

COVID-19 Emergency Regulations Part II Revisions to Diploma Requirements

March 15, 2021



Exemptions from NYS Diploma Requirements

Since the COVID-19 crisis is still affecting the State of New York and students across New York have had varied levels of in-person instruction, the Department proposes to revise the amendments Commissioner's regulations to allow exemptions to the diploma requirements associated with the June 2021 and August 2021 examination administrations. These include exemptions to:

- **Regents Examinations;**
- **Pathway assessments;**
- **Alternative assessments;**
- **Technical assessments;**
- **Work-readiness assessments; and**
- **Locally developed tests.**

CDOS Commencement Credential and CDOS Pathway

The Department proposes to exempt students from any unfinished requirements for the career development and occupational studies commencement credential (CDOS) provided that the student is otherwise eligible to exit from high school and has otherwise demonstrated knowledge and skills relating to the CDOS learning standards.

Regents Exam Exemption Eligibility Requirements

Only students who have met the standards for the course of study, as locally determined, will be eligible for an exemption to the examination requirements.

To qualify for such an exemption to the diploma requirements students must meet one of the following criteria:

- The student is currently enrolled in a course of study culminating in a Regents Examination and by the end of the 2021 school year, or the 2021 summer session, will have earned credit in such course of study;
- The student was previously enrolled in the course leading to an applicable Regents Examination, has achieved course credit, and has not yet passed the associated required Regents examination but was intending to take the test in June 2021 or August 2021 to achieve a passing score; or
- The student is in grade 7 or 8, is enrolled in a course of study leading to a Regents and has met the standards assessed in the provided coursework.

The Department also proposes to extend exemption eligibility for pathway assessments, alternative assessments, technical assessments, and locally developed tests through the 2020-21 school year.

Mastery and Honors Flexibility

In the calculations for the mastery and honors endorsement, student course grades may be substituted for exam scores in cases where Regents Examination exemptions would preclude a student from qualifying for an endorsement to their diploma.

Mastery in Math and/or Science

- **3 Regents Exams with an 85 or better**
- **2 Regents Exams with an 85 or better +1 exemption**
- **1 Regents exam with an 85 or better and a final course average of 85 or better in the two courses for which an exemption was offered**

Honors

- **All Regents exams with a computed average of 90 or above**
- **3 Regents exams with a computed average of 90 or above and exemptions for other applicable Regents Exams**
- **If fewer than 3 Regents exams: a computed final course average of 90 or above in all courses for which an exemption was offered applicable to the diploma type**

Science Laboratory Experience

The Department also proposes to amend the Commissioner's regulations relating to science laboratory experience to:

- Clarify that a student may still be eligible to take a science Regents examination, and therefore be eligible for an exemption if applicable, even if they are unable to meet the 1,200 minute science laboratory experience requirement due to the COVID-19 crisis; and
- Expand the amendment allowing students to continue to meet the laboratory requirements through a combination of hands on and virtual experiences due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Graduation Assessment Exemption Declination

Reminder of previous action still in effect:

- With the cancellation of the January 2021 Regents Examinations, the Department amended regulations to provide parents and persons in parental relation of students scheduled to graduate in January, June, or August of 2021 who have been exempted from a graduation assessment requirement the opportunity to decline such exemption.
- Additionally, the amendment extended the time period required by schools to give parents or persons in parental relation notification of the option to decline such exemption from 10 calendar days to 30 calendar days.

If the USDE Grants the Assessment Waiver,

- ✓ The June 2021 administration of ALL Regents Examinations will be cancelled.
- ✓ The August 2021 administration of ALL Regents Examinations will be cancelled.

If the USDE Assessment Waiver is Denied; or There is No Response From USDE,

- The Department will administer **only** the Regents Examinations required under ESSA during the June 2021 Administration :

✓ ELA

✓ Algebra 1

✓ Earth Science

✓ Living Environment

Students taking the above assessments will still be offered the exemption to the graduation requirement associated with these examinations.

- The August 2021 Regents Exams will be cancelled.

Next Steps

- March 15 The Department will issue a memo explaining the impact of the exemptions to exam-related diploma requirements on this year's test takers.
- March 16 The Department will disseminate to middle and high school principals the annual instructions on ordering the June 2021 Regents Examinations as well as the schedule for the four exams to be administered.
- March 18 If there has been no response from USDE the Department will issue two normal administrative informational memos:
- 1.) 3-8 Assessment Information
 - 2.) NYSESLAT Assessment Information



Questions?