



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: February 3, 2021
To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads
Route To: Principals, Assistant Superintendents of Curriculum and Instruction, Elementary and Secondary English Language Arts and Mathematics Teachers, Supervisors and Instructional Coaches
From: Lisa J. Gleason, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner
Division of Academics and Performance

NJDOE Announces Additional English Language Arts and Mathematics Prerequisite Concepts and Skills Supports

Today, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is publishing the final installment of an instructional resource designed to help English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics educators as they continue to adapt and prioritize their instruction. Building on the fall release of the [ELA and Mathematics Prerequisite Concepts and Skills](#) Units 1 and 2, the NJDOE is now adding Units 3 and 4. As a result of educators' requests, the standards and their respective prerequisite concepts and skills will also be published by strand (ELA) and domain (mathematics) in the coming days. These units were developed in collaboration with educators who created the [English Language Arts and Mathematics Instructional Units](#).

The NJDOE recognizes that student learning and instructional time have been disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic and that educators and families have had to provide more physical, social, and emotional supports to students than ever before. These optional tools are just one way the NJDOE is working to support educators as they help all students, regardless of their learning environment and the many learning disruptions, to accelerate back to grade-level skills and concepts. The resources are consistent with Student Achievement Partners' recommendations described in [2020-2021 Priority Instructional Content in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics](#). Additional guidance regarding how to deliver highly effective instruction in hybrid environments and address learning gaps can be found in [The Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education](#) (p. 77).

Resource Design

These resources complement the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) and are intended to inform the type of individualized instruction and supports that might be needed to meet students where they are to engage in grade-level instruction. Educators may leverage these resources as they continue to adapt their existing mathematics and ELA instructional programs and their multi-tiered systems of student supports. The design is not intended to indicate that educators should eliminate or neglect any standards, skills, or conceptual understandings that may prepare students for the challenges of later grades; it is a guide to help educators focus their limited and disrupted instructional time.

Within the mathematics units, not all of the mathematical content in a given grade is emphasized equally in the standards. Clusters of standards are designated as "Major," "Additional," or "Supporting." The *major* work of the grade requires greater emphasis on some standards than the others based on the depth of the ideas, the time that they take to master, and/or their importance to future mathematics or the demands of college and career readiness. The other clusters of standards are designed to *support* and strengthen areas of major emphasis or they are considered *additional* standards because they may not connect tightly or explicitly to the major work of the grade.

Likewise, the ELA resources highlight those standards that represent the major work of ELA instruction: learning to read, close reading of complex texts, and building knowledge through a range of engaging reading experiences. The identification of “focus” standards signals those areas that may require more emphasis in instructional time. The remaining ELA standards identified as “supporting” can be integrated into the instruction of the focus standards. Essentially, as suggested by Student Achievement Partners, these supporting standards may be used to guide questioning or the qualities of a student’s response to text.

Monthly Webinar Series

The NJDOE is pleased to announce a free monthly webinar series that will provide further support to schools and districts interested in using these resources. Webinars will begin at 3 p.m. and last approximately one hour. Advanced registration is required. Each webinar below will provide a broad overview of the Prerequisite Concepts and Skills resources geared to a different target audience:

- ELA and mathematics school/district leaders (February 23)
- ELA and mathematics, grades 1-2 (March 2), grades 3-5 (March 4)
- ELA grades 6-8 (March 9), grades 9-12 (March 18)
- Mathematics grades 6-8 (March 11), Algebra I and Geometry (March 16)

Future webinars topics and registration information will be forthcoming.

Districts may want to share the [Family Guides: Supporting Learning in 2020-2021](#) that provide guidance about what students should know and be able to do, grade by grade, in math and literacy. This resource is available in English and Spanish.

Contact Information

For questions regarding the English language arts units, please contact EnglishLanguageArts@doe.nj.gov and for questions regarding the mathematics units, please contact Mathematics@doe.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D., Acting Commissioner of Education
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