



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

Office of P-12 Education
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12234

E-mail: NYSEDP20@nysed.gov
Tel: (518) 474-3862
Twitter: @NYSEDNews

TO: District Superintendents of BOCES
Superintendents of Public School Districts
Administrators of Public and Charter Schools
Administrators of Registered Nonpublic Schools

FROM: Angelique Johnson-Dingle, Deputy Commissioner P-12 Instructional Support
Angelique Johnson-Dingle
Jason Harmon, Deputy Commissioner P-12 Operational Support
Jason Harmon

SUBJECT: Exemptions from Diploma Assessment Requirements for Major Life Events

DATE: March 11, 2025

In November 2023, the [recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures](#) were presented to the Board of Regents. This was an unprecedented effort that brought together student voices along with a diverse range of stakeholders, including parents, educators, administrators, school support staff, representatives of higher education, and the business community. The Blue Ribbon Commission created a roadmap for learning-centered education that best meets the needs of every student in New York State and incorporates a competency-based approach to teach the practical skills needed for the dynamic demands of tomorrow's workforce.

As leaders in education, the Blue Ribbon Commission members were mindful of individual student circumstances and needs. As such, one of the Commission's recommendations was to provide exemptions from diploma assessment requirements for major life events (such as medical conditions, death of a family member, or other trauma). Based on this recommendation, the Board of Regents approved an [emergency action to amend the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education](#) to provide such discretion. The amendment allows the superintendent, principal, or head of school (as applicable to a registered nonpublic school or charter school) to make a local determination to grant an exemption from the diploma assessment requirements for students who experienced a major life event prior to the planned administration of a required diploma assessment (i.e., Regents Examination, NYSED-Approved Regents Examination Alternative, or a NYSED-Approved Pathway Assessment).

Additional information related to this amendment may be referenced on the Office of Standards and Instruction's [Frequently Asked Questions about NYS Graduation Requirements webpage](#) which includes a list of frequently asked questions related to exemptions for major life events. Additional questions may be referred to the Office of Standards and Instruction via email to P12StandardsInstruction@nysed.gov or by calling (518) 474-5922.