



January 21, 2021

Interim Commissioner Dr. Betty Rosa
Chancellor Dr. Lester Young
NYS Education Department
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Interim Commissioner Rosa and Chancellor Young,

The NYS Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. (NYS PTA) is honored to represent the families of our 2.6 million school children and our nearly 250,000 members. It is our mission to make every child's potential a reality and support EVERY child with ONE voice.

We write to formally request the cancellation of the June NYS Regents Exams, and request your intervention in seeking cancellation (or a waiver from) the 3-8 ELA and Math assessments and other federally required assessments.

These are trying times. Support for our students and their success is paramount. And we applaud all of our educators, our school leaders, and our school related professionals for their tireless work in supporting children and their families. Now is the time that we must continue to support them.

Our students across the state have had varied academic opportunities since last March. Our students continue to deal with new and increasing mental health concerns, trauma, and uncertainty. For some students, they have yet to step into a classroom. For others, they may be in an in-school learning setting one, two or three days a week; others are fully back in-person.

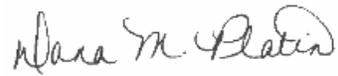
These levels of disparities are sadly inherent during the pandemic, as we truly wish every child could be safely in a seat in front of one of our highly qualified NYS educators. But that is not the case.

Thus, for equity reasons, and to truly support meaningful learning and the mental health of our students, we must request that standardized assessments including the June NYS Regents and federal mandated 3-8 ELA and Math assessments be canceled. We would like to have a separate discussion on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT), as we see usefulness of this data for our educators and schools.

Let's give educators the continued support to help our children, and not worry about whether a child will fail a test.

As always, NYS PTA stands ready to work collaboratively to support ALL children and families and we look forward to our future plans in family engagement. We are available at any time by contacting our Executive Director, Kyle Belokopitsky, at execdirector@nyspta.org or 518-452-8808 (office) or 518-817-3017 (cell).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dana M. Platin".

Dana Platin, President

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kyle McCauley Belokopitsky".

Kyle Belokopitsky, Esq., Executive Director

Cc: Dr. Kimberly Wilkins