



March 19, 2020

Shannon Tahoe
Interim Commissioner
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Commissioner Tahoe,

The NYS Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. (NYS PTA) is honored to represent nearly 300,000 parents, families, and educators as members and our 2.6 million school children across New York and their families. It is our mission to make every child's potential a reality and support every child with ONE voice.

We received the update regarding the delayed shipment of ELA and Math exams; thank you for that communication. We further thank you for your diligence in keeping educational partners fully engaged and informed during this pandemic.

We are concerned, however, that the actual test administration is coming up in a few short weeks. While we fully understand that these assessments are federally mandated, we ask that the Department officially communicate to the U.S. Department of Education and request the April and May 2020 administration be cancelled.

As New York State schools will be closed at least until April 2 by order of Governor Cuomo, and because many other schools and BOCES areas will be closed by local order much longer, students will not be ready for these assessments, and the stress of a standardized test administration during these uncertain times would place unnecessary test anxiety on our students. Further, not all districts are equal regarding continued instruction during closure, which may place student readiness at different levels.

As example, while districts are trying their best to provide equal access to learning opportunities across the state, some communities, families and students are without access to internet or devices which would be necessary for online learning. Further, each school may be providing different levels of instruction in take home packets and printed work for students. This could lead to an unfair disadvantage and not an accurate reflection for state testing.

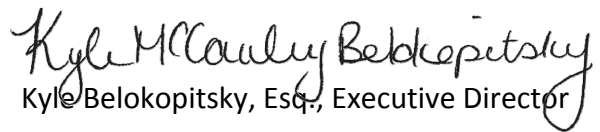
We are also concerned with the administration of this year's Regents examinations. Despite online and home instruction, students are losing critical instructional hours. We do not know the solution, but bring our concerns to you regarding these assessments as well.

Thank you for considering our requests, and we look forward to continuing our work to advance the love of learning for all children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lorey A. Zaman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L'.

Lorey A. Zaman, President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kyle McCaully Belokopitsky". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K'.

Kyle Belokopitsky, Esq., Executive Director