



TO: Higher Education Committee
FROM: John L. D'Agati *John L. D'Agati*
SUBJECT: Teacher Preparation Support Program
DATE: April 20, 2012
AUTHORIZATION(S): *John L. D'Agati*
SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

The Department will develop a relationship with SUNY and CUNY to support deans, department chairs, faculty and program directors of teacher education and school building leader programs and their respective colleges of arts and sciences in the implementation of the Regents Reform Agenda.

Reason(s) for Consideration

For information

Proposed Handling

This item will come before the Higher Education Committee for discussion at its April 2012 meeting.

Background Information

As part of the Regents Reform Agenda and consistent with major federal and State policy initiatives, the Department has established new certification requirements for teachers and school leaders. In May 2010, the Board affirmed the new certification assessment, which includes the Academic Literacy Skills Test, the Educating All Students Test and the Teacher and School Building Leader Performance Assessment. At the March 2012 meeting, the Board of Regents also affirmed that the Department will partner with the Teacher Assessment Performance Consortium (TPAC) and use this as its model for teacher performance assessment.

These new assessments have been guided by research which demonstrates that educator practices and effectiveness, and enhanced teacher knowledge, are associated with improved student performance. As a result of this research, New York adopted the Common Core Learning Standards and aligned its assessment and certification requirement to those standards.

At its February 2012 meeting, the Board of Regents also approved a shift in the implementation of the new certification exams. The new performance assessment for initial teacher certification, the Academic Literacy Skills Test, the Educating All Students test, and the new performance assessment for school building leader certification would be required for candidates applying for initial certification on or after May 1, 2014 (see below for a discussion of the new Content Specialty Tests). The Department recommends requiring LEAs and schools that accept student teachers to permit those teachers to complete the requirements of the performance assessment, including videos, in the context of their student teaching assignments.

Content Specialty Tests

The Department administers dozens of different Content Specialty Tests (CSTs) that correspond to various academic subjects, foreign languages, and other teaching specialties. These are being revised in batches, beginning with the Multi-Subject CSTs that are required for Early Childhood and Childhood certification. The Department will stop administering each old CST as soon as its replacement is available. Candidates who pass the old CST in a particular subject will be permitted to count it towards a certificate in that subject, even if the date on which they apply for the certificate is after the date that the new CST is available - a form of automatic "grandfathering."

The Department plans to publish a timetable in spring 2012 giving the date when each new CST will be available. We currently anticipate that many of the exams will be implemented during the 2013-14 academic year, and the remainder will be implemented during 2014-15. The framework for each new CST will be published well before the first administration date.

Transitional B Candidates

Candidates for certification via the Transitional B ("alternative") pathway would be subject to somewhat different requirements because of the way their programs are structured. Currently, these candidates must pass the LAST and CST during the introductory component of their program, prior to obtaining Transitional B certification and becoming teacher of record, and they must pass the ATS-W by the end of their program, prior to obtaining Initial certification. (Most Transitional B programs are two years, and some are three years.)

Consistent with the current approach, candidates would be required to pass the Academic Literacy Skills Test, the Educating All Students test, and the CST during the introductory component of their program (prior to obtaining Transitional B certification), and would be required to pass the performance assessment by the end of their program (prior to obtaining Initial certification).

Supporting the Transition to the New Exams

To enable program administrators and faculty to adjust their curricula and prepare their candidates to pass the new exams, the Department will post test frameworks that outline in detail the material that each test will cover, as well as the performance standards for each test. During the spring 2012 semester, we plan to post draft frameworks and scoring rubrics for the Teacher Performance Assessment, the Academic Literacy Skills test, the Educating All Students test, and the new School Building Leader exam. We plan to post frameworks for the new CSTs in batches, well before the new exams are required.

In addition, in order to help ensure that the deans, department chairs, faculty and staff have the support and guidance needed to successfully incorporate these new teacher and school building leader requirements in their courses, the Department is seeking to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SUNY and CUNY to support these efforts.

The Department's efforts will also include a partnership with the independent colleges and universities, as represented by the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (clcu), and with certain proprietary colleges, to establish and provide a program of professional development for full-time and adjunct faculty and all supporting instructional staff in New York state approved teacher and school building leader preparation programs, along with their colleagues in their respective colleges of arts and sciences. This will be accomplished either through a partnership with SUNY and CUNY via the MOUs or a single source contract.

Some of the activities the Department is seeking to support include workshops, on-line instructional modules, webinars, partnerships with local school districts that provide on-site opportunities for observation-based training and learning and curriculum development and alignment, and the application of rubrics for observation based assessment, video libraries and video simulations for formative instruction and assessment. In addition, the Department would support the ongoing activities of faculty who are forming working groups (such as the SUNY Teacher Certification Consortium). Other activities may include departmental meetings where the agenda is devoted to the presentation of information and guidance as it relates to all of the salient aspects of the Regents Reform Agenda.

These various activities shall address the needed knowledge and skills covered on 1) The Teacher Performance Assessment Consortium (TPAC) assessment, or TPA, a joint project of Stanford University, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, and the Council of Chief State School Officers, with support from the Ford Foundation; 2) The new teacher and school leader certification requirements, (Educating All Students Test (EAS), Academic Literacy and Skills Test (ALST), and the updated Content Specialty Tests (CST), as well as the alignment of these exams with Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards [developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers in collaboration with the National Policy Board on Educational Administration (NPBEA) and the New York State Teaching Standards; 3) The application of data driven instruction; and 4) The P-20 data system. In addition, the supported activities will cover

the main features of the new requirements for Annual Professional Performance Reviews (Education Law 3012-c and Commissioner's Regulations 100.2[o]).

As part of the MOU, the Department will require a range of specific outcomes and deliverables based on the various activities. Examples of such deliverables include, but are not limited to, the development of interim course assessments aligned to the NYS Teaching Standards, Common Core Standards, and ISLLC Standards, revised program designs, revised curriculum in ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies preparation, open sourced curriculum, revised syllabi reflecting course revisions, evidence of faculty participation in various development activities, the development of seminars on such concepts as clinically rich student preparation, student learning objectives and video based assessments, the identification of faculty experts in particular areas, such as the new frameworks for the Educating All Students Test. The professional development program shall also include support systems that will allow for ongoing access to information and a follow-up to questions and answers generated by the academic community.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Department, consistent with the Board of Regents reform agenda, and our Race to the Top award, pursue, with each of the higher education sectors and their respective teacher and school leader preparation programs, opportunities to provide professional development that will ensure a successful transition to the new academic standards in education.

Timetable for Implementation

We expect to begin implementation later this spring.