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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

**Attachments in this email:**

[Draft Regents Exams Schedules](#)

[GSA Circles Flyer 2025](#)

[MV Homeless 2025 Summer Memo](#)

[SSEC Reporting Memo](#)

[Summer 2025 Restorative Circles Training](#)

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*[Click here to view archived copies of NYSED Updates on our website](#)*

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**ACTION REQUIRED**

**Submission of Alternative High School Equivalency Preparation Program (AHSEP) and Alternative Transition Program (ATP) Application: Due June 30<sup>th</sup>**

- The AHSEP and ATP application is now available.
- Any public school district, BOCES, or State agency interested in operating an AHSEP or ATP program for the 2025-2026 school year must complete and return the application by June 30, 2025.
- The application and instructions can be found on the Office of Student Support Services [Alternative High School Equivalency Preparation Program](#)

- and Alternative Transition Program (AHSEP/ATP) webpage.
- Applications must be submitted via email to [AltEd@nysed.gov](mailto:AltEd@nysed.gov).
- Questions can be directed to the Office of Student Support Services at (518) 486-6090 or [AltEd@nysed.gov](mailto:AltEd@nysed.gov).

### **ACTION REQUIRED**

#### **2025-2026 State-Administered Prekindergarten Application Initial Survey Now Available**

- The 2025-2026 State-Administered Prekindergarten Application Initial Survey is now available in the NYSED Business Portal.
- This survey **must be completed** before the 2025-2026 Prekindergarten Application can be assigned.
- Once the survey is completed and approved, the Office of Early Learning will assign the appropriate application(s) based on the funding the LEA intends to access.
- Please direct any questions regarding this survey to the Office of Early Learning at [OEL@nysed.gov](mailto:OEL@nysed.gov).

### **MUST KNOW**

#### **McKinney Vento Summer School Information Memo (attachment)**

- The Office of ESSA-Funded Programs has released a guidance document for LEAs related to the McKinney-Vento Act requirements during the summer.
- The McKinney Vento Summer School Information Memo provides LEAs with information on the required actions under the McKinney-Vento Act that LEAs must take to support students experiencing homelessness during the summer break. Outside of the school year, LEAs are required to ensure that students have access to summer school and programming and that barriers to attending programming, such as transportation, are removed.
- LEAs with questions regarding this memo may email [CONAPPTA@nysed.gov](mailto:CONAPPTA@nysed.gov), call NYS-TEACHS at 1-800-388-2014, or call Jane Fronheiser, McKinney Vento State Coordinator, at 518-473-0295.

### **MUST KNOW**

#### **Collection of 2024-25 school year School Safety and Educational Climate (SSEC) Incident Counts (attachment)**

- Beginning on Monday, June 23, 2025, public schools and districts, charter schools, and BOCES can begin submitting aggregate incident counts via the online reporting application, the IRS Data Exchange or "IDEx," that is accessed through the NYSED [Application Business Portal](#).
- If you have difficulty accessing the online reporting form, please visit the IRS website at the [BEDS & SSEC Help Center](#).
- Additional information, including training materials related to SSEC incident reporting categories, is available on our [Student Support Services website](#) and the [Dignity for All Students Act website](#).
- Specific questions regarding SSEC reporting may be directed to the Office of Student Support Services at [SSEC@nysed.gov](mailto:SSEC@nysed.gov) or (518) 486-6090.

### **MUST KNOW**

#### **Zero Emission Busing – Transition Progress Reporting – 2025 Survey Now Available**

- NYS Education Law §3638(7) requires all school districts to report on their progress toward transitioning to zero-emission busing.
- Reporting is due annually, on or before August 1.
- All New York State school districts will have access to submit data and other

- relevant information to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) via the SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance application ("SEDMON") in the [SED Business Portal](#).
- Districts must ensure that persons assigned to enter information in the survey have been given entitlement rights in SEDMON to access Transportation surveys.
- The 2025 survey will build upon data reported the year prior, and results will be used to inform the development of the two 2-year compliance waivers authorized in statute.
- The survey will be updated/amended annually, as needed, to ensure useful information continues to be provided to NYSED.
- Districts may contact [Inho Suh](#), Director of Pupil Transportation at 518-473-2833, or [David Elliott](#), Coordinator of Educational Aid Services at 518-474-4364, for assistance.*

