

Testing Reduction Report

Recommendations of the Board of Regents to the Governor and Legislature to Reduce Testing, Improve the Quality of Tests, and Reduce Test Stress and Anxiety as Required by Subpart F of Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2015



June 2015

Table of Contents

| SECTION | PAGE |
|---|-------------|
| Executive Summary | 1 |
| The Challenge: College and Career Readiness | 2 |
| Overview of the Assessment Program in New York State | 4 |
| Regents Actions to Reduce Testing | 8 |
| Summary of Adjustment Options | 13 |
| Conclusions | 15 |
| Appendix A: Subpart F of Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2015 | 16 |

I. Executive Summary

The 2015-2016 enacted state budget (Subpart F of Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2015 – See Attachment A) requires the Chancellor of the Board of Regents, on behalf of the Board, to submit a report by June 1, 2015 to the governor, the temporary president of the state senate, and the speaker of the assembly outlining recommendations to:

- Reduce the amount of state and local student testing;
- Improve the quality of state and local tests; and
- Reduce test-related stress and anxiety for students and educators.

In preparation of the report, the Chancellor was required to work with students, parents, educators, school districts, and other relevant stakeholders.

In compliance with statute, the Chancellor, on behalf of the Board, identified the following adjustment options:

| <i>Reduce Testing</i> |
|--|
| 1. The governor and the legislature should fund the Regents \$8.4 million funding request to eliminate stand-alone multiple choice field testing. |
| 2. Implement adaptive testing. |
| 3. Embed performance-based tasks. |
| <i>Improve the Quality of Tests</i> |
| 4. Release more test questions. |
| 5. Fund additional rounds of Teaching is the Core grants. |
| 6. Convene an advisory group to recommend enhancements to the next generation of assessments. |
| <i>Reducing Stress and Anxiety</i> |
| 7. Provide guidance to the field regarding the negative effects of test prep practices. |
| 8. Shorten the tests to reduce anxiety surrounding completion of the test. |
| 9. Allow students who are meaningfully engaged in the task to continue working on the ELA test for as long as they need beyond the standard administration window. |
| 10. Require candidates for teacher certification to complete coursework in assessment literacy to ensure research-based and informed use of assessments in classrooms. |
| 11. Identify best practices and make available model materials to facilitate discussions between school districts and parents regarding the use and importance of assessments. |

In addition to the adjustment options listed above, the Board of Regents and the Department have taken several actions in the past year to reduce testing, improve quality of the tests, and reduce testing stress and anxiety, with a summary provided in Section IV of this report (see page 8).

II. The Challenge: College and Career Readiness

Despite having some of the highest performing school districts in the country, New York does not prepare large percentages of its students for success in college and career. While statewide, 76 percent of the students who began high school four years earlier graduated, just 38 percent graduated with the English and mathematics skills necessary to enroll and succeed in credit-bearing college courses. Results are dramatically uneven across school districts, and even our highest performing districts can do better.

The work of raising student achievement in New York is critical to our state's long-term economic success and to the strength of our communities and our democracy. More importantly, it is critical to the future of each and every young person. Each of our 2.7 million public school students deserves a world class education that prepares him or her for success in college and careers in the 21st century global economy. The Board of Regents adopted a Reform Agenda in 2009 to do just that.

- The Board joined 45 other states, the District of Columbia, and Department of Defense schools in adopting new **college and career readiness standards**. These standards were developed by K-12 educators, higher education faculty, business leaders, and researchers working together across states to map back from college and career success the knowledge and skills students need at every grade level K-12. The development of the Common Core was an initiative of the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief School State Officers, and the broad state adoption of the standards reflects the simple truth that the knowledge and skills students must have in English language arts and mathematics to succeed in college and careers is consistent across state lines.
- We worked with the governor, the state legislature, and the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) to establish a **model teacher and principal evaluation system** based on multiple measures that for the first time incorporates student learning and provides comprehensive feedback and targeted professional development.
- Millions of dollars in federal funding have been invested to support **innovative approaches to turning around our lowest performing schools** and expanding opportunities for high-needs students, including new career and technical education schools like P-TECH in Brooklyn and new community schools providing wraparound services.
- We are developing tools to help educators use **evidence about student learning** to inform improved teaching practice.

- Because nothing is more important for the success of a student than having an effective teacher in a classroom in a school led by an effective principal, we have changed the way teachers and leaders are prepared and certified to ensure that **educators have the skills** required by our high standards and today's diverse classrooms.

