



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: June 9, 2021
To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads, Directors of Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities
Route To: High School Principals, Directors of Guidance, Bilingual/ESL Coordinators, District Test Coordinators
From: Lisa J. Gleason, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner
Division of Academics and Performance

Cancellation of Summer 2021 NJSLA Administration and Graduation Assessment Requirement Reminders

This memo includes information regarding the cancellation of the summer 2021 New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA) administration. It also provides reminders about the graduation assessment requirements for the class of 2022. Additionally, important information is provided about the expectations and considerations that child study teams must keep in mind when making decisions related to students with disabilities and the high school graduation assessment requirements.

Summer NJSLA Cancellation

On April 14, 2021, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) published a [broadcast](#) announcing the cancellation of the spring 2021 administration of the NJSLA. In alignment with this previous announcement, the summer 2021 administration of the NJSLA is also cancelled. Districts are encouraged to implement their summer programs, including remediation opportunities and advanced course offerings for students, as planned.

Additional information regarding statewide assessments for the 2021-2022 school year will be forthcoming, including opportunities for students in the class of 2022 to meet the high school graduation assessment requirement during the fall block assessment administration window.

Reminders for the Class of 2022

In accordance with the consent order dated February 15, 2019 from the Appellate Division of the Superior Court, students in the classes of 2019 through 2022 have the same graduation assessment requirements that were in place for the classes of 2017 and 2018. Specifically, three pathways are available to these students to meet ELA and mathematics [graduation assessment requirements](#): (1) demonstrate proficiency on the high school end-of-course NJSLA/PARCC assessments in ELA-10 and/or Algebra I; (2) demonstrate proficiency in ELA and/or mathematics by meeting the designated cut score on one of the alternative assessments such as the SAT, ACT, etc.; or (3) demonstrate proficiency in ELA and/or mathematics through the Portfolio Appeals Process.

Students in the class of 2022 will be able to access the third graduation pathway, the Portfolio Appeals Process, during their twelfth-grade year. Additional guidance regarding portfolio task updates, information related to students with disabilities and English language learners (ELLs), and an overview of the submission process will be shared with districts prior to the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

Information for Students with Disabilities

Under the Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA), all students with disabilities must be included in all general state and districtwide assessments. The individualized educational programs (IEPs) of students with disabilities will address whether the student must meet the passing score on the state assessments or demonstrate proficiency through an alternate pathway. Students with disabilities whose IEPs specify an

alternative way to demonstrate proficiencies will continue to follow the graduation assessment requirements set forth in their IEPs.

It is the responsibility of the student's child study team to ensure that the IEP is implemented as written, including components addressing state graduation assessment requirements. Child study teams should reserve the exemption of the statewide assessment graduation requirement for students with the most significant intellectual disabilities and for students with disabilities who have made repeated unsuccessful attempts to meet statewide assessment requirements through the available pathways, including the Portfolio Appeals Process. Districts are encouraged to begin convening meetings of the student's child study team when the student is in grade 9, or as early as possible. The child study team includes the student, and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) and will discuss the student's specific graduation requirements and pathways.

Questions about IEP components concerning graduation assessment requirements should be directed to the Office of Special Education Policy and Dispute Resolution at oseinfo@doe.nj.gov. Questions about state assessments should be directed to the Office of Assessments at assessment@doe.nj.gov.

- c: Members, State Board of Education
- Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D., Acting Commissioner of Education
- NJDOE Staff
- Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
- Garden State Coalition of Schools
- NJ LEE Group