



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Honorable MaryEllen Elia
Commissioner
New York State Education Department
New York State Education Building
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12234

June 4, 2019

Dear Commissioner Elia:

Thank you for your participation in the U.S. Department of Education's (the Department) assessment peer review process under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), which governed State assessments through the 2016-2017 school year. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which governs State assessments beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, maintains the essential requirements from NCLB that each State annually administer high-quality assessments in at least reading/language arts, mathematics and science that meet nationally recognized professional and technical standards with a few additional requirements. I appreciate the efforts of the New York State Education Department (NYSED) to provide additional evidence in response to the feedback the Department provided on October 5, 2018 (see <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/nclbfinalassess/ny5.pdf>).

State assessment systems provide essential information that States, districts, principals, and teachers can use to identify the academic needs of students, target resources and supports toward students who need them most, evaluate school and program effectiveness, and close achievement gaps among students. A high-quality assessment system also provides useful information to parents about their children's advancement against and achievement of grade-level standards. The Department's peer review of State assessment systems is designed to provide feedback to States to support the development and administration of high-quality assessments.

Department staff carefully evaluated NYSED's submission of the additional evidence requested, and found that the components of your assessment system for reading/language arts and mathematics general assessments in grades 3-8 (the New York State Testing Program) and high school (the Regents Examinations) meet all of the statutory and regulatory requirements of sections 1111(b)(1) and (3) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB. In addition, Department staff also has determined that these assessments meet the new requirements for State assessments under the ESEA, as amended by ESSA. Congratulations on meeting this important ESEA requirement; assessments that produce valid and reliable results are fundamental to a State's accountability system.

Based on the recommendations from these peer reviews and the Department's analysis of the State's submission, I have determined the following:

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The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

- Reading/language arts and mathematics general assessments in grades 3-8 (New York State Testing Program): **Meets requirements of the ESEA, as amended by the NCLB and ESSA.**
- Reading/language arts and mathematics general assessments in high school (Regents examinations): **Meets requirements of the ESEA, as amended by the NCLB and ESSA.**

Please be aware that approval of NYSED’s assessments is not a determination that the system complies with Federal civil rights requirements, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Finally, please remember that, if NYSED makes significant changes in these assessments, the State must submit information about those changes to the Department for review and approval.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to improving educational outcomes for all students. I look forward to our continued partnership as we move ahead with this critical work. I appreciate the work you are doing to improve your schools and provide a high-quality education for your students. We have found it a pleasure working with your staff on this review. Please accept my congratulations for your State's approved assessments under the ESEA. I wish you well in your continued efforts to improve student achievement in New York.

If you have any questions, please contact at: NewYork.OESE@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Frank T. Brogan
Assistant Secretary for
Elementary and Secondary Education

cc: Steven E. Katz, Director, Office of State Assessment