In recognition of the challenging work of transforming teaching and learning, the Board of Regents and the Department leveraged federal Race to the Top funds to provide unprecedented resources, professional development and other supports to facilitate local implementation efforts of the Regents Reform Agenda.

- **Professional Development:** The Department launched regional Network Teams – teams of experts on curriculum and instruction – based in BOCES and large school districts, created the Network Team Institutes (NTI) to provide statewide turnkey training to the Network Teams, and launched a professional development website, EngageNY.org, to provide optional no cost training and instructional tools that can be adapted in the classroom.
- **Curriculum:** The Department is developing optional curriculum modules that districts can choose to adopt, adapt, or ignore, and is making available a video library of exemplars of excellent teaching.
- **Teacher and Leader Supports:** The Department provided grants to help school districts implement model teacher and leader support and evaluation programs and to ensure the equitable distribution of effective teachers, including the Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (STLE) grant program which provides over \$80 million in Race to the Top funds to over 100 districts developing career ladder models that leverage the new evaluations.

III. Overview of the Assessment Program in New York State

History of the Assessment Program

The State Education Department, under the direction of the Board of Regents, has a storied tradition in assessments, dating to 1865. Regents exams were developed as commencement-level achievement tests to measure the state learning standards and, with appropriate coursework, earn a student a Regents Diploma.

Elementary and Intermediate-level achievement testing began in 1966 with the grades 3, 6, and 9 Pupil Evaluation Program Tests in Reading and Math. A decade later, the grade 5 reading test and grade 4 program evaluation test in science were added.

The 2001 federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) required, among other measures, administration of the following assessments:

- Grades 3-8 English language arts (ELA) and mathematics exams;
- At least one science exam in grades 3-5, 6-9, and 10-12; and
- At least one high school ELA and one high school mathematics exam.¹

New York began to administer the grades 3-8 required NCLB assessments in 2006. **Only two required state tests (Regents Exams in US History & Global Government and Global History & Geography) are not federal mandates.**² Other state and local tests are optional, including:

- Optional state assessments for advanced diploma and coursework purposes, such as Regents exams in mathematics and science;
- Optional local tests for instructional purposes, such as locally-selected diagnostic, interim or benchmark assessments; and
- Optional tests for evaluation purposes.

The state has not created or required any additional tests as part of the implementation of new college and career readiness standards. The negotiated teacher and principal evaluation law enacted by the legislature and the governor contained requirements for locally selected measures of student learning. A variety of pressures at the state and local level may have resulted in the local adoption of unnecessary testing in some districts. The Regents and the Department strongly believe – and have advised the field – that the amount of testing should be the minimum necessary to inform effective decision-making.

¹ Additional assessments may be required for English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities. Some students may also be required to participate in field testing.

² For purposes of the social studies assessments required to earn a high school diploma, students who first enter grade 9 in September 2011 and thereafter or who are otherwise eligible to receive a diploma in June 2015 and thereafter must pass either the Regent Exam in US History & Government or the Regents Exam in Global History & Geography.

Grades 3-8 Test Development and Administration

New York Educators from P-12 and higher education advise the Department on all stages of the design, development, and review of assessments necessary to measure student progress on statewide learning standards.³ **Teachers assist with the development and review of each and every test question**, as well as the final full test before it is administered. In addition, each test question is field tested with New York students prior to being included on an actual scored assessment. Following initial test administration, educators review the test and test results and, based on their experience and knowledge of the learning standards, recommend performance level (proficiency) cut scores to the Commissioner and the Board of Regents.⁴ **Every test item is designed from scratch and meets industry best practice for item quality, fairness, and accessibility.**

In fact, recent studies have found that **New York’s tests are a “top truth teller” with regard to how closely the state tests indicate a student’s actual proficiency in ELA and mathematics**⁵ and that **New York has the strongest proficiency standards in the country.**⁶ The study by Achieve found that in both ELA and mathematics, the state tests had the lowest disparity rating between performance on the state test versus performance on the national NAEP tests.

The grades 3-8 ELA and mathematics tests emphasize critical thinking, reading challenging texts, opportunities for students to write with evidence drawn from texts, and math questions that require students to demonstrate their mathematical reasoning through real world applications. As the tests were made more comprehensive over the last decade (even before the transition to the higher standards), the tests were lengthened. In addition, at the request of educators across the state, the scheduled length of time for the tests was extended beyond the expected completion time to allow students who may need additional time to have the time they need. **However, steps have been taken in the past two years to reduce time on task and test length.** Although our current grades 3-8 English language arts and mathematics exams take between 40 to 70 minutes to complete, the testing schedule provides students between 60 and 90 minutes each session spread over 3 days so that students do not have to rush through the exam.

