August 9, 2011

To: Deans of Teacher Education Programs  
Members of the Professional Standards and Practices Board for Teaching  
Members of NYSATE and NYACTE

From: Allison Armour-Garb

Subject: Update and Field Test of Teacher Performance Assessment for Initial Certification

I write to update you on the development of the new performance-based assessment for teachers that will be a requirement for initial certification and to ask your assistance in a New York State field test of the assessment.

The New York State Education Department, assisted by the Evaluation Systems group of Pearson, began work on this assessment in 2009. The assessment is a part of the Board of Regents actions to transform teaching. Individuals graduating from existing, approved teacher preparation programs in May 2013 or after will be required to pass the new assessment.

The development process is designed to result in an assessment that is supported by current evidence concerning effective teaching, is aligned with the appropriate standards, and is valid, reliable, and free from bias. During the spring and summer of 2010, the Department established a committee representing teachers, principals, superintendents of schools, higher education partners, and other stakeholders to assist in the development of the performance-based assessment. Since last summer, the exam development committee has met multiple times to develop and refine the design, content specifications, and scoring rubrics for the new assessment.

In addition, faculty and students from New York State teacher preparation programs have participated in field testing of preliminary versions of the assessments. Some of you may have participated in these previous field tests. The Department, the exam development committee, and Pearson have made changes and refinements to the assessment materials based on the results of these field tests and other feedback.
The current draft of the NYSTCE performance assessment for teachers includes two tasks:

- Task I - candidates submit a video-recording of a lesson, along with background information for the lesson to provide a context for the submitted video-recording.
- Task II - candidates submit a video-recording of another lesson, along with three written responses related to the submitted lesson -- a lesson plan, an assessment plan, and analysis and reflection.

We are seeking faculty and their students to participate in a field test of the current design of the teacher performance assessment in fall 2011. This is scheduled to be the final field test before the assessments become operational in spring 2012. Colleges and universities that wish to participate in the field test should contact Karen Townsend, Manager of Program Education and Communication, Evaluation Systems group of Pearson at (413) 256-2832 or karen.g.townsend@pearson.com.

Thank you for your continued cooperation in the development of the performance-based assessment. We look forward to continuing to work with you and Pearson as we finalize this new assessment. Further questions on the assessment may be addressed to me at aarmour@mail.nysed.gov.

cc: John D’Agati
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