



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

TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

FROM: James A. Kadamus *James A. Kadamus*

COMMITTEE: Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education

TITLE OF ITEM: Deputy Commissioner's Report

DATE OF SUBMISSION: January 13, 2003

PROPOSED HANDLING: Discussion

RATIONALE FOR ITEM: Current Activities in the Office of Elementary, Middle, Secondary, and Continuing Education

STRATEGIC GOAL: Goals 1 and 2

AUTHORIZATION(S): *Thomas J. Blane*

SUMMARY:

Among the topics highlighted in this report are:

- New York State Virtual Learning Space
- Advanced Program Exam Fee Waivers
- Recognition of Incarcerated Education Programs
- National Knowledge and Skill Standards for Law, Public Safety and Security
- Tech Prep Grant Awards
- GED Test Administration Modifications for Candidates with Disabling Conditions

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER'S REPORT
ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, SECONDARY AND CONTINUING EDUCATION**

New York State Virtual Learning Space

CGI, Inc. has been engaged as the web designer to begin work on the New York State Virtual Learning Space (NYSVLS), SED's educational portal. It will be an important tool for schools and for the Department to help teachers, administrators, parents, teacher preparation institutions, and other members of the learning community in supporting high student achievement and closing the academic performance gap. CGI brings a good reputation, great skills and an excellent attitude to this initiative. They are working now on Phase I of the project. Content for VLS will come from three main sources:

SED content, including:

- Learning standards in each of the seven standards areas
- Performance indicators for each standard area at all levels of education
- Resource guides with core curricula
- Assessment information
- Learning experiences tied to the performance indicators

Content developed by the following Technology Literacy Challenge Fund (TLCF) content development grantees:

Study Zone, Oswego City School District; New York Net, Schenectady City School District; Living Schoolbook, Syracuse University/Syracuse City School District; Accelerate U, Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES; NY Learns, Center for Applied Technologies in Education/Buffalo City School District; School Tools, Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES; and Professional Development/Online Mentoring, Nassau BOCES.

Content developed by other groups across the State, including Staff and Curriculum Development Network (SCDN), Teacher Centers, Model Schools Network, Bilingual Education Technical Assistance Centers (BETACs), Special Education Training and Resource Centers (SETRCs), etc.

We will continue to work with the TLCF sites as we have done for many months and will reach out to the other groups after the first of the year to discuss how we can work together to provide excellent resources to teachers, and assistance to teachers in using the NYSVLS.

As an initial step in the process of designing and implementing NYSVLS we intend, as of January 13, to provide links to existing sites from the SED homepage. We hope that many people statewide will visit these sites and share their comments, suggestions or concerns with us. So that we can ensure a positive experience for visitors to the sites, we will be asking that the TLCF content development grantees assure us by January 8 that: 1) they have sufficient capacity to handle statewide traffic; and 2) they have eliminated the need for passwords or have created a proxy password or "guest pass" for visitors. As of January 13, we will link to those sites that have

provided these assurance and will establish a mailbox dedicated to comments regarding NYSVLS and the sites.

Advanced Program Exam Fee Waivers

New York has received a grant to participate in the U.S. Department of Education's Advanced Placement Incentive Program. A partial fee waiver amount of \$50 for the College Board Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate exams has been established for this year and is available for students taking exams in May 2003. To receive the fee waiver, schools must determine student eligibility and provide appropriate information to the College Board or International Baccalaureate offices.

Recognition of Incarcerated Education Programs

The CUNY Catch Program and the Friends of Island Academy have been recognized in a recent publication, "Barriers and Promising Approaches to Workforce Development for Young Offenders Toolkit." The two programs are part of a select group of 15 programs nationwide that have been judged to be exemplary programs and policy initiatives that are successful in helping court-involved youth become economically self-sufficient. The 15 programs share a commitment to rehabilitation, continuum of care, integrated education, systems collaboration, support structures and accountability. These exemplary programs are identified in a report to the Annie E. Casey Foundation by the National Youth Employment Coalition, the Justice Policy Institute, and the Youth Development and Research Fund.

National Knowledge and Skill Standards for Law, Public Safety and Security

In 2002, The States' Career Cluster Initiative, funded and managed by the U.S. Department of Education and the states, developed an initial set of National Standards for Law, Public Safety and Security. This Initiative continues the effort to develop students who are better prepared to live in and maintain a complex, democratic society and, at the same time, prepare students who are interested in careers in law, public safety and security. The current National Standards represent the combined efforts of secondary and postsecondary educators and those from the professions of corrections, law enforcement, fire and emergency services, law and security. As increasing pressures are brought to bear on the professions that keep our society safe and secure, those professions are seeking ways to both improve their attractiveness and professionalism, and to create better education and training systems to prepare people for these careers. Created to promote and continue the effort begun with the Career Cluster Initiative, the National Education Consortium for Careers in Law, Public Safety and Security works closely with, and is composed of, national professional associations, educational systems and institutions (secondary and postsecondary), state, local and government agencies.

During the past several months, Department staff selected three sites that will work in partnership with other schools in other interested states to: integrate the

knowledge and skill national standards of the career cluster into the educational approaches and curriculum of career academies, small learning communities, schools within schools, and similar career education programs; and provide models for use by other career programs throughout the nation. The following BOCES have agreed to be pilot sites: Western Suffolk BOCES, Dix Hills; Madison-Oneida BOCES, Verona; and Orange-Ulster BOCES, Goshen.

Tech Prep Grant Awards

The Department has awarded seven new Tech Prep \$100,000 planning grants for 2002-2003. They are as follows: Brooklyn High Schools Office-New York City Board of Education; Buffalo City School District; Champlain Valley Educational Services (BOCES), Plattsburgh; Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES; Medgar Evers College, Brooklyn; Rochester City School District; and SUNY Delhi. Tech Prep is an articulated secondary-postsecondary educational improvement model that integrates academic and career and technical education. It is funded from Title II of the Carl Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998. Department staff will provide technical assistance to planning sites. If successful in the planning year, these sites can apply for implementation status for the 2003-2004 school program year with funding up to \$200,000 each. There are 26 Tech Prep consortia in the implementation phase.

GED Test Administration Modifications for Candidates with Disabling Conditions

Under normal circumstances, all candidates are required to follow standard test administration procedures when taking the tests that are required for the NYS High School Equivalency Diploma. However, since these procedures may make it difficult or impossible for some candidates with disabling conditions to demonstrate what they have learned, test administration modifications may be authorized for candidates with disabling conditions. The candidate will not be denied the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned solely because of his/her disability. Eligibility for test administration modifications is determined on an individual basis according to each applicant's documented needs.

Applicants wishing to complete the GED tests under special conditions or to use special editions of the test must provide written verification, by a competent and appropriate professional person, of their inability to perform test-taking skills required by standard conditions, and must include a specific justification for administering the GED test under special conditions. They must submit a GED application to the Chief Examiner along with documentation of eligibility (if the candidate is under the age of 19). Application forms may be obtained at the local official GED Testing Center or from the Department. Requests for special accommodations will be held in confidence and no record of the accommodation will be provided on the candidate's GED score report or GED credential.