



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
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To: District Superintendents, Superintendents of Public Schools, and Administrators of Charter Schools

From: David Abrams 

Re: Update on the 2005-06 Grades 3 – 8 Testing Program

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update on the various activities that are ongoing in support of the implementation of the Grades 3 – 8 Testing Program in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. Specific information for teachers and administrators addressing test ordering, test security, test administration and scoring will be available well in advance of the testing periods.

Over the past school year, State Education Department (SED) staff has been working diligently with many of you and our testing contractor, CTB McGraw-Hill, to ensure that New York State is prepared to meet the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). These efforts have led to the development, and, in some cases, the completion (Attachment A) of several resources. Additional activities are being planned as well in support of the Grades 3 – 8 Testing Program. The following is a list of some of these initiatives.

Test Administration Dates

The Office of Standards, Assessment and Reporting has, with much input from other Department offices and New York State school administrators, BOCES district superintendents and staff and large city district superintendents, developed a flexible schedule for the statewide administration of all elementary and intermediate level tests for the 2005-06 school year. This schedule includes the specific dates for the general administration and make-up administration dates for the grade 3 – 8 tests in ELA and mathematics. Schools and districts should carefully review the footnotes included on this schedule to ensure that all students are tested during the appropriate test administration window. The schedule is available at: <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/schedules/ei.htm>. As you are preparing your plans for the administration of these tests, please keep in mind that schools are to administer one session per day at each grade level. The only exception is for grade 8 ELA and Math; for that grade, sessions 1 and 2 are to be administered on the same day. A description of the tests at each grade level can be found in the *Introduction to the Grades 3-8 Testing Program in English Language Arts and Mathematics* that can be found at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/intro.pdf>

Scoring, Scanning, and Processing Timetable

SED has finalized a timetable for the scoring, scanning, and processing of the grade 3 – 8 ELA and mathematics tests. The complete schedule of important dates is attached to this memorandum (Attachment B). Based on the administration windows for each test, the approximate scoring dates and deadlines for submission of student data are included in this chart. The dates within which schools can expect to receive their testing and scoring materials (both printed and DVDs) are also included. Reasonable time lines have been set to allow districts to use any of several scoring models while still being able to process scores in time to ensure compliance with NCLB reporting requirements.

Scoring Models (revised 10/20/05)

For the 2005-06 school year, schools and school districts may use local decision-making processes select the model for the scoring of the Grade 3 – 8 ELA and mathematics tests (see below) that best meets their needs. Schools will be able to score these tests regionally, district-wide, or individually. Schools will be required to enter one of the following “scoring model codes” on student answer sheets:

1. Regional scoring;
2. Schools from two districts;
3. Three or more schools within a district;
4. Two schools within a district; or
5. One school only.

Schools and districts should carefully analyze their individual needs and capacities to determine their appropriate scoring model. BOCES and the Staff and Curriculum Development Network (S/CDN) can provide districts with technical support and advice in making this decision. In addition, a chart (Attachment C) is included in this memorandum to provide a brief comparison between regional/district scoring and local scoring. Discussions on these options will also be conducted at the planned Scoring Operations Training (see below).

When Can Schools Expect to Receive Score Reports?

Due to the extensive data collection and psychometric requirements of this new testing program, the time frame for issuing score reports will be different from the time frame for issuing score reports for the current grade 4 and 8 tests. As indicated on the attached timetable, score reports for the ELA tests will be issued to schools in early August 2006. Score reports for the mathematics tests will be issued to schools in late September 2006. These time frames are based upon the need to collect sufficient statewide data to perform standard setting and scaling prior to the release of final student scores. These necessary psychometric functions will take approximately 140 days once scores have been submitted to SED and CTB for analysis and verification. However, these time frames will decrease for the subsequent years of the Grades 3 – 8 Testing Program, as the complete psychometric analysis and standard setting need not be repeated after the first year of test administration. Additional information on the impact of these time frames on academic intervention services and other instructional decisions will be forthcoming.

Scoring Advisory Committee

The BOCES Staff and Curriculum Development Network (S/CDN) has established a Grades 3 – 8 Scoring Advisory Committee that has worked closely with SED and with representatives from the State’s five large city school districts, to provide valuable input in setting policy and procedures for the scoring and processing of these new statewide tests. A PowerPoint presentation entitled “Preparation For Scoring” lays out a general framework for the scoring process and also describes some upcoming scoring training initiatives. This presentation can be accessed at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/rev-scoring-prep.ppt>.

Scoring Operations Training

This summer, SED and S/CDN will host a full-day training session on scoring operations. This is not training in scoring the tests, but a session to provide general guidance and instruction on scoring proposals and logistics; best practices in setting up scoring sites; use of the scoring materials, including the operations manual; and a hands-on demonstration of the scoring operation. This session will be held on Tuesday, August 23, 2005 at the Rockland BOCES and will be repeated on Thursday, August 25, 2005 at the Monroe 2 BOCES. DVDs of the session will be made available to interested schools and districts. The final agenda for this session is being developed and additional information, including registration instructions, will be posted by mid-July on the *Latest News on Grades 3 – 8 Testing* web site at: <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/>.

