



Superintendent's Report

To: Board Members

From: Leah M. Christman

Date: July 16, 2012

- After attending a meeting with PDE on the roll-out plans for Keystone exams, it is obvious that the State is still working on logistics. We have been told that there will be no PSSA for 11th grade this year and the end-of-course Keystone exams for Alg.I, Biology and Literature will be implemented. There is a problem with the rollout for our current 11th graders who according to NCLB must be tested at least once during high school. There is a possibility that all 11th graders will be required to take the end-of-course Keystones, in addition to other students who will be completing the courses in 2013 and 2014 during the phase in. (Proposed plan follows). The State is waiting to hear from the Federal gov't for approval of the plan. As soon as we get confirmation from PDE, we'll communicate details to parents and students.
- We have been informed that PA will not be requesting flexibility to NCLB and the established benchmarks. This means we are still on track for 100% proficiency by ALL students by 2014. Proficiency for Keystone exams will be required for graduation starting with the class of 2017 (our students entering 8th grade this year). The PDE will be applying for new Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) based on initial field test results for the Keystone exams. Current AMO for assessment is 89% in math and 91% in reading. 26 states have been granted flexibility so far and 10 more plus D.C. have applied. Legislators have not yet reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).
- For the next 2 years, some students will be double tested in writing as the state field-tests new exams aligned to the common core standards.
(Highlighted on next page)
- All education administrators will complete 2 day training through CLIU for the Educator Effectiveness Program based on Charlotte Danielson's observation/ supervision model in July and August. We are waiting for the teacher on-line training to open on the PDE SAS site. It was supposed to

open July 1. Half of our teachers will need to complete the online training this year and one third will be observed using the new rubric. This will not be much of a change for us since we already use Danielson's model (since 2004).

- Several laws were passed with the state budget which will require us to provide additional training and documentation to the State. No State funding is targeted for these mandates to my knowledge. As details unfold, I'll apprise the Board:
 - All educators must have 3 hours of training on signs of child abuse every five years.
 - Someone must be trained in CPR and present at all times when students are in buildings during regular school hours.
 - All coaches must be trained in signs of cardiac arrest in student athletes.
 - Schools must provide documentation by Oct 15 each year of the breakdown of all expenses related to all PIAA sports including data on participants by sport, costs for supplies, coaches, uniforms, maintenance of fields and facilities, donations, booster club funds, etc.
 - The Educator Effectiveness Program becomes required using new forms for supervision for teachers beginning 2013-14, and Principals, other educational administrators, and specialists in 2014-15.
- All administrators will participate in an Admin. Retreat this Wed.- Fri. to discuss leadership skills required for success and to plan building/ department and personal goals for growth in the upcoming year,
- We are keeping a close eye on class sizes in our primary grades- trying to balance budget concerns with educational concerns with our youngest students.
- Parent letters for PSSA student results are being processed at each school for mailing. We have not yet received any district or building AYP information.
- We received notification on our new Chinese teachers and are still looking for host families.

From <http://www.pasa-net.org/updatetoday.asp> -

Proposed Assessment Transition - During last week's Board of Education meeting, officials with the PDE reviewed the proposed transition plan for Pennsylvania's state assessment system. Officials emphasized that the schedule was the **proposed** transition plan and is contingent upon 1) approval from the U.S. Department of Education, 2) approval of the proposed Chapter 4 regulations and 3) adequate funding to support all testing activities.

The proposed transition schedule is as follows:

2012-13:

- Grades 3-8 math and reading PSSA
- Grade 12 retest in October
- Grades 3-8 and 11 math and reading PASA
- Grades 5 and 8 writing PSSA
- Grades 4 and 8 science PSSA
- Grades 4, 8 and 11 science PASA
- No PSSA-M
- Grades 3-5 stand-alone writing field test (results used to implement a writing component into the proposed Grades 3-5 English Language Arts assessment)
- Keystone Exams – Algebra I, literature and biology. The keystones will be used for two purposes: proposed state requirement that the class of 2017 and beyond demonstrate proficiency for the purpose of graduation, as per proposed Chapter 4 regulations, and accountability as per NCLB, with those details and federal approval pending. The testing window for the keystones will be Dec. 10-14 (2012), Jan. 9-16, May 13-24 and July 29-Aug. 2 (make-up). The PDE also will be applying for new Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) based on initial field test results. Current AMO for assessment is 89% in math and 91% in reading.

