



Dear ESSAA Member,

David Frank, the NYSED Assistant Commissioner of the Office of Education Policy, periodically shares important updates regarding New York State Education Laws, Commissioner's Regulations, and Federal Guidelines with our leadership team. This information is valuable for public school administrators as they carry out their daily responsibilities. Below is the latest update from NYSED, which includes essential "Must Know" information on various key state and federal policies and programs that impact our members across the state.

As information evolves, we'll keep you informed about developments affecting New York State school administrators. Note, the most critical time sensitive information is labeled 'MUST KNOW.'

Your ESSAA Team

REMINDER

Teacher and Principal Evaluation Independent Evaluator Hardship Waivers (IEHW) for the 2024-25 School Year

- The deadline for submitting this year's waiver applications will be February 1, 2025.
- The application is posted in the NYSED Business Portal each year for completion by LEAs.
- The waiver is granted annually and must be renewed each school year.
- Note: LEAs currently implementing Educator Evaluation Plans under Education Law §3012d and requiring the IEHW for the current school year must apply.
- *Questions related to the Hardship Waivers should be directed to the Office of Educator Quality and Professional Development by email at Hardship@nysed.gov.*

REMINDER

2025 Scholarships for Academic Excellence Nomination Reminder and Technical Assistance

- o It is time to nominate your students for the annual [Scholarships in Academic Excellence](#) (SAE) opportunity.
- o This year, SAE has been modernized, and all nominations are submitted electronically through the SEDMON application available in the [NYSED Business Portal](#).
- o For technical assistance in accessing the nomination survey, please review the [help documents](#) available at the [SAE website](#) (see SEDMON Technical Assistance Resources).
- o As a reminder:
 - Initial access to the 2025 SAE Nomination Survey is granted to the School District Superintendent/CEO.
 - When accessing the NYSED Business Portal, the SEDMON application and the SAE Survey should be listed as an option by clicking on the [SED Monitoring and Vendor System](#) link.

- If you have multiple surveys, you will find the SAE survey under OPASS (Office of Postsecondary Access, Support, and Success).
- **Note:** Only the designated school district point person indicated in SEDREF can [grant or revoke access](#) to the secure SEDMON application. That person can grant access to the SAE Survey/SEDMON Application as they deem appropriate by delegating access in SEDDAS. NYSED staff are not permitted to grant or revoke access to the SAE Survey/SEDMON application.
- For more information on the 2025 Scholarships for Academic Excellence (SAE), please visit the [SAE website](#) and review the [SAE Cover Letter](#), [FAQ](#), and [Bulletin](#). For technical assistance in accessing the survey, please review these [help documents](#).
- *Any questions on SAE, its survey, or submission may be sent to scholar@nysed.gov.*

FYI

Planning for Regents Examinations in Physical Science: Chemistry and Physical Science: Physics Investigations (attachment)

- The Regents Examinations in Physical Science: Chemistry and Physical Science: Physics will be administered for the first time in June 2026.
- The purpose of this memorandum is to confirm the inclusion of Investigations for these two subjects and to provide schools and districts with a list of materials to aid in budgeting and planning.
- Additional details about the Investigations for the Regents Examinations in Physical Science: Chemistry and Physical Science: Physics will be forthcoming and all documentation for the Investigations, including translated editions, will be available in spring 2025 so that science educators may review it prior to the 2025-26 school year.
- *Questions can be directed to the Office of State Assessment at emscassessinfo@nysed.gov.*

FYI

P-3 Literacy Instructional Best Practices Guidance Released

- The NYSED P-3 Literacy Instructional Best Practices are now available on the Office of Early Learning website.
- The P-3 Literacy Best Practices were released in a statewide webinar event on January 7, 2025. The slides from the presentation, as well as the P-3 Literacy Instructional Best Practices, are available on the Office of Early Learning website.
- Per Education Law §818, on or before September 1, 2025, every school district shall verify that their curriculum and instructional practices in the subject of reading, in prekindergarten through grade three, align with all the elements of instructional best practices.
- A recording of the webinar, a Frequently Asked Questions document, as well as information about the attestation process, will be made available in the coming weeks.
- *Any questions about the P-3 Literacy Instructional Best Practices can be sent to the Office of Early Learning at OEL@nysed.gov.*

FYI

Office of Early Learning (OEL) Science Everywhere Webinar Recording Now Available

- The Science Everywhere Webinar recording is now available.
- The recorded webinar can be accessed via the OEL website.
- *Any questions can be directed to the Office of Early Learning at OEL@nysed.gov.*

FYI

Be Well This Month: Care for Our Social and Emotional Well-Being (attachment)

- This monthly communication from NYSED's Office of Student Support Services provides practical tips and resources for fostering well-being at home and work.
- The January 2025 issue highlights Goal 1 of New York's SEL Benchmarks, which focuses on developing self-awareness to nurture and affirm a strong sense of identity, inform decisions about actions, and build a sense of agency.
- Articles and resources include:
 - *How Self-Compassion Can Help You Deal with Stress (Greater Good Magazine)*
 - *The Importance of Creative Expression and How to Get Started (mindful.org)*
 - *The Power of Little Things: How to Find Joy in the Everyday (Psychology Today)*

- *A Healthier You: A 5-Step Guide to Better Doctor Visits (TED Health)*
- SEL resources are available on the Student Support Services website. We welcome your feedback at studentsupportservices@nysed.gov.
- *Questions can be directed to Student Support Services at studentsupportservices@nysed.gov.*

FYI

Update to NYSED Funding Opportunity: Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Participation Grants

- The New York State Education Department (NYSED) has issued a deadline extension and update to the RFP for the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Participation Grants.
- The application deadline for grant announcement GC25-003 has been extended to 1/17/2025.
- There is a change to the RFP on page 15 that states, "New Program Partner (became active within one year of 1/10/2025)".
- Applications must be submitted online at <https://nyslgrants.smapply.us/> by 5:00 pm EST on January 17, 2025.
- *For additional information, GC25-003 is posted on the New York State Library website NYS Grants for Participation in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.*

Planning for Regents Examinations
in Physical Science

Be Well This Month: Care for Our
Social and Emotional Well-Being

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