



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

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DIRECTOR  
Office of State Assessment

September 2020

**TO:** Principals of Public, Religious, and Independent Schools  
Leaders of Charter Schools  
Science Coordinators  
Living Environment Teachers

**FROM:** Zachary Warner

**SUBJECT:** Providing Laboratory Activities for Living Environment Part D Virtually During the 2020-21 School Year

The Regents Examination in Living Environment is made up of four parts (Parts A, B, C, and D). Part D consists of questions based on a series of required laboratory activities completed during the school year. In order to prepare for the Part D section of this examination, students participate in a series of required laboratory activities. Each examination tests at least three of the four required laboratory activities.

Consistent with the [reopening guidance](#) (pp. 98-99) provided by the Department in July 2020, schools must ensure that they have a continuity of learning plan for the 2020-21 school year. Plans must prepare for in-person, remote, and hybrid models of instruction and this instruction must be aligned with the outcomes in the New York State Learning Standards. Due to the possibility of a hybrid or fully remote model of instruction as a result of COVID-19, the 1200-minute lab requirement can be met through hands-on laboratory experiences, virtual laboratory experiences, or a combination of virtual and hands-on laboratory experiences coupled with satisfactory lab reports for the 2020-21 school year.

[Prior guidance](#) from the Department on maintaining the integrity of the laboratory activities for Living Environment Part D prohibited their modification and electronic/virtual provision to students. Recognizing the variation in instruction and the widespread use of remote instruction, the Department is removing these restrictions for the 2020-21 school year. Permission is hereby granted to reproduce, electronically (i.e., scanned) if necessary, the Student Laboratory Packet and the Student Answer Packet in limited quantities for local use in instruction. The Teacher's Guides are not to be provided to students and should not be reproduced electronically or shared virtually. This permission does not apply to mass distribution of these materials, virtually or otherwise and electronic reproduction should only be used in cases where schools are delivering hybrid or fully remote instruction to students in a Living Environment course.

Please contact the Office of State Assessment at [emscassessinfo@nysed.gov](mailto:emscassessinfo@nysed.gov) with questions on the laboratory activities. At this time, the Department is only able to provide the laboratory materials in hard-copy. Schools providing materials to students virtually are required to create electronic files.