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

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER
Office of Assessment Policy, Development and Administration

January 28, 2011

To: District Superintendents
Superintendents of Public and Nonpublic Schools
Principals of Public, Charter, and Nonpublic Schools

From: David Abrams

Subject: Allowance for January 2011 Graduating Seniors Attending Schools that Canceled Regents Examinations Due to Inclement Weather

During the January 2011 Regents Examination period (Tuesday, January 25, 2011 through Friday, January 28, 2011), a number of schools were closed due to inclement weather. Students who attend those schools were unable to take Regents Exams and Regents Competency Tests (RCTs) as scheduled. The Department is providing an allowance for seniors whose only outstanding requirement for January 2011 graduation is a passing score on one or more Regents Exam(s) or RCT(s) that were canceled due to inclement weather. This allowance is **only** available to seniors who meet the eligibility criteria listed below and attend schools that submit documentation listing the exams canceled and the number of January 2011 graduating seniors who were unable to take the exams. Please see the attached form that must be used.

The allowance is **only** available to students who:

- are enrolled as **seniors (Grade 12)** during the 2010–11 school year;
- first entered Grade 9 **prior** to September 2008;
- were scheduled to take one or more exams on January 25, 26, 27, and/or 28, 2011 and were unable to do so because the exam was canceled due to inclement weather; and
- are determined by the principal and superintendent of a public school district or by the chief administrative officer of a nonpublic or charter school to have met all of the course and testing requirements for graduation in January 2011 with the exception of one or more of the exams canceled in the school.

For seniors meeting the above eligibility criteria, schools may accept a **passing grade in the course**, in accordance with local policy, in place of any canceled Regents Exam(s) or RCT(s) scheduled to be administered between Tuesday, January 25 and Friday, January 28 in order to meet the required State testing requirement(s) **for a local diploma**.

This allowance enables these students to meet the State testing requirements for a **local diploma only**. To earn a **Regents diploma**, students must take and pass the required Regents Exam(s) with a score of at least 65.

For each student who earns a local diploma using the allowance outlined in this memorandum, districts must retain in the student's permanent record: (1) a copy of this memorandum; and (2) a signed statement from the school principal, superintendent or chief administrative officer indicating the reasons why the allowance applied to the student in question. This documentation should be retained, consistent with the district's record retention policies, and be producible upon request for auditing purposes.

Schools and districts will receive credit for student participation and performance accountability calculations only if an allowable English language arts (ELA) and math exam score have been reported in the Student Information Repository System (SIRS). If a student enrolled in Grade 12 does not have a reported ELA or math exam score, was scheduled to take the exam to be used for accountability purposes during the January 2011 Regents Exam period, and was unable to because the exam was canceled due to inclement weather, this student will be considered to have no valid score for accountability purposes unless the exam is taken at a future point in time. Students reported to the SIRS as having earned local diplomas will count as graduates for accountability purposes. Additional information on accountability calculations can be found at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/sirs/.

Schools planning to provide this allowance for their eligible January 2011 graduating seniors must submit the requested information on the attached form to the Department by e-mail to emscassessinfo@mail.nysed.gov or by fax to 518-474-1989 no later than February 28, 2011.

Thank you for the all the hard work you do on behalf of the students of New York State.

Attachment

c: John B. King, Jr.