2013-14: (*based on Common Core)

- Grades 3-5 English Language Arts PSSA* (includes a writing component)
- Grades 3-5 math PSSA*
- Grades 6-8 math and reading PSSA
- Grades 3-8 and 11 math and reading PASA
- Grade 8 writing PSSA
- Grades 4 and 8 science PSSA
- Grades 4, 8 and 11 science PASA
- Grades 6-8 stand-alone writing field test (results used to implement a writing component into the proposed Grades 6-8 English Language Arts assessment)
- Keystone Exams – Algebra I, literature, biology

2014-15:

- Grades 3-8 English Language Arts PSSA* (includes a writing component)
- Grades 3-8 math PSSA*
- Grades 3-8 and 11 math and reading PASA
- Grades 4 and 8 science PSSA
- Grades 4, 8 and 11 science PASA
- Keystone Exams – Algebra I, literature and biology

Keystone Exam Implementation and AYP – Also at last week's meeting, officials with the PDE outlined the schedule for implementation of the Keystone Exams and specifically who is included in AYP. Officials noted that the option selected was one of six suggested to an advisory group and the one favored by superintendents and school officials on that group.

The scheduled implementation is as follows:

- **2012-13:** All 11th grade students regardless of whether they're taking the course currently or have taken it in the past
- **2013-14:** All 11th grade students who have never taken a Keystone Exam, plus banked scores from 2012-13 10th grade students. (Students who were not proficient in the 2012-13 may retest.)
- **2014-15:** All 11th grade students who have never taken a Keystone Exam and banked scores from 2013-14 10th grade students. (Students who were not proficient in 2012-13 and/or 2013-14 may retest.)
- **2015-16:** the highest score of all 11th grade students. Every 11th grade student must have taken the Keystone at least one by his/her 11th grade year.

Twenty-six new states and the District of Columbia have formally submitted requests to the U.S. Department of Education for waivers from key provisions of No Child Left Behind. This adds to the 11 states that the Obama Administration announced earlier this month had developed and agreed to implement bold education reforms in exchange for relief from burdensome federal mandates.

The latest 26 states—Arkansas, Arizona, Connecticut, Delaware, Iowa, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina, Nevada, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin—along with D.C., have all proposed plans to raise standards, improve accountability, and support reforms to improve principal and teacher effectiveness.

Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Tennessee have already received flexibility from NCLB based on their locally designed plans to spur education reform.

"The best ideas to meet the needs of individual students are going to come from the local level. Like the first round of waiver applicants, these plans will protect children, raise the bar and give states the freedom to implement reforms that improve student achievement," said U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

If their plans are approved, these 26 states and D.C. will:

- Set performance targets based on whether students graduate from high school ready for college and career rather than having to meet NCLB's 2014 deadline based on arbitrary targets for proficiency.
- Design locally tailored interventions to help students achieve instead of one-size-fits-all remedies prescribed at the federal level.
- Be free to emphasize student growth and progress using multiple measures rather than just test scores.
- Have more flexibility in how they spend federal funds to benefit students.

The 27 waiver requests will be posted online along with the names of the peer reviewers who will convene next month to review them. States seeking flexibility in the second round will be notified later this spring. The Department expects additional states to request flexibility by Sept. 6 for the third round of review.

The flexibility was developed with input from state and other education leaders across America under waiver authority granted to the U.S. Department of Education in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. More comprehensive reforms, outlined in President Obama's Blueprint for Reform, await Congressional reauthorization of the ESEA.