



August 2011

Dear Superintendent:

The revised 2011-2012 school year Elementary- and Intermediate-level testing schedule can be found at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/schedules/>. **This schedule supersedes the previously released schedule.**

There are a few changes this year. First, the Grades 3-8 ELA and Mathematics assessments will now be given in April rather than May. I recognize the increased stress this places on our systems and teachers and students in particular. I'm also aware that some districts will have to revise their academic calendars to accommodate the testing schedule. I apologize for these complications, but this is an unavoidable and necessary adjustment.

As we move toward the new teacher and principal evaluation system, the timing of the assessment results becomes increasingly more important. In order to ensure results are available in time for these evaluations to be completed, we must have the assessments completed, graded and the results distributed to the field by June 15. That deadline necessitates the exams be administered in April. Again, I apologize for the added stress that this may cause.

The second significant change this year is the implementation of uniform testing dates for these assessments. Adopting uniform testing dates helps provide an additional layer of protection and security and helps ensure the integrity of the exams and, by extension, the results. I recently initiated a review of exam integrity. Establishing uniform testing dates is an important step toward ensuring that testing scandals that have arisen in other states are not repeated in New York. Tainted testing only damages the very students we're trying to educate.

On a different note, I'm sure you're aware that New York City Mayor Bloomberg and several private donors have provided funding to restore January Regents exams in 2012. The following Regents exams will be offered next January: Comprehensive English; Living Environment; Physical Setting/Earth Science; U.S. History & Government; Geometry; Global History & Geography; Algebra 2/Trigonometry; Integrated Algebra; Physical Setting/Chemistry; Physical Setting/Physics; Regents Competency Tests (RCT).

I hope the restoration of the exams this academic year helps more of your students meet the Regents graduation requirements and successfully move on to higher education and career paths. Unfortunately, we still face funding uncertainty for future years' January Regents.

We face many challenges in our schools. Fewer resources and higher expectations are placing increased demands on every administrator and educator in the State. But as we move forward to implement the Regents' reforms, our students need every ounce of our commitment to help them build a better future. I look forward to working closely with you to ensure that this happens.

May I offer you my best wishes for a safe and successful school year for every one of the students entrusted to your care. If you have any questions or concerns about the assessment schedule or any other issue, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John B. King". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "K".  
John B. King  
Commissioner