



EMPIRE STATE SUPERVISORS AND ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

Supporting school leaders, every day.

Summary of April 2025 Board of Regents Meeting

The Board of Regents conducted their monthly meeting on Monday, April 7, and Tuesday, April 8, 2025.

Chancellor Lester Young opened the meeting with reflective thoughts on the current political climate and the many uncertainties surrounding public education at this time. Chancellor Young emphasized that public education is the heartbeat of our society and stressed how important it is for our country to renew our shared commitment to ensuring that our schools are havens of opportunity for every child.

Chancellor Young also introduced two newly appointed Board of Regents members, **Regent Keith Wiley** representing Western New York, and **Regent Felicia Thomas Williams** representing the Long Island region.

P-12 related topics covered during the April 2025 meeting summarized in this report include:

- **Presentation on a Regionalized Approach to Postsecondary Options for Students with Disabilities.**
 - **Review of the Updated NYS Special Education Accountability Structure for Making Annual Determinations Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).**
 - **Proposed Amendment to Require the Addition of Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Practices Course Work to Core Requirements in Registered Teacher Preparation Programs.**
-
- **Presentation of a Regionalized Approach to Postsecondary Options for Students with Disabilities**

Ceylane Meyers-Ruff, Deputy Commissioner for Adult Career and Continuing Educational Services (ACCES), introduced a presentation on a collaborative, regionalized project being developed in Westchester County with the goal of enhancing postsecondary options for students with disabilities.

Superintendents from Ossining, Tarrytown, and Peekskill provided an overview of their collaborative work with the **Advancing College and Career Experiences for Student Success (ACCESS) Project**. In partnership with Westchester Community College, the program seeks to expand access to postsecondary academic courses and workplace experiences for students with disabilities, aged 18 – 21, in all three school districts.

Key components of the new program will include:

1. Increased access to college classes.
2. Transition and pre-employment support.
3. Digital Literacy and Culinary Arts Pathway options.
4. Opportunities to earn employment-related certifications.

It is anticipated that the program will launch in September 2025 on the Westchester Community College campus.

Below you will find a link to the slides referenced during the presentation that include more information on the specific components of the initiative.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/sites/regents/files/FB%20Monday%20-%20Three%20Districts%20One%20Vision%20-%20A%20Regionalized%20Approach%20to%20Postsecondary%20Options%20for%20Students%20with%20Disabilities.pdf>

- **Updated Special Education Accountability Structure for Making Determinations Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).**

Associate Commissioner for the Office of Special Education, Chris Suriano, reviewed the updated process for annual accountability related School District Determinations, which are required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

IDEA requires each state to develop a **State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)** every six years. The report provides a framework for evaluating compliance with IDEA requirements and outlines the steps that will be taken to improve in the future. Associate Commissioner Suriano reviewed new changes to the evaluation criteria that will be implemented for the 2025-2026 school year.

The Board was also updated on the **Annual IDEA Determination Criteria** used by NYSED for evaluating individual school district compliance. The evaluation criteria relate to:

1. District adherence to performance and compliance based matrix indicators.
2. Timely and accurate data collection.
3. Implementation of corrections to identified areas of noncompliance.
4. Other relevant data/audit findings.

Based on their compliance with the evaluation criteria, NYSED annually rates school districts into one of these four categories.

1. Meets the requirements and purposes of the IDEA.
2. Needs assistance in implementing the requirements of the IDEA.
3. Needs interventions in implementing the requirements of the IDEA.
4. Needs substantial intervention in implementing the requirements of the IDEA.

A review of current statewide data showing the number of districts currently receiving the various levels interventional support was included in the presentation.

The NYSED Office of Special Education has been conducting ongoing stakeholder engagement meetings in recent months to update educators across the state on the changes to the various components of the Performance and Compliance Matrixes.

Below you will find a link to the slides used during the presentation.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/sites/regents/files/ACCES%20-%20School%20District%20Determinations%20under%20the%20Individuals%20with%20Disabilities%20Education%20Act%20IDEA.pdf>

- **Proposed Amendment to Require the Addition of Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Practices Course Work to the Core Requirements in Teacher Preparation Programs.**

The Board discussed a proposed amendment that would require all New York State teacher preparation programs to provide instruction in culturally responsive-sustaining education (CR-SE) practices and pedagogy in teacher preparation course work.

Following the 60-day public comment period, it is anticipated that the proposed amendment will be presented for adoption at the September Board of Regents meeting.

Below is the link to the proposed amendment.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/sites/regents/files/425hed1.pdf>