These assessment guidelines were developed with input from the field and brought the state closer to the schedules issued by the highly regarded Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System and the New England Common Assessment

³ See <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/teacher/home.html> for our state assessment teacher recruitment processes.

⁴ New York’s test development processes are posted at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/teacher/test-development-process.pdf>. Assessment design, passage selection, and item review criteria are posted at <http://www.engageny.org/3-8> for the Grades 3-8 ELA and math tests and <http://www.engageny.org/resource/regents-exams> for the Regents Exams.

⁵ See <http://www.achieve.org/naepbrief>.

⁶ <http://educationnext.org/states-raise-proficiency-standards-math-reading/>

Program, that ask schools to schedule longer blocks than the expected testing time so that students who may need additional time can demonstrate their knowledge and skills. The scheduled testing time in English language arts and mathematics combined accounts for less than 1 percent of the school year.

Just as prior to the state's adoption of higher standards, testing accommodations for students with disabilities are to be given consistent with the recommendations of local committees on special education. However, even with the appropriate testing accommodations, for students with significant disabilities, the state assessment may not adequately measure the student's learning. When students with disabilities are required to participate in an assessment at their chronological age that is significantly misaligned with content learned at their instructional level, the assessment may not provide instructional actionable information on student performance or foster the most prudent instructional decisions. Because participation at chronological grade level is a federal requirement, a waiver from the US Department of Education would be required to administer the state assessment at a student's instructional grade level.

Test Questions and Providing Instructionally Relevant Information

The Regents and the Department share the concerns that have been raised about the limited number of test questions that were released following the grades 3-8 tests. We agree that test questions can have instructional value for teachers who may, in the context of the standards, use questions from previous tests as exemplars, not for the purposes of excessive test preparation, but to inform lessons and classroom activities. Because the Department prints the grades 3-8 tests internally, only 4 versions of the exam can be created and shipped to school districts. While printing tests internally is less costly for the state, it prevents the Department from printing sufficient test versions (e.g., other states print 20-25 or more test versions). As a result, the Department is required to conduct stand-alone field testing in order to have enough test questions banked to develop the following years exam and to be reused on future exams. Also, because test questions from one year may be used in a future year's test, having a limited amount of printed test versions prevents the Department from releasing more test questions to educators and parents.

In order to control the costs of the assessment program and ensure the integrity of future assessments, the Department released 25 percent of the 2013 and 50 percent of the 2014 grade 3-8 questions with annotated answers. However, with additional funding, the Department would be able to print more versions of the test, which would allow the Department to embed more field test questions, eliminate stand-alone multiple choice field tests, and release significantly more test questions.

The Department will continue to make instructionally-relevant information from state assessments available to educators and parents, including:

- Instructional reports for educators that include information about each student's response to each test question, including whether the student answered the

question correctly and the learning standard(s) measured by the question. These reports will be available July 1 to allow educators to use this information for summer curriculum writing, professional development and planning activities.

- Once the test questions are released (anticipated at 50 percent, unless additional funds are made available), additional educator reports will be available to allow analysis of the reasons for student incorrect responses on released questions.
- Statewide parents reports are available following the score release, which provide information about student strengths and areas in need of additional support. Additional parent reports are being developed locally in different regions of the state.

IV. Regents Actions to Reduce Testing

As part of its February 2014 report on implementation of higher standards, a Regents workgroup made 19 adjustment option recommendations – ultimately adopted by the full Board – including 12 related specifically to state and local assessments. As part of the 2014-2015 enacted state budget, the governor and the legislature codified many of the Regents recommendations into law, and included additional provisions.

