



Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn

News Release

For Immediate Release

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AFC Commends the Decision to Modify Graduation Exam Requirements in Light of COVID-19

April 7, 2020 (NEW YORK CITY) — *Today, Kim Sweet, Executive Director of Advocates for Children of New York (AFC), issued the following statement in response to the cancellation of the June Regents exams and the release of guidance from the New York State Education Department (NYSED) modifying graduation requirements for impacted students:*

AFC commends Chancellor Rosa, the Board of Regents, and the State Education Department for their decision to exempt students who were scheduled to take Regents exams this June from having to pass those assessments as a condition of high school graduation. This decision is good news for the thousands of students across New York State who are currently navigating unprecedented disruptions to their education. The guidance released today, which allows students in certain situations to demonstrate their readiness to graduate through passing course grades, ensures that students who are on track to earn a diploma will not be penalized for circumstances well beyond their control. Because many students are still struggling to access remote learning, it will be critical—especially once the current crisis has passed—that schools have the resources to provide young people with the additional academic and other support they will need to leave high school prepared for college and careers.

About Advocates for Children of New York (AFC)

Since 1971, Advocates for Children of New York has worked to ensure a high-quality education for New York students who face barriers to academic success, focusing on students from low-income backgrounds who are at greatest risk for failure or discrimination in school because of their poverty, disability, race, ethnicity, immigrant or English Language Learner status, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, or involvement in the foster care or juvenile justice systems. AFC uses four integrated strategies: free advice and legal representation for families of students; free trainings and workshops for parents, communities, and educators and other professionals to equip them to advocate on behalf of students; policy advocacy to effect change in the education system and improve education outcomes; and impact litigation to protect the right to quality education and compel needed reform.