Scoring Train the Trainer Workshops – ELA

In September, twelve *Train the Trainer* scoring workshops for the ELA tests will be held throughout the State to ensure access by all appropriate school and district staff. These sessions are based on the turnkey training model. Scoring leaders attending these sessions will be able to provide instruction and guidance to local school and district staff, who will in turn be able to train the teachers who will be scoring the tests. The preliminary dates and locations of these sessions, as well as a draft agenda, are included as part of the PowerPoint presentation at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/rev-scoring-prep.ppt>. Members of the S/CDN Scoring Advisory Committee and representatives from NYC and Yonkers will act as the “Points of Contact” in helping SED reach out to all schools and districts for this training. The points of contact will help coordinate the proper attendance and assist with various other logistics at their respective meeting sites. Additional information on this training will be available through your S/CDN representative.

Scoring Train the Trainer Workshops – Mathematics

During the end of October and the beginning of November, twelve *Train the Trainer* scoring workshops in mathematics will be conducted. Like the ELA workshops, these sessions will be held throughout the State to ensure access by all appropriate school and district staff. These sessions are also based on the turnkey training model in which scoring leaders attending these sessions will be able to provide instruction and guidance to local school and district staff, who will in turn be able to train the teachers who will be scoring the tests. The dates and locations of these sessions, as well as a draft agenda, are included as part of the power point presentation at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/rev-scoring-prep.ppt>. Additional information on this training will be available in September through your S/CDN representative.

Implementation Workgroup

SED will be convening an implementation workgroup to provide advice and strategies that will assure the effective implementation of the Grades 3 – 8 tests across the State. This workgroup will include a diverse sample of educational professionals from across the State who will help SED produce additional guidance and information that schools and districts can use to properly plan for their own individual test administrations in order to meet both their local needs and NCLB requirements. Additional issues to be addressed by this group will include scoring strategies, effective communication, professional development, curriculum guidance, data reporting, and administration strategies for special student populations.

A Guide to the Grade 3 – 8 Testing Program with Sample Tests

In September 2005, SED will issue a complete *Guide to the Grades 3 – 8 Testing Program*. The guide will include a complete sample test in each subject at each grade level with the corresponding scoring materials. The sample tests will be similar in both format and content to the actual tests that will be administered in January 2006 for ELA and in March 2006 for mathematics. The sample tests will also include a complete set of scoring materials, including rubrics, so that teachers and other school and district staff can review student work at each grade level. The sample tests will also be used as training materials during the ELA and mathematics scoring workshops as described above. Both the *Guide* and the sample tests will be available on the SED web site at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/home.html>.

Parent Brochure on the Grade 3 – 8 Tests in ELA and Mathematics

In September, SED will be posting a parent brochure describing the Grades 3 – 8 Testing Program. This brochure will include important information about the tests that their students will be taking starting in 2005-06. SED has partnered with various educational and parent groups throughout the State to make this brochure a source of useful information for the parents of NYS students. Translations of this brochure will be made available in Chinese, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian and Spanish. The English and translated editions of this brochure will be posted on the Department's web site at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/home.html>.

Additional Information

Additional information and updates are posted regularly on the *Latest News on Grades 3 – 8 Testing* web site at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/home.html>. All resources referenced within this memorandum will be available there, along with the resources listed in Attachment A. The web site is your best source for the latest information on this important program, and I urge you to check regularly for updates. In addition, specific information for teachers and administrators addressing test ordering, test security, and test administration and scoring will be available well in advance of the tests.

I hope this information is helpful. Please feel free to email any further questions, concerns, or inquiries to emscassessinfo@mail.nysed.gov.

cc: James A. Kadamus

Existing Resources

Resource	Web Address
Introduction to the Grades 3-8 Testing Program in English Language Arts and Mathematics (includes sample ELA questions)	http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/intro.pdf
Latest News on Grades 3-8 Testing (including ELA and Mathematics curriculum)	http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/home.html
Grades 3 – 8 English Language Arts Tests Home Page	http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/e-home.htm
Mathematics Toolkit: Curriculum Guidance Materials and Resources, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Mathematics Core Curriculum ◆ Pre-March/Post-March Indicators ◆ Template for Analysis of Mathematics Programs / Series ◆ Learning Standards Crosswalk ◆ Professional Development Modules ◆ Glossary for teachers / Suggested Lists of Mathematical Language ◆ Sample Mathematics Questions 	http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/guidance.htm
Grades 3 – 8 Mathematics Tests Home Page	http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/m-home.htm
Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Instructional Technology	http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/
Office of State Assessment	http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa

Important Dates for Grades 3-8 Tests in 2005-06

English Language Arts (ELA) Tests

Activity	Grade 3 ELA	Grade 4 ELA	Grade 5 ELA	Grade 6 ELA	Grade 7 ELA	Grade 8 ELA
Test Books Arrive at Schools from SED	1/4-1/6	1/4-1/6	1/4-1/6	1/11- 1/13	1/11- 1/13	1/11- 1/13
Administration of Tests	1/9-1/13	1/9-1/13	1/9-1/13	1/17- 1/20	1/17- 1/20	1/17- 1/20
Makeup Testing	1/17- 1/20	1/17- 1/20	1/17- 1/20	1/23- 1/27	1/23- 1/27	1/23- 1/27
DVDs for Scorer Training and Scoring Materials Arrive at Schools from SED	1/18- 1/19	1/18- 1/19	1/18- 1/19	1/25- 1/26	1/25- 1/26	1/25- 1/26
Questions and Answers for Scoring Posted at http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/	1/20	1/20	1/20	1/27	1/27	1/27
Help Line for Scoring Available (Final schedule to be determined)	1/23- 2/10	1/23- 2/17	1/23- 2/10	1/30- 2/24	1/30- 2/17	1/30- 2/28
Scoring of Constructed Responses	1/23- 2/10	1/23- 2/17	1/23- 2/10	1/30- 2/24	1/30- 2/17	1/30- 2/28
Final Date to Submit Answer Sheets to Scanning Centers*	2/13	2/20	2/13	2/27	2/20	2/28
Scanning Centers – Preliminary File Due to CTB/McGraw-Hill**	3/24	4/3	3/28	4/6	3/30	4/11
Scanning Centers – Final File Due to CTB/McGraw-Hill**	4/10	4/13	4/12	4/17	4/14	4/18
Score Reports Available to Schools (approximate)	8/7	8/7	8/7	8/7	8/7	8/7

*New York City and Yonkers may establish different due dates for district schools to submit answer sheets for scanning.

**The Level 2 Repository will be the source of data for submission to CTB/McGraw-Hill. Scanning centers must have required student data on the Level 2 Repository before this date.

Mathematics Tests

Activity	Grade 3 Math	Grade 4 Math	Grade 5 Math	Grade 6 Math	Grade 7 Math	Grade 8 Math
Test Books Arrive at Schools from SED	3/1-3/3	3/1-3/3	3/1-3/3	3/8-3/10	3/8-3/10	3/8-3/10
Administration of Tests	3/6-3/10	3/6-3/10	3/6-3/10	3/13-3/17	3/13-3/17	3/13-3/17
Makeup Testing	3/13-3/17	3/13-3/17	3/13-3/17	3/20-3/24	3/20-3/24	3/20-3/24
DVDs for Scorer Training and Scoring Materials Arrive at Schools from SED	3/15-3/16	3/15-3/16	3/15-3/16	3/22-3/23	3/22-3/23	3/22-3/23
Questions and Answers for Scoring Posted at http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/	3/17	3/17	3/17	3/24	3/24	3/24
Help Line for Scoring Available (Final schedule to be determined)	3/20-3/31	3/20-4/5	3/20-4/7	3/27-4/7	3/27-4/12	3/27-4/14
Scoring of Constructed Responses	3/20-3/31	3/20-4/5	3/20-4/7	3/27-4/7	3/27-4/12	3/27-4/14
Final Date to Submit Answer Sheets to Scanning Centers*	4/3	4/6	4/10	4/10	4/13	4/17
Scanning Centers –Preliminary File Due to CTB/McGraw-Hill**	5/5	5/10	5/11	5/12	5/17	5/19
Scanning Centers – Final File Due to CTB/McGraw-Hill**	5/15	5/22	5/23	5/24	5/26	5/30
Score Reports Available to Schools (approximate)	9/22	9/22	9/22	9/22	9/22	9/22

*New York City and Yonkers may establish different due dates for district schools to submit answer sheets for scanning.

**The Level 2 Repository will be the source of data for submission to CTB/McGraw-Hill. Scanning centers must have required student data on the Level 2 Repository before this date.

Regional/District Scoring vs. Local Scoring

Regional/District Hand Scoring		Local Hand Scoring
1.	Fosters collaboration between schools, districts and regions.	Fosters collaboration within schools.
2.	Increases the opportunity for varied professional development experiences.	Confines professional development experiences to immediate peers.
3.	Establishes a broader basis for consistency and fairness in statewide scoring.	Allows for variance in scoring processes (training, application of rubrics, etc.)
4.	Sets stage for sharing the coordination of scoring duties across regions and districts.	Focus for the coordination of scoring duties most likely falls upon a single person.
5.	Allows the sharing of resources across schools, districts and regions.	Increases the demands on limited resources (e.g., personnel, money, time)
6.	Requires larger space accommodations for scoring.	Requires less space for setting up scoring.
7.	Needs careful logistics coordination (receipt and return of student papers, answer sheets; movement of papers from group to group)	Limits logistics to classrooms within a school.

The amount of time and the number of teachers needed will depend on the resources available and the plan for hand scoring – number of groups; focus on reading then writing or all three simultaneously, etc. The estimated times for each item that could be used based on the hand scoring plan is provided in the test design in the Appendix of the PowerPoint presentation provided on June 2, 2005 to the SCDN and available at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/rev-scoring-prep.ppt>.