| Regents Workgroup Recommendation | Category | 2014-15 Budget Action | Status of Implementation |
|--|--|--|--------------------------|
| <p>Give high school students more time to meet the Common Core standards. Extend the phase-in for Common Core-aligned Regents examinations required for graduation so that the class of 2022 is the first that is required to pass English and mathematics Regents exams at college and career ready levels. In addition, provide flexibility with respect to the Regents Geometry Exam by allowing, similar to the flexibility offered at local discretion for the current school year in Algebra, the higher score to count for students who take the 2005 standards Geometry exam in addition to the Common Core-aligned Geometry exam through the January 2016 administration. Student performance will continue to be reported on a 0-100 scale.</p> | <p>Reduce test stress and anxiety.</p> | <p>None.</p> | <p>✓</p> |
| <p>Eliminate high stakes for students. Issue guidance indicating that (1) the Department neither requires nor encourages districts to make promotion or placement decisions using student performance on state assessments in grades 3-8; and (2) if districts choose to consider state assessments in grades 3-8 when making promotion or placement decisions, they should make adjustments to ensure students are not negatively impacted by the Common Core transition and should use multiple measures - not grades 3-8 state assessment results alone.</p> | <p>Reduce test stress and anxiety.</p> | <p>Provided that school districts or BOCES may not report grade 3-8 test results on official transcripts or permanent records through 2018. SED must notify parents that such results will not be placed on a student's record.</p> <p>Provided that grade 3-8 test results may not constitute the major component of promotion decisions.</p> | <p>✓</p> |

| Regents Workgroup Recommendation | Category | 2014-15 Budget Action | Status of Implementation |
|--|---------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>Offer smarter testing options for students with disabilities. Advocate for a federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) waiver from the United States Education Department (USED) to allow students with severe disabilities who are not eligible for the alternate tests to be assessed based on instructional level rather than chronological age.</p> | Reduce test stress and anxiety. | Required SED to issue regulations to implement components of the federal waiver related to students with disabilities (to the extent such waiver was granted). | USED has yet to act on SED's waiver. |
| <p>Offer smarter testing options for English language learners. Advocate for a federal ESEA waiver from USED to allow English language learners to be assessed via the language acquisition test (NYSESLAT) rather than the English language arts exam for their first two years.</p> | Reduce test stress and anxiety. | Required SED to issue regulations to implement components of the federal waiver related to English language learners (to the extent such waiver was granted). | USED has yet to act on SED's waiver. |
| <p>Clarify what new grades 3-8 test scores mean for students. Because student performance on the 2013 grades 3-8 tests was based on more rigorous standards, and therefore proficiency rates cannot be compared to scores from previous years, provide clarification for what Performance Level 2 means when aligned with Common Core Regents exam performance levels. The new Level 2 on the grades 3-8 ELA and math tests aligns to "On Track for Regents Exam Passing for Graduation" on Common Core Regents Exams (until the required passing score is raised to the college and career ready level).</p> | N/A | None. | ✓ |
| <p>Focus extra support on students that need it the most. Extend the Academic Intervention Services "hold harmless" provision applied in 2012-13 to 2013-14 and 2014-15 to better ensure that existing support services for students remain relevant and appropriate as New York implements the Common Core.</p> | Reduce test stress and anxiety. | None. | ✓ |

| Regents Workgroup Recommendation | Category | 2014-15 Budget Action | Status of Implementation |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p>Reduce field testing and provide increased access to test questions. Advocate for the governor and state legislature to adopt the Regents state budget priority request for \$8.4 million in new funding to eliminate multiple-choice stand-alone field testing and to allow the Department to print more versions of state tests so that more test questions may be released to teachers and parents.</p> | <p>Reduce testing.</p> <p>Improve the quality of tests.</p> | <p>Required SED to reduce field testing and to make significantly more test questions available to the public to the extent possible based on available funds. However, no additional funds were provided, which in effect negated any impact of this provision.</p> | <p>The Regents and the Department have continued to advocate for additional funding to reduce field testing and increase access to test questions. (Senate bill S.5124 by Majority Leader Flanagan provides new funding to accomplish this objective.)</p> |
| <p>Develop Native Language Arts assessments for Spanish-speaking ELLs. Advocate for the governor and state legislature to adopt the Board of Regents state budget priority request for \$10 million in new funding to develop Native Language Arts assessments to provide districts the option of offering this assessment when it would best measure the progress of Spanish-speaking ELLs.</p> | <p>Reduce test stress and anxiety.</p> <p>Improve the quality of tests.</p> | <p>None.</p> | <p>The Regents and the Department have continued to advocate for additional funding to develop Native Language Arts assessments for ELLs.</p> |
| <p>Reduce unnecessary tests. Conduct expedited review of evaluation plan amendments where the changes reduce or eliminate unnecessary testing.</p> | <p>Reduce testing.</p> | <p>Provided for expedited reviews of evaluation plans where the only change is to reduce local standardized tests required pursuant to such plan.</p> | <p>✓</p> |
| <p>Eliminate traditional standardized tests in grades K-2. Disapprove evaluation plans beginning in 2014-15 that include administration of traditional standardized tests in grades K-2 and remove all grade K-2 traditional standardized tests from the list of approved locally-selected student assessments for APPR purposes. (The state does not administer traditional standardized tests in K-2.)</p> | <p>Reduce test stress and anxiety.</p> <p>Reduce testing.</p> | <p>Prohibited administration of standardized tests in grades Pre-kindergarten-2.</p> | <p>✓</p> |

