



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: November 18, 2020
To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads
Route To: District Test Coordinators, District Technology Coordinators, School Test Coordinators, School Counselors
From: Diana M. Pasculli, Acting Assistant Commissioner
Division of Academics and Performance

2020-2021 Statewide Assessment Schedule

The United States Department of Education (USDE) anticipates that all states will administer statewide assessments as required under the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* during the 2020-2021 school year. Therefore, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) plans to administer New Jersey's statewide assessment system, which includes the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA), Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM), ACCESS for ELLs and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), in the spring of 2021. The NJDOE recognizes the complexity of the circumstances in schools across the state and will closely monitor developments related to the COVID-19 pandemic throughout the school year. Additionally, the NJDOE will continue to engage with USDE, assessment experts and the Council of Chief State School Officers on the national issue of state assessments and will keep school administrators and educators apprised of any new information through additional broadcasts as necessary.

Details regarding the administration windows for each respective assessment are provided the [2020-2021 statewide assessment schedule](#). Notably, the NJDOE is postponing the high school fall block of the NJSLA.

NJSLA Administration Window

Each year, the NJDOE provides districts that implement block schedules (fall and spring instructional schedules) the opportunity to administer the NJSLA in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics to high school students who are enrolled in a district-approved, credit-bearing course in ELA 9, and/or Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II.

The NJDOE recognizes that districts may not be able to administer the NJSLA fall block assessments in accordance with all in-person administration and monitoring requirements due to the continued impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, **the NJDOE is postponing the fall block assessment administration window and providing a single, expanded NJSLA administration window from March 15, 2021 – June 11, 2021.** This expanded assessment administration window will provide an opportunity for students who are required to participate in state assessments during the fall block, spring block, and regular spring administration to complete testing.

The NJDOE recommends that students who complete their courses during the fall block be administered the associated end-of-course assessment early in this expanded window. A fall block course is defined as a course that starts at the beginning of the academic year and completes instruction at the end of the fall semester.

Districts should immediately notify the parents and/or guardians of students enrolled in a fall block schedule who would have been required to participate in the NJSLA fall block assessment administration that the administration has been postponed.

Clarification of Testing Requirements Under ESSA

As per the USDE, to meet the requirements of ESSA, the NJDOE is providing clarification that all students must take the Algebra I state assessment in high school, with the following exceptions:

- Students who take the DLM assessment in high school;
- Students who took the Algebra I state assessment in middle school must take one of the following state assessments in high school:
 - Geometry;
 - Algebra II; or
 - A more-advanced mathematics assessment (only if both Geometry and Algebra II are also taken in middle school).

Unless any of the exemptions outlined above apply, high school students should complete the Algebra I state assessment in grade 9.

Participation Requirements: NJSLA ELA, Math and Science

The NJDOE reminds districts that for the 2021 NJSLA administration, **NJSLA assessments in ELA and math will be administered to students in grades 3-9**. There will be no ELA 10 assessment, and students will not be required to take an end-of-course mathematics assessment in grade 10, unless they are in grades 10-12 and enrolled in Algebra I for the first time. NJSLA assessments in science will be administered to students in grades 5, 8, and 11.

Registration Requirements

Students in grades 3 to 9 should be registered for the assessment associated with their current ELA and math course enrollment. For science, students should be registered directly in PearsonAccess^{next} based on the appropriate grade band (5, 8, or 11). Additional information regarding the NJSLA-Science registration process is forthcoming.

Graduation Assessment Reminders

The NJDOE will provide more information about graduation assessment requirements for all classes as soon as possible.

Spring 2021 District Test and Technology Coordinator Training

The annual district test and technology coordinator (DTC) training for the 2020-2021 school year will take place **virtually**. Details regarding registration and participation in this training are forthcoming.

Contact Information

If you have questions regarding the New Jersey's statewide assessments, please contact the Office of Assessments at (609) 376-3960 or assessment@doe.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
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