

P-16 News & Notes

**From Senior Deputy Commissioner Johanna Duncan-Poitier
December 20, 2007**



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

With the holiday season upon us, I wanted to take this opportunity to wish you and your families, and your school communities a very happy holiday season. As we continue to carry out our commitment to helping you with your important work to help students to succeed and graduate, I also wanted to thank you for all of the support you have provided the Board of Regents and the State Education Department over the past year. All in addition to the time and energy you dedicate to your schools and your students, you routinely share your advice and expertise for helping to shape the future of education statewide. You have helped us to maximize the historic investment in education this year. You have worked with us to advance the Regents P-16 Education Plan. You have collaborated with colleges and universities to make P-16 connections work for our students. You have worked hard to help close achievement gaps statewide. You have selflessly answered whenever we have asked –for this and more, I thank you.

Best wishes for a happy holiday season! I look forward to new and exciting opportunities in 2008 and to working together to help our students achieve maximum success.

PROPOSED NEW YORK STATE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

I am pleased to announce that the State Education Department has released a preliminary draft of proposed New York State Professional Development Standards for public review and comment. Please access the draft standards, and the response form, go to “News” on the Office of Teaching Initiatives website at <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert> or go to the direct link at <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/resteachers/stds.htm>. Please send your comments by January 15, 2008.

EXCELSIOR SCHOLARS PROGRAMS FOR GRADE SEVEN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE STUDENTS

The New York State Education Department is pleased to announce the availability of a \$5,000,000 competitive grant opportunity to support the costs of summer mathematics and science programs for high-performing mathematics and science students who will have completed grade seven in June 2008. Not only will these students be challenged by rigorous and engaging commencement-level coursework but those who successfully complete one of the awarded summer programs will be certified to the Governor for recognition as Excelsior Scholars.

The purpose of this competitive grant program is for New York State public and independent colleges and universities to provide advanced coursework for these high performing mathematics and science students. The advanced courseware must be in mathematics and science and must be aligned to the New York State learning standards at the commencement-level. The program must include only eligible and other high performing students as defined in Section 100.14 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

A successful summer program may result from the collaboration between public and independent colleges and universities and school districts that include at least one public middle school, junior high school, intermediate school, junior/senior high school, or kindergarten through secondary school.

Proposed programs may be enhanced by coordination with one or more of the State's centers of excellence in technology. This grant initiative is designed to spark conversations between higher education and middle-level educators in unprecedented ways furthering the Regents' P-16 Plan for Action.

The Request for Proposals information can be found on the "Funding Opportunities/Allocations" link at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov>. Proposals must be postmarked by February 4, 2008. All questions regarding the application process should be directed to the program email box at excelsiorscholars@mail.nysed.gov.

GRANT FUNDING AVAILABLE TO CONVERT HALF-DAY KINDERGARTEN CLASSES TO FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN CLASSES

We are pleased to announce that grant funding is available during this school year to school districts that operated half-day kindergarten programs in the 2006-07 and 2007-08 school years and plan for conversion to full-day kindergartens in the 2008-09 school year. If you have offered half-day kindergarten in the 2006-07 and 2007-08 and are planning to convert all of your kindergarten classes to full-day kindergarten in the 2008-09 school year, your district may be eligible to receive funding to defray additional costs to your district for planning time, classroom materials, equipment and furniture and supplies. For more information on this grant opportunity, please contact the Office of Early Education and Reading Initiatives at (518) 474-5807.

GRADE EIGHT ACCELERATION FOR DIPLOMA CREDIT

In response to questions we have recently received from the field, we wanted to take an opportunity to provide important clarifying information on the Part 100 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, which provide public school students in grade eight the opportunity to take high school courses in mathematics and in at least one of the following areas: English, social studies, languages other than English, art, music, career and technical education subjects or science courses.

- This provision was put in place to provide opportunities for individual students rather than as a vehicle for accelerating entire cohorts of students into high school courses.
- Superintendents or their designees shall determine whether an eighth grade student has demonstrated readiness to take high school courses. School districts are encouraged to develop and use a written set of criteria to determine each student's readiness for acceleration.
- Grade eight students who are accelerated for diploma credit must have been provided instruction designed to facilitate their attainment of, by the end of grade seven, the State intermediate learning standards in each subject area in which they are accelerated.
- Part 100 Regulations of the Commissioner of Education allow only grade eight students the opportunity to be accelerated into high school courses in the eighth grade and to receive credit for use in satisfying diploma requirements. This provision does not extend to grade seven students.

We hope this clarifying information is helpful. Grade eight acceleration for diploma credit may be found in subdivision 100.4(d) of the Part 100 Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. Section 100.4 may be accessed at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/part100/pages/1004.html>. Please contact Anne Schiano, Assistant Director, Curriculum, Instruction and Instructional Technology, at aschiano@mail.nysed.gov for additional information.

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AT THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The New York State Education Department is still recruiting experienced people to fill professional positions. A complete listing of the titles and requirements may be found at <http://oms32.nysed.gov/hr/article7.html>.

SCHOOL EXECUTIVE'S BULLETIN

The Fall 2007 School Executive's Bulletin is available online at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/sb/fall07site/fa07home.html>.
