



BUREAU CHIEF
Office of State Assessment

July 2018

TO: Principals of Secondary Schools

FROM: Clara DeSorbo

SUBJECT: Administration of the August 2018 Regents Examinations and Regents Competency Tests

This memorandum provides essential information about the administration of the August 2018 examinations. In addition, all persons coordinating the administration of the August 2018 examinations should be familiar with the [School Administrator's Manual](#). This publication is available on the Department's website. Important telephone and fax numbers for the Office of State Assessment (OSA) are listed on the last page of this memorandum.

This will be the last administration of the Regents Competency Tests (RCTs).

Accompanying this memorandum are the list of regional centers, a memorandum regarding the content of each August examination, and the schedule for the August 2018 examination period.

For the August 2018 administration, each scoring key and rating guide posted on the Department's website will be password protected. **Principals and/or their designees will need to access the Online Examination Request System to obtain the passwords required for obtaining the scoring materials each day that Regents Examinations are being administered, August 16 and 17.**

SHIPMENT OF EXAMINATION MATERIALS

For **single-shipment** storage locations, Regents boxes will be delivered on **Monday, August 13** or **Tuesday, August 14**.

For **daily-delivery** storage locations, Regents boxes will be delivered on **Tuesday, August 14** for examinations scheduled for Thursday, August 16; and **Thursday, August 16**, for examinations scheduled for Friday, August 17. In all cases, delivery can be expected between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

The locked boxes containing the August 2018 Regents Examinations will be delivered to your school or approved storage location by United Parcel Service (UPS). At the top of the shipping label affixed to the locked box are the principal's name, school phone number, school name, and school address of the school to which the shipment is being sent. If you are a host school serving as the approved storage location for a neighboring school, the guest school's name will appear at the bottom of the shipping label. The guest school is the school that requested the examinations in that locked box, and school personnel for the guest school will have the keys to open their locked boxes.

In late July/early August, a shipment of the Earth Science performance test materials will be delivered to schools in cardboard cartons and/or padded mailers. The Department does not provide printed copies of the following nonsecure materials, which will be available on the Department's website. Schools must print sufficient copies to adequately supply each student with:

1. **Regular editions of the reference tables** for Physical Setting/Earth Science and Physical Setting/Chemistry and the **Spanish editions of the reference tables** for the Physical Setting/Earth Science. The [reference tables](#) can be found on the Department's website. Note that the Department will provide schools with the braille and large-type editions of the reference tables.

2. The **essay booklets** for the Regents Examinations in English Language Arts, Transition Examination in Global History and Geography – Grade 10, and U.S. History and Government. All [essay booklets](#) can be found on the Department’s website.
3. The **RCT in Writing Answer Booklets**. The [answer booklets](#) for the RCT in Writing can be found on the Department’s website.

The following nonsecure materials must be printed by the school and supplied to all school personnel involved in the administration and scoring of Regents Examinations and RCTs:

4. [Directions for Administering Regents Examinations](#) and the [Directions for Administering and Scoring RCTs](#).
5. [Information Booklets for Scoring Regents Examinations](#).
6. [Scoring Keys and Rating Guides](#) for all Regents Examinations. These materials will be made available on the Department’s website at approximately 11:30 a.m. for morning examinations and at approximately 3:30 p.m. for afternoon examinations on the scheduled administration dates. Note that schools will receive printed scoring materials for the restricted RCTs, the RCT in Writing, and the restricted braille editions of the Regents Examinations in Physical Setting/Earth Science and Living Environment.

Shipments of August examinations to each school (and/or Department-approved storage location) will occur on **August 13** or **14** for single-shipment schools and on **August 14** and **16** for daily-delivery schools. Single shipment schools will receive one delivery with examinations for both days, whereas daily-delivery schools will receive one delivery for each day for which examinations were requested. The shipments of the locked Regents boxes containing these materials will be delivered to schools or approved storage locations between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. at least one day before the date that the examinations are scheduled to be administered. The printed scoring materials for restricted examinations will be delivered with their corresponding examinations.

Please be sure that someone in your school, or approved storage location, is available to accept the examination shipments when deliveries are expected. Should any problems occur with the delivery of examination materials, call this office immediately.

