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### NYS PTA Is Reviewing reports of issues with 3-8 English Language Arts (ELA) assessments

- Reports indicate as many as 30,000 students lost work or had system failure when taking assessments on computers.
  - Vendor (Questar Assessments, Inc., will be held fully accountable for this error.
- Also reports of students were testing for multiple hours, some into and past lunch periods. Test was reduced from three days to two.

### Excelsior Scholarship Application for the 2018-2019 Academic Year is Open

- SUNY and CUNY students whose families make up to \$110,000 annually can now apply.
- Open to new students only. If currently receiving, need not reapply.
- Eligibility: NYS resident, attend CUNY or SUNY 2 or 4 year college, 30 credits per year (including summer and Winter sessions), household federal adjusted gross income total up to \$110,000 to be eligible.
- In 2019-20 and beyond, New York State families can earn up to \$125,000. Recipients must also plan to live in New York State for the length of time they received the award.
- More than 210,000 now attend tuition-free (53%). Excelsior Scholarship helps reduce tuition after all other scholarship and grant money has been awarded through the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (NYSHESC).
- Applications accepted through Monday, July 23.

### U.S. Department of Education Approves First Innovative Educational Quality through Innovation Partnerships (EQUIP) Experiment. Brookhaven College, Dallas County Community College District named as first institution

- EQUIP will allow students to use federal student aid to enroll in programs offered by nontraditional education providers who have partnered with accredited colleges or universities.
  - Experiment provides an exemption from the normal federal student aid rules, allowing a nontraditional provider to exceed the 50 percent cap, thereby providing low-income students with greater access to new types of programs.
- U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos- “Nontraditional students comprise the fastest growing student segment in higher education...these students are looking for new, more efficient and lower-cost ways to earn workplace-relevant credentials, oftentimes while working and raising a family. Through these experimental sites, we can provide students with new options that, until now, existed only outside of the federal financial aid system.”

