

April 21, 2008

TO: Chief School Administrators  
Charter School Lead Persons

FROM: Jay Doolan, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner  
Division of Educational Standards and Programs

SUBJECT: Statewide Assessment Schedule for 2008-2009 School Year

The attached Statewide Assessment Schedule lists New Jersey test administration dates for the 2008-2009 school year for grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and high school.

As you will see, there are significant changes at several grade levels. Please review this information carefully.

### **High School Assessments**

All first-time eleventh graders will take the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) in mathematics and language arts literacy in March 2009. All retained eleventh grade, twelfth grade, retained twelfth grade, returning, and adult high school students who have not yet passed all sections of the HSPA must participate in the October 2008 administration and, if necessary, the March 2009 administration. Please note that the October 2008 HSPA schedule has been designed to avoid conflict with the Jewish holidays.

The 2009 End of Course Biology Test will be administered Monday, May 18, 2009, with make-up testing on Thursday May 21, 2009. Criteria for determining who must participate in the End of Course Biology Test are presented in the attached schedule. Districts are reminded that the department intends to adopt new graduation requirements that will include the mandate that all high school students take biology in order to attain a New Jersey diploma.

In association with this 2009 End of Course Biology Test, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and its grantee, the New Jersey Performance Assessment Alliance (NJPAA), intend once again to conduct a stand-alone field test (approximately 90 minutes) of a biology performance assessment prompt in May 2009. This performance assessment will be scored by the NJPAA, with scores disseminated to districts in July 2009; however, these field-test scores will not be combined with the regular End of Course Biology Test scores. Eventually, the scores of these two components may be combined as part of the score reporting for biology assessment. Further information about this 2009 biology performance assessment will be disseminated shortly by NJPAA and the NJDOE.

In addition, the NJDOE intends to pilot-test an End of Course Algebra I Test in May 2009. Approximately 35-50 districts will be recruited for this purpose in the coming months. Some districts may be asked to participate in an Algebra I field test in October 2008.

Further information about the pilot End of Course Algebra I Test and a subsequent End of Course Algebra II Test will be released later this spring. The End of Course Algebra I Test will be administered in the period May 18 through May 29, 2009, with one day allotted for regular testing and a second for make-up testing. Participating districts may choose two testing days within this period. Achieving proficiency on the End of Course Algebra I Test will *not* be a graduation requirement in 2009; however, districts are reminded that the department intends to adopt new graduation requirements which will include the mandate that all high school students take Algebra I, and other mathematics courses, in order to attain a New Jersey diploma.

### **Special Review Assessment (SRA)**

Please note that the current Special Review Assessment (SRA) process will remain in place for 2008-2009; several significant changes to the SRA process are planned for 2009-2010 and beyond. The department will communicate with you shortly regarding these anticipated changes.

### **Grades 3 through 8**

The assessments for grades 3 and 4 will be administered starting in spring 2009 under a contract awarded last year to Measurement Incorporated of Durham, North Carolina. Thus, starting in 2009, the assessments for grades 3 through 8 will all be administered through this contract and under essentially identical administrative processes and routines. We believe this consolidation will prove more efficient for both the department and for districts. Please note that grade 3 mathematics will become a two-day assessment starting in 2009.

The 2009 schedule for assessments in grades 3 through 8 is a four-week testing window: it provides for regular testing of grades 7 and 8 the week of April 27, 2009 (starting on Tuesday, April 28, 2009), grades 3 and 4 the week of May 4, 2009, and grades 5 and 6 the week of May 11, 2009 with make-up testing in the week following each regular testing period. We developed this schedule after consulting with many districts about the logistical issues inherent in administering statewide assessments. Most districts told us that it is very difficult for them to administer more than two grade level assessments in a single week, and we developed the schedule accordingly. We expect that a similar four-week testing window in grades 3 through 8 will be adopted for the following year, i.e., April 26 - May 21, 2010. Districts are encouraged to plan accordingly.

### **National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)**

The next round of National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) testing mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) will take place during the period of January 26 through March 6, 2009. Please note that in addition to the regular grade 4 and grade 8 NAEP testing, New Jersey will be among a select number of states participating in a special NAEP twelfth-grade pilot study in mathematics and reading. Approximately 3,000 students from a sample of approximately 100 New Jersey high schools will be asked to participate in this 90-minute program to be conducted in late January and February 2009. New Jersey's performance on NAEP assessments has consistently been among the highest in the nation, and the results of the NAEP assessments help to confirm the rigor of the achievement standards embodied by *New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards* (NJCCCS). The Office of State Assessments will update you accordingly, as we hear further from the NAEP program office in Washington, D.C.

## **Alternate Proficiency Assessment (APA)**

The portfolio-based Alternate Proficiency Assessment (APA), for students with severe cognitive disabilities, collects instructional materials over a designated period. Districts may expect to receive detailed information on the 2008-2009 APA portfolio design and time frame in the coming weeks.

The department appreciates the feedback it receives regarding testing schedules. If you have any questions about the statewide assessment schedule for 2008-2009, please contact Timothy Peters, director, Office of State Assessments, by telephone at (609) 984-6311, or by email at [timothy.peters@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:timothy.peters@doe.state.nj.us).