## **MUST KNOW**

### **Official Transcripts Required for Teaching Assistant (TA) Applications**

- All TA applications filed on or after **June 1, 2025**, will require official transcripts sent to the Office of Teaching Initiatives (OTI).
- Photos of diplomas will no longer be accepted for applications filed on or after June 1, 2025.
- Official transcripts can be transmitted to OTI in the following ways:
  - Emailed from the school district to [transcriptsoti@nysed.gov](mailto:transcriptsoti@nysed.gov).
  - Mailed via USPS to the applicant, who would then mail the sealed envelope to OTI, or mailed by the school district.
  - Submitted by a third-party vendor, such as Parchment or National Student Clearinghouse.
- GED submissions can still be submitted by the applicant but must include the GED ID#. *Please see the [OTI website](#) for more information.*
- Please see the [Contact Us webpage](#) to reach out to OTI with questions.*

## **MUST KNOW**

### **Requirement for Internship Certificate, Superintendent Statement Postponed**

- The requirement for Internship Certificate applications to have a school district recommendation is postponed until further notice.
- Please see the [Contact Us webpage](#) to reach out to OTI with questions.*

## **FYI**

### **2025-2026 Albert Shanker Grant Application Period - Open Until February 6, 2026**

- The Albert Shanker grant was established to defray the costs of National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification to eligible New York State public school teachers.
- The New York State Education Department (NYSED), through the Albert Shanker Grant, makes funding available to support eligible New York State public school teachers in the following **priority order of funding**:
- Candidates seeking their first National Board Certification, **or**
- Retake of one component, **or**
- Maintenance of Certification (MOC).
- Funding is limited and allocated on a first-come, first-served basis to eligible candidates in the priority order of funding.
- Resources may be found at:
  - [NYSED Albert Shanker Grant](#)
  - [NYSED Albert Shanker Grant Candidate FAQ](#)

- Questions may be directed to [shankergrant@nysed.gov](mailto:shankergrant@nysed.gov).

#### **FYI**

### **Higher Education Services Corporation Launches New Application Pathway for New York State Financial Aid**

- Demonstrating a strong commitment to sensitivity, security, and accessibility, the [New York State Higher Education Services Corporation \(HESC\)](#) has launched a new [alternate financial aid pathway](#) to help ensure all New York students have access to higher education.
- The application is designed for eligible students who are U.S. citizens or eligible non-citizens who do not want to complete a FAFSA due to concerns related to the privacy of their personal and family information but wish to apply for New York State financial aid.
- **Key Details of the Alternate Financial Aid Pathway:**
  - This is not a financial aid program but an alternate pathway for eligible students to apply for New York State financial aid.
  - The alternate pathway provides access to many New York State financial aid programs, such as the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP).
  - A [prescreening tool](#) is available to help students determine the path best for them.
- While the alternate pathway provides access to many New York State financial aid programs, it is important to note that students who do not complete the FAFSA will not be eligible for:
  - Federal financial aid (Pell Grant, Federal Work-Study, federal student loans), and the
  - New York State Excelsior Scholarship/New York State Enhanced Tuition Award (ETA).
- Updated guidance, eligibility criteria, and FAQs are available on HESC's [Alternate Eligibility Path information page](#).
- *For additional information, please sign up for one of HESC's upcoming [DREAM Act & Alternative Pathway Support Sessions](#) and [HESC text alerts](#).*

#### **FYI**

### **Educator Evaluation Updates**

- New guidance is available to support the design and development of a [Standards-based Educator Evaluation and Professional Support \(STEPS\)](#) plan. Resources include:
  - [Designing a STEPS plan: Developing the Components of a STEPS Plan](#)
    - This document builds on prior guidance documents: [Designing a STEPS plan – A Preliminary Guide](#) and [Designing a STEPS Plan – Requirements and Guidance](#), and provides specific examples of how an LEA could design the components of a STEPS plan.
  - Webinars to support the STEPS plan design process:
    - [Using a Needs Analysis to Select Teacher Measures](#)
    - [Using a Needs Analysis to Select Principal Measures](#)
- For questions or additional support, please contact the Office of Educator Quality and Professional Development at (518) 486-2573 or via email at [educatoreval@nysed.gov](mailto:educatoreval@nysed.gov).