The locked Regents boxes will be secured with either two locks and a plastic crimp or one lock and two plastic crimps. Padlock keys will be mailed in one or more envelopes to the principal, and should arrive before the locked Regents boxes. If padlock keys for each day of the examination period have not been received by noon on Friday, August 10 call the Test Distribution Unit at 518-474-5914.

CHECKING THE EXAMINATION SHIPMENT

Enclosed in each delivery is a shipping notice listing the materials included. As soon as you receive the Regents box(es), use the shipping notice and your confirmation notice to inventory the materials received. **Under no circumstances may the sealed packages of secure examination materials be opened during this inventory.** The number of test booklets contained in each of the sealed packages is indicated below.

- *All Regents Examinations, including Spanish editions, and the RCT in Writing.* Each sealed package will contain 25 booklets.
- *Restricted editions – All editions of the RCTs in Mathematics, Reading, Science, Global Studies, and U.S. History and Government.* Each test booklet is numbered and sealed in a separate envelope. The exact quantity requested will be shipped to the school.
- *Braille and large-type editions of all Regents Examinations and RCTs.* The exact quantity requested will be shipped to the school.

If your inventory shows that the shipment contains excess examination materials or that it contains examination materials that you did not request, please notify OSA immediately via fax. It is the principal’s responsibility to maintain these excess materials under the same strict security as the examinations that your school will be administering, as outlined under “Safeguarding Examination Materials” on page 4.

SAFEGUARDING THE INTEGRITY OF THE TEST MATERIALS

Out of consideration for those students with disabilities who are completing their examinations over multiple days as an approved testing accommodation, educators are not permitted to discuss test questions or other specific test content with others online via e-mail or LISTSERV, or through any other electronic means prior to or during the test administration period or until Wednesday, August 22. Everyone's cooperation with this rule helps to preserve the integrity of the assessments taken by these students over multiple school days so that they can complete the exams at a pace appropriate for them. Avoiding public discussion of specific test content over electronic media affords those students an equal opportunity to demonstrate what they know and are able to do.

For those tests regularly scheduled for administration on Thursday, August 16 and Friday, August 17, staff may discuss specific test content by electronic means beginning Wednesday, August 22. We believe that nearly all students who are testing with this accommodation will have completed their examinations by this date. Please note that this instruction does not limit educators' ability or permission to discuss test questions among themselves, with their students who have fully completed the test, or with others during an in-person discussion, or to share with the Department any concern they have regarding any of the specific test content.

Proctors may not use cell phones or other electronic devices to duplicate test materials and should keep their own communications devices put away during testing, using them **only** in emergency situations. Test booklets cannot be opened and read prior to the distribution of tests to students.

EMERGENCY SUPPLIES OF EXAMINATION MATERIALS

A list of regional centers accompanies this memorandum. If a shipment for your school does not include all of the materials needed, contact a nearby regional center immediately with the exact number of test booklets that your school needs. This will ensure that a sufficient supply of examination materials will be available.

Emergency supplies of English editions are available at all regional centers. Only regional centers in New York City may have Spanish editions of Regents Examinations and RCTs. Translated editions are **not** ordinarily available at regional centers outside of New York City. Braille and large-type editions are **not** ordinarily available at any regional centers. If your school requires an emergency supply of materials that are **not** ordinarily available at the regional centers or more than ten booklets of an examination that is ordinarily available at the regional center, please send a fax to OSA for instructions on how to proceed.

Examination materials are available at the regional centers only on the day of the examination. Secure materials for morning examinations will be released in the morning; secure materials for afternoon examinations will not be released until after 10:30 a.m. Restricted RCT scoring keys will not be released by regional centers until after the Uniform Statewide Admission Deadlines (9:15 a.m. for morning examinations, 1:15 p.m. for afternoon examinations). Subject to these limitations, materials may be picked up at regional centers between 7:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

In order to obtain examination materials at a regional center, an individual must present a letter of authorization written on his or her school's letterhead and signed by the principal. The letter must identify the person picking up the materials and list the specific materials requested. Anyone obtaining examination materials must provide identification with a photograph and countersign the authorization letter before the examination materials will be released.

