



March 23, 2012

Dear Colleagues,

I am excited to provide you with a brief update on an important policy decision. As you know, since late 2009, when the Board of Regents directed the Department to implement a performance assessment for initial teacher certification, we have been working with Pearson to develop an assessment. At the Board's meeting earlier this week, it was announced that the Department will instead implement a multi-state Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA) developed by Stanford University that has recently become available through Pearson. The policy memo is posted at this link:

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2012Meetings/March2012/312hed5.pdf>

The TPA is a joint project of Stanford University, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), the Council of Chief State School Officers, and a group of more than 20 states known as the Teacher Performance Assessment Consortium (TPAC). The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) has endorsed the TPA, and NCATE's Blue Ribbon Panel on Clinical Preparation has published a report supporting the TPAC model. As many of you know, Linda Darling-Hammond and Ray Pecheone, both professors at Stanford's School of Education, have led the development of the TPA with Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity (SCALE) staff. The TPA is modeled after previous performance based assessments of teaching, including the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, InTASC, and the Performance Assessment for California Teachers. National design teams composed of teacher education faculty have provided valuable advice on the development of the TPA.

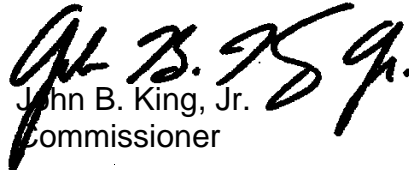
One advantage of adopting the TPA model is the intended multi-state administration, which would provide a large data set to benchmark New York against other states—both at the outset, when we set passing scores for initial certification, and in the future, as we monitor the effectiveness of certification policies in practice. Institutions in 26 states (including New York) and the District of Columbia are currently field-testing the TPA. New York institutions will have an additional opportunity to participate in field trial of the TPA during the 2012-13 academic year, at no cost to candidates. The TPA field test website (tpafieldtest.nesinc.com) serves as a valuable resource even for those not participating in the field test, including information on the TPA program and current field test materials, instructions to candidates and faculty, confidentiality information, policies, and frequently asked questions. In many respects, the TPA is very similar to the performance assessment that NYSED pilot- and field-tested in New York in 2010 and 2011, so faculty that participated in those trials will see much that is familiar in the TPA tasks and electronic platform.

The TPA is Common Core-aligned and specifically designed to assess practice-based skills proven to have a positive impact on student achievement. The rubrics for scoring the TPA are aligned with NYS Teaching Standards and the InTASC standards.

There is no significant change to the implementation timeline discussed at the February 2012 Board of Regents meeting as a result of this decision (see <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/certexams12012.html>). Stanford and Pearson will disseminate assessment handbooks and rubrics to IHEs in spring 2012. The assessment will be available for formative use during the 2012-13 academic year and will be required for candidates applying for initial certification on or after May 1, 2014.

Finally, there are a number of online resources for the TPA program that you may access and begin to explore immediately. For example, TPAC Online is a web-based community hosted by AACTE for TPA participating states and programs. TPAC Online includes discussion forums, examples and suggestions from institutions implementing the TPA, research articles and state-oriented groups. We encourage your faculty to take advantage of the resources and discussion available at TPAC Online by becoming members. To join, contact tpac@aacte.org for registration assistance.

Sincerely,



John B. King, Jr.
Commissioner