| Regents Workgroup Recommendation | Category | 2014-15 Budget Action | Status of Implementation |
|--|-----------------|---|--------------------------|
| <p>Establish a 1 percent cap on time for locally-selected standardized testing. Limit the time students may spend on standardized tests to comply with districts' locally selected measures as part of APPR. (The federally required State assessments in grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics account for less than 1% of instructional time.)</p> | | <p>Enacted caps on state standardized testing time (1%), local standardized testing time (1%), and time spent on test preparation (2%).</p> <p>Provided exemptions to these provisions for students with disabilities and English language learners pursuant to federal requirements.</p> | ✓ |
| <p>Offer flexibility to districts to further reduce local testing time required by evaluations. Allow the use of school-wide measures for evaluation purposes for teachers of middle school social studies (grades 6-8) and science (grades 6-7).</p> | Reduce testing. | None. | ✓ |

In addition to the actions taken in the context of the workgroup, the Regents have also reduced testing and its associated pressure by:

- Reducing testing times and the number of test questions on the federally required grades 3-8 assessments.
- Eliminating “double testing” that required 7th and 8th grade students who take the Regents exams in mathematics to also take the grade level mathematics assessment after the Department successfully sought and received a waiver from USED.
- Provided additional flexibility for high school students during the rollout of Common Core exams by allowing students the option to take the old test in addition to the new test and have the higher score count for grading and other purposes.

Identifying Testing Best Practices Through “Teaching is the Core”

In August 2014, the Department awarded \$9.2 million in “Teaching is the Core” grants to school districts (or consortia of school districts) to support efforts to improve the quality of all educational assessments, reduce the number of assessments that do not

contribute to teaching and learning, and identify and/or develop high/quality assessments already in use for instructional purposes that can simultaneously be used for evaluation purposes.

Through this program, the 31 grantees have, among other activities, engaged in:

- Assessment Review: assembling a district-level team to identify whether assessments measure the state learning standards;
- Action Plan Development: creating and publicly posting a description of the action plan to implement the results of the assessment review;
- Action Plan Implementation: Convening groups of educators to carry out each aspect of the action plan; and
- Professional Development: Awardees were required to establish professional development programs to assist teachers in identifying high-quality assessment practices and provide training and resources to support the use of assessments to inform instruction.

While the program ends in June 2015, after the submission of this report, we already have examples of best practices from multiple districts engaged in this grant program:

- Districts found it helpful to have a breakdown of the number of assessments that are given by grade level or content area has started very powerful conversations locally not only about assessments but also about grading systems, district missions, and use of common planning time.
- Some districts have formed collaborative relationships to create common interim assessments for mathematics in grades 6-8, with plans to expand to other grades and content areas.
- Districts have identified and corrected gaps, overlapping areas, and duplications in their local assessment system.

V. Summary of Adjustment Options

Reduce Testing

- 1. The governor and the legislature should fund the Regents \$8.4 million funding request to eliminate stand-alone multiple choice field testing.** In order to better address concerns from the public regarding testing time and the release of test questions, the Department has for several years requested funds to implement state-of-the-art printing and distribution processes for the grades 3-8 tests. By creating more versions of the tests, most field test questions could be embedded in the operational tests, thereby substantially reducing the number of schools and students required to participate in stand-alone field tests.
- 2. Implement adaptive testing.** This form of testing could reduce testing time by adapting test administration to the pattern of student test responses to more quickly assess the level of knowledge and skills. This approach, however, requires a mature central and local technology infrastructure, requires a very large question bank at high development cost, and is not currently approvable by USED since it likely results in off-grade-level testing.
- 3. Embed performance-based tasks.** The next generation of testing could include more performance-based tasks that closely align with classroom instruction, but this would require significant investments to ensure reliability, validity, and fairness standards.

