



October 2003

To: District Superintendents of Schools
Superintendents of Public and Nonpublic Schools
New York City Department of Education
Superintendents of State-operated Schools
Superintendents of Special Act School Districts
Principals of Public and Nonpublic Schools
Directors of Special Education
Chairpersons of Committees on Special Education
SETRC Professional Development Specialists
Commissioner's Advisory Panel on Special Education
Charter Schools

From: Douglass Bailey, Coordinator of Policy, Planning and Partnerships, Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID)

Gerald E. DeMauro, Coordinator, State Assessment Office, Office of Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education (EMSC)

Subject: A New Scheduling Option Available to Schools Administering State Examinations to High School Students with Disabilities — Effective January 2004

This memorandum provides information on a new scheduling option available to schools when administering Regents Competency Tests to students with disabilities. High school students with disabilities occasionally encounter difficulties when they are scheduled to take more than one State assessment in one day during a given Regents examination period. Many students with disabilities are provided "extended time" as a testing accommodation required by their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Accommodation Plan. Some students with disabilities may want to take both a Regents Examination and its corresponding Regents Competency Test (RCT) during the same Regents examination period. A scheduling concern arises when the student who is permitted extended time is to be administered more than one test in a single day.

To address such concerns, the school should consider several options:

- **Postpone one of the tests** until the next Regents examination period during which it is scheduled to be administered (e.g., the following August or January in the case of a June examination). The examination to be postponed should be in a content area in which the student will continue to receive instruction (and in which retention of information is thus a less critical concern). Schools are encouraged to provide review and preparation time to the student prior to any examination(s) postponed due to scheduling concerns.
- **Take a Department-approved alternative to the State examination.** Available in some content areas as equivalent to the corresponding State examination, these alternatives include, among others, certain titles of the SAT I and II, and Advanced Placement Tests. Some of these alternative examinations are offered several times a year and on dates that do not conflict with State examinations. The list of Department-approved alternative examinations appears as Appendix III of the School Administrator's Manual, posted at: <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/testing/hsinfo/gen/sam2001.pdf>.
- **Reschedule an RCT to the next available school day** during the same test administration period on which this student has no other State examinations scheduled. This **new option** may be made available only to the student whose IEP or 504 Plan requires extended time as a testing accommodation and who is scheduled to take an RCT on the same day as another State examination. **This option is not permitted for Regents examinations.** The administration of all Regents examinations must occur on the date indicated on the official schedule distributed by the Office of State Assessment. (See <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/testing/sched.html> for schedules for upcoming examination periods.)

The requirements for implementing the rescheduling of an RCT are as follows:

- The school may reschedule the RCT to the next available school day during the same examination period on which the student has no other State examinations scheduled. The RCT may be rescheduled only to a time **after** the regularly scheduled date for that test's administration (not earlier than the date originally scheduled by the Department). For example, if the RCT is scheduled for the third day of testing, and the student is scheduled to take another State examination on that date, the RCT can be moved to the fourth day (not the first or second day) of that testing week. At the school's discretion, the scheduled rating day at the end of the examination period may be used as the alternate date if the RCT is ordinarily scheduled for the last day of testing and the student is scheduled to take another State examination on that date.
- Only scheduling problems involving other State assessments may be taken into account in determining a student's eligibility for this option. The same-day administration of locally developed or other assessments do not constitute a permissible basis for rescheduling RCTs.
- To maintain test security, the student, the student's parents and the school administrator are required to sign the attached security forms certifying that the student did not have access to any of the specific content of the test prior to taking it. Schools may reproduce Attachments 1a, 1b, and 1c for this purpose.

- No official test score may be entered into the student's permanent record for an RCT rescheduled in accordance with the procedures outlined in this memorandum until all three required security certificates have been completed and signed by all appropriate parties and have been placed in the school's files. These forms must be retained as part of the school's special education file in the individual student's records.
- The school implementing this option must notify the Department of its decision to do so by completing and submitting a copy of Attachment 2, the Notification of Rescheduled Regents Competency Test, to VESID's Central Administration Regional Support Services Unit. The form must be submitted via fax (518-473-5769) no later than two weeks prior to the scheduled test administration.

It is our hope that this new option will help reduce scheduling difficulties for students with disabilities. For questions about this new scheduling option or about a student's eligibility for the RCT Safety Net, telephone VESID's Special Education Policy Unit at 518-473-2878. For additional information about testing programs and schedules, please visit the Office of State Assessment website at: <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/assess.html>.

**New York State Test Administration
Security Certificate**

I, _____, as a **student** enrolled at _____
_____ School, do certify that I had no prior knowledge by way of
contact with another student and/or administrator or through contact with media reports
of any of the questions on the following Regents Competency Test administered during the
_____ Regents examination period.
month/year

Regents Competency Test

Date(s) Administered

Date

Student's signature

This form must be retained as part of the school's special education file in the individual student's records.

**New York State Test Administration
Security Certificate**

I, _____, as the **parent/guardian** of _____
who attends _____ School, do certify that this student had no prior
knowledge by way of contact with another student and/or administrator or through contact with
media reports of any of the questions on the following Regents Competency Test administered
during the _____ Regents examination period.
month/year

Regents Competency Test

Date(s) Administered

Date

Parent/Guardian's signature

This form must be retained as part of the school's special education file in the individual student's records.

**New York State Test Administration
Security Certificate**

I, _____, as the **principal** of _____

School, do certify that _____ was not given access by me or any of the
proctors to any of the questions on the following Regents Competency Test prior to the date
administered during the _____ Regents examination period.
Month/year

Regents Competency Test

Date(s) Administered

Date

Principal's signature

This form must be retained as part of the school's special education file in the individual student's records.

**Notification of Rescheduled
Regents Competency Test (RCT)**

Name of School District: _____

Contact Name: _____

Contact Telephone Number: () _____

Name of Student: _____

Conflict (Name of Regents Examination and RCT scheduled for the same day):

Resolution (alternate date RCT will be administered):

The form must be submitted via fax (518-473-5769) no later than two weeks prior to the scheduled test administration.