

Region 10 Government Relations Update December 1, 2021

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October 2021

Information from the Governor's Press Conference:

The Numbers from Yesterday

- It is Day 275 of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 148,974 tests were conducted yesterday. There were 6,819 positive cases resulting in a 4.57% positivity rate.
- The micro-cluster positivity rate is 6.22%.
- Total hospitalizations continue to rise and are at 3,532.
- There were 54 COVID-19 related deaths yesterday.

Test Results - Yesterday

	Total Persons Tested	Total Tested Positive	% Positive, Yesterday
Capital Region	6,431	239	3.7%
Central New York	4,834	202	4.2%
Finger Lakes	9,759	647	6.6%
Long Island	26,434	1,178	4.5%
Mid-Hudson	19,779	1,012	5.1%
Mohawk Valley	3,549	165	4.6%
New York City	63,194	2,504	4.0%
North Country	1,851	55	3.0%
Southern Tier	4,321	164	3.8%
Western New York	8,822	653	7.4%

Other Information

The governor stated that we are heading into a different phase of the pandemic and he introduced the following 5 new strategies, based on increasing numbers of new hospitalization and the need to not over stress that hospital systems:

[Executive Order 202.78](#) - This E.O. extends the governor's emergency actions through December 27, 2020.



News from the NYS Department of Health



[NYSDOH Micro-Cluster Strategy](#)

On November 25, NYSDOH extended the timeline to implement requirements for districts in newly designated zones. The following summarizes the extensions of time:

- Schools that went into yellow zones as of November 23 have until December 9 to meet the COVID-19 testing requirements. NYSDOH requires that 20% of on-site students, teachers, and staff be randomly tested. The extension only applies to districts that were designated as a yellow zone as of 11/23.
- Revisions to the zones were made that went into effect on 11/26. Schools in newly designated zones have a testing deadline of 12/12/20. The revisions are below:

Modifications to Current Focus Zones

Staten Island - Parts of Staten Island Move to Orange Warning Zone - Click [Here](#) for Map

Parts of Staten Island will transition to an orange warning zone based on increasing 7-day positivity rates, number of cases, and hospitalizations that meet the metrics for orange warning zone designation. The remainder of the borough will remain in a yellow precautionary zone.

New Focus Zones

Manhattan - New Yellow Precautionary Zone - Click [Here](#) for Map

A new yellow zone will be established in the Washington Heights area, after meeting the metrics for yellow precautionary zone designation including an increasing 7-day positivity rate, number of cases, and hospitalizations.

This Year



- New Governor - New Administration
- More Complex and Contentious
- In-person Instructions
- Staff Shortages
- COVID-19 Testing, Tracing Quarantines

New from NYS Dept. of Health



https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/11/updated_tts_and_toq_memo_for_lhds_11242021.pdf

- Extended mask requirement in schools
- 11/24/21 guidance on Test to Stay, Testing and Quarantine
 - Only LHDs are allowed to determine practices and must make decision for all schools within the county. Policy must be equitable.
 - Individual districts may not make unilateral decision on test to stay or quarantined practices.
 - TTS allows close contact to avoid school exclusion by testing negative with a rapid test or antigen for 7 consecutive days after being exposed.
 - Results need to be received before the school day begins
 - If test is done in unmonitored setting, then processes must ensure that the test is done correctly and on the correct person.
 - Exposed person must still quarantine outside of school.
 - NYSDOH does not support TTS.

New from NYSDOH (cont.)

- **Return to School**

- People who are fully vaccinated or who have had a COVID-19 infection within the last 90 days to return to school following a negative antigen test result. Former guidance indicated that a return to school after developing symptoms could only occur based on a NAAT test.

- **Test out of Quarantine**

- Only an LDH may make a decision that would allow shortening a quarantine period and it must be consistent with the CDC. Quarantine can end after Day 7 if a diagnostic tests is negative and if no symptoms were reported during daily monitoring.

- **Weekly Testing for Unvaccinated**

Staff and teachers who were diagnosed with and recovered from COVID-19 within the last 3 months and do not have to be tested weekly.

