increased funding to improve opportunities for students to earn college credits through dual enrollment courses or Early College High Schools.
8. Funding to allow districts to sustain staffing that has supported the federal stimulus-funded work.
9. APPR Reforms

The finalized proposal is scheduled to be adopted at the December Board of Regents meeting.

The link below includes the slides used during the presentation and presents a more comprehensive list of items currently being considered for inclusion in the budget.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/sites/regents/files/State%20Aid%20-%202024-2025%20State%20Education%20Department%20Budget%20and%20Legislative%20Initiatives.pdf>

- Since media arts is the only arts discipline that is not designated as an area of certification, media arts classes are taught primarily by certified CTE teachers or certified visual art teachers. Currently, students who wish to apply media arts credits toward the Career and Technical Education (CTE) diploma pathway **must** be taught by a teacher certified in CTE, and students wishing to apply the credits toward the Individual Arts Assessment (IAAP) pathway **must** be taught by a certified art teacher.

To address this inequity and provide more flexibility, the Board discussed a proposed amendment which would permit students to earn IAAP credit in media arts courses taught by CTE instructors, and

also allow CTE students to earn credits toward the CTE pathway in classes instructed by teacher who is certified in the visual arts.

It is anticipated that the proposed amendment will be presented for permanent adoption at the March 2024 Board of Regents meeting.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/sites/regents/files/1123p12d1.pdf>