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October 6, 2015

TO: Chief School Administrators
Charter School and Renaissance School Project Lead Persons

FROM: Kimberley Harrington, Chief Academic Officer
Office of Teaching and Learning

SUBJECT: Appeals Process for Students That Have Not Met Their Assessment Graduation Requirement

This memo describes the 2016 portfolio appeals process for students who have not met their assessment graduation requirement. Please review this memo and share with all applicable district staff.

Districts that have students who are on track to meet all their graduation requirements except their assessment requirement by the Spring of 2016, can file a portfolio appeal that consists of: an Education Proficiency Plan (EPP) that includes student transcripts; performance on Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and/or substitute competency assessments; and interventions provided to the student to ensure he/she met the graduation requirement. The appeal must also include constructed response tasks (CRTs) in the subject areas in which the student is deficient: mathematics and/or English language arts (ELA). The CRTs need to ensure the student can demonstrate core mathematical and English language arts competencies that are equivalent to the expectations of the substitute competency assessments. Below are the requirements for the CRTs in mathematics and English language arts:

Mathematics

In order to earn a New Jersey high school diploma, a student must demonstrate proficiency in mathematics. A student may do this by demonstrating alternative classroom work evidencing the mathematical practices aligned to the content categories as described below. Each of the categories encompasses knowledge and skills articulated in *New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards*.

A student appeal must include one (1) *graded, open-ended response* student work sample for four out of the five mathematical content categories. **Each** work sample must use one of the two mathematical practice categories described below to evidence the mathematical practices. Therefore, each student portfolio must contain four CRTs: one CRT aligned to four out of five content areas. Each CRT needs to have at least three (3) points and a student needs to get two (2) out of three (3) to be considered "proficient." At least two (2) points of the CRT has to be based on reasoning or modeling and the other point on computation. A CRT that is scored based purely on computation will not be accepted. Students cannot be considered "proficient" based on computation alone. In order to get a two or higher, students need to demonstrate their ability to reason and model mathematically.

Evidence the Mathematical Practices

- I. **Expressing Mathematical Reasoning:** Express appropriate mathematical reasoning by constructing viable arguments, critiquing the reasoning of others, and/or attending to precision when making mathematical statements.
 - Base explanations and reasoning on knowledge and skills articulated in the Number and Quantity, Algebra, Functions, Geometry, and Statistics & Probability content areas.
- II. **Modeling:** Apply knowledge and skills to solve real-world problems, engaging particularly in the Modeling practice and, where appropriate, making sense and persevering to solve them, reasoning abstractly and quantitatively, using appropriate tools strategically, and making use of structure.
 - Solve multi-step contextual problems requiring application of knowledge and skills articulated in the Number and Quantity, Algebra, Functions, Geometry, and Statistics & Probability content areas.

For further guidance, please review the *Informational Guide for Mathematics Portfolio Appeals Process* document which is attached.

English Language Arts

In order to earn a New Jersey high school diploma, a student must demonstrate proficiency in English language arts. A student may do this by demonstrating alternative classroom work aligned to the content categories as described below:

- Two grade-level passages (one literature and one informational) and associated items that demonstrate a student's comprehension (i.e., multiple choice items and short constructed responses to open-ended questions)
- Writing that includes at least two of the three types required by New Jersey Standards (informational/explanatory, argument, narrative)
- Writing should be scored using the PARCC rubric, available at <http://www.parconline.org/assessments/test-design/ela-literacy/test-specifications-documents>

Districts should use PARCC practice and released items as examples of the kinds of questions that must be included, but **may not** use the actual items for their appeals. Questions should require students to demonstrate their understanding by identifying evidence from the texts passages.

For further guidance, please review the *Informational Guide for English Language Arts Portfolio Appeals Process* document which is attached.

New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) Portfolio Appeal

Unlike prior years, the portfolio submission process will occur on a rolling basis beginning Monday, January 11, 2016, and the department will continue to accept appeals post-marked Friday, May 13, 2016. In order to prevent students who may have passed the appeals process to miss their graduation ceremonies, all appeals must be post-marked by May 13, 2016. Appeals post-marked after May 13, 2016, will be reviewed and scored, but we cannot ensure the results will be returned to the district or student before their graduation ceremony.

In the next couple of months, districts should take time to review the portfolio appeal process and begin creating CRTs and completing the EPP. We will post an electronic version of the EPP and the *Mathematics Portfolio Appeals Expectations* document on our website and it is also included as an attachment with this memo.

For districts/schools with a large number of appeals (100 or more), the NJDOE would like to conduct on-site evaluations at different times throughout the appeals window and work with the district/school to ensure the portfolios include all the information necessary in order for it to be reviewed.

If your school district would prefer an onsite evaluation of your NJDOE Portfolio Appeals, please email that preference with your best estimate regarding quantity to Dr. Faye Ball at faye.ball@doe.state.nj.us.

For district/schools that have smaller volumes of portfolio appeals, you may begin sending them on Monday, January 11, 2016, to the Office of Assessments. Please be sure to send them and label them as: *NJDOE Portfolio Appeals* to Dr. Faye Ball, portfolio appeals coordinator, Office of Assessments, New Jersey Department of Education, P.O. Box 500, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0500. Districts may also hand-deliver their *NJDOE Portfolio Appeals* to New Jersey Department of Education, Building 100, Riverview Plaza, Route 29, Trenton, New Jersey 08625. Districts will be notified of their *NJDOE Portfolio Appeals* decisions by email on a rolling basis.

If you have questions regarding the English language arts CRTs or portfolio process, please contact Mrs. Mary Jane Kurabinski, deputy chief academic officer, Office of Teaching and Learning, at 609-633-1726 or mary.jane.kurabinski@doe.state.nj.us.

If you have any questions regarding the mathematics CRTs or portfolio process, please contact Mr. Timothy Giordano, mathematics coordinator, Office of Assessments, at 609-633-8015 or timothy.giordano@doe.state.nj.us.

To ensure your district's NJDOE Portfolio Appeals decisions are emailed in a timely manner, each student's Portfolio Appeal must include the:

1. completed *Cover Sheet*
2. *Educational Proficiency Plan (EPP)* (N.J.A.C. 6A:8-4(c-d))
3. *Specified quantity and quality of student graded work samples for each content area.*

If you have **any questions regarding the NJDOE Portfolio Appeal** process, please contact Dr. Faye Ball, portfolio appeals coordinator, at 609-984-1970 or faye.ball@doe.state.nj.us.

Thank you.

KH/JBH/memo:appealsprocess

Attachments

c:	Members, State Board of Education	Executive Director for Regional Achievement Centers
	Commissioner David C. Hespe	Executive County Business Officials
	Senior Staff	County Test Coordinators
	Diane Shoener	District Test Coordinators
	Jeffrey B. Hauger	Bilingual/ESL Coordinators
	Mary Jane Kurabinski	High School Principals and Supervisors
	Harry Lee	Directors of Approved Private Schools for the Disabled
	Peggy McDonald	Directors of College-Operated Programs
	Lori Ramella	Directors of a State Facility
	Faye Ball	NJ LEE Group
	Timothy Giordano	Garden State Coalition of Schools
	Executive County Superintendents	