#### **FYI**

### **Early Aid Start Request (EASR) - Revised Form**

- In November 2024, it was announced that beginning July 1, 2025, projects under \$5 million will not be considered complex and therefore are no longer

eligible for EAS unless the project is delayed by items beyond the district's control such as liens, litigation, declared natural disaster, or force majeure events; or the quality of work is currently unsatisfactory and corrective action is required.

- Please use the updated form moving forward: [FP-EASR](#) (Excel) / [FP-EASR](#) (PDF).
- As a reminder, this form must be submitted prior to December 1st to be processed in time for two payments in the current aid year, and prior to June 1st to ensure the project is processed in time for one payment in the current aid year.
- Please review the [Early Aid Start Request Memo](#) prior to submitting the EASR form.
- *For questions on Early Aid Start Requests, please contact [Suzette.Amrock@nysed.gov](mailto:Suzette.Amrock@nysed.gov).*

#### **FYI**

##### **CORRECTED ATTACHMENT: Draft January, June, August 2026 Regents Examination Schedules for Comment (attachment)**

- You are receiving this communication to allow you to provide feedback to NYSED on the Draft January, June, and August 2026 Regents Examination schedules.
- For information regarding the draft schedules, please see the attachment titled *DRAFT Regents Examination Schedules for January, June, and August 2026*.
- *Questions may be directed to the Office of State Assessment at 518-474-8220, and feedback should be sent to [emsctesting@nysed.gov](mailto:emsctesting@nysed.gov).*

#### **FYI**

##### **2025-26 Consolidated Application for ESSA-Funded Programs**

- On Wednesday, June 4, 2025, the Office of ESSA-Funded Programs launched the 2025-2026 Consolidated Application for ESSA-Funded Programs.
- The 2025-2026 Consolidated Application for ESSA-Funded Programs can be accessed and completed via the [NYSED Business Portal](#). The application includes the following programs under ESSA: Title I, Part A; Title I, Part D; Title II, Part A; Title III, Part A ELL; Title III, Part A Immigrant; Title IV, Part A; and Title V, Part B.
- Please see the [Consolidated Application for ESSA-Funded Programs](#) website for additional information.
- The preliminary allocations and support model to assist LEAs in completing the application will be forthcoming under a separate communication.
- *Questions may be directed to the Office of ESSA-Funded Programs at 518-473-0295 or through email to [conappta@nysed.gov](mailto:conappta@nysed.gov).*

#### **FYI**

##### **Office of Early Learning Spring UPK Newsletter Now Available**

- The Office of Early Learning has released the [Spring UPK Newsletter](#).
- This issue includes:
  - Important Dates and Deadlines
  - Navigating PreK Day 2025
  - UPK Classroom Spotlights – Ithaca CSD and Brewster CSD
  - P-3 Literacy Resources
  - 2024-2025 Early Learning Webinar Series
  - 2025-2026 State-Administered Prekindergarten Funding Information
- To subscribe, please join the [UPK Newsletter email list](#).

- *Please direct any questions regarding this survey to the Office of Early Learning at [OEL@nysed.gov](mailto:OEL@nysed.gov).*

#### **FYI**

##### **Free Community Building Circles Training for School Faculty & Staff (attachment)**

- Interested faculty and student support staff will participate in a three-day training on restorative circles to promote trust and relationship building in their classroom and wider school communities.
- Twelve regional trainings across New York State will be offered from July - August 2025.
- **Registration:** See the attached flyer for instructions.
- *Questions can be directed to [RJTrainings@nycourts.gov](mailto:RJTrainings@nycourts.gov).*

#### **FYI**

##### **Free Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA) Restorative Circles Training Faculty and Students (attachment)**

- Selected schools with GSA chapters will participate in a two-part training program using restorative circles to support dialogue, sense of belonging, and student leadership for GSA students.
- Faculty will receive two days of training in Summer 2025, and student leaders will receive two days of training in Fall 2025.
- **Application deadline:** Friday, June 13, 2025. See the attached flyer for instructions.
- *Questions can be directed to [RJTrainings@nycourts.gov](mailto:RJTrainings@nycourts.gov).*



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