



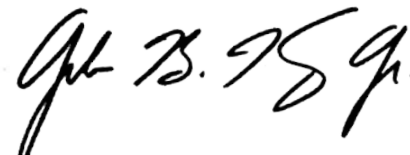


**TO:** P-12 Education Committee

**FROM:** Ken Slentz 

**SUBJECT:** Proposed addition of §100.5(a)(9) of the Regulations of the Commissioner, relating to a Regents Research Paper requirement for a Regents or local diploma

**DATE:** June 10, 2013

**AUTHORIZATION(S):**  

### SUMMARY

#### Issues for Discussion

Should the Board of Regents add a new section 100.5(a)(9) of the Commissioner's Regulations to require that students first entering grade 9 in September 2013 and thereafter complete a Regents Research Paper?

#### Reason(s) for Consideration

Implementation of policy

#### Proposed Handling

This issue will come before the P-12 Education Committee for discussion at the June Regents meeting and will be submitted for adoption at the September Regents meeting. A copy of the proposed rule is attached. Supporting materials are available upon request from the Secretary to the Board of Regents.

#### Procedural History

The Board of Regents adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts & Literacy and Mathematics at its July 2010 meeting and incorporated New York-specific additions, creating the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), at its January 2011 meeting. To implement the new standards, the Board has previously directed the Department to develop a plan and timeline for developing and administering assessments aligned to the CCLS in ELA and math in

Grades 3-8 and high school and to provide the field with training, tools and resources to ensure a successful transition to the CCLS.

To ensure implementation of the CCLS in line with the Regents Reform Agenda, a recommendation was discussed at the Board's April 2013 meeting to require a Regents Research Paper for admission to the Regents Exam in ELA (Common Core) beginning with the January 2015 administration. The Regents Research Paper would be an opportunity for students to demonstrate necessary college and career readiness skills and CCLS writing standards that cannot be measured in an examination setting due to time constraints. The Board directed staff to seek additional input from stakeholders and to modify the recommendation accordingly to ensure local flexibility and opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration.

### **Background Information**

The adoption and implementation of the CCLS is a central tenet of the Regents Reform Agenda and the State's RTTT commitments. To fulfill this commitment, the Board has previously directed the Department to develop a plan and timeline for developing and administering assessments aligned to the CCLS in Grades 3-8 and high school and to provide the field with training, tools and resources to ensure a successful transition to the CCLS. Department staff has regularly provided the Board with information and updates on our progress in accordance with the Board's July 2010 adoption of the Common Core Standards and January 2011 adoption of the CCLS (e.g., May and November 2011; March, April, July, September and November 2012).

### **Proposed Regulatory Amendment: Regents Research Paper**

To ensure implementation of the CCLS in line with the Regents Reform Agenda and the State's RTTT application, all students first entering Grade 9 in the 2013-2014 school year and thereafter must be provided with a high school English course of study aligned to the CCLS and pass the new Regents Exam in ELA (Common Core) to meet graduation requirements.

The proposed regulatory amendment to 100.5(a)(9) of the Commissioner's regulations would establish a Regents Research Paper requirement as an opportunity for students to demonstrate necessary college and career readiness skills and CCLS writing standards that cannot be measured in an examination setting due to time constraints. The regulation would require the completion of a Regents Research Paper for graduation with a Regents or local high school diploma, beginning with those students who first enter grade 9 in September 2013 or thereafter. The amendment would require the following minimum standards for the Regents Research Paper:

- 1) The Regents Research Paper shall be submitted, in the English language, as a word-processed document consistent with the publication guidelines of the discipline pertaining to the subject of the paper.
- 2) The Regents Research Paper shall cite a minimum of four informational texts as sources gathered from multiple authoritative print and/or digital sources.

Literature texts, while admissible as sources, shall not be counted toward this minimum source requirement.

- 3) The Regents Research Paper shall be a minimum of five typed pages (approximately 1,250 words of text), exclusive of works cited, graphics, and cover page.
- 4) The final student draft of the Regents Research Paper shall be accompanied by a procedural checklist that meets State requirements.
- 5) Hand-written papers and other accommodations may be allowed where appropriate (e.g., for students with disabilities whose individualized education program or students whose plan under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. section 794) specifies such accommodation) or in extenuating circumstances, as determined by the principal.

