

COMPREHENSIVE ATTENDANCE POLICY

In the last Newsletter, we noted that a policy relating to pupil attendance recordkeeping was under discussion. The Board of Regents is expected to adopt it at their September 2001 meeting. Commencing July 1, 2003 attendance shall be taken and recorded in accordance with the following:

- For pupils in non-departmentalized K-8 schools, pupil's presence or absence shall be recorded once per day; if pupils are dismissed from school grounds for lunch, presence or absence must be recorded a second time.
- For pupils in grades 9-12 or in departmentalized schools presence or absence shall be recorded after the taking of attendance in each period of scheduled instruction.
- Tardiness or early departure from school shall be recorded as excused or unexcused.
- A teacher or other designated person shall be appointed to supervise the keeping of the register.
- The principal shall review attendance records so that appropriate action can be taken regarding absence, tardiness or early departure.
- A comprehensive attendance policy must be developed which includes:
 - a.) objectives and plans to achieve them
 - b.) clear determination of what constitutes excused and unexcused absences/tardiness
 - c.) description of coding system used to identify absences, etc.
 - d.) statement regarding pupil attendance and pupil's ability to receive course credit
 - e.) incentives and disciplinary sanctions to be used to ensure attendance
- Community awareness of the comprehensive attendance policy must be promoted.
 - a.) Parents and persons in parental relations to students must receive a summary of the policy at the beginning of each year.
 - b.) Each teacher shall be provided with a copy of the policy.
 - c.) Copies of the policy should be available to any other member of the community upon request.

This applies to all schools – public and non-public. It will become effective July 1, 2003. These coming two years will give all an opportunity to plan the policy and work all the details out.

INFORMATION ON STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT

- ❖ Some recent newspaper articles indicate a misunderstanding about the scoring of Regents examinations, particularly the revised science Regents examinations offered for the first time this June. The Department does not "curve" Regents examinations and cutpoints for passing; that is, they do not, after a test is taken, make scores conform to a "bell curve". In fact, the State distributes the scoring chart before the test is administered. A brief summary of the essential steps in establishing passing scores for Regents examinations is being disseminated to school leaders. This scoring process has been used on seven test administrations beginning in June of 1999 with the English and Math A examinations. For information contact Roseanne DeFabio at 518-473-7880.
- ❖ Recently the Regents received a report on the development and implementation of an alternate assessment for students with severe disabilities. A copy is available on the Regents home page under materials for the July meeting. Full implementation of the alternate assessment will occur in the 2001-2002 school year. This assessment will be for students with severe disabilities who cannot participate in State and local assessments. For information contact Lawrence Gloeckler at 518-474-2714.

TIMELINE REGARDING PASSING GRADE FOR REGENTS EXAMS

Students entering grade 9 in September 2001 will be required to achieve a 65 passing score on Regents exams to meet graduation requirements.

In June 2001, the Regents began discussing the timeline for phasing out the 55 low pass on Regents exams. This was in response to a proposal from the District Superintendents to extend the 55 low pass option and to set targets for districts to have more students achieve 65 or more on the Regents exams. The Regents requested additional data concerning percentages, dropouts, etc. to consider as the current timeline is received.

More discussion will come in the fall and a final decision is expected.

Reminder: Private high schools must be in compliance by 2008.

NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATION

The New York State Legislature is considering a number of bills that would change education policy in significant ways:

1. Assembly 9053/Senate 5516 would allow students in career and technical education programs to graduate after having passed only Math & English regents. They would be required to take social studies and science but not pass them.
2. Assembly 9052/Senate 5517 would require the Commissioner to create a State portfolio assessment that could be used in place of social studies and science Regents exams.
3. Assembly 7701 would permit students who are designated as English language learners to graduate without passing English Regents. State competency tests in English would substitute.

Chancellor Hayden and Commissioner Mills oppose these bills on the grounds that they would weaken standards by creating a lower track for some students. A statewide portfolio system would require constant and intensive state supervision and would be very costly.

CONCERNING ESEA

A House/Senate Conference committee has been appointed to reconcile differences between H.R.1 and S1, the ESEA reauthorization bills. The committee has met for opening statements but a final bill is not expected until after Congress returns from its summer recess which begins on August 3 and ends on September 5th.

There are no House members from New York State on the committee and only Senator Clinton from New York on the Senate side.

The House and Senate Bills have many similarities but also significant differences. Basically H.R.1 calls for 23 billion dollar expenditure, S1 has the level at 33 billion. Both call for testing in reading and mathematics in grades 3-8; accountability and requirements for school improvement; grants to improve teacher quality. The Senate bill shifts funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act from the discretionary to the mandatory side of the federal budget. Neither bill includes the possibility of vouchers for use in the private schools but the door is slightly ajar for possibilities in the tutoring area.

On July 20th, USCCB forwarded to all members of the Conference committee a letter which identifies key issues pertaining to the participation of private school students and teachers. Such issues include retention of funding for capital expenses, full funding for IDEA, and the adoption of language strengthening the consultation process and general requirements regarding the participation of private school students and teachers in ESEA programs. The main thrust of the letter is that in all applicable sections of the ESEA reauthorization it is critical that the statutory language be very clear with regard to uniform provision for the participation of private school students and teachers.

If you want more detailed information the USCCB letter, list of issues and members of the conference committee will be listed under the July Public Policy Update on the Division of Catholic Schools and Public Policy web page at:

www.usccb.org/education

**ELEMENTARY AND INTERMEDIATE
STATE ASSESSMENTS SCHEDULE**

<u>EXAM</u>	<u>ADMINISTRATION DATES</u>	<u>MAKE-UP DATES</u>
Grade 4 English Language Arts	January 28 – February 1*	February 4 – February 6
Grade 4 Mathematics	May 7 – May 9	May 10 – May 14
Grade 4 Elementary-Level Science	Any time in May	Any time in May
Grade 5 Elementary-Level Social Studies	November 14 – November 15	November 16 – November 19
Grade 8 English Language Arts	March 4 – March 8*	March 11 – March 12
Grade 8 Mathematics	May 7 – May 8	May 9 – May 10
Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Performance	Any time in May	Any time in May
Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Written Test	Any time between 6/5 & 6/20	Any time Between 6/6 & 6/20
Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Social Studies	Any time between 6/5 & 6/20	Any time between 6/6 & 6/20
Intermediate-Level Technology Education	Any time between 6/5 & 6/20	Any time between 6/6 & 6/20

(* Schools should select specific dates (three for Grade 4, two for Grade 8) within the test administration windows specified above)

DRAFT - REGENTS EXAM SCHEDULE FOR 2002

- June 18, 2002 - 9:15 - Comp. English: Session One - Physical setting / Earth Science
1:15 - RE in global history and geography - Physical setting / Physics
- June 19, 2002 - 9:15 - Comp. English: Session two - Living environment
1:15 - RCT in writing - Seq. Mathematics, course II - Mathematics A
- June 20, 2002 - 9:15 - RCT in Global Studies - RE in US History & government
1:15 - RCT in reading - Seq. Mathematics, course III - Mathematics B
- June 21, 2002 - 9:15 - RCT in US History & government - Physical setting / Chemistry
1:15 - RCT in Science - Comprehensive Regents Examinations = French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Latin, Spanish
- June 24, 2002 - 9:15 - RCT in mathematics – Introduction to occupations - Proficiency Exams =French, German, Italian, Latin, Spanish
- June 25, 2002 - Rating Day

The last administration for sequential mathematics, course I, is January 2002 and the last administration for business analysis / business computer applications, clothing and textiles, food and nutrition, health occupations education core, housing and environment, and human development was June 2001.