THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

TO:	P-12 Education Committee
FROM:	Angelica Infante-Green
SUBJECT:	Update on Computer-Based Testing
DATE:	April 11, 2016
AUTHORIZATION(S):	

SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

Provide the Board of Regents with an update on New York State's transition to computer-based testing starting in the 2015-16 academic year. Department staff will provide an update on the computer-based New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) and the Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Computer-Based Field Tests for public schools, charter schools and non-public schools.

Reason(s) for Consideration

The first computer-based NYSAA tests were administered in March 2016 and computer-based testing, including the first administration of computer-based field tests in grades 3-8, will continue through June.

Procedural History

This issue will come before the P-12 Education Committee for discussion at the April 2016 meeting.

Background Information

New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA)

Over the last several years, the Department engaged educators from across the State in conversations about potential revisions to the NYSAA to ensure that the

assessment more appropriately assessed the range of students with severe disabilities and addressed time and resource concerns of the educators who administer the NYSAA. As a result of these conversations, the Department took steps to research an alternate assessment that would allow students with severe disabilities to more fully demonstrate their knowledge; that would be more efficient to administer and score; and that would provide useful and timely information to inform instruction for the student. A Request for Proposals was released in spring 2015 soliciting assessment programs that address, to the extent possible, the concerns and recommendations received from educators on the NYSAA. The contract was awarded to Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) in summer 2015, part of the University of Kansas. During the 2015-16 school year there will be a total of 16 states, including New York State that will use DLM for their alternate assessment program.

Beginning with the 2015-16 school year, the NYSAA in ELA and mathematics will be assessed using DLM. DLM is a computer-delivered adaptive assessment measuring a student's achievement of the ELA and mathematics standards at a reduced level of depth, breadth, and complexity. This assessment provides the opportunity to customize the assessment to the individual abilities and needs of the student, is designed to measure a wide range of proficiencies of students, is quicker and easier to administer and score, and provides useful information to teachers to inform future instruction for the student. Administration of the NYSAA ELA and mathematics test window opened on March 21, 2016 and is open until June 3, 2016.

New York State Grades 3-8 ELA and Mathematics Field Tests

In May of 2012, the Department announced a plan to transition to computer-based testing (CBT) in grades 3-8 as part of its commitment to improving test delivery, reducing test length, and shortening the turn-around time on testing results. This transition is part of the five year contract with Questar Assessment Inc. to develop the State's 3-8 English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics assessments and to provide all schools with the option of administering these tests on computers.

School participation in computer-based field testing in 2016 was voluntary by school. When schools placed requests for 2015-16 elementary/intermediate level operational tests, schools were asked to indicate whether they would like to administer the 2016 Grades 3-8 stand-alone ELA and Mathematics field tests either in the traditional paper-based format or as computer-based tests. NYSED strongly suggested that every district consider committing at least one school in the district to administer computer-based field tests in spring 2016 to help schools and districts understand the technical requirements of CBT and begin to plan for a full rollout of CBT in the future.

To date, 952 schools, in about half of New York State school districts, volunteered to administer computer-based field tests in 2016. The computer-based field testing window will be from Monday, May 23, 2016 through Friday, June 10, 2016. The paper-based field testing window will be from Tuesday, May 31, 2016 through Friday, June 10, 2016.

Training & Resources for Computer-Based Testing

NYSED, Questar Assessment Inc., and DLM are providing districts and schools with training and resources to prepare for the shift to computer-based tests. Some resources are specific to the contractor and the testing system, as noted in the table below.

Resource	Purpose
Provided for both NYSAA and Grades 3-8 Computer-Based Tests	
Computer-Based Question Samplers	Question samplers of the new NYSAA computer-based test in ELA and Math allow educators, families, and students to preview new NYSAA test questions. Sample logins will be available from the DLM website at http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/newyork The Grades 3-8 ELA and Math CBT Question Samplers allow users to complete a short sample test on computer using previously released New York State items. Users can practice and get experience with testing tools and accommodations in the computer-based testing environment. http://www.nysed.gov/edtech/schools/question-sampler
System Documentation and Manuals	Technical manuals specific to computer-based testing for each contractor will be posted online. They will outline all technical components and requirements of the test administration and test delivery systems.
Available for Grades 3-8 Computer-Based Tests Only	
System Scan & Test Readiness Check	System Scan provides immediate feedback on device and browser information for each workstation. System Scan tool displays system specifications and visual confirmation of whether the system meets each technical requirement. Test Readiness Check allows users to determine their local download/upload speed. It will help users determine the number of concurrent testers allowed without reducing testing quality. The tools are available at: http://www.questarai.com/support/
Test Administration Training Site	A practice environment of the Questar test administration system will be made available to

	district and school administrators to gain experience with the administration system used to manage the Grades 3-8 computer-based tests.
Secure System Trials	Secure browser testing allows schools to ensure test forms load properly via the secure browser for Grades 3-8 computer-based field tests. A sample form will be made available in the secure browser before testing begins. This will also allow districts to conduct additional load testing.

Next Steps

Department staff will continue to support districts and schools in the transition to computer-based tests as part of the long term strategy to move more testing online in order to move toward the use of innovative, technology enhanced items and a quick return of scores to educators and their students.