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KAREN TRUJILLO, PH.D.
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
GOVERNOR

May 1, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents, Charter School Directors, and District Test Coordinators

FROM: Gwen Perea Warniment, PhD, Deputy Secretary of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment 

RE: Assessment Program Updates and Clarifications

As a follow up to the April 25th superintendents' call with Secretary Karen Trujillo, PhD, this memorandum provides assessment updates and clarifications based on discussion held during the call.

End of Course Exams (EOCs)

Please note that EOCs will be administered as planned for this spring 2019. As the PED plans for the 2019–20 SY and considers recommendations from the Student Success Task Force (SSTF) and the Assessment and Accountability Advisory Committee (AAAC), the role of EOCs in the State's future accountability system will be re-evaluated.

US Department of Education Approves PED's Request for Science Waiver

On March 5, Secretary Trujillo requested a waiver allowing New Mexico to administer a full census field test of the New Mexico Assessment of Science Readiness (NM-ASR) in spring 2020. The US Department of Education (USED) has approved this waiver, which relieves New Mexico of its federal reporting requirements for science in the 2019–20 SY. This waiver allows schools to become more familiar with the *New Mexico STEM Ready! Science Standards* and to focus on high-quality instruction aligned to the new standards. Additionally, the waiver allows the PED an additional year of field testing to ensure the creation of a high-quality assessment that meets the needs of our students and families. The waiver requires all students in grades 5, 8, and 11 to participate in the NM-ASR field test in spring 2020. Although USED will not require the PED to provide student-level reporting of the spring 2020 field test data, the PED is working with the vendor on the feasibility of providing non high-stakes preliminary reporting of field test results to districts. These preliminary spring 2020 results would not be used for accountability purposes but rather for use as internal feedback. This spring 2019 is the last year of SBA Science administration.

The formal USED's response letter for the waiver can be found at: https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/USDE_Approval_NM_Science_Waiver.pdf.

Exit Criteria for ACCESS for ELLs

New Mexico is a World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium member. WIDA provides the state's annual English language proficiency assessments, ACCESS for ELLs, and Alternate ACCESS. In fall of 2016, the ACCESS for ELLs assessment underwent a standard setting that included participation from New Mexico educators. Results of the standard setting was reflected starting with the spring 2017 ACCESS for ELLs administration score reports. Currently, the exit criteria for New Mexico is an overall composite performance level (PL) greater than or equal to 5.0. After this spring 2019 administration of ACCESS for ELLs, the PED will revisit the exit criteria. In order to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, the PED will follow a data-informed process that includes ACCESS for ELLs and the state's content assessments. This is required to ensure that the methods identify a performance range where an English learner's level of English language proficiency no longer appears to inhibit meaningful participation in state academic assessments.

Student Success Task Force

The SSFT had their first in-person meetings on April 16th and 17th. Phase one discussions have focused on grades 3–8, high school math, and English language arts assessments as required by USED. The task force will be convening virtually on May 7th to continue this discussion.

The PED is grateful for the work and dedication of our task force members. The discussions have been lively and productive. Members have been carefully reflective of stakeholder feedback from the community conversations.

GPW/lv

cc: Secretary Karen Trujillo, PhD
Kara Bobroff, Deputy Secretary
Adán Delgado, Deputy Secretary
Timothy Hand, PhD, Deputy Secretary
Katarina Sandoval, Deputy Secretary
Daniel Manzano, Chief of Staff
Brian Laurent, Director of Accountability
Lynn Vásquez, Director of Assessment
Mayra Valtierrez, Director of Culture and Language
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