JD/TP/testingschedule2008-09

Attachment

c:     Members, State Board of Education  
       Commissioner Lucille E. Davy  
       Willa Spicer  
       Erika Leak  
       Kim C. Belin  
       Senior Staff  
       Timothy Peters  
       Janis Jensen  
       Sandra Alberti  
       Kenneth Figgs  
       Mary Jane Kurabinski  
       Roberta Wohle  
       County Superintendents  
       County Test Coordinators  
       District Test Coordinators  
       Directors of Approved Private Schools for the Disabled  
       Directors of College-Operated Programs  
       Directors of a State Facility  
       NJ LEE Group  
       Garden State Coalition of Schools

## STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE 2008-2009 SCHOOL YEAR

### HIGH SCHOOL TESTING

#### OCTOBER 2008 ADMINISTRATION

*High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA):* for retained eleventh graders, twelfth graders, retained twelfth graders, returning students, and adult high school students.

September 29, 2008, October 2, 3, 2008	Regular Testing (Mathematics and Language Arts Literacy Days 1 and 2)
October 6, 7, 8, 2008	Make-up Testing (Mathematics and Language Arts Literacy Days 1 and 2)

#### MARCH 2009 ADMINISTRATION

*High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA):* for all first-time eleventh graders, retained eleventh graders, twelfth graders, retained twelfth graders, returning students, and adult high school students.

March 3, 4, 5, 2009	Regular Testing (Mathematics and Language Arts Literacy Days 1 and 2)
March 10, 11, 12, 2009	Make-up Testing (Mathematics and Language Arts Literacy Days 1 and 2)

END OF COURSE BIOLOGY TEST	May 18, 2009 (Regular testing day)
	May 21, 2009 (Make-up testing day)

*Who Must Take the End of Course Biology Test*

- All New Jersey public high school students, regardless of grade level, who are enrolled in a first-year biology course any time during the 2008-2009 school year, must take the End of Course Biology Test. The following course titles are included as *exemplars*:
  - Resource Center Biology
  - ESL Biology
  - General Biology
  - Life Science
  - Foundations in Biology
  - College Prep Biology
  - Honors Biology
  - Accelerated Biology
  - Advanced Placement Biology (see below)
  - Integrated Science (see below)

The additional criteria for participation in the End of Course Biology Test must be followed:

- Students taking *AP Biology*, without having completing a *biology* prerequisite, must take the May 2009 End of Course Biology Test.
- Students taking *AP Biology*, after completing a *biology* prerequisite, must not take the May 2009 End of Course Biology Test.
- Students taking *Integrated Science* as an alternative to the *biology* offerings listed above, must take the May 2009 End of Course Biology Test.
- Students taking *Integrated Science* as a *prerequisite* course for *biology* elective must not take the May 2009 End of Course Biology Test. These students will take the End of Course Biology Test during the school year that they are enrolled in the *biology* elective.
- Students who failed the May 2008 End of Course Biology Test may not take the May 2009 End of Course Biology Test. Retest options will become available when the test becomes a requirement for graduation.

Districts are advised to align their biology course offerings with the New Jersey High School Biology/Life Science Syllabus. The syllabus and related information can be downloaded from the NJDOE web site at:

<http://www.nj.gov/education/aps/cccs/science/>

## **GRADE EIGHT TESTING**

*New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK8):* for all eighth-grade students.

April 28, 29, 30, May 1, 2009

Regular Testing (Language Arts Literacy Days 1 and 2, Mathematics, Science)

May 4, 5, 6, 7, 2009

Make-up Testing (Flexible; but no more than one content area per student per day)

## **GRADE SEVEN TESTING**

*New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK7):* for all seventh-grade students.

April 28, 29, 30, May 1, 2009

Regular Testing (Language Arts Literacy Days 1 and 2, Mathematics Days 1 and 2)

May 4, 5, 6, 7, 2009

Make-up Testing (Flexible; but no more than one content area per student per day)

## **GRADE SIX TESTING**

*New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK6):* for all sixth-grade students.

May 11, 12, 13, 14, 2009

Regular Testing (Language Arts Literacy Days 1 and 2, Mathematics Days 1 and 2)

May 18, 19, 20, 21, 2009

Make-up Testing (Flexible; but no more than one content area per student per day)

## **GRADE FIVE TESTING**

*New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK5):* for all fifth-grade students.

May 11, 12, 13, 14, 2009

Regular Testing (Language Arts Literacy Days 1 and 2, Mathematics Days 1 and 2)

May 18, 19, 20, 21, 2009

Make-up Testing (Flexible; but no more than one content area per student per day)

## **GRADE FOUR TESTING**

*New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK4):* for all fourth-grade students.

May 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 2009

Regular Testing (Language Arts Literacy Days 1 and 2, Mathematics Days 1 and 2, Science)

May 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 2009

Make-up Testing (Flexible; but no more than one content area per student per day)

## **GRADE THREE TESTING**

*New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK3):* for all third-grade students.

May 4, 5, 6, 7, 2009

Regular Testing (Language Arts Literacy Days 1 and 2, Mathematics Days 1 and 2)

May 11, 12, 13, 14 15, 2009

Make-up Testing (Flexible; but no more than one content area per student per day)

**NOTE:** *As an option, schools that are configured grades K-5 may test grades 3-5 during the May 4 through May 8, 2009 period, provided that they notify the Office of State Assessments in advance of their intention to do so. We regret that schools configured 6-8 may not test those grades in the same window in 2009; however, that may be possible for 2010 and beyond.*