School districts will be encouraged to develop research paper guidelines that exceed these minimum requirements. English language learners and students with disabilities will be allowed accommodations as appropriate, and the Department will develop guidance on allowable accommodations for such students with respect to the Regents Research Paper. In addition, after consultation with the field, the Department will provide general guidance on the Regents Research Paper, including the following:

- The Regents Research Paper must be satisfactorily completed and evaluated in advance of the student being awarded his or her Regents or local high school diploma.
- Instruction and guidance in the research process will occur in English class to address the CCLS. However, the educator(s) within the school responsible for coordination, logistics, and scoring of the paper can be determined locally by the school district or building principal.
- The Department encourages schools to identify disciplines through which authentic research and writing is occurring and opportunities for teachers to share the work of instruction, implementation, and assessment. The Department strongly recommends that collaboration take place among teachers across disciplines, school library media specialists, public libraries, and community partners, to ensure equity in instruction and assessment. In addition, the paper can be used for other course purposes (e.g., as one factor in a student's course grade).
- The Principal will certify and maintain records on which students completed the Regents Research Paper requirement for graduation and diploma purposes.
- Although the final student draft of the Regents Research Paper must be accompanied by a Procedural Checklist that meets Department requirements, established school district procedures for research (e.g., International Baccalaureate, Siemens Competition / Intel Science Talent Search) may be

substituted for the checklist providing they are inclusive of the CCLS and Department guidelines.

- The Regents Research Paper is an opportunity for students to demonstrate necessary college and career readiness skills and CCLS writing standards (specifically, anchor standards 7, 8, and 9) that cannot be measured in the Regents Exam due to time constraints.
- The Department will provide exemplars to illustrate various ways that students can meet the Regents Research Paper requirement.

### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Regents reach consensus on the intent of the proposed amendment prior to its submission in September for adoption.

### **Timetable for Implementation**

It is anticipated that the proposed amendment will be submitted to the Board of Regents for adoption at the September Regents meeting, after publication of a Notice of Proposed Rule Making in the State Register on July 10, 2013 and expiration of the 45-day public comment period prescribed in law for State agency rule makings.

Attachment

AMENDMENT OF THE REGULATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

Pursuant to Education Law sections 101, 207, 208, 209, 305, 308, 309 and 3204

Subdivision (a) of section 100.5 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education is amended, effective October 2, 2013, as follows:

(a) General requirements for a Regents or a local high school diploma. Except as provided in paragraph (d)(6) of this section, the following general requirements shall apply with respect to a Regents or local high school diploma. Requirements for a diploma apply to students depending upon the year in which they first enter grade nine. A student who takes more than four years to earn a diploma is subject to the requirements that apply to the year that student first entered grade nine. Students who take less than four years to complete their diploma requirements are subject to the provisions of subdivision (e) of this section relating to accelerated graduation.

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(9) All students first entering grade nine in September 2013 and thereafter, shall satisfactorily complete a Regents Research Paper in a format as prescribed by the commissioner including, but not limited to, the following:

(i) The Regents Research Paper shall be submitted, in the English language, as a word-processed document consistent with the publication guidelines of the discipline pertaining to the subject of the paper.

(ii) The Regents Research Paper shall cite a minimum of four informational texts as sources gathered from multiple authoritative print and/or digital sources. Literature texts, while admissible as sources, shall not be counted toward this minimum source requirement.

(iii) The Regents Research Paper shall be a minimum of five typed pages (approximately 1,250 words of text), exclusive of works cited, graphics, and cover page.

(iv) The final student draft of the Regents Research Paper shall be accompanied by a procedural checklist that meets State requirements.

(v) Hand-written papers and other accommodations may be allowed where appropriate (e.g., for students with disabilities whose individualized education program or students whose plan under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. section 794) specifies such accommodation) or in extenuating circumstances, as determined by the principal.