School personnel are forbidden to make or authorize photocopies of secure State examination booklets without the express written *prior* approval of OSA. Such approval will be considered only when it is not feasible for the school to obtain the secure examination materials from a regional center.

SAFEGUARDING EXAMINATION MATERIALS

The principal of each school requesting examinations must make the necessary arrangements to safeguard the materials requested for the school. Upon delivery, the locked Regents box(es) must immediately be placed in the Department-approved safe or vault at the storage location designated by the school. Examination materials may be removed from locked Regents boxes only for inventory and for administration of the examinations on the scheduled date.

If the locked Regents boxes containing a school's shipment of secure examination materials are found to be too large to fit into the approved safe or vault, the principal who requested the examinations must contact this office immediately to make arrangements for the storage of the boxes in an alternate approved location.

The Regents box keys and the combination or key to the safe or vault must be maintained under strict security conditions to preclude access to the examinations by students and other unauthorized persons. When the safe or vault where the Regents boxes are stored is unlocked, it must be kept under continuous supervision by school personnel. Additionally, the locked Regents boxes must be visually checked daily by the person in charge of the administration of the examinations to ensure that they have not been tampered with and that their contents remain secure.

The sealed packages containing examination booklets must not be opened until the day that each examination is scheduled to be administered, and no earlier than is necessary for distribution to proctors. Scoring key packages must be kept secure and may not be opened until after the Uniform Statewide Admission Deadline of 9:15 a.m. for morning examinations and 1:15 p.m. for afternoon examinations. The principal must notify the Department via fax if any of the packages of secure examination materials were not sealed properly when received.

If the examination materials are stored in a building other than the school in which the examinations will be administered, the materials for both the morning and afternoon examinations of each day may be picked up from the storage location on the morning of that day. However, the materials may not be picked up from the storage location before the day on which that examination is scheduled to be administered. If the materials for both morning and afternoon sessions are picked up in the morning, the principal must ensure that the afternoon examination materials are stored in a secure location until needed for administration.

Department personnel will make unannounced visits to some schools after the examination materials have been delivered in order to verify that they are being properly stored. If a storage violation is found, all examination materials will immediately be removed from the school and transferred to a location designated by the Department. The school principal will have to arrange to pick up examination materials from that location each morning and afternoon during the Regents Examination period, and to pick up printed RCT scoring materials after the morning and afternoon Uniform Statewide Admission Deadlines on the appropriate days. The school will then be required to store all examination materials at a location designated by the Department for a period of at least one year. In addition, the Department may rescind the school's authorization to administer examinations.

Following the examination period, in addition to other materials, the principal must return to the Department the completed **Examination Scoring Certificate**, **Deputy and Proctor Certificate**, and **Examination Storage Certificate** (received in the shipment of secure materials). For a complete list of items to be returned, refer to the *Checklist for Return of Examination Materials in Regents Boxes* (DET 536) or to Section 4 of the [School Administrator's Manual](#).

ADMISSION OF STUDENTS TO EXAMINATIONS

Students who have not completed the appropriate course(s) may not be admitted to State examinations. Students must provide written authorization from the home school district superintendent to take an examination to earn "credit by examination." In all cases, nonresident students and any others not enrolled in the summer school program may be admitted to State examinations only at the written request of the home school principal. Public school districts may not charge resident students a fee for

admission to the August examinations. Nonresident students may be charged a reasonable fee to cover administration and scoring costs.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION AND RECORDKEEPING

Plans should be made before the administration of the examinations to verify the identity of each student entering the examination room, especially those not enrolled in the summer school program. Accurate attendance records must be kept for each examination. The school must have attendance records that can be used to verify the presence or absence of any student for any of the August examinations.

USE OF COMMUNICATIONS DEVICES

All students are prohibited from bringing cell phones and certain other personal electronic devices into a classroom or other location where a State test is being administered. Test proctors and school officials shall retain the right to collect and hold any prohibited electronic devices prior to the start of the test administration. Admission to the test shall be denied to any student who is in possession of a cell phone or other prohibited electronic device and refuses to relinquish it.