Improve the Quality of Tests

- 4. Release more test questions.** By funding the Regents \$8.4 million referenced in adjustment option 1, the Department would, in addition to being able to dramatically reduce field testing, be able to more rapidly build and maintain its test question bank, allowing for the release of significantly more test questions following test administration.
- 5. Fund additional rounds of Teaching is the Core grants.** The Department's \$9.2 million program has demonstrated promise in identifying best practices in assessment programs. Because this is the only known dedicated funding source for local collaboration around improvement of assessment programs, additional rounds should be funded by the governor and the legislature in next year's budget to expand the conversations to additional districts.
- 6. Convene an advisory group to recommend enhancements to the next generation of assessments.** The Department will convene a standing advisory group comprised of stakeholders and experts to recommend enhancements to the next generation of assessments. The council will advise on how to create assessments that maintain high learning standards and support great teaching, accountability and meaningful measures of student progress, while reducing the amount of testing and test prep, improving test quality, and reducing student and adult stress.

Reducing Stress and Anxiety

- 7. Provide guidance to the field regarding the negative effects of test prep practices.** The Regents and the Department strongly discourage “test prep” practices because research demonstrates that is not how students learn best. In addition, students perform best on local, regional, statewide or national assessments when they have great teachers delivering high quality instruction aligned to rigorous standards. Rote test prep practices are incompatible with highly effective teaching and lead to lower student performance.
- 8. Shorten the tests to reduce anxiety surrounding completion of the test.** The tests could be shortened further if the state stopped reliably measuring certain skills (i.e., reading, writing, problem solving), stopped providing reliable instructional sub-score reports, and/or stopped measuring certain performance levels.
- 9. Allow students who are meaningfully engaged in the task to continue working on the ELA test for as long as they need beyond the standard administration window.** Feedback from the field suggests that some students need additional time to employ the strategies they learn in the classroom on the ELA tests. Because the purpose of the tests is for students to demonstrate what they know, not how quickly they can answer questions, there is an opportunity to provide students who are meaningfully engaged in the assessment to continue to work on the ELA test beyond the regularly scheduled times.
- 10. Require candidates for teacher certification to complete coursework in assessment literacy to ensure research-based and informed use of assessments in classrooms.** To ensure that each educator in classrooms across the state has access to the most up-to-date, research-based techniques about the use and importance of assessments in the classroom, certification requirements can be updated to require a course of instruction in assessment literacy for all new certification candidates.
- 11. Identify best practices and make available model materials to facilitate discussions between school districts and parents regarding the use and importance of assessments.** While there are districts and schools across the state that have excellent strategies for communicating with teachers, students and parents about the role of assessments, it is clear that there are others that would benefit from best practices and model materials to use to engage their communities. The Department will convene school and district leaders exemplifying best practices in this area and make available optional resources to be used around the state for districts, teachers, students and parents to engage on the role of assessments.

VI. Conclusions

Students, parents and teachers need clear expectations and measures of progress. The assessment program is a key tool to support improved teaching and learning. The assessment system also helps us demonstrate to parents that their children are meeting rigorous expectations as they progress through the education system.

As the ongoing statewide discussion on the assessment program continues, it will be important to continue conversations with each of the critical stakeholders:

- **Students:** We need to help students understand that the purpose of testing is to understand what they know and can do and what they do not yet know or cannot yet do so the adults can provide additional assistance. Although meaningful learning will be challenging, demonstrating achievement through testing does not need to be an overly stressful process.
- **Parents:** We need to better affirm parent concerns that the best education is wide not narrow, and the best tests are as short as possible while measuring the kinds of knowledge and skills we want for our children.
- **Educators:** We need to acknowledge that although new evaluation systems provide a heightened context for test scores, stressful rote test preparation will not result in student learning or produce better test results on higher-order learning standards.

We can and will work together to build better tests that help us better celebrate teaching and learning. The recommendations contained in this report are an important first step.

Appendix A: Subpart F of Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2015

Section 1. Testing reduction report. New York families in many districts are expressing significant stress and anxiety from over-testing. The demands of state tests have been growing and there has been an increase in the number of local tests. As a result, testing in many districts has reached a level that is counterproductive and must be addressed. On or before June 1, 2015, the Chancellor of the Board of Regents shall submit a report to the Governor, the Temporary President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the Assembly outlining recommendations that shall help to: reduce the amount of state and local student testing, improve the quality thereof, and thereby reduce test-related stress and anxiety for students and educators. The report shall outline ways in which any future testing in New York shall be implemented in a manner that minimizes classroom preparation, student stress and student anxiety. The Chancellor shall work with students, parents, educators, school districts, and other relevant stakeholders in preparing the report.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.