



April 19, 2010

Subject: April 22 High School Preview Accountability and Overview Reports and Final Guidance on Elementary/Middle-Level Assessments for 2009–10

Dear Colleagues,

In a previous email to you dated February 23, 2010, I summarized the various reports that are and will be available as you verify 2009–10 accountability and other school year data. The message can be found at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/ARay/ARay2009-10Verification2-23-10.pdf>, and the timeline can be found at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/ARay/2009-10AccountabilityVerificationTimeline-2-22-10.pdf>. Please review this information carefully as you continue to plan your spring and summer data verification activities.

April 22 Preview *Accountability and Overview Reports* (preAORs)

To allow districts and schools to get a head start on reviewing secondary-level data and the impact on accountability, a set of district and school preview *Accountability and Overview Reports* (preAORs) will be available to authorized users on www.nySTART.gov on April 22, 2010 at 4 pm. These reports will include secondary-level historical data, as well as the secondary-level assessment information and graduation outcomes that were contained in Level 2 of the Student Information Repository System (SIRS) as of April 16, 2010.

Unless updated prior to the final verification deadline on July 30, 2010 (regional deadlines will vary to allow sufficient time for processing), these data will be used to determine 2009–10 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and 2010–11 school and district accountability statuses in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and graduation rate at the secondary level.

Please review your school/district preAOR and the High School Accountability Verification Reports (AVRs) on nySTART. You may also access High School AVRs through the Level 2 Reporting environment using the web links provided by your Level 1 data center. Both nySTART and the Level 2 Reports include student detail reports that display the students included in accountability determinations, as well as the assessments and outcomes used for these determinations. If you believe that students, assessment results, and/or outcomes are not accurately recorded in SIRS, please make the necessary changes in your local student management systems and load the revised information into the SIRS. These changes will be reflected in nySTART and Level 2 Reports the following week and in subsequent preAORs available in July 2010.

Please be aware that new federal regulations required a number of changes in the calculation of 2009–10 AYP and 2010–11 accountability status determinations. Graduation rate goals and targets are now significantly more rigorous, as described in the January 2010 memo from Ira Schwartz (see http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/nyc/APA/Memos/Graduation_rate_memo.pdf). In

addition, the U.S. Education Department (USED) no longer allows a statistical adjustment to the determination of AYP for the Students with Disabilities group (see http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/nyc/APA/Memos/Update_on_SWD_stat_adj.pdf). To help offset the impact of this change, New York has received permission from USED to include in the Performance Index calculations for the Students with Disabilities group, for a period of up to two AYP determination cycles, the scores of students who were previously classified as students with disabilities but who no longer receive special education services (see <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/memos/0910ayp.html>). More information on these changes can be found in the preAOR Report Guide at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/nystart/reportguides.html>.

Because elementary/middle-level accountability assessments have not yet been administered, elementary/middle-level data will not be included in the April 22 preAOR. Elementary/middle-level data, including student demographic, enrollment, and program participation information, should be reviewed now through the Tested/Not Tested reports available in nySTART and the Level 2 Reporting environment and, beginning May 4, through the elementary/middle-level AVRs.

The April 22 preAOR should not be viewed as final. As you continue to review student-level data contained in the AVRs and to load 2009–10 data each week to the SIRS, the determinations reflected in this April 22 preAOR may change. Subsequent preAORs will be available beginning July 1 through August 5, 2010. These reports will include secondary-level June 2010 assessment data, elementary/middle-level English language arts, mathematics, and science accountability data, as well as changes to any previously submitted data. Data in the SIRS as of July 30, 2010 (regional deadlines will vary to allow sufficient time for processing) will be used for 2009–10 AYP and 2010–11 accountability status determinations.

Please review these reports early to ensure that all students for whom your district or school is responsible are reported in the SIRS with accurate demographic, enrollment, program services, special education snapshot, special education events and, when available, assessment and outcome data.

2009–10 Elementary/Middle-Level Assessments

Finally, I would like to mention several important issues to consider as you make final preparations for the administration of ELA and mathematics assessments in grades 3 through 8. Given the complexities involved in administering, scoring, and scanning these assessments, it is critical that you plan for the following:

- 1) Verify that you have a test booklet and answer sheet for each student required to complete the assessments, particularly for those students who have entered your school/district after the date on which the answer sheets may have been pre-printed.
- 2) Verify that all students required to complete the assessment have a New York State Student Identifier System (NYSSIS) number, as well as a valid and accurate 2009–10 enrollment record in the SIRS.

- 3) Remember that a district has accountability responsibility for resident students placed by the district's Committee on Special Education or other school official in an out-of-district placement. The district of residence must ensure that these students are administered an assessment and that answer sheets are submitted on time to the appropriate scoring and scanning center.
- 4) Remember that school district personnel must report test administration errors immediately to the Office of State Assessment and to the SIRS as per the guidelines contained in the *School Administrator's Manual* found at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/manuals/home.html> and the *SIRS Manual* found at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/sirs/>.
- 5) Take special precaution to separate the answer sheets for New York State Testing Program (NYSTP) assessments from the answer sheets for the Secure Audit Test/Field Test for English language arts and mathematics. NYSTP assessments are to be scored and returned to your Level 1 scan center as outlined in the *School Administrator's Manual* found at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/manuals/home.html>; Secure Audit/Field Test materials are to be packaged and returned to CTB/McGraw-Hill as described in the March 16, 2010 memorandum from David Abrams found at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/fieldtest/3-8ftmemo2010.pdf>.

On behalf of the Commissioner, Senior Deputy Commissioner, Board of Regents, the Office of State Assessment, and my other colleagues in the State Education Department, I again want to express our appreciation to all those who have worked so diligently to report, collect, and verify these data. We continue to make concerted efforts to improve our data collection and reporting systems, and ensure data accuracy and integrity. Your ongoing feedback assists us greatly in these efforts.

If you have questions about SIRS or data verification, please contact the Office of Information and Reporting Services by phone (518-474-7965) or e-mail (dataquest@mail.nysed.gov). You may also contact your Regional Information Center or Big 5 Data Coordinator if you have questions about data contained in the SIRS. Please contact the Office of State Assessment at emscassessinfo@mail.nysed.gov if you have questions about the Secure Audit Test/Field Test for English language arts and mathematics or the administration of the grades 3 – 8 ELA and mathematics assessments.

Thank you for all your hard work on behalf of all the students of our State.

Alan Ray
Assistant Commissioner
P-16 Policy and Strategic Planning