ADMINISTERING AND SCORING EXAMINATIONS

Teachers are **not** permitted to score their own students' answer papers. This means that a teacher who was the student's 2017-18 school year teacher or is the student's 2018 summer school teacher in the coursework associated with a particular Regents Examination or RCT may not score the student's answer paper for that examination. This prohibition includes special education and academic intervention services (AIS) teachers. The following examples are intended to offer guidance to school administrators who will be making determinations as to a teacher's eligibility to score specific students' examination papers.

- A teacher providing AIS to a student in preparation for the Regents Examination in U.S. History and Government may **not** score that student's answer paper for this examination.
- An English teacher who was the student's homeroom teacher but was not the student's school year or summer school English teacher may score that student's answer paper for the Regents Examination in English Language Arts.
- A mathematics teacher who taught a student algebra the year before but is not currently instructing a student in the coursework in geometry may score the student's answer paper for the Regents Examination in Geometry.

The principal is responsible for making the final determination as to whether or not a teacher may score specific students' examination papers based on this scoring policy. A principal may establish rules that are more prohibitive than the illustrations above suggest.

The general administration procedures for secondary-level examinations are provided in the [School Administrator's Manual](#). Specific [directions](#) for administering regular and restricted examinations are available on the Department's website. These materials must be distributed to teachers before the examination date in order to give them time to become familiar with the instructions.

The [scoring keys and rating guides](#) will be made available on the Department's website. Posting time for the scoring materials for the August Regents Examinations will be approximately 11:30 a.m. for morning examinations and approximately 3:30 p.m. for afternoon examinations. All scoring keys and rating guides posted on the Department's website will be password-protected. Passwords needed to open the files for the posted scoring keys and rating guides will be made available to principals in the Online Examination Request System on the day of the examination. In order to access the scoring keys and rating guides, all schools will be required to enter the passwords obtained from the Online Examination Request System.

All scoring keys and rating guides posted on the Department's website will be password protected (see page 1).

SCORING RESTRICTED EXAMINATIONS

The administration procedures for restricted examinations (the braille editions of Living Environment and Physical Setting/Earth Science and all RCTs except the RCT in Writing) are different from those for

nonrestricted examinations. General information about the administration of restricted examinations is provided in the [School Administrator's Manual](#). Specific [instructions](#) for administering and scoring each of the restricted examinations will be posted on the Department's website. Each person who will administer or score the restricted editions must be thoroughly familiar with the procedures detailed in both publications.

The scoring key provided for the alternative language and braille editions of the RCT in Mathematics is different from that for the English language edition. This scoring key will be shipped only to those schools requesting these editions. To ensure that correct scores are recorded, make certain that all persons responsible for rating any State examination are provided with the appropriate scoring materials.

The scoring keys provided for the braille editions of the Regents examinations in Living Environment and Physical Setting/Earth Science are different from the scoring keys provided for the regular editions of these examinations.

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS RETAKING THE REGENTS EXAMINATION IN PHYSICAL SETTING/EARTH SCIENCE

All students taking the August 2018 Regents Examination in Physical Setting/Earth Science must take the performance test, even if they have taken it in conjunction with a prior administration of the written examination. Only the performance test score earned by the student in the weeks immediately preceding the August 2018 written examination may be used to determine the student's final examination score for this Regents Examination.

Consequently, all schools planning to administer the Regents Examination in Physical Setting/Earth Science must make arrangements for all students who will be taking the written examination to take the performance test, as well. The performance test must be administered during the last two weeks of the Earth Science course and no later than the day before the written examination. This requirement applies both to students enrolled in the course of study and to students who plan only to retake the examination. All schools administering this examination must notify students of the date and time to appear for the performance test.

REPORTING TESTING MISCONDUCT AND IRREGULARITIES TO THE DEPARTMENT

The principal is responsible for all aspects of the school's administration of State examinations and must take appropriate measures both to prevent, as much as possible, and to investigate all irregularities associated with the administration and scoring of these examinations.

Reporting Student Testing Misconduct and Other Testing Irregularities

The principal must report the following misconduct by students and testing irregularities in writing on school letterhead to OSA via fax or by [e-mail](#).

- All student infractions of the Department's policy prohibiting the possession or use of cell phones and other communications devices during State examinations.
- All confirmed cases of students having committed fraud on State examinations.
- All interruptions of testing sessions, including those caused by power outages or fire alarms.
- All instances in which a State examination is administered without Department authorization at a time outside of the published Statewide schedule.
- All instances in which a school does not conform to the Uniform Statewide Admission Deadline in administering a State examination.
- All instances in which scorers do not rate State examinations in accordance with the scoring materials provided by the Department.
- All cases in which student answer papers are lost prior to the recording of the scores in students' permanent records.

Mandatory Reporting of Testing Improprieties by Adults

The Department's Test Security Unit (TSU) handles all reports of testing improprieties by adults involved in the administration and scoring of State assessments. School officials and personnel are required to report any incident of testing misconduct by an educator or other adult involved in testing. Reports should be made via the TSU website by submitting the [Incident Report Form](#) located on the main page under "Report Educator Test Fraud." The following are examples of improper testing conduct that must be reported to the TSU:

- All suspected or confirmed cases of a school official or staff member giving aid to students during a State examination or altering student responses on an examination paper.
- All cases in which a school official or staff member alters or otherwise misrepresents a student's earned examination score during scoring, recording, or reporting.
- Any instance of an administrator or teacher instructing another administrator or teacher to alter or interfere with a student's examination score.

More complete information on strategies for avoiding the occurrences listed on the previous page and for addressing them should they occur may be found in the [School Administrator's Manual](#) and in the [Directions for Administering Regents Examinations, June and August 2018 Administrations](#).

TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with Disabilities

Summer school principals must ensure that students with disabilities are provided the testing accommodations specified in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Accommodation Plans (504 Plans) when they take State examinations. Under certain conditions, special examination arrangements may be made for general education students taking State examinations. The guidelines to be followed in such circumstances are provided on page 16 in Section Two, of the [School Administrator's Manual](#).

English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELLs/MLLs)

Schools may provide the following testing accommodations to English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners:

- *Time Extension:* Schools may extend the test time for ELLs/MLLs. Principals may use any reasonable extensions, such as "time and a half" (the required testing time plus half that amount), in accordance with their best judgment about the needs of the ELLs/MLLs. Principals should consult with each student's classroom teacher in making these determinations.
- *Separate Location:* Schools are encouraged to provide optimal testing environments and facilities for all students. Schools may administer State examinations to ELLs/MLLs individually or in small groups in a separate location.
- *Bilingual Dictionaries and Glossaries:* ELLs/MLLs may use bilingual dictionaries and glossaries when taking State examinations. The bilingual dictionaries and glossaries may provide only direct translations of words. Bilingual dictionaries or glossaries that provide definitions or explanations are not permitted.
- *Simultaneous Use of English and Alternative Language Editions:* For those Regents Examinations for which the Department provides direct written translations, ELLs/MLLs may use both an English and an alternative language edition of the test simultaneously. However, they should be instructed to record all of their responses in only one of the two editions. The alternative language edition used by the student should be so indicated on the student's answer document. (Note: The alternative language editions of RCTs provided by the Department are often not direct translations of the English editions being administered during the same examination period and may not be used simultaneously with an English edition.)

- *Oral Translation for Lower Incidence Languages:* Schools may provide ELLs/MLLs with an oral translation of a State examination when there is no translated edition provided by the Department. This accommodation is permitted for State examinations in all subjects **except** English. All translations must be oral, direct translations of the English editions—written translations are not allowed. No clarifications or explanations may be provided. Translators should receive copies of the English editions of the tests *one hour prior* to administration. The Department’s Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (telephone 518-474-8775) and the Regional Bilingual Education Resource Networks (RBERNs) can assist schools in locating suitable translators. A [list of RBERNs](#) is available on the Department’s website.
- *Writing Responses in Native Language:* ELLs/MLLs making use of alternative language editions or of oral translations of State examinations may write their responses to the open-ended questions in their native language. Scoring the tests is the responsibility of the school. However, the Department’s Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages and the RBERNs, can assist schools in locating persons who can translate the students’ responses into English to facilitate scoring of the answer papers.

Former English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners

Schools may provide the testing accommodations listed above under the heading “English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners” to Former English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners who met the exiting criteria specified in Part 154-2 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education and were exited from English Language Learner status following their participation in one of the two most recent administrations (Spring 2016 or Spring 2017) of the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). Such students either achieved an overall level of Commanding on the NYSESLAT or achieved an overall level of Expanding on the most recent administration of the NYSESLAT or earned a score of 65 or higher on the Regents Examination in English Language Arts.

These accommodations may not be provided to Former English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners who were identified as English language Commanding prior to any NYSESLAT administration more than two years ago. [Additional guidance](#) on the identification of Former English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners is available on the Department’s website.

HANDLING OF STUDENTS’ COMPLETED EXAMINATION MATERIALS

When a student has completed a State examination, the student’s answer materials should be collected and confirmed, or “checked in,” by a proctor and logged in to a list of examinees before that student is permitted to leave the testing room. When they are hand scored, answer papers for all State examinations must remain in the custody of teachers or administrators in the school building or regional scoring site until the rating process is complete and scores are recorded on the students’ permanent records. When answer papers are scored in cooperation with another school, they may be transported to the cooperating school for such scoring. It remains the principal’s responsibility to ensure the security and integrity of such papers while they are out of the building. Answer papers that are sent to a scanning center for scoring may be stored either at the scanning location or in the schools where the examinations were administered, as long as storage conditions are maintained that will not limit the principal’s access to an individual student’s answer papers. As an additional precaution, all scrap paper should be retained until all of the examination scores have been recorded.

If a student’s answer paper is lost, the principal or superintendent must conduct an inquiry and file a written report with this office. This report must include (1) a description of the loss or disappearance, including a list of all students whose papers are missing; (2) the examination title and administration date; (3) the likely cause of the loss or disappearance; and (4) what steps will be taken to prevent a similar occurrence in the future.

MATERIALS RETURNED IN THE REGENTS BOX

The materials that must be returned to the Department in the Regents boxes are listed in Section Four of the [School Administrator's Manual](#) and on the checklist provided to schools in the shipment of secure test materials. Please combine all materials to be returned to the Department in one Regents box when possible.

Return all Regents boxes no later than August 24. Please check all storage locations for any boxes remaining from previous examination periods and return those boxes as well. Each school must pay for the return shipment of its own Regents boxes; the boxes may not be returned collect. The boxes may be returned by UPS or any other carrier. Regardless of the carrier, the school must call the carrier, make the necessary arrangements, and pay for the return shipment. If the Regents boxes for a school are returned collect, the Department will refuse delivery.

DEPARTMENT REVIEW

Selected summer school principals requesting examinations will receive notice concerning Department review by the end of the August Regents Examination period. This notice will indicate each subject for which answer papers must be submitted in the Regents box to the Department. All of the answer papers not requested must remain on file in the school for one year, with the exception of restricted edition examinations. The latter must be returned to the Department. Schools asked to submit answer papers for Regents Examinations should produce, and retain in the school, photocopies of all answer papers prior to submitting them to the Department.

ONLINE SUBMISSION OF TEACHER EVALUATIONS OF EXAMINATIONS

Suggestions and feedback from teachers are an important contribution to the test development process. The Department provides an online evaluation form for State assessments where teachers may respond to several specific questions and may make suggestions. Complete and submit the [evaluation](#) of any examination (except restricted editions) on the Department website.

REPORTING AND RECORDING TEST SCORES

Summer schools must record the names and test scores of all students tested and then send the scores for each student to the student's home school. Information about recording test scores on the permanent record is provided in Section Three of the [School Administrator's Manual](#).

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions regarding the requesting, storing, and administering of the Regents Examinations and Regents Competency Tests, call the Operations Group at 518-474-8220.

For other questions regarding State assessments, call OSA's main number at 518-474-5900.

Fax supplemental requests for the Regents Examinations and RCTs to 518-474-2021.

Other faxes regarding test administration may be sent to 518-474-1989.

OSA can also be reached via [e-mail](mailto:emscassessinfo@nysed.gov) at emscassessinfo@nysed.gov.