



# STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: January 27, 2021  
To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads  
Route To: District Test Coordinators, District Technology Coordinators, School Test Coordinators  
From: Lisa J. Gleason, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner  
Division of Academics and Performance

## Spring 2021 New Jersey Student Learning Assessments English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science: Important Activities and Key Dates

This memorandum provides districts with the [key dates and information](#) to assist with preparation for administering the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA) statewide assessment program in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science for the spring of 2021. At this time, the United States Department of Education has not indicated that there will be any form of waiver of states' statewide assessment obligations for the 2020-2021 school year.

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) recognizes that the disruption to education due to the COVID-19 pandemic persists as schools and districts prepare for the spring 2021 assessment administration. To provide greater flexibility to educators and districts, the NJDOE will provide the **option to administer the NJSLA remotely during the spring 2021 assessment administration, which runs from March 15, 2021 to June 11, 2021.**

The NJDOE will provide guidance and supports for both in-person and remote administrations of the NJSLA for the spring of 2021 through trainings and resources outlined below. Any updates to administration procedures will be shared with the public as soon as possible.

### 2020-2021 Cancelled English Language Arts (ELA) Field Test

The ELA field test unit *will not* be a part of the state ELA assessments for spring 2021. Districts that were selected for the canceled spring 2020 field test will not have to schedule for a field test unit.

### Spring 2021 NJSLA District Test and Technology Coordinator (DTC) Training

Each year, the NJDOE requires that all District Test Coordinators and District Technology Coordinators attend training hosted by the Office of Assessments on the administration of the NJSLA statewide assessment program in ELA, mathematics, and science.

The spring 2021 District Test and Technology Coordinator Training will be *virtual* and *asynchronous*. Training will also cover preparation for remote administration of the NJSLA. Training modules will be available online through a new virtual event platform from **February 22, 2021 to March 5, 2021** and must be completed within that timeframe. As a reminder, the DTCs are *required* to participate in these trainings each year.

Limits on attendance are lifted for the 2021 virtual training modules and all school and district coordinators are welcome to register. A memo containing registration information will be shared in the coming weeks.

Live virtual question and answer sessions regarding DTC training topics, as well as virtual one-on-one support sessions with Pearson Level 2 technical support staff, will be available during the second week of the training window (March 1 through March 4, 2021). These sessions are available to participants as an *optional* support resource. However, there will be capacity limits on Q&A sessions and one-on-one support sessions will be first come, first served. Due to these capacity limits, only DTCs can register for the live Q&A sessions and technical

support sessions. The NJDOE will make every effort to ensure that DTCs with questions or technical support needs are accommodated.

### **NJSLA Administration Window – March 15, 2021 to June 11, 2021**

In a [memo dated November 18, 2020](#), the NJDOE announced the postponement of the fall block assessment administration window and a single expanded window for the administration of fall, regular, and spring assessment blocks.

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.

### **NJ SMART State Assessment Registration Submission Data – NJSLA-ELA and Mathematics**

The NJDOE will upload Student Registration/Personal Needs Profile (SR/PNP) data for ELA and mathematics into the PearsonAccess<sup>Next</sup> (PAN) platform based on the information submitted by districts through the NJ SMART State Assessment Registration Submission in the fall of 2020. Districts can review the data in PAN and make any necessary changes to student information starting **January 27, 2021**. Data can be updated as necessary in PAN throughout the assessment administration window.

To provide additional opportunity for data analysis, two new fields will be introduced this spring in the SR/PNP file. Both of these fields will be updateable throughout the entire assessment administration window.

- **Testing Location:** A required field used to identify whether students are testing inside or outside of the school building.
- **Student's Learning Model:** An optional field used to identify students' primary mode of instruction throughout the school year.

Additional information regarding how these fields should be used can be found in the SR/PNP field definitions guide in the PAN support menu.

### **Student Registration/Personal Needs Profile (SR/PNP) Import for NJSLA-Science**

For NJSLA-Science, districts must import student data directly to PAN and not through NJ SMART. **January 27, 2021 through February 9, 2021** is the initial import window for the NJSLA-Science SR/PNP. Districts may continue to make updates to student data prior to and throughout the testing window until the district data clean-up window closes on June 18, 2021. However, only students registered in PAN on or before **February 9, 2021** will be used to calculate quantities for an initial order of printed test materials for students who require a paper-based accommodation. Approved private schools for students with disabilities and other institutions which are not accountable schools were not responsible for registering students for NJSLA-ELA/Math in NJ SMART. However, they are responsible for registering students for NJSLA-Science in PAN. Please review the SR/PNP Field Definitions Guide for details on important changes for 2021.

### **Test Coordinator and Test Administrator Manuals**

Electronic versions of the spring 2021 test coordinator manual will be posted no later than **February 15, 2021** and test administrator manuals will be posted no later than **March 1, 2021** on the [NJSLA Resource Center](#) webpage.

### **Paper Testing Materials**

The NJSLA-ELA, mathematics and science assessments are computer-based assessments, and most students should take the assessment on a computer. Students who are unable to use a computer, based on a need documented in a valid Section 504 Plan or Individualized Education Program (IEP), will take the paper-based assessment. The paper-based assessment will be available to schools for in-person administration only.

Student test registrations entered in the assessment administration platform on or before **February 9, 2021** will be used to calculate quantities for an initial order for paper-based testing materials. Districts will receive paper materials for testing (test booklets and answer folders, mathematics reference sheets, periodic tables, large print, and Braille test booklets) no later than **March 8, 2021 for ELA and mathematics and April 12, 2021 for science paper materials**.

Additional paper materials may be ordered for students enrolled after the initial registration of students in the assessment administration platform through the Additional Order process. Districts must specify the exact number of individual test booklets required when requesting additional orders. Districts must wait to receive the initial order of paper materials before ordering additional materials through the Additional Order process. The Additional Order window opens on March 8, 2021 for ELA and math and April 12, 2021 for science.

**Contact Information**

For questions, please contact the NJDOE's Office of Assessments at [assessment@doe.nj.gov](mailto:assessment@doe.nj.gov) or (609) 376-3960.

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