Asymptomatic persons who have been exposed to COVID-19 ,and who have been previously diagnosed with lab confirmed COVID-19 (and have recovered) are not required to retest and quarantine within 3 months after symptom onset. Schools must keep track of this information

Mask Breaks

-No change in requirements-must wear masks in schools

NYSTRS



- November Bulletin
 - Unpaid Leaves of Absence Unpaid leaves of absence are not reported to the System, and employees do NOT receive service credit for pension purposes, even if such employees continue to be eligible for health insurance and other employer benefits. If you have questions on reporting leaves of absence, please call NYSTRS at (800) 348-7298, Ext. 6220.
 - Has implications for persons not vaccinated or willing to be tested weekly.
- <https://nystrs.org/Employers/Administrative-Bulletins/2021-Bulletins/bull2021-11>

NYSED



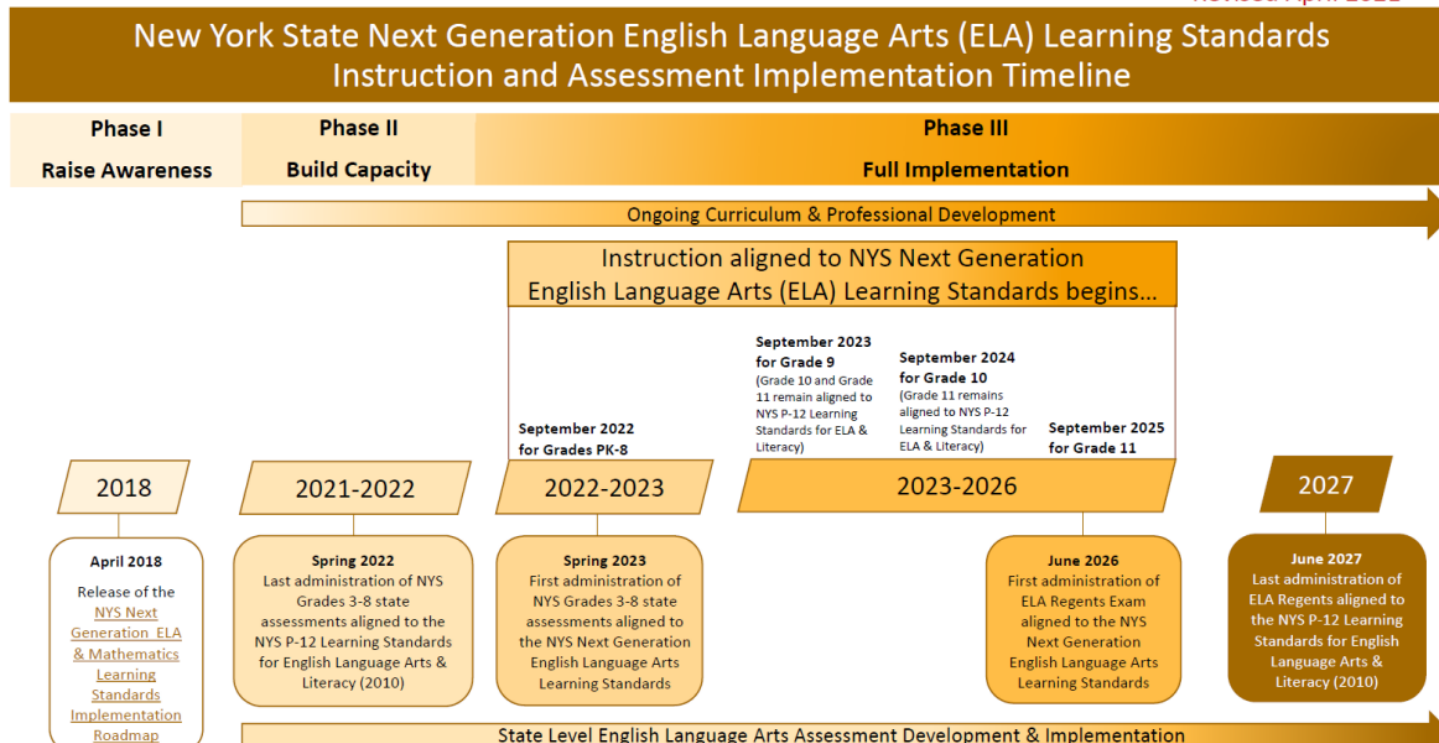
- Building Leader and Teacher Certification
 - flexibility in calculating a year of experience, permitting a variety of part-time experiences that could be equivalent to 180 or more days of full-time experience in a 12-month period.
 - Reform initiative
- Waiver from Accountability
- Assessments
 - Upcoming Jan. Regents
 - Scores
 - New State Contract
- Revised Standards

- Graduation Measures-2024

- APPR

Schedule for NGS

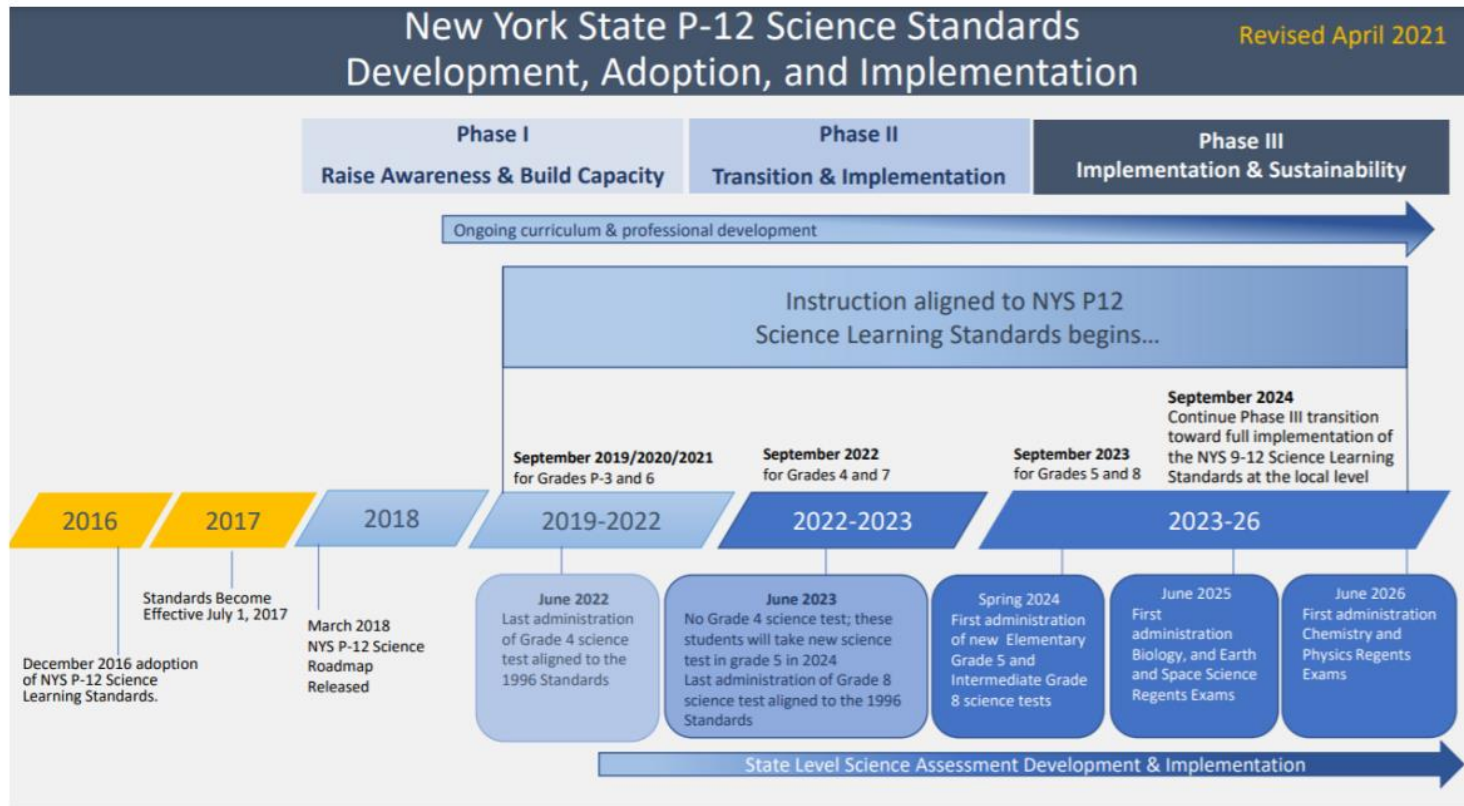
Revised April 2021



Next Generation Standards



<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/SAWG%20-%20Board%20of%20Regents%E2%80%99%20Standards%20and%20Assessment%20Work%20Group.pdf>



Federal Funding

- ❖ CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act) - \$1 billion
- ❖ CRRSA (Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations) - \$4 billion
- ❖ ARP (American Rescue Plan) \$9 billion
- ❖ Funds have a finite shelf life:
 - CARES Act- obligated by 9/22
 - CRRSA- obligated by 9/23
 - ARP- obligated by 9/24
- ❖ Applications into SED by 9/30
- ❖ Not the only source of funding

Timeline for Using Federal Funds



LEAs have until 2024 to obligate newest federal funds:

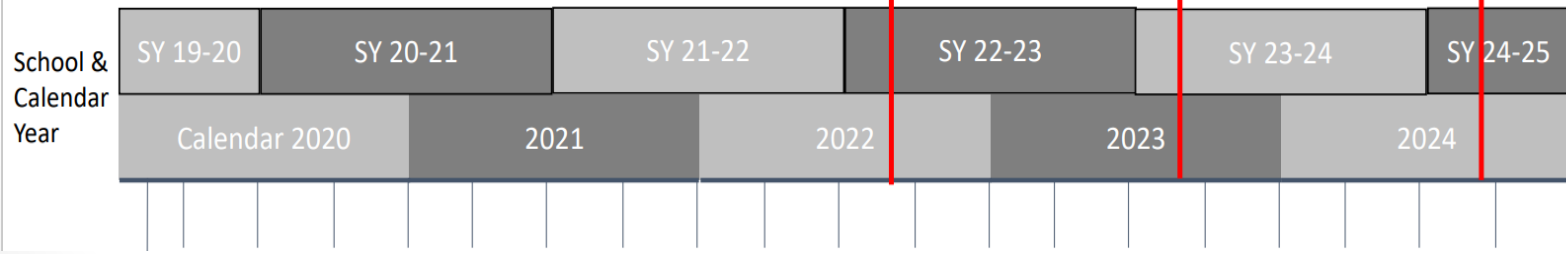
\$123B ARP ESSER III. LEAs must obligate by 9/ 2024 ~ **\$2400 /pupil**

20% must be used for learning loss

\$54B CRSSA ESSER II. SEAs must obligate by 9/ 2023. ~ **\$1,100 /pupil**

Broadly flexible. DoED: expenses must relate to COVID.

\$13B CARES ESSER I. LEAs must obligate by 9/2022 ~250pp



Broad Use

- Needs arising from or exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic
- Allocated to advance equity and disproportional impact of COVID-19
- Safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services
- 20% set aside for instructional loss
- May be used in combination with other funds, but not blended
- No supplement not supplant requirement, but does have maintenance of effort
- May not be used to supplement or restore "rainy day" fund (E.-10)

Transformational

- Once in a generation funding + Need to Discuss Foundation Aid
- Challenges to spending within finite timeframe
- Implementation impacted by resource shortages
- Input from stakeholders
- Posting of Plans

Use of Federal Funding

Training and professional development

Provide principals and other school leaders resources necessary to address the needs of individual schools

Purchasing supplies to minimize spread of infectious diseases

Improve indoor air quality

Repair and improve school facilities to reduce risk of virus transmission (enlarge a gym to enable social distancing)

Pay for staff positions that would be cut due to declining enrollment

Overtime to salaried staff to prepare for safe reopening

Premium pay consistent with CBA

Plan for or implement activities during long-term closures

Purchase educational technology

Provide mental health services and supports (community schools, hiring counselors)

Provide summer learning opportunities

Other activities needed to maintain operation and continuity of services

Hiring new staff and avoiding layoffs

Transportation

High quality instructional materials

Broadband and device access

Capital expenditure under federal rules

Cybersecurity

Develop strategies and implement public health protocols (COVID-19 testing)

Other Sources of Funding

- Remote Learning: \$7.2 billion increase to the E-Rate program, which will bolster schools' ability to provide broadband and device access for disconnected students.
- In-School COVID Testing: \$10 billion for schools to do in-school COVID testing (state breakdown here: <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/03/17/biden-administration-invest-more-than-12-billion-expand-covid-19-testing.html>)
- Students Experiencing Homelessness: \$800 million to support the identification, enrollment, and school participation of children and youth experiencing homelessness, including through wrap-around services.
- Child Tax Credit: ARP includes a one year expansion of the child tax credit (CTC), boosting the amount to \$3,600 for children under the age of six and to \$3,000 for children ages 6 to 17.
- Mental Health: ARP includes \$10 million for the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, \$30 million for Project AWARE, and \$20 million for youth suicide prevention.
- Child Nutrition Assistance: ARP includes a 15% increase in SNAP benefits through September 2021; \$1 billion of additional funding for nutrition programs and \$25 million for SNAP online purchasing and technology improvements.
- Head Start: ARP provides \$1 billion for Head Start.
- Childcare Development Block Grant: ARP includes \$15 billion for CCDBG.

State Aid



- Potential \$14 billion deficit
- But NYS stimulus allowed for a \$3 billion state aid increase
- \$1.4 billion increase to Foundation Aid
- Restored \$1 billion Pandemic Adjustment
- \$105 million for full day Pre-k - 200 more districts
- All districts saw some increase-62% are at 2-3% increase, 211 districts at 3% increase, and 400 districts greater than 3% increase
- Full phase in of the Foundation Aid formula in 3 years- place in statute
- Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2021 requires that schools districts that receive

SAANYS Work



- During Session
 - Tag team with Statewide Associates
 - Fragmented legislative process
 - Revisions to early retirement incentive bills
 - Working on restorative justice
- GRC met once in June and will likely meet at the end of September
- Daily Updates
- SAANYS Reopening Focus Group
- Unit President